THE SELF INTERPRETING BIBLE

ELISHA'S FOUNTAIN, WHERE ELISHA CAST SALT INTO THE SPRING AND HEALED THE WATERS. [II. KINGS, ii: 19.]—"And the men of the city (that is of Jericho) said unto Elisha: Behold, I pray thee, the situation of this city is pleasant, as my Lord seeth: but the water is naught and the ground barren. And he said: Bring me a new cruse, and put salt therein. And they brought it to him. And he went forth unto the spring of the waters, and cast the salt in there, and said, Thus saith the Lord, I have healed these waters; there shall not be from thence any more death or barren land. So the waters were healed unto this day, according to the saying of Elisha which he spake." In the view above we have a picture of Elisha's Fountain in the city of Old Jericho where his miracle was performed. The water from this fountain is still used to supply the natives of the modern village of Jericho and for irrigating the soil.

THE

SELF-INTERPRETING BIBLE

WITH

COMMENTARIES, REFERENCES, HARMONY OF THE GOSPELS AND THE HELPS NEEDED TO UNDERSTAND AND TEACH THE TEXT,

ILLUSTRATED AND EXPLAINED

BY

OVER FOUR HUNDRED PHOTOGRAPHS

SHOWING THE PLACES OF BIBLE EVENT AS THEY APPEAR TO-DAY.

REFERENCES, EXPLANATORY NOTES AND TABULATED STATISTICS

EDITED AND REVISED BY

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IN FOUR VOLUMES.

VOL. II, JUDGES—SONG OF SOLOMON.

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THE BOOK OF JUDGES

Relates the transactions of fourteen Hebrew judges, who, under God, the King of the nation, were occasional governors of Israel; and who, Abimelech excepted, were typical of Jesus Christ, as called to, qualified for, and occupied in delivering his chosen people. It contains the history of about three hundred years; and particularly narrates the Israelites' behaviour towards the Canaanites whom Joshua had left in the country; the Lord's reproof of their conduct and their repentance for it; what nations were left to chastise them for it; their frequent relapses into idolatry; and their punishment on account of it by terrible oppressions from the Mesopotamians, Moabites, Canaanites, Midianites, Abimelech, Ammonites, and Philistines; and their deliverances by Othniel, Ehud, Deborah and Barak, Gideon, Jephthah, and Samson; and their protection by Shamgar, Tola, Jair, Ibzan, Elon, and Abdon, i.–xvi. The last five chapters are an appendix, informing us of events which happened not long after the death of Joshua; particularly the idolatry of Micah; the conquest and idolatry of the Danites; the horrible lust of the Gibeathites; and the almost utter destruction of the Benjamites for protecting them, xvii.–xxi. The scope of this and of the following histories of the Old Testament is to represents the sinful backslidings of Israel, and the holiness, equity, mercy, sovereignty, and power of God, in his dispensations of mercy and judgment towards them, in exact correspondence with his promises and threatenings, Le. xxvi.; De. xxviii.–xxxii.

CHAPTER I.

1 *The acts of Judah and Simeon.* 4 *Adoni-bezek justly requited.* 8 *Jerusalem taken.* 10 *Hebron taken.* 11 *Othniel hath Achsah to wife for taking of Debir.* 16 *The Kenites dwell in Judah.* 17 *Hormah, Gaza, Askelon, and Ekron taken.* 21 *The acts of Benjamin.* 22 *Of the house of Joseph, who take Beth-el.* 30 *Of Zebulun.* 31 *Of Asher,* 33 *Of Naphtali.* 34 *Of Dan.*

A.M. 2570 or 2580.
B.C. 1434 or 1424.

NOW, after[a] the death of Joshua, it came to pass, that the children of Israel [b]asked the LORD,[1] saying, Who shall go up for us against the Canaanites first, to fight against them?

2 And the LORD said, [c]Judah shall go up: behold, I have delivered the land into his hand.

3 And Judah said unto [d]Simeon his brother,[2] Come up with me into my lot, that we may fight against the Canaanites; and I likewise will go with thee into thy lot. So Simeon went with him.

4 And Judah went up; and the [e]LORD delivered the Canaanites and the Perizzites into their hand: and they slew of them in [f]Bezek ten thousand men.

5 And they found Adoni-bezek in Bezek: and they fought against him, and they slew the Canaanites and the Perizzites.

6 But Adoni-bezek fled: and they pursued after him, and caught him, and [g]cut off his thumbs and his great toes.

7 And Adoni-bezek said, Threescore and ten kings, having their thumbs and their great toes[3] cut off, gathered[4] *their meat* under my table: [h]as I have done, so God hath requited me. And they brought him to Jerusalem, and there he died.

8 ¶ Now the children of Judah [i]had fought against [k]Jerusalem, and had taken it, and smitten it with the edge of the sword, and set the city on fire.

9 And[l] afterward the children of Judah went down to fight against the Canaanites that dwelt in the mountain, and in the south, and in the valley.[5]

10 ¶ And Judah went against the Canaanites that dwelt in [m]Hebron; (now the name of Hebron before *was* Kirjath-arba;) [n]and they slew Sheshai, and Ahiman, and Talmai.

11 And from thence he went against the inhabitants of Debir: (and the name of Debir before *was* Kirjath-sepher:)

12 And [o]Caleb said, He that smiteth Kirjath-sepher, and taketh it, to him will I give Achsah my daughter to wife.[6]

CHAP. I.

a Jos.24.29,30.

b Nu. 27, 21. Ex. 28, 30. ch.20.18. 1 Sa.23.9, 10.Pr.3.5,6.

1 The influence of the elders who outlived Joshua still continues to preserve the people in the worship of the true God, and they will not undertake any war without his sanction. The reference of the case to God is to be accounted for only on the principle declared, Le. 18. 27, 28, and surely, if a human judge has a right, and is bound, to punish a criminal, much more must 'the Judge of the whole earth' have a right to order the punishment of individual or national sins.—*C.*

c Ge.46.12; 49. 8-10. De. 32. 8. Is.54. 4. Re. 19.11-16. Da.7. 14. Ps. 72.8;2.8.

d Ge.46.10. Jos.19.1. 2 Sa.10.11.

2 The tribes of Judah and Simeon were descended from the same parents, Jacob and Leah: and there was a further propriety in their cooperation and mutual assistance, in the circumstance that the lot of the latter lay within that of the former.—*C.*

e Ex 23.28 30;34.11, 24. De 11 :7. 1,2,10, 20,22;11.23.

f 1 Sa.11.8.

A.M. 2570 or 2580.
B.C. 1434 or 1424.

g Ja. 2. 13. Is. 33. 1, Le.24.19, 21. Ex.21.18 -21. Mat.7...ver.7.

3 Heb. *the thumbs of their hands and of their feet.*

4 Or, *gleaned.*

h 1 Sa.15.33. Pr.1. 31; 13.21. Mat.7...Re. 13, 1 Ki.2.8,9. Ps.37, 39,38;140 01.

i Jos. 15. 63. ver. 21. 2 Sa. 5.7.

k Jos. 10.1.

l Jos.10.36;11.21; 15. 13-15.

5 Or, *low country.*

m Jos.10.5.

n Nu.13.22. Jos. 15. 14.Ps. 33.17. Ec.9.11.

o Jos.15.10-19. 1 Sa. 17.;5;18.25.

6 This passage is extracted from Jos. 15. 13-19. The object of the repetition seems to be, to distinguish, by a notable occurrence, the conquests gained during the life of Joshua, from those that were subsequent. Accordingly, ver. 8 is not a continuation of ver. 7, but a reference to what 'had been done' at a former period, when, though numbers were fewer, faith was stronger. Another object of the repetition seems to be, to give a formal recognition of the title of Caleb; for in Jos. 15. 13 it is said 'he,' that is, Joshua, gave to Caleb the city of Arba. In Ju. 1. 20 it is said, 'and they,' that is, the people of Judah, gave the city; thereby confirming the promise formerly made by Moses, and the grant conferred by Joshua.—*C.*

CHAPTER I. [Ver. 2. *Judah shall go up.* Israel was formerly a camp, now it is a federation of settlements and colonies, in which each tribe is to assert its own territorial rights, but still under the national sanction and banner. Here is the true exemplar of the churches. In the movements and progress of reformation they constitute one army united by common doctrines and common dangers. When the storm of opposition or persecution gives place to the calm of success, the churches settle down in territorial divisions; each church having allotted to it, by Providence, its own peculiar work of faith and labour of love; while all the churches should remain the members of one great federation, of which Christ is the head, and whose separate or combined energies should all be directed to the spiritual subjugation of their common enemies, and the advancement of the glory of their common Lord. *C.*]

Ver. 6. [*Cut off his thumbs and his great toes.* This punishment, grievous as it appears, was more politic than cruel. The removal of the thumb was intended to unfit for holding the war-spear. The removal of the great toes to unfit for running; and so to obviate the necessity of imprisonment or death. There seems no room for supposing, with some, that the great toes were cut off merely to prevent Adoni-bezek from employing them as a kind of additional hands, as is common with artisans in the East, and as is sometimes seen in Europe in the case of persons born without hands. In a cruel tyrant, such as Adoni-bezek was, we scarcely expect either the diligence or dexterity of an artisan. *C.*]

Ver. 7. [*As I have done, so God hath requited me.* A heathen once wisely said of a criminal, 'He has blushed, and all is well;' and may not a Christian hope that where conscience is not dead, there still is hope of spiritual revival? Adoni-bezek acknowledges the justice of God; may we not judge in charity, that he likewise saw his mercy? *C.*]

Ver. 13. [*Caleb's younger brother took it.* Joshua had already taken Arba (Hebron), Jos. 10. 36, how then does it require to be taken again? Are not these accounts contradictory? By no means. The Canaanites had in the meantime retaken them, and they now required to be reconquered, an occurrence very common in all warfare. *C.*]

Ver. 18. [The Septuagint, which is followed by Augustine, reads, that 'Judah did *not* take Gaza,' &c.; and Josephus says they took neither Gaza nor Ekron. All these seem forced amendments of the text, and without authority. The subsequent Scripture history exhibiting these cities, not in the possession of Israel, but of their enemies—and no account of their recapture from Israel having been given—it seemed necessary to force an agreement between the two narratives. Such modes of reconciling scriptures are not only indefensible, but to be utterly condemned. The reconciliation lies at the surface. Judah took the cities and lands, as in the text, the Canaanites retook them, as the subsequent history implies, though it records neither the time nor the manner. *C.*]

Ver. 19. [*Could not drive out the inhabitants of the valley, because they had chariots of iron.* These words, as translated, seem to ascribe incapacity to Jehovah. The proper solution lies in translating the last clause of the sentence interrogatively, thus:—'Could he not therefore have caused the inhabitants of the valley to be driven out though they had chariots of iron?' This is a truth in war. For when mountaineers are driven from their natural fortresses—and the earth affords none stronger than those of Palestine—the force that drove them out must with far greater ease drive out the inhabitants of the plain, no matter how strong their walls or how great their means of defence. This solution confirms the declaration, Jos. 17. 18, and is perfectly consistent with the translation of similar sentences in other parts of the Hebrew Scriptures, while it removes the apparent admission of incapacity in God,

RUINS OF SERAPEUM, PUTEOLI—NEAR THE PLACE WHERE NERO HAD HIS OWN MOTHER PUT TO DEATH AND NEAR WHERE ST. PAUL LANDED IN ITALY. [JUDGES, i:7.]—"And Adoni-bezek said, Three-score and ten kings, having their thumbs and their great toes cut off, gathered their meat under my table: as I have done, so God hath requited me. And they brought him to Jerusalem and there he died." There is an intimate correspondence between crime and requital, and there seems to be a correspondence between the particular type of crime and the order of punishment that follows. Neoptolemus murdered people at the altar, and at the altar he was murdered. Phalerus roasted men in a brazen bull. In a brazen bull he was roasted in turn. History abounds with illustrations. The picture we give of the ruins of the Serapeum at Puteoli will serve to illustrate the relation between crime and its penalty. These ruins are in the neighborhood of the Emperor Nero's greatest crime. Near here he had his mother murdered, while he in turn in after years destroyed himself by his own hand.

13 And [p]Othniel the son of Kenaz, Caleb's younger brother, took it: and he gave him Achsah his daughter to wife.

14 And it came to pass, when she came *to him*, that she moved him to ask of her father a field: and she lighted from off *her* ass; and Caleb said unto her, What wilt thou?

15 And she said unto him, Give me a [q]blessing: for thou hast given me a south land; give me also springs of water. And Caleb gave her the upper springs and the nether springs.[8]

16 ¶ And the [r]children of the Kenite, Moses' father-in-law, went up out of the [s]city of palm-trees with the children of Judah into the [t]wilderness of Judah, which *lieth* in the south of Arad; and they went and dwelt among the people.[9]

17 ¶ And Judah went with Simeon his brother, and they slew the Canaanites that inhabited Zephath, and utterly destroyed it: (and the name of the city was called [u]Hormah:)

18 Also Judah took [x]Gaza with the coast thereof, and Askelon with the coast thereof, and Ekron with the coast thereof.

19 And[y] the LORD was with Judah; and he drave out *the inhabitants of* the mountain;[1] but could[z] not drive out the inhabitants of the valley,[2] because they had chariots of iron.[3]

20 And[a] they gave Hebron unto Caleb, as Moses said: and he expelled thence the three sons of Anak.

21 ¶ And [b]the children of Benjamin did not drive out the Jebusites that inhabited Jerusalem; but the Jebusites dwell with the children of Benjamin in Jerusalem unto this day.

22 ¶ And the [c]house of Joseph, they also went up against [d]Bethel: and the LORD *was* with them.

23 And the house of Joseph sent to [e]descry Beth-el: (now the name of the city before *was* Luz.)[f]

24 And the spies saw a man come forth out of the city, and they said unto him, Show us, we pray thee, the entrance into the city, and we[g] will show thee mercy.

25 And when he showed them the entrance into the city, [h]they smote the city with the edge of the sword: but they let go the man and all his family.

26 And the man went into the [i]land of the Hittites, and built a city, and called the name thereof Luz: which *is* the name thereof unto this day.[4]

27 ¶ Neither[k] did Manasseh drive out *the inhabitants of* Beth-shean and her towns, nor Taanach[5] and her towns, nor the inhabitants of Dor and her towns, nor the inhabitants of Ibleam and her towns, nor the inhabitants of Megiddo and her towns: but the Canaanites would dwell in that land.[6]

28 And it came to pass, when Israel was strong, that they [l]put the Canaanites to [7]tribute, and did not utterly drive them out.[8]

29 ¶ Neither[m] did Ephraim drive out the Canaanites that dwelt in Gezer; but the Canaanites dwelt in Gezer among them.[9]

30 ¶ Neither[m] did Zebulun drive out the inhabitants of Kitron, nor the inhabitants of Nahalol: but the Canaanites dwelt among them, and became tributaries.

31 ¶ Neither[o] did Asher drive out the inhabitants of Accho,[1] nor the inhabitants of Zidon, nor of Ahlab, nor of Achzib, nor of Helbah, nor of Aphek, nor of Rehob:[2]

32 But the Asherites [p]dwelt among the Canaanites, the inhabitants of the land; for they did not drive them out.

33 ¶ Neither [q]did Naphtali drive out the inhabitants of Beth-shemesh, nor the inhabitants of Beth-anath; but he dwelt among the Canaanites, the inhabitants of the land: nevertheless the inhabitants of Beth-shemesh and of Beth-anath became tributaries unto them.

34 ¶ And the Amorites forced the children of Dan into the [r]mountain: for they would not suffer them to come down to the valley:

35 But the Amorites would dwell in [s]mount Heres in Aijalon, and in Shaalbim: yet the hand of the house of Joseph[3] prevailed,[4] so that they became tributaries.

36 And the coast of the Amorites *was* from [t]the going up to Akrabbim, from the rock and upward.[5]

CHAPTER II.

1 *An angel rebuketh the people at Bochim.* 6 *The wickedness of the new generation after Joshua.* 14 *God's anger and pity towards them.* 20 *The Canaanites are therefore left to prove Israel.*

AND an [a]angel of the LORD came up from Gilgal to Bochim, and said, [b]I made you to go up out of Egypt, and have brought you unto the land which I sware unto your fathers; and I said, I will never break my covenant with you.

2 And [c]ye shall make no league with the inhabitants of this land; ye shall throw down their altars: but ye have not obeyed my voice; why have ye done this?

3 Wherefore [d]I also said, I will not drive them out from before you;[1] but they shall be

---

A.M. 2570 or 2580. B.C. 1434 or 1424.

p ch.3.9. Jos.15.17. 1 Ch.4.13. Ge.48.20. Isa. 16.11. This affair of Caleb and Othniel happened ten years before this war of Judah and Simeon.

q Or, present. Ge. 33.11. 1 Sa.25.18,27,30. 26. Jos.15.19; 22.7.2 Ki. 5.15. He.6.7.

8 Why record at all, but especially a second time, so insignificant a private occurrence? We answer, it can never be insignificant to record the example of a thoughtful prudent wife, or of a kind and generous father. They are the really great characters in a nation. This woman was the wife of the first hero of the age, see ch. 3. 9, upon whom was poured out the Spirit of the Lord.—*C.*

r Ex.3. 1; 18. 1. Nu. 10. 29. ch.4.11. 1 Sa.15. 6. 1 Ch. 2. 55. Je. 35.2.

s De. 34. 3.

t Nu.24.21, 22, 21. 1. Jos.12.14.

9 The Kenites and Midianites appear to have been identical, or at least they had amalgamated at a very early period. Moses invited Jethro, who was a Kenite, to accompany him to Canaan. He refused; but a section of the tribe—led perhaps by a son of Jethro—joined the Israelites, and crossed the Jordan with them. There is no note of time in this verse. It was probably when the tribe of Judah took possession of their allotted territory that 'the children of the Kenite went up out of the City of Palmtrees (Jericho) with them, and settled near Arad, the ruins of which may still be seen on the summit of a conical hill about 15 miles south of Hebron.—*P.*

u 2 Ch.14.10. Nu.21. 1, 3; 14.45.

x Jos.13.3; 15.45-47. Je.25.20. ch.3.1,3.

y Is.41.10,14,15. Ro. 8.31. Jos.15.48.

1 Or, *he possessed the mountain.*

z Jos.7.12, 13; 17. 16. 18. Mat.17.19,21. 2 Pe. 2.14.

2 'The valley' is here opposed to 'the mountain,' and may therefore signify generally the plain of Philistia, and all the lowlands in which chariots were used —*P.*

3 Either chiefly or altogether of *iron*. The extreme difficulty of preserving light vehicles of wood in warm and dry climates, may have suggested the use of *iron chariots*. In modern times, and for the assigned reason, iron vehicles have been proposed for passengers in Arabia —*C.*

a Nu. 14. 24; 13. 22. Jos.14.13; 15.13, 14; 21. 11,12. Ver.20.

b Jos. 18. 11; 10. 1. 2 Sa.5.6-9. ch. 19.10-12; ver.8.

c Jos. 16.1, 4; 8. 17. 2 Ki.18.7.

d Ge. 12. 8; 28. 19. Jos.8.9.

e Jos.2.1; 7. 2. ch.18. 2. Ps.122.5. Mat.10.16.

f Ge. 28.19.

g Jos.2. 14. 1 Sa. 30. 15. ver.25.

h Jos.6.22-25.

i Ge. 15.20; 23. 2, 10; 14. 10. It was probably in Arabia.

k Jos. 17. 11-13; 21. 25. ch.3.4.

4 The Hittites retired northward before the Israelites, and settled on the banks of the Orontes in Northern Syria. Probably the new city of Luz was built in that region.—*P.*

5 Thus the Levites were kept out of part of their property.

6 These cities were all situated in the plain of Esdraelon, with the exception of Dor, which lay on the coast, at the western base of Carmel. The Israelites were generally unable to meet in battle the war-chariots of the people who dwelt in the plains of Palestine —*P.*

l Ps. 106. 34, 35. Ex. 23. 32. De. 7. 2. 1 Sa. 15. 9. Je. 48. 10.

7 Indolence and covetousness were the sins that induced disobedience to God, who had positively commanded the expulsion of the Canaanites.—*C.*

8 Heb. *driving he drove them not out.*

m Jos. 16. 10. 1 Ki. 9. 16, 17. Ps. 106. 34, 35.

9 Gezer lay in the plain of Sharon, near the foot of the mountains, and not far from the line of the ancient road from Beth-horon to Joppa. It was a strong city, and bore an important part in the future wars of Israel.—*P.*

n Jos. 19. 15. Je. 48. 10. Ps. 106. 34, 35.

o Jos. 19. 24-30. Ps. 106. 34, 35.

1 This celebrated city being greatly enlarged by the first Ptolemy of Egypt, it was named Ptolemais. By the Arabs it is called Akka, by the Turks Acre, and by the crusaders St. Jean d'Acre. It is situate on a point of land projecting into the sea, and this land it is a fertile plain extending to the foot of Mount Carmel.—*C.*

2 All these cities were in the plain of Phœnicia, which runs along the shore at the western base of Lebanon.—*P.*

p Ps. 106. 35, 36.

q Jos. 19. 32-39. Ver. 49, 13. Je. 48. 10. Ps. 106. 34, 35.

r Jos. 15. 10, 11; 19. 48.

s Jos. 19. 42. ch. 12. 12. 1 Ki. 4. 9.

3 Who assisted the Danites.

4 Heb. *was heavy.*

t Or, *Maaleh-akrabbim*, Jos. 15. 2, 3. Nu. 34. 3.

5 Akrabbim was a pass in the valley of Arabah, about 20 miles south of the Dead Sea. From that place westward to the plain of Philistia was the stronghold of the Amorites in southern Palestine —*P.*

CHAP. II.

a Christ, as Ge 16. 7; 22. 11. Ex. 3. 2; 14. 19; 23. 20; 33. 14. Jos. 5. 13, 14. ch. 6. 11, 13. 3.

b Ex. 3. 8, 17; 6. 8. Jos. 24. 5. Ge. 17. 7, 8. Ex. 23. 30, 31; 34. 12-16. Nu. 33. 55. De. 7. 2-4, 16-25; 12. 2, 3. 2 Co. 6. 14-17.

c ver. 20. Jos. 23. 13. Ex. 23. 32; 34. 12. Nu. 33. 55. De. 7. 16. 1 Ki. 11. 1, 2. Ps. 106. 34-40.

1 Is not this a breach of covenant and promise on the part of God? No. For he had commanded the Israelites to drive out the wicked idolaters, and that, thus using their obedience, he would drive them out; but with disobedience he had made no covenant, and to rebels no such promise.—*C.*

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to the want of faith, obedience, zeal, and courage in the armies of Judah. *C.*]

Ver. 20. [*He expelled thence the three sons of Anak.* Therefore how much more should Judah have expelled the inhabitants of the plain, seeing the Anakims were the mightiest and most dreaded of the inhabitants of Canaan? De. 9. 2. *C.*]

REFLECTIONS.—Difficult and extensive is the work which the people of God, and the rulers of nations and churches, have to go through with, after one would think everything was rectified. There is need to acknowledge the Lord in all our ways, that, being animated by him to our proper work, we may prosecute it with courage and success. And the more honour or ability God gives to men, the more difficult work he assigns them. But God most fearfully humbles the proud, marks their sins in their judgments, and metes out to them the measure which they had meted out to others; while such as share with the people of God in their wilderness sufferings, share also in their eternal inheritance. Our own unbelief, sloth, and cowardice frequently hinder our performance of duty, and prevent or mar much of our happiness. Yea, many secret enemies still abiding in our hearts prevent

as thorns in your sides, and their gods shall be a snare unto you.

4 And it came to pass, when the angel of the LORD spake these words unto all the children of Israel, that the [e]people lifted up their voice, and wept.

5 And they called the name of that place Bochim:[f] and they [g]sacrificed there unto the LORD.

6 ¶ And when [h]Joshua had let the people go,[2] the children of Israel went every man unto his inheritance to possess the land.

7 And the people served the LORD all the days of Joshua, and all the days of the elders that outlived Joshua,[3] who had seen all the great works of the LORD that he did for Israel.

8 And[i] Joshua the son of Nun, the servant of the LORD, died, *being* an hundred and ten years old.

9 And they buried him in the border of his inheritance in Timnath-heres, in the mount of Ephraim, on the north side of the hill Gaash.

10 ¶ And also all that generation were gathered[k] unto their fathers: and there arose another generation after them, which [l]knew not the LORD, nor yet the works which he had done for Israel.

11 And the children of Israel [m]did evil in the sight of the LORD, and served Baalim.[4]

12 And they [n]forsook the LORD God of their fathers, which brought them out of the land of Egypt, and followed other gods, of the gods of the people that *were* round about them, and bowed themselves unto them, and provoked the LORD to anger.

13 And they forsook the LORD, and served Baal[o] and Ashtaroth.[5]

14 ¶ And[p] the anger of the LORD was hot[6] against Israel, and he delivered them into the hands of spoilers that spoiled them, and he sold them into the hands of their enemies round about, so that they could not any longer stand before their enemies.

15 Whithersoever they went out, the hand of the LORD was against them for evil, as the LORD had said, and as the LORD had sworn unto them: and they were greatly distressed.

A.M. 2570 or 2580.
B.C. 1434 or 1424.

e 1 Sa.7.6. Ezr.10.1. Pr.17.10.

f That is, *weepers*, Jos.7.26.Ge.35.8.

g ch.6.24;13.19.1 Sa. 7.9, *i.e.* for expiation of their sin.

h Jos.24.28–31. 2 Ki. 12.2.

2 When he disbanded the national army, including, as appears from the quota of the two tribes and half, nearly two-thirds of the fencible men of the nation.—*C.*

3 Heb. *prolonged days after Joshua.*

i Jos. 24. 29, 30. Job 30.23; 5.26. Ps.49.7,9, 10; 89.48. Zec.1.5. Ec. 12.5,7.

k Ge.15.15; 25.8; 49. 33.Nu.27.13.

l Ex.5.2. Is.5.12. Ho. 4.6.ch.3.1. Ps.92.6. Tit. 1.10.

m ch.3.7;4.1;6.1;10. 6;13.1. Ge.13.13; 38.7. 2 Ki.20.3.

4 *Lords*, for they were many, named from the places of their worship, or some other peculiarity, as Baal-peor, Baal-zephon, Baal-zebub.—*C.*

n De.xiii.xx.; 29.18; 31.16,17; 32.15–21. Ex. 20.5.

o 1 Ki.11.5,33. 2 Ki. 23.13. 1 Sa.31.10. 1 Co. 8.5.Ge.35.2.

5 Ashtaroth literally signifies *flocks* or *riches;* as a proper name it is applied to the Sidonian Venus, and other of their female deities, by whose impure worship Israel was seduced from the Lord. *C.*——Baal was the *sun-god*, universally worshipped in Western Asia, and indeed in almost all heathen nations. His altars and sanctuaries were on eminences—sometimes, as in the case of Hermon, on the summits of high mountains, whence the first view of the rising and the last view of the setting sun might be gained by his devotees. The sun was regarded as the source and emblem of life, and of the generative power of nature. *Ashtaroth*, a plural form, the singular being *Ashtoreth*, was the name of the principal female deity of the Canaanites. The feminine principle of nature was supposed to be embodied in the moon, to which the name Ashtoreth was given. But the idol set up in the temples and worshipped under this name had the form of a woman with the crescent moon on her brow.—*P.*

p Ne.1.6. Le 26.14 ,31. De..8,1 ,28;29.19, 27; 31.17,18; 32.22. 2 Ch. 7.19; 30.8. ch.3.8; 6.1 6; 10.7. Ps.44.12,13. 2 Ki.17.20.2 Ch.15.5.

6 He that would understand what is meant by the *anger* of the Lord, may read its meaning in the national calamities inflicted by a retributive providence. —*C.*

A.M. 2574 or 2584.
B.C. 1430 or 1420.

q ch.3.9,15; 4.5,6; 6. 14;xi.xiii.1 Sa. vii.

7 *Judges*, not mere judicial functionaries, but generally reformers in religion, ver.19, and leaders in battle, ver. 18, two characters not often seen joined, but, as the case of Joshua and David will prove, by no means incompatible.—*C.*

8 Heb. *saved.*

r 2 Ch.36.15,16.2 Ki. 17.7–17. Ps.106.43. Le. 17.7.Ho.2.2.

9 The common name of idolatry in the scriptures of the Old Testament, being in a great degree literally descriptive of the impure rites of heathenism; and little less so of several forms of modern infidelity, in some of which the name and tie of husband and wife are openly reprobated, and the time anticipated for their utter extinction. Should such time ever arrive, which God in his mercy forbid, he will, should these lands, having imitated Israel's sins, speedily be subjected to Israel's punishment. —*C.*

s ver.7.Jos.24.24,31.

t Jos. 1. 5. ch. iii. iv. vii.xi.xv. 1 Sa.vii. Ro. 8.31.

u ch. 10. 16. Ps. 106. 44,45; 12.5; 102.17. Ex. 2.24.

1 Produced in God a change, not of purpose, but of relation to Israel. God says, 'I am the Lord, I change not.' But the relation between God and an idolater rejoicing in his idols, and between that same God and that same idolater 'bemoaning' his apostasy, is changed. In the former case God's purpose was judgment, now it is mercy.—*C.*

x Ps.106.43. ch.3.12; 4.16.1; 10.6;13. 1. Jos. 24.31.2 Ch.24.17,18.

3 Or, *were corrupt.*

y ch.3.8; 6. 13; 10. 7 De.32.22; 29.20; 31. 17; 7.4;6.15. Jos. 23. 16. Is. 5.25. Je. 15. 14; 17.4. 2 Ki.17.18.2 Ch. 12.5.

z ver. 3. Ps. 81. 11. Eze.20.24–26. ch. 3. 3. Pr.1.31. Je. 2. 17, 19; 4. 18;5.25;6.19.

a ch.3.1,4. Ge. 22. 1. De.13.3.Jos.23.13.

b Or, *suffered*, ver. 3,21;ch.4.2,3.

CHAP. III.

a Jn.2.24. ver.4; ch. 2.22.De.8.2;13.3.

b ch. 2. 10. Jos. vi.–xii.

c Ps.81.13; 44.13; 59. 11.Jos.23.13.

1 The whole parenthesis is explanatory, and may be paraphrased as follows; —'All the people of Israel who had not taken part in the conquest of Canaan, in order that the generations which followed Joshua might be taught what war is, seeing they had not witnessed or engaged in it previously.'—*P.*

16 ¶ Nevertheless the LORD [q]raised up judges,[7] which delivered[8] them out of the hand of those that spoiled them.

17 And [r]yet they would not hearken unto their judges, but they went a whoring[9] after other gods, and bowed themselves unto them; they turned quickly out of the [s]way which their fathers walked in, obeying the commandments of the LORD; *but* they did not so.

18 And when the LORD raised them up judges, then the LORD [t]was with the judge, and delivered them out of the hand of their enemies all the days of the judge: for it [u]repented[1] the LORD because of their groanings, by reason of them that oppressed them, and vexed them.

19 And it came to pass, when [x]the judge was dead, *that* they returned, and [3]corrupted *themselves* more than their fathers, in following other gods, to serve them, and to bow down unto them; they ceased not from their own doings, nor from their stubborn way.

20 ¶ And [y]the anger of the LORD was hot against Israel; and he said, Because that this people hath transgressed my covenant which I commanded their fathers, and have not hearkened unto my voice,

21 I also [z]will not henceforth drive out any from before them of the nations which Joshua left when he died;

22 That [a]through them I may prove Israel, whether they will keep the way of the LORD, to walk therein, as their fathers did keep *it*, or not.

23 Therefore the LORD [b]left those nations, without driving them out hastily; neither delivered he them into the hand of Joshua.

CHAPTER III.

1 *The nations which were left to prove Israel.* 5 *By communion with them they commit idolatry.* 8 *Othniel delivereth them from Chushan-rishathaim.* 12 *Ehud from Eglon.* 31 *Shamgar from the Philistines.*

NOW these *are* the nations which the LORD left to [a]prove Israel by them; (*even* as many *of Israel* as had [b]not known all the wars of Canaan;

2 Only that the generations of the children of Israel might [c]know to teach them war, at the least such as before knew nothing thereof;[1])

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our fully entering into the rest and peace of the gospel, and are causes of daily disquietude and anxiety. But in following bad examples things readily go on to worse and worse. And yet how great is the goodness of God —instead of casting off his chosen people, he multiplies his pardons and mercies to them.

CHAPTER II. [Ver. 1. *An angel of the Lord came up from Gilgal to Bochim.* Having first appeared in Gilgal, as the *star* of our Lord first appeared in the east, the angel came to the place of a general assembly of the nation then met, which place received thence the name of *Bochim*, or *weepers*, as a memorial of the miraculous appearance. This angel was Jehovah, 'the Son of God,' 'God manifest,' as appears from comparing Ge. 24. 7; 26. 3 with the oath recorded in this verse, and again repeated, He. 6. 13. *C.*]

Ver. 10. [*Which knew not the Lord.* The rapid change to idolatry would appear, if not incredible, at least peculiar, to hard-hearted and stiff-necked Israel, were not the experience of all ages in perfect accordance with the inspired narrative. The reformations under David, Josiah, Hezekiah, and Ezra lasted little beyond the lives of their promoters. The greater reformation under our Lord scarcely outlived the days of the apostles. Nay, while an apostle lived to write, there were those who had forgotten their first love. The glorious reformation of the sixteenth century ceased to grow even during the lives of the reformers; and the various revivals since bestowed in different parts of the churches have seldom continued even during the generation that has experienced them. —*Note*, The word of God requires no confirmation beyond its own authority; yet, that men may be without excuse, all historical record and universal experience confirm it by their perfect concurrence. *C.*——They knew not Jehovah, as their fathers had known him, by the miraculous displays of power and mercy cognizable by the senses. The great body of the Israelites appear to have been incapable of studying or apprehending abstract truth. They could form no conception of a spiritual God. They were a sensual people. They required something visible and tangible in their worship. Hence the tendency of the national mind to idolatry. *P.*]

REFLECTIONS.—Inexcusable are the sins of such as enjoy the oracles of God: and it is but madness and self-deceiving to expect advantage from friendship with the enemies of God around us, or our own corruptions within us! for in offending God by one sin, we provoke him to give us up to a greater, with the misery which attends it. And none know how brutish in sin they may become if once given up to their hearts' lusts; nor what plagues and misery they may meet with in

THE TEMPLE OF PAN—NEAR WHERE THE TRANSFIGURATION ON MOUNT HERMON TOOK PLACE. [JUDGES, ii: 12]—"And they forsook the Lord God of their fathers, which brought them out of the land of Egypt, and followed other gods, of the gods of the people that were round about them, and bowed themselves unto them, and provoked the Lord to anger." The temple of Pan, or what remains of it at Cæsarea Philippi, is hewn out of a part of Mount Hermon. There are arched niches chiseled into the sides of the foot of the mountain here about which there are Greek letters indicating that the temple was dedicated to the rustic god Pan. Cæsarea Philippi was but a little distance from Dan, which formed the extreme limit of the Holy Land, and so the god worshiped here was one of the gods of the people that were round about Israel. Here are streams, wild woods, goats, and mountains, and all things in nature which seem to be friendly to the genius of the heathen god, Pan.

A.M. 2574 or 2584. B.C. 1430 or 1420.

3 *Namely,* [a]five lords of the Philistines, and all the [c]Canaanites, and the Sidonians,[2] and the Hivites[f] that dwelt in mount Lebanon, from mount Baal-hermon unto the entering in of Hamath.

4 And they were [g]to prove Israel by them, to know whether they would hearken unto the commandments of the LORD, which he commanded their fathers by the hand of Moses.

5 ¶ And the children of Israel [h]dwelt among the Canaanites, Hittites, and Amorites, and Perizzites, and Hivites, and Jebusites:

6 And they [i]took their daughters to be their wives, and gave their daughters to their sons, and served their gods.

7 And the children of [k]Israel did evil in the sight of the LORD, and forgat the LORD their God, and served Baalim and the groves.[3]

8 ¶ Therefore [l]the anger of the LORD was hot against Israel, and he sold them into the hand of Chushan-rishathaim king of [m]Mesopotamia: and the children of Israel served Chushan-rishathaim eight years.

9 And [n]when the children of Israel cried unto the LORD, the LORD raised up a deliverer[4] to the children of Israel, who delivered them, *even* [o]Othniel the son of Kenaz, Caleb's younger brother.[5]

10 And the [p]Spirit of the LORD came upon him, and he judged Israel, and went out to war: and the LORD delivered Chushan-rishathaim king of Mesopotamia into his hand; and his hand prevailed against Chushan-rishathaim.

11 And the land [q]had rest forty years:[6] and Othniel the son of Kenaz died.

12 ¶ And the children of Israel [r]did evil again in the sight of the LORD: and the LORD

[a] ch.6.34;11.29;13.25;14.6.1 Sa.10.6;16.13.2 Ch.20.14.Nu.27.18.Mi.7.8. [q] Jos.11.23.Es. 9.22,30.ch.5.31,8.28. [r] ch.2.11,17,19.Ps.78.32.Ho.6.4.

A.M. 2627 or 2629. B.C. 1377 or 1375.

strengthened [s]Eglon the king of Moab against Israel, because they had done evil in the sight of the LORD.

13 And he gathered unto him the children of Ammon and Amalek, and went and smote Israel, and possessed [t]the city of palm-trees.

14 So[u] the children of Israel served Eglon the king of Moab eighteen years.

15 But when the children of Israel [x]cried unto the LORD, the LORD raised them up a deliverer, Ehud the son of Gera, a [7]Benjamite, a man [y]left-handed:[8] and by him the children of Israel [z]sent a present unto Eglon the king of Moab.

16 But Ehud made him a dagger which had [a]two edges, of a cubit length; and he did gird it under his raiment upon his right thigh.

17 And he brought the present[9] unto Eglon king of Moab: and Eglon *was* a very fat man.

18 And when he had made an end to offer the present, he sent away the people that bare the present.

19 But he himself turned again from the [b]quarries that *were* by Gilgal,[1] and said, I have a secret errand unto thee, O king: who said, Keep silence. And all that stood by him went out from him.

20 And Ehud came unto him; and he was sitting in a [c]summer parlour, which he had for himself[2] alone: and Ehud said, I have a [d]message from God unto thee. And he [e]arose out of *his* seat.

21 And Ehud put forth his left hand, and took the dagger from his right thigh, and [f]thrust it into his belly.

22 And the haft also went in after the blade; and the fat closed upon the blade, so

[a] Jos.13.3, 1 Sa. iv.; 6.17;xiii.xxxi. ch. 16.5, 8,23;10.7;12.13.
[c] Nu. 13. 29. Ge. 10. 15.
[2] It has been already stated (see note on Jos. 19. 30) that most probably Sidon was not included in the grant to Asher, and the mention of the Sidonians here wil not militate against that opinion, as they might readily send colonies to occupy the territory allotted to the tribes.—*C.*
[f] De.1.7;3.9. Jos.11. 3,17;13.5. ch.4.2. Nu. 34.8.Eze.47.16,17,20.
[g] Ex.15.25. De. 8. 2; 13.3; 33. 8. 1 Co. 11. 19. ver.1;ch.2 22.
[h] Ps.106. 34–38; 120. 5. ch. 1. 29–32. 2. 3, 21, 23. Ge.15. 18–21. Ex. 3. 8;34.11. De.7.1.
[i] Ex. 34. 16. De. 7. 3. 1 Ki.11.1,5, Eze.16.3.
[k] ver.12,13;ch.4.1;6. 1;2.11–13. Je.2.32. De. 16.21; 31. 17, 18, 29; 32. 15–21. Ex.34.13.
[3] The Hebrew word translated 'the groves' is *Asheroth.* Some of the ancient versions, as the Latin, render it *Astaroth.* In the Mishna it is explained as 'a tree that is worshipped,' *i.e.* a wooden image. According to Movers the original meaning of *Ashurah* (in the sing.) is 'upright;' then a 'pillar;' then 'a female divinity of the Canaanites worshipped under the image of an upright pillar,' often as the partner of Baal. This latter I take to be the true meaning here. The word, therefore, must be regarded as a proper name.—*P.*
[l] ch.2.14, 20. De. 28. 47,48.
[m] Heb. *Aram-naharaim,* Ps. 60. title. Ac.7.2.
[n] Ps. 78. 34–37; 106. 44;50.15. Le. 26. 40–44. De.4.30,31. ch.4.3;6.6; 10.10, 12, 13; 2. 16; ver. 15. Je. 22. 23. 1 Sa.12. 10.
[4] Heb. *saviour.*
[o] Jos.15.17. ch.1. 13. 1 Ch. 4.13.
[5] The same who conquered Debir, slew or expelled the Anakim, and got as his reward the hand of Achsah, Caleb's daughter.—*P.*
[6] About 1377 or 1375.—Whether the rests under Othniel, Ehud, Barak, and Gideon included the years of the preceding calamities, or whether, after Jair, the judges were contemporary, is uncertain, and therefore dates correspondent to both are marked.
[s] 1 Sa.12.9. Jn.19.11. Ps.14 .2. De.32. 30.
[t] De.34.3.ch.1.16.
[u] Le. 26. 23–25. De. 28.47,48.
[x] Ps. 50. 15; 106. 44. ver.9.
[7] Or, *the son of Jemini.*
[y] Heb. *shut of his right hand,* ch.20.16, 47.1 Ch.12.2.
[8] Benjamin signifies 'son of the right hand,' which may, by some now unknown association, have led the Benjamites to their peculiar cultivation, so to speak, of the left hand. See ch. 20. 16. Such ambidexterity is not common, but is easily acquired in youth, and by a vigorous resolution may at later periods be attained. Well instructed surgeons frequently possess it in great perfection, and some 'deputies,' by injury of the use of the right hand, have in a short time learned to write and to paint in the most beautiful manner with the left, so bountiful is Providence in the bodily capacities of men, so many the facilities for compensating every loss.—*C.*
[z] Pr.21.14; 18.16; 19. 6.
[a] Ps.149.6. Re. 1.16; 2.12.
[9] Not *a* present, but *the* present—therefore the annual or occasional tribute.
[b] Or, *graven images,* Jos. 4. 20. It seems they worshipped the twelve stones erected there.
[1] We hear no other word of quarries in Gilgal. The word is translated 'images,' De. 7. 25, and should be so here, as it accounts in some degree for the resolution of Ehud, his anger being excited by the view of the Moabitish idols.—*C.*
[c] Heb. *a parlour of cooling,* Am.3.15.
[2] 1359 or 1355.
[d] Mi.6.9. Am.1.2.
[e] Ps.29.1.1 Th.2.13.
[f] Nu.25.7,8. 1 Sa.15. 33. Job 20.25. Zec.13.3; 2.7.

their course. What pains God uses to check his people's sinful rebellion against him or revolting from him! And deep are the impressions of his rebukes when effectually blessed. But even then not our tears, however sincere and penitential, but the atoning sacrifice of Jesus Christ, can make us pure from our iniquity. Faithful ministers and magistrates are a beneficial restraint upon nations and churches; yet we may commonly observe that the power and life of religion rarely flourish in a place for more than one generation at a time. And it is an awful sign to this effect when young ones grow up in ignorance and forgetfulness of God and his mighty works. But how infinite the extent of God's mercy and patience! he bears with, and even pardons and delivers, transgressors in the moment of their greatest extremity, and calls and blesses instruments for that end. But, Lord, what are men! they often become more hardened under such mercies and judgments—at the hazard of provoking thee to the uttermost, they return again and again to the very abomination for which they had formerly smarted! No wonder then that they are given up to uncommon rage of lusts or of lasting punishment.

CHAPTER III. [Ver. 1. *The nations which the Lord left to prove Israel. To prove,* not to discover anything in them unknown to God, 'for he knows what is in man;' but to disclose to themselves their wickedness by the judgments that righteously followed it; and to display to other nations and churches, as well as to Israel, the nature of that moral government which God exercises over all. God also intended to prove—to demonstrate—the power of faith, that is, the believing reception of God's word, and a firm reliance upon his truth, mercy, and power; and thereby to bear witness to a faithless generation that 'God's arm was not shortened that it could not save,' seeing the arm of man, when nerved by faith, was instrumentally sufficient for their deliverance.—*Note,* The faith of these judges and their true followers was faith in Christ the promised deliverer, whose 'day they saw afar off and were glad.' *C.*]

Ver. 2. [*Teach them war.* Not to teach them war as an employment, but to let them feel it as a judgment; and only a duty when in self-defence or the commanded punishment of abandoned criminals. *C.*]

Ver. 3. [The 'five lords of the Philistines' resided in the five capital cities, Gaza, Ascalon, Ashdod, Gath, and Ekron. The Canaanites and Sidonians included the inhabitants of Lebanon and Phœnicia; the Hivites were the inhabitants of Anti-Lebanon, which extended from Hermon on the south to the entering in of Hamath on the north. Hermon had a noted sanctuary of Baal on its summit, and many others round its sides: hence it is called Baal-hermon. *P.*]

Ver. 7. [*Served Baalim and the groves.* How any one could worship Baal, and in the same sense worship a *grove,* is scarcely intelligible. The Hebrew word, however, translated 'groves,' signifies, according to the high authority of Castel, 'a wooden image dedicated to Astarte or Venus.' The word employed by the Septuagint to translate the Hebrew, Theodoret explains by *Astarte, Venus,* or *Ashtaroth.* A clear proof of this interpretation occurs **2 Ki. 23. 6,** where it is recorded that 'Josiah brought out the groves from the house of the Lord.' Now a grove could not have grown in the house; the word must therefore signify an image for idolatrous worship. *C.*]

Ver. 8. [*Mesopotamia* is in Hebrew *Aram-naharaim, i.e.* 'Aram between the two rivers,' the Euphrates and Tigris. The king Chushan-rishathaim is not elsewhere mentioned; but it has been thought he is identical with the Assyrian monarch *Asshur-ris-ilim,* who conquered Southern Syria and Palestine, and who is called on Assyrian monuments 'the powerful king, the subduer of rebellious countries, he who has reduced all the accursed' (see Rawlinson's *Ancient Monarchies,* ii. 308). *P.*]

Ver. 9. [*Caleb's younger brother.* Family descent is neither proudly and foolishly to be overvalued, nor as proudly or foolishly despised. God gives many promises in family descent—he assigns his largest encouragements to family education—he delights to be called 'the God of our fathers;' and here the first deliverer illustrates the importance of family character, hereditary honour, courage, and piety. *C.*]

Ver. 13. [*City of palm-trees.* Whether this city was *Jericho* or *Engedi,* which lay near to each other, is matter of question. Brown Patterson, in his judicious notes, says it was Jericho, or a city erected by the Moabites on its site, but gives no authority, and in this opinion he is joined by the annotator in the *Pictorial Bible.* Syme in his *Geography* identifies Hazezontamar, the city of palm-trees, with Engedi. That it was not Jericho appears more than probable from consulting **ch. 1. 16;** for Jericho having been utterly de-

that he could not draw the dagger out of his belly; and the dirt came out.[3]

23 Then [g]Ehud went forth through the porch, and shut the doors of the parlour upon him, and locked them.[4]

24 When he was gone out, his servants came; and when they saw that, behold, the doors of the parlour *were* locked, they said, Surely he covereth[h] his feet in his summer chamber.

25 And they tarried till they were ashamed: and, behold, he opened not the doors of the parlour; therefore they took a key, and opened *them:* and, behold, their lord *was* fallen down dead on the earth.

26 And Ehud escaped while they tarried, and passed beyond the quarries, and escaped unto Seirath.

27 And it came to pass, when he was come, that he [i]blew a trumpet in [k]the mountain of Ephraim, and the children of Israel went down with him from the mount, and he before them.

28 And he said unto them, [l]Follow after me; for the LORD hath delivered[5] your enemies the Moabites into your hand. And they went down after him, and took the [m]fords of Jordan toward Moab, and suffered not a man to pass over.

29 ¶ And they slew of Moab at that time about ten thousand men, all [n]lusty, and all men of valour; and there escaped not a man.

30 So Moab was subdued that day under the hand of Israel. [o]And the land had rest fourscore years.

31 ¶ And after him was [p]Shamgar the son of Anath, which slew of the Philistines six hundred men with an ox-goad: and he also delivered Israel.

A.M. 2645 or 2649.
B.C. 1359 or 1355.

3 Or, *it came out at the fundament.*

g Mat. 10. 16. Ec. 9. 10. Zec. 2. 7.

4 The Scriptures having given principles for judgment and conduct, do not generally comment upon actions either with praise or blame, but leave men to judge and act by the principles already furnished. Their silence, therefore, is not to be interpreted into an approval of the mode by which Ehud delivered Israel. The death of Eglon may have been well deserved, but the manner, so far as we can judge from the narrative, is not to be defended. Indeed we are no more called upon to vindicate all the acts of Ehud than all the acts of Samson. God can work perfectly by imperfect instruments, else in a world like ours what could be effected?—*C.*

h Or, *easeth nature,* 1 Sa. 24. 3.

i ch. 6. 34. 2 Sa. 20. 22. Nu. 10. 3.

k Jos. 15. 9; 17. 15, 18; 20. 7. ch. 2. 9; 7. 24; 17. 1; 19. 1, 18; 1 Ch. 6. 66. Je. 4. 15; 31. 6; 50. 19.

l ch. 7. 17; 4. 10. 1 Sa. 17. 47; Ps. 115. 1.

5 Those who really believe in an overruling, universal, and therefore particular providence, embracing all events, however great or however minute, which is the only providence and divine government recognized in Scripture, will have no difficulty in understanding literally that the Lord delivered their enemies. But this 'delivering of Moab' into the hands of Israel implies no more approbation of the idolatrous propensities and evil practices of Israel than it implied approbation of the idolatry and wickedness of Moab when the Lord delivered Israel into their hands.—*C.*

m Jos. 2. 7. ch. 7. 24; 12. 5.

n Heb. *fat.* Ps. 17. 10; 22. 29; 119. 70. De. 32. 15. Job 15. 27.

o See note on ver. 11.

p ch. 2. 16, 18; 15. 15. 1 Co. 1. 27.

A.M. 2725 or 2711.
B.C. 1279 or 1293.

CHAP. IV.

a ch. 2. 19, 20. Le. 26. 23-25. Je. 5. 3.

b ch. 2. 14, 15; 10. 7. Is. 50. 1. 1 Sa. 12. 9. Ps. 44. 12. De. 32. 30.

c Jos. 11. 1, 10; 19. 36.

d ver. 13.

e Jos. 12. 23, *i.e.* nations of Gilgal.

f ch. 3. 9, 15; 10. 16; 6. 6. Ps. 78. 34-37. Je. 22. 23. 1 Sa. 12. 10.

g Jos. 17. 16. De. 28. 33, 47, 48.

h 1 Co. 1. 27. Ga. 3. 28. Col. 3. 11.

1 The Scriptures nowhere condescend to assert or defend woman's moral dignity or equality with man. This great end they attain much more effectually than by a mere metaphysical inquiry or logical controversy. They give the history of woman; and in that history record her spiritual endowments and official dignities, as immediately conferred by the hand of God.—*Note,* Facts are always the simplest and most effectual arguments.—*C.*

i Ge. 35. 8. Jos. 16. 2; 18. 22, 25.

2 Ramah was five miles north of Jerusalem, and Bethel ten; the palm-tree of Deborah must therefore have been close to Beeroth, which lies about half-way between those two cities. Mount Ephraim was the general name for the whole range extending from Jerusalem to the plain of Esdraelon.—*P.*

3 Cir. 1259 or 1273.

k He. 11. 32. ch. 5. 1, 12, 15.

l Jos. 19. 32, 37; 21. 32. ver. 9, 10.

m De. 4. 1, 2; 12. 32. ch. 2. 16.

n Jos. 19. 12, 22, 34. ch. 8. 18. 1 Sa. 10. 2. Ps. 89. 12. Je. 46. 18. Ho. 5. 1.

4 See note on Jos. 10. 22.—*C.*

o ch. 5. 14-18.

p ch. 1. 3. Jos. 11. 20. Ex. 14. 4. Mat. 6. 13. Ps. 115. 1. Pr. 21. 30, 31.

q ch. 5. 21. Ps. 83. 9, 10. 1 Ki. 18. 40.

r Ex. 4. 10, 11. Mat. 14. 30, 31. Mar. 5. 36.

s Ps. 99. 8; 89. 31-33.

CHAPTER IV.

1 *Deborah and Barak deliver Israel from Jabin and Sisera.* 18 *Jael killeth Sisera.*

AND the children of Israel [a]again did evil in the sight of the LORD, when Ehud was dead.

2 And the LORD [b]sold them into the hand of Jabin king of Canaan, that reigned in [c]Hazor; the captain of whose host *was* Sisera, which dwelt in [d]Harosheth of [e]the Gentiles.

3 And the children of Israel [f]cried unto the LORD; for he had nine hundred [g]chariots of iron; and twenty years he mightily oppressed the children of Israel.

4 ¶ And [h]Deborah, a prophetess, the wife of Lapidoth, she judged Israel at that time.[1]

5 And she dwelt under [i]the palm-tree of Deborah, between Ramah and Beth-el in mount Ephraim;[2] and the children of Israel came up to her for judgment.[3]

6 And she sent and called [k]Barak the son of Abinoam out of [l]Kedesh-naphtali, and said unto him, Hath not the [m]LORD God of Israel commanded, *saying,* Go and draw toward [n]mount Tabor,[4] and take with thee [o]ten thousand men of the children of Naphtali, and of the children of Zebulun;

7 And I [p]will draw unto thee, to the [q]river Kishon, Sisera, the captain of Jabin's army, with his chariots and his multitude; and I will deliver him into thine hand.

8 And Barak said unto her, [r]If thou wilt go with me, then I will go; but if thou wilt not go with me, *then* I will not go.

9 And she said, I will surely go with thee: [s]notwithstanding the journey that thou takest shall not be for thine honour; for the LORD

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stroyed, and its re-erection denounced, it can scarcely be imagined that the Kenites were inhabiting its ruins. *C.*]

Ver. 28. [It appears from the whole tenor of this singular narrative that the Moabites had crossed the Jordan and settled down on the plain of Jericho. The site of the ancient city may have been, and probably was, occupied by a village of huts; and the building of it subsequently by Hiel may refer to its regular fortification as a city. Be this as it may, Eglon had established himself at this place. Gilgal was only a mile or two distant; and the word translated 'quarries' doubtless signifies those stones or pillars which Joshua had set up. After accomplishing the bloody deed Ehud could easily escape. The wild ravines and rugged mountains of Benjamin and Ephraim were only a few miles distant. Taking advantage of the panic he suddenly collected the people of Israel and seized the passes of the Jordan. The Moabites were thus entrapped. Behind them were the mountains filled with an exasperated enemy; in front the Jordan with its difficult fords guarded by armed men. Conquest was thus easy, and the slaughter necessarily great. *P.*]

Ver. 29. [*Ten thousand men.* Moab had the country only by military occupation, not by agricultural or commercial settlements. There is therefore no account but of men—a sure note of the great moral corruption both of the occupying army and the conquered country. *C.*]

Ver. 31. [*Slew of the Philistines six hundred men with an ox-goad.* The Syrian ox-goad of modern times—and from the eastern tenacity of ancient forms, manners, and customs, we may infer of ancient times likewise—is a strong pole of wood, 7 or 8 feet long, with a pointed iron at one end and a broad chisel at the other—the one to goad the oxen, the other to clean the plough—a truly formidable weapon, and perhaps intended for defence in a country where still in many places, as travellers declare, the gun forms a regular appurtenance of the plough. The exploit of Shamgar is extraordinary; an infidel would say incredible. Not so, however, if Scripture language receive the same justice with other history; for we say, a general gained a battle, when we make no mention of the soldiers who alone fought for it, while he never struck a single blow. Shamgar may accordingly have led on a party of Israelites against Moabite marauders, he being armed merely with an ox-goad. Or if any say that the words describe the 600 as actually slain by his own hand, still it is not said that he slew them at once, but may have destroyed so many in successive encounters. *C.*]

REFLECTIONS.—While men are on earth, inward corruptions and outward enemies will be still left, to prove their steadfastness or exercise their graces. One of the most dangerous snares is an irreligious partner in marriage, which is ruinous in its consequences, as it opens a wide inlet to every abomination, and generally leads to forgetfulness of God. But God can easily find instruments to punish us, far or near, even among our own relations. And yet how light, especially at first, are his strokes of justice in comparison of what our iniquities deserve! God also can easily find and qualify instruments for the deliverance of his people: and ordinarily he employs such as have been most courageous and faithful in his work, or such as seem naturally most unfit for it. But if we, after deliverances, return to our own sins, we may expect that God will return to judgment: and if lighter corrections have been ineffectual, God will make them longer and heavier. Nor is any instrument so despicable but he can make it the rod of his anger. Wicked men, kings not excepted, are often fattened up to their own shame and destruction, and find their message from God in a ruinous stroke of his wrath. But easy work is the ruin of the strongest enemies when we are called, directed, and assisted by God!

CHAPTER IV. [Ver. 2. *That reigned in Hazor.* Reconquered and rebuilt by the Canaanites, after being burned by Joshua, Jos. 11. 13. Such revolutions are common in war, and indicate no contradiction in the history. Its restoration is not recorded, simply because the author writes not the general history of Jabin, but of Israel, and notices only so much of Jabin as is necessary to illustrate the religious defection and political troubles of Israel.—*Harosheth of the Gentiles.* A city of northern Galilee, long retained by the Canaanites, and has the distinctive appellation 'of the Gentiles,' as most probably there was another city of the same name within the possession of the tribes. *C.*]

Ver. 7. [Mount Tabor stands on the northern side of the great plain of Esdraelon. It is almost isolated, being connected only by a low wooded ridge with the mountains of Galilee on the west. In form, as seen from the south, it is a segment of a sphere, and is thinly covered with evergreen oaks. It is one of the most graceful hills in Palestine. It has an elevation of 1900 ft.; and its summit is covered with the ramparts and ruins of an ancient city. The highest sources of the Kishon are at the southern base of Tabor, but they are winter torrents. The river winds westward through the great plain. Its banks are composed of rich alluvial

A.M. 2725 or 2711.
B.C. 1279 or 1293.

shall[t] sell Sisera into the hand of a woman. And Deborah arose, and went with Barak to Kedesh.[u]

10 ¶ And Barak called [x]Zebulun and Naphtali to Kedesh; and he went up with ten thousand men at [y]his feet: and Deborah went up with him.

11 Now [z]Heber the Kenite, *which was* of the children of Hobab, the father-in-law[5] of Moses, had severed himself from the Kenites, and pitched his tent unto the [a]plain of Zaanaim, which *is* by Kedesh.[6]

12 And they showed Sisera that Barak the son of Abinoam was gone up to [b]mount Tabor.

13 And Sisera gathered[7] together all his chariots, *even* nine hundred chariots of iron,[8] and all the people that *were* with him, from Harosheth[c] of the Gentiles, unto the river of Kishon.[d]

14 And Deborah said unto Barak, Up; for this *is* the day in which the LORD hath delivered Sisera into thine hand: [e]is not the LORD gone out before thee? So Barak went down from mount Tabor, and ten thousand men after him.[9]

15 And [f]the LORD discomfited Sisera, and all *his* chariots, and all *his* host, with the edge of the sword, before Barak; so that Sisera lighted down off *his* chariot, and fled away on his feet.

16 But Barak [g]pursued after the chariots, and after the host, unto Harosheth of the Gentiles: and all the host of Sisera fell upon the edge of the sword; *and* there was not a man[1] left.

17 ¶ Howbeit Sisera [h]fled away on his feet to the tent of Jael the wife of Heber the Kenite: for *there was* peace between [i]Jabin the king of Hazor and the house of Heber the Kenite.

18 And Jael went out to meet Sisera, and said unto him, Turn in, my lord, turn in to me; fear not. And when he had turned in unto her into the tent,[2] she covered him with a mantle.[3]

19 And he said unto her, [k]Give me, I pray thee, a little water to drink;[4] for I am thirsty. And she opened a bottle of milk, and gave him drink, and covered him.

20 Again he said unto her, Stand in the door of the tent; and it shall be, when any man doth come and inquire of thee, and say, Is there any man here? that thou shalt say, No.

21 Then Jael, Heber's wife, took a [l]nail of the tent,[5] and took[6] an hammer in her [7]hand, and went softly unto him, and smote the nail into his temples, and fastened it into the ground: (for he was fast asleep and weary:) so he died.

22 And, behold, as Barak pursued Sisera, Jael came out to meet him, and said unto him, Come, and I will show thee the man whom thou seekest. And when he came into her *tent*, behold, Sisera lay dead, and the nail *was* in his temples.

23 ¶ So [m]God subdued on that day Jabin the king of Canaan before the children of Israel.

24 And the hand of the children of Israel [n]prospered, and prevailed against Jabin the king of Canaan, until they had destroyed Jabin king of Canaan.

CHAPTER V.

The song of Deborah and Barak.

A.M. 2745 or 2731.
B.C. 1259 or 1273.

THEN [a]sang Deborah, and Barak the son of Abinoam, on that day, saying,

2 Praise[b] ye the LORD for the avenging of Israel, when the people [c]willingly offered themselves.

3 Hear, [d]O ye kings; give ear, O ye princes: [e]I, *even* I, will sing unto the LORD; I will sing *praise* to the LORD God of Israel.

4 LORD, [f]when thou wentest out of Seir, when thou marchedst out of the field of Edom, the earth trembled, and the heavens dropped, the clouds also dropped water.

5 The[g] mountains melted[1] from before the LORD, *even* that Sinai from before the LORD God of Israel.

6 In the days of [h]Shamgar the son of Anath, in the days of Jael, the highways were unoccupied, and the travellers[2] walked through byways.[3]

7 *The inhabitants of* [i]the villages ceased,[4] they

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t ch.2.14;ver.17–22.
u ver.6,10,11.
x ver.9;ch.5.18.
y ch.4.20.Ex.11.8.
z ch.1.16. Nu.24.21; 10.29.Ex.2.18;3.1;18.1.
a This has been supposed to contradict Ex. 18. 1, where the father-in-law of Moses is called Jethro; but why might he not, as was and is still common, be known by two names? The fact is mentioned to account for the presence of the Kenites in such an unexpected place.—*C.*
b Jos.19.33,37.
c The Kenites, as has been seen (note, ch. 1. 16), settled first in the south of Judah, near Arad. But they were nomads, and a section of them, attracted doubtless by the excellence of the pasture, wandered northward, and encamped on the rich upland plain beside Kedesh. The word translated 'plain' is properly 'oak;' and the 'oak of Zaanaim' was probably some noted tree, perhaps a patriarch in a sacred grove, beneath or around which nomad shepherds of those days used to pitch their tents, as Abraham pitched his by the oak of Mamre. There are still some fine groves of oaks on the plains around Kedesh.—*P.*
b Ps.89.12. Jos.19.12, 22,34. Je.46.18. ver.6, 14.
7 Heb. *gathered by cry* or *proclamation*.
8 Each chariot seems from history and Egyptian sculptures to have contained a driver, a shieldman, and a javeliner.—*C.*
c ver.2.
d ver.7.
e Is.52.12; 22.23; 41.10,15,16. Ro.8.31.ch.5.20,21.2Sa.5.24.
9 About 1259 or 1273.
f Ps.83.9,10. Jos.10.10,11. ch.5.20,21. 2Ki.7.6.2Ch.13.15–17.
g Le.26.7,8. Jos.10.19,20; 11.8. Ps.104.35. Ro.2.12. Ja.2.13. Je.48.10.
1 Heb. *unto one.*
h Ps.107.40. Job 12.20;18.7–12;40.11,12.
i ver.2,11.
2 The Kenites were Arabians, still dwelling in tents, and as such, in the absence of the husband, it was the duty of the wife to practise that hospitality for which the various branches, even the wildest, of the Arab race are still distinguished.—*C.*
3 Or *rug* or *blanket.*
k ch.5.25.Je.35.8.
4 This request proceeded most probably as much from policy as from necessity; for having once received food or drink from an entertainer, the guest was privileged, by the Arab code of honour, to consider himself perfectly sure of protection.—*C.*

l ch.3.21,31; 5.13,20. 1 Sa.17.49. 1 Co.1.27. It seems that Jael at first intended kindness to Sisera; but the Lord directed her to kill him, as an open enemy and murderer of the Israelites.
5 To those who have never examined a tent, it may be useful to state that it consists of a pole fastened in the ground —or more than one, if the tent be large —that to the top of the pole several cords are fixed, and these are tied to pins of wood or iron driven into the ground, slanting outward, at proper distances on each side, and strained tight, either simply by the hand, or by means of a block and pulley to each; and that over these cords a covering is stretched. With one of these pins, and a workman's hammer, the death of Sisera was effected.—*C.*
6 Heb. *put.*
7 The tent-pin, or 'nail,' is a long spike of wood or iron—in this case iron; 'the hammer' is the large mallet with which Arab women are accustomed to drive the tent-pins into the ground when encamping. All Arab women are well accustomed to their use. Jael therefore was able to strike with force and precision.—*P.*
m Ne.9.24.Ps.18.47; 83.9,10.
n Heb. *going, went, and was hard,* De.28.50. Ps.140.8–11. Zec.1.15. 2Ti.3.9. 1 Sa.3.12.

CHAP. V.

a Ex.15.1. 1 Sa.2.1. Lu.1.45–79. Is.xii.xxv. xxvi.Re.19.1,4.
b Ps.48.11;94.1;97.8.
c ver.9. Ps.110.3.
d Ps.2.10–12; 29.1,2. Ec.5.8.
e Ps.34.1,3;78.49;59. 16; 71. 15; 61. 8; 101. 1; 104.33; 108.3; 145.5,21; 146.2.
f De.4.11;33.2. Hab. 3.3. Is.64.3. Nu.20.21; 21.4. Ps.68.8; 28.7–15. Ex.15.14,15.
g Hab.3.10. Ex.19. 18. Ps.97.5;77.17;114.4; 68.8
1 Heb. *showed.*
h ch.3.31; 4.18. Le. 26.22. 2Ch.15.5. La.1. 4.Mi.3.11,12.
2 Heb. *walker of paths.*
3 Heb. *crooked ways.*
i Es.9.19. Je.35.10, 11.
4 As in the case of Jael, so in the case of Sisera, we are unable to ascertain the complete facts of the indictment. What his personal delinquencies may have been, we cannot tell; but there is here a note of his administration of the government, that marks him as a political and military delinquent of the deepest dye.—*C.*

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soil, which the winter torrents and heavy rains of autumn and spring convert into impassable morasses. *P.*]

Ver. 15. [*Sisera lighted down off his chariot.* Why not rather keep in the chariot, and trust to the swiftness of the horses? Partly to avoid notice of himself, by drawing away the pursuers after the chariot, as actually took place; partly, perhaps, to get into broken ground or underwood, so as to escape detection; partly to make his way to the nearest friendly tribe, who had actually informed of Barak's levies on Tabor, ver. 12. *C.*]

Ver. 20. [*Thou shalt say, No.* That the modern Arab code of honour must have thus early been recognized, is evident from the fact, that Sisera goes confidently to sleep in the tent, with no defence but Jael's implied denial of his concealment. He was fully aware that no one dared to violate the privacy of the tent in search of Sisera. The crime would have been considered inexpiable. Nay, even if certain he was concealed within, it is questionable whether any one acquainted with Arabian law would have ventured to enter. *C.*]

Ver. 22. [*Sisera lay dead, and the nail was in his temples.* Do the Scriptures sanction the breach of implied and conventional honour, or the practice of assassination, either for private or political crimes? We answer, They sanction neither; they denounce both. How then are we to defend the conduct of Jael? The answer is easy. We feel tied to no such defence. The candid student of the Bible is referred, for the general principle of Scripture in such cases, to the note on ch. 3. 23. And it may be proper to add, that when the Scriptures neither pause to condemn nor to justify, but merely to state the facts, we must now be utterly incompetent to pronounce anything but a conditional verdict, whether of guilt or acquittal, inasmuch as we are totally ignorant of many of the concurrent circumstances under which the event took place. *C.*]

REFLECTIONS. — Long-continued peace and prosperity are often made the occasion of great wickedness, which issues in heavier and sharper punishments than any formerly met with. But a merciful God readily hears the cries of his people under the distress which they have provoked him to lay upon them: and in his work of deliverance there is neither male nor female, but he himself is ALL and IN ALL! Such as through unbelief are too eagerly desirous of human help or encouragement, are often punished with the loss of part of that honour which they might otherwise have had. But fearful, irresistible, and unavoidable is the ruin which proud sinners shall meet with when and where they expected nothing but safety, victory, and triumph. When God attacks there is no standing: when he pursues there is no escaping: when he begins he will also make an end: but such as trust in him shall never be disappointed. They who go forth in faith shall return victorious. Even the weak things of the world shall confound the mighty. And happy is it for us even when dear-bought experience animates

PLOWING IN THE PLAINS OF JEZREEL—WHERE GIDEON MET THE MIDIANITES. [JUDGES, iv: 13-16.]—The valley of Jezreel is the great battlefield of Syria. Here Deborah and Barak routed the hosts of Jabin under Sisera. Here also on the southern edge of the plain near, Josiah, King of Judah, was defeated and slain by Pharaoh Necho, King of Egypt, while on his way to the Euphrates. Here Gideon fought with the Midianites. Here the Philistines encamped in their conflict with Saul. Here Saladin met the crusaders, and here in 1799 the famous battle of Mount Tabor was fought between Napoleon's army and the Turks. We are looking in the above picture toward the Mediterranean and Mount Carmel. When the people you see plowing were asked to stop long enough to let us take their picture, they promised to do so on condition of receiving backsheesh, and for this favor they thought a shilling the proper compensation.

ceased in Israel, until that I Deborah arose, that I arose a [k]mother in Israel.

8 They [l]chose new gods; then *was* war in the gates: was [m]there a shield or spear seen among forty thousand in Israel?

9 My heart *is* toward the governors of Israel, that offered themselves willingly among the people. Bless ye the LORD.

10 Speak,[6] ye[n] that ride on white asses, ye that sit in judgment, and walk by the way.[7]

11 *They that are delivered* from [o]the noise of archers in the places of drawing water,[8] there shall they rehearse the [p]righteous acts of the LORD, *even* the righteous acts *toward the inhabitants* of his villages in Israel: then shall the people of the LORD [q]go down to the gates.[9]

12 Awake,[r] awake, Deborah; awake, awake; utter a song: arise, Barak, and [s]lead thy captivity captive,[1] thou son of Abinoam.

13 Then [t]he made him that remaineth[2] have dominion over the nobles among the people: the LORD made me have dominion over the mighty.

14 Out[u] of Ephraim *was there* a root[3] of them against Amalek; [x]after thee, Benjamin, among thy people: out of [y]Machir came down governors, and out of Zebulun they that handle the pen[4] of the writer.

15 And the [z]princes of Issachar *were* with Deborah; even Issachar, and also Barak: he was sent on foot[5] into the valley. [a]For the divisions of Reuben *there were* great [b]thoughts of heart.[6]

16 Why abodest thou [c]among the sheepfolds, to hear the bleatings of the flocks? For[7] the divisions of Reuben *there were* great searchings of heart.

17 Gilead abode beyond Jordan: and why did Dan remain in ships?[8] Asher continued on the sea-shore, and abode in his breaches.[9]

18 Zebulun[d] and Naphtali *were* a people *that* [e]jeoparded[1] their lives unto the death in [f]the high places of the field.

19 The [g]kings came *and* fought; then fought

A.M. 2745 or 2731.
B.C. 1259 or 1273.

k ch.4.4,6.Is.49.23.
l ch.2.12; xvii.xviii. De.32.16,21.
m 1 Sa.13.19,22.Le. 26.36.Jo 20 21,.5.
6 Or, *meditate.*
n Nobles, ch. 10. 4; 12.14. Ps.107.32; 145.5, 12.
7 Nobles who ride, judges on the bench, and commoners on foot, tell each of the oppression that spared neither rank.—*C.*
o La.5.4,9.1 Sa.9.11. Ge. 24. 11. The soldiers robbing people of their water.
8 Travellers in dry climates are required to pass by the watering places, and there the Moabite archer waited to rob and destroy.—*C.*
p Heb. *righteousnesses of the LORD,* 1 Sa. 12.7. Mi.6.5. Is. 63.7.
q ch.4.16.Is.28.6.
9 Oppression had driven the people from the defenceless villages to mountain recesses, now they may visit the city gates in safety.—*C.*
r Ps. 57. 8; 103. 1, 2; 108.2.
s Ps.68.18.Ep.4.8.
1 Lead thy captivators captive.—*C.*
t Ps.149.8,9;49.12,20. Re. 2.26, 27. Is. 41. 15, 16. Eze. 17. 24. 1 Co.1. 26-29.
2 Then made the Lord of Barak, who was a poor relic of an oppressed people, a ruler over the mighty nobility of Moab.—*C.*
u ch.4.5,6. Jos. xvi. xvii.
3 A root concealed in the ground (Deborah, who was of Ephraim), but springing up into a tree of power against Amalek.—*C.*
x ch.4.10,14. These four tribes assisted a little.
y Nu.32.39,40. Jos. 17.1.
4 Heb. *draw with the pen.*
z 1 Ch.12.32.
5 Heb. *his feet.*
a Or, *in the divisions,* &c., Ac.15.39.
b Heb. *impressions,* Pr.22.13. 2 Co. 11.2.
6 Unhappy divisions in council; a people deliberating much, but through party feuds never coming to the aid of their brethren; but consulting an ignominious safety in the sheepfolds — changing the jarring of their divided councils, for the united bleatings of the flocks.—*C.*
c Nu.32.1. Phi.2.21; 3.19. These four tribes gave no assistance.
7 Or, *in.*
8 Or, *port.*
9 Or, *creeks.*
d ch.4.10.
e Re.12.11. Es.4.16. Ac.20.24.1 Jn.3.16.
1 Heb. *exposed to reproach.*
f ch.4.6,12,14.
g Ps.48.4; 118.8-12. Re.17.14;16.16.

A.M. 2731 or 2745.
B.C. 1259 or 1273.

h Jos. 12. 21; 17. 11. Zec.12.11.
2 The indefinite expectation of prizemoney was grievously disappointed.—*C.*
i Ps.77.17,18.Jos.10. 11.1 Sa.7.10.
3 Heb. *paths.*
4 Perhaps the sun, at the commencement of the battle, glaring in the face of Sisera's army, gave the first advantage to Israel; or an eclipse operating upon their superstitious fears, unmanned them—such events have often decided the fate of a battle, and literalized the text. Or, did the battle last till night, and the light of the stars, breaking out after the storm, enable Israel to complete the discomfiture of Sisera and his army?—*C.*
k ch.4.7,13. Ps.83.9, 10.1 Ki.18.40.
5 There was evidently a storm and destructive inundation—an occurrence very destructive in mountainous districts.—*C.*
l ver.13.
m Ps.33.17; 20.7. Pr. 21.31.
6 Or *tramplings,* or *pitchings.*
7 Its place is unknown. It has fallen through indifference to the cause of God, or cowardly fear of enemies, beneath the anathema, not of man, but of the angel of the Lord.—*Note,* Let churches take warning, lest they perish.—*C.*
n ch.2.15;6.11;4.6;13. 3. Jos.5.14. Ex.23.20, 23.Is.63.9.
o Ne.3.5. 1 Sa.17.48. Re.17.14.Je.48.10.
p Ge.14.19. Lu.1.28. Pr.31.31.
8 Renowned above women.—*C.*
q ch.4.19,20.
9 Heb. *she hammered.*
1 'She smote his head, then she struck and pierced through his temples,' which is more agreeable to the original, and consonant to the facts, as it does not appear she struck off his head. —*C.*
2 Heb. *between.*
r Heb. *destroyed,* Ps.52.7. Mat.7.2. Ja.2. 13.
3 Heb. *her words.*
s Ex. 15.9. Job 20.5. The victory and spoil hinder them.
4 Heb. *to the head of a man.*
t Ps.83.9-18;48.4 11; 58.10,11;97.8;92.7,9;68. 1,2.
u Ep.6.24. Ps. 19. 5; 37.6. 2 Sa.23.4. Pr.4.18. Job 17.9. Is.40.31.
x ch.3.11,31. Jos.11. 23. It ended before Christ about 1219 or 1253.

the kings of Canaan in [h]Taanach by the waters of Megiddo; they took no gain of money.[2]

20 They[i] fought from heaven; the stars in their courses[3] fought against Sisera.[4]

21 The[k] river of Kishon swept them [5]away, that ancient river, the river Kishon. [l]O my soul, thou hast trodden down strength.

22 Then[m] were the horse-hoofs broken by the means of the prancings,[6] the prancings of their mighty ones.

23 Curse ye Meroz,[7] (said the [n]angel of the LORD,) curse ye bitterly the inhabitants thereof; because they [o]came not to the help of the LORD, to the help of the LORD against the mighty.

24 [p]Blessed[8] above women shall Jael the wife of Heber the Kenite be; blessed shall she be above women in the tent.

25 He[q] asked water, *and* she gave *him* milk; she brought forth butter in a lordly dish.

26 She put her hand to the nail, and her right hand to the workmen's hammer; and with the hammer[9] she smote Sisera: she smote[1] off his head, when she had pierced and stricken through his temples.

27 At[2] her feet he bowed, he fell, he lay down; at her feet he bowed, he fell: where he bowed, there he fell down [r]dead.

28 The mother of Sisera looked out at a window, and cried through the lattice, Why is his chariot *so* long in coming? why tarry the wheels of his chariots?

29 Her wise ladies answered her, yea, she returned answer[3] to herself,

30 Have[s] they not sped? have they *not* divided the prey? to every man[4] a damsel *or* two; to Sisera a prey of divers colours, a prey of divers colours of needle-work, of divers colours of needle-work on both sides, *meet* for the necks of *them that take* the spoil?

31 So[t] let all thine enemies perish, O LORD: but *let* them [u]that love him *be* as the sun when he goeth forth in his might. And the land had rest [x]forty years.

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us at last to mortify our corruptions, and purge out the Canaanites from the church of Christ.

CHAPTER V. [Ver. 11. The degraded state of fear and servitude to which the whole nation had been reduced, and the desolation which war and tyranny had left behind them, are described with wonderful graphic power in this noble ode:—The highways waste; travellers stealing along by obscure paths; arms all gone; the towns and villages deserted; and the inhabitants seeking an asylum in caves and mountain fastnesses. *P.*]

Ver. 13. [Ver. 13 may be thus rendered:—'Then descended a remnant to (to follow them to battle) the nobles of the nation;—Jehovah descended to me with the heroes.' *P.*]

Ver. 14. ['From Ephraim (came warriors) whose root (whose settlement) is in (the mountain formerly possessed by) Amalek. Behind thee Benjamin among thy peoples.' *P.*——So zealous, they drop the merchant's pen for the soldier's spear. High authorities, for 'pen,' read 'sceptre,' 'rod,' or 'javelin.' The Septuagint, Syriac, and Chaldee translations read 'pen,' which, upon the whole, we are disposed to follow. *C.*]

Ver. 16. [*Great searchings of heart.* God searching the hearts, and showing what was in them, Ps. 139. 23—the thoughtful in Reuben searching why God was contending with them by confounding their counsels.—*Note,* What a lesson to the divided churches! Why divided in doctrine? why divided in love? why in forbearance? why in mutual help—the help of the Lord against the mighty? Shed abroad, O Lord, thy love in the hearts of thy churches; and teach them to 'keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.' *C.*]

Ver. 17. ['Gilead reposes beyond Jordan. And Dan; why tarries he by his ships? Asher remains by the sea-shore; he reposes in his harbours.' The territory of Dan reached to the Mediterranean, and contained the port of Joppa. Asher held the coast along the Bay of Akka. *P.*]

Ver. 21. [This part of the triumphal ode throws light on the battle. Both armies descended from the mountains of Naphtali, but they were drawn to opposite points in the plain. Barak occupied the top of Tabor; Sisera, with his 900 iron chariots, took up a position on the level plain between Megiddo and Taanach. Deborah gave the signal for attack. When Barak charged the enemy, a tremendous storm of hail burst over the plain from the east, and drove full in the face of Sisera. The hail, the tempest, and the lightning, together with the charge of Barak, threw the Canaanites into hopeless confusion. The Kishon rose suddenly in its miry bed; horses and chariots were engulfed; the torrent swept away the fleeing soldiers. Sisera, seeing the danger, leaped from his chariot, and escaped on foot to his native mountains, and met the fate he deserved in the tent of Jael. *P.*]

Ver. 22. [*Prancings of their mighty ones.* 'Mighty ones,' strong steeds, as translated by Kennicot. 'Horse hoofs broken,' because not shod with iron, a thing unknown in several ancient nations, and still unpractised in several districts of the East. The hoofs were broken in the rugged ways and rapid flight. *C.*]

REFLECTIONS.—God must have all the glory of his work; whoever be the instruments, the success is entirely owing to him. His new favours should occasion an affecting remembrance of former ones, and of our relation to him as our God: and the heights of

FISHERMEN MAKING THEIR NETS—TIBERIAS. [JUDGES, v : 14.]—"Out of Ephraim was there a root of them against Amalek; after thee, Benjamin, among thy people; out of Machir came down governors, and out of Zebulun they that handle the pen of the writer." Tiberias was in the territory of Zebulun, and this part of Palestine seems to have always been noted above the rest of the Holy Land for its secular learning and for its trade. The people of Galilee were never held in high esteem by the strict orthodox party at Jerusalem. They were related more to the great outside world. In the above view we have a characteristic scene in Tiberias; a man making nets as they have always been made in this city of fishermen; and it is true to-day as it was true in the days of our Savior, that the fishermen of Tiberias make up the best class of her citizens. They have the faces to-day of earnest, honest, faithful men.

CHAPTER VI.

1 The Israelites for their sin are oppressed by Midian. 7 A prophet rebuketh them. 11 An angel sendeth Gideon for their deliverance. 17 Gideon's present is consumed with fire. 25 Gideon destroyeth Baal's altar, and offereth a sacrifice upon the altar Jehovah-shalom. 28 Joash defendeth his son, and calleth him Jerubbaal. 33 Gideon's army. 36 Gideon's signs.

A.M. 2785 or 2751. B.C. 1219 or 1253.

AND the children of Israel [a]did evil in the sight of the LORD; and the LORD delivered them into the hand of [b]Midian seven years.

2 And[c] the hand of Midian prevailed[1] against Israel: *and* because of the Midianites the children of Israel made them [d]the dens which *are* in the mountains,[2] and caves, and strong holds.

3 And *so* it was, when Israel had sown, that the Midianites came up, and the Amalekites, and [e]the children of the east, even they came up against them;

4 And they [f]encamped against them, and destroyed the increase of the earth, till thou come unto [g]Gaza;[3] and left no sustenance for Israel, neither sheep,[4] nor ox, nor ass.

5 For they came up with their cattle and their [h]tents, and they came as [i]grasshoppers[5] for multitude; *for* both they and their camels were without number: and they entered into the land to destroy it.

6 And Israel was greatly impoverished because of the Midianites; and [k]the children of Israel cried unto the LORD.[6]

7 ¶ And it came to pass, when the children of Israel cried unto the LORD because of the Midianites,

8 That the LORD sent a prophet[7] unto the children of Israel, which said unto them, [l]Thus saith the LORD God of Israel, [m]I brought you up from Egypt, and brought you forth out of the house of bondage;

9 And I delivered you out of the hand of the Egyptians, and out of the hand of all that oppressed you, and drave them out from before you, and gave you their land;

10 And I said unto you, [n]I *am* the LORD your God; fear not the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell: [o]but ye have not obeyed my voice.

11 ¶ And there came an [p]angel of the LORD,[8] and sat under an oak which *was* in [q]Ophrah, that *pertained* unto Joash the [r]Abiezrite: and his son Gideon thrashed wheat by the winepress, to hide[9] *it* from the Midianites.[1]

12 And the angel of the LORD appeared unto him, and said unto him, [s]The LORD *is* with thee, thou mighty man of valour.

13 And Gideon said unto him, Oh my Lord, if the LORD be with us, [t]why then is all this befallen us? and where *be* all his miracles which our fathers told us of, saying, [u]Did not the LORD bring us up from Egypt? [x]but now the LORD hath forsaken us, and delivered us into the hands of the Midianites.

14 And the LORD looked upon him, and said, [y]Go in this thy might, and thou shalt save Israel from the hand of the Midianites: have not I sent thee?

15 And he said unto him, Oh my Lord, [z]wherewith shall I save Israel? behold, [a]my family *is* poor in Manasseh, and I *am* the least in my father's house.[2]

16 And the LORD said unto him, [b]Surely I will be with thee, and thou shalt smite the Midianites as one man.

17 ¶ And he said unto him, If now I have found grace in thy sight, [c]then show me a sign that thou talkest with me.

18 Depart not hence, I pray thee, until I come unto thee, and bring forth [d]my [3]present, and set *it* before thee. And he said, I will tarry until thou come again.

19 And Gideon went in, and made ready a kid,[4] and unleavened cakes of an ephah of flour: the flesh he put in a basket, and he put the broth in a pot, and brought *it* out unto him under the oak, and presented *it*.

20 And the angel of God said unto him, Take the flesh and the unleavened cakes, and lay *them* upon this rock, and [e]pour out the broth. And he did so.

21 ¶ Then the angel of the LORD put forth the end of the staff that *was* in his hand, and touched the flesh and the unleavened cakes; and [f]there rose up fire out of the rock, and consumed the flesh and the unleavened cakes. [g]Then the angel of the LORD departed out of his sight.

22 And when Gideon perceived[5] that he *was* an angel of the LORD, Gideon said, Alas, O

A.M. 2792 or 2758. B.C. 1212 or 1246.

CHAP. VI.

a ch.2.14;3.7,12;4.1. Le.26.14-39. Dc.28.15 &c. Nu.32.13-29. 2 Pe.3.2-12.

b Ge.25.2. Nu.25.18.

c Le.26.17. De.28.47,48.

1 Heb. *was strong.*

d 1 Sa.13.6. He.11.38.

2 Though shorter, this is much more grievous than any of the foregoing expressions. Israel is driven from villages and towns altogether, and can now only hide in dens and caves of the mountains. With such retreats Canaan abounded—God thus mingling mercy with judgment, and keeping a seed alive to serve him. These memorials of their misery are still found by the curious traveller in the deep recesses of the mountains.—*C.*

e ch.8.10,11. Job 1.3. 1 Ch.5.19,..6.

f De.28.30-43. Le.26.25,26.

g Ge.10.19. De.3.23. Jos.10.41;11.22;15.47. ch.1.18.

3 They had therefore crossed the whole land from Jordan to the Mediterranean.—*C.*

4 Or, *goat.*

h Is.13.20.

i ch.7.12;8.10.

5 *Grasshoppers* or *locusts*, a most numerous and voracious race, and appropriate emblems of the destructive children of the desert.—*Note*, Sometimes the church has a few great enemies, sometimes enemies weak in detail, but invisible in the mass. Christ was at first persecuted by the priests, finally he was delivered to the multitude. Hence he was compelled to say, 'Lord, how are they increased that trouble me?' Ps.3.1.—*C.*

k ch.3.9, 15;4.3;10.10,15. Ps.78.34;106.44;50.15;102.17;34.6,15. Ho.5.15. Is.26.16. Je.22.23.

6 The distress that accompanies or follows sin is intended to bring backsliders to feel the pain of the wounds, mourn their miseries, and turn to the Lord. If God hears the ravens when they cry, much more will he hear his own penitent returning children.—*C.*

7 Heb. *a man, a prophet.*

l ch.4.6;2.1-3.

m Ex.1.-xiv. Nu.21.24-35. Jos.vi.-xxi. Ne.9.7-30. Ps.cv. cvi. cxxxv. cxxxvi. lxxviii. Is.63.7-14. Eze.20.5-28. Je.32.20-22.

n Ex.20.2,3. 2 Ki.17.35. Je.10.2.

o ch.2.12,17,19. De.32.15-21. 2 Ki.17.7-17.

p ch.2.1;5.23;13.2; ver.14,16. Is.63.9.

8 'An angel of the Lord,' equivalent to 'God manifest;' as will appear from comparing ver. 11 with ver.14.—*C.*

q ver.24; ch.8.27,32, not Jos.18.23. 1 Sa.13.17.

r Jos.17.2. He.11.32. ch.8.2,32;ver.34.

9 Heb. *to cause it to flee.*

1 The season of grape-gathering being most probably not yet come, the wine-press is chosen instead of the ordinary threshing-floor. The narrative reveals the deplorable state of destitution to which the marauding Midianites had reduced the country.—*Note*, How thankful should a people be for the blessing of peace and security! God alone, and neither law nor power, 'maketh them to dwell in safety.' Law and power are themselves his mercies and his instruments—he himself is the giver and the doer.—*C.*

s Da.9.23. Lu.1.28. Ru.2.4. Ro.8.31. Is.41.10,13-16.

t De.29.24;31.17. Ps.25.6;89.49. Is.59.1,2;63.14,15. Je.22.8,9.

u ver.8, 9. 1 Sa.12.11.

x ver.1,2.

y Jn.20.22. ch.4.6. Jos.1.5-9. 1 Sa.12.11. Ex.3.10.

z Lu.1.34. Mat.14.30,31. Ex.3.11;4.10,13. 1 Sa.9.21. He.11.32.

a Heb. *my thousand is the meanest*, Ex.18.25. Mi.5.2.

2 The character of Gideon begins here to develop itself; and stands before us in three particulars, that expand as the history advances. It stands, (1) in industry and secrecy, ver. 11; (2) in acknowledgment of God's government and judgment, ver. 13; (3) in humility, ver. 15; (4) polished language and manners, ver. 17, 18; (5) careful investigation of evidence, ver. 17; (6) generous hospitality, ver. 18, 19; (7) instant compliance with a proper request or command, ver. 20; (8) acknowledgment of sinfulness, ver. 22; (9) piety and zeal, ver. 24, 28; (10) prudent courage, ver. 27; (11) his religious influence on his servants, ver. 27.—*C.*

b Ex.3.12. Jos.1.5. ver.12,14. Ro.8.31. Is.41.10, 14-16. He.13.5, 6.

c Ge.15.8-17. Ex.4.1-9. 2 Ki.20.8. Ps.86.17.

d Ge.18.5; 19.3. ch.13.15.

3 Or, *meat-offering.*

4 Heb. *a kid of the goats.*

e 1 Ki.18.33,34.

f Le.9.24. ch.3.19, 20. 2 Ch.7.1. 1 Ki.18.38.

g Ge.35.13;17.22. ch.13.20. Lu.24.31.

5 Gideon may have believed his visitant to be a prophet, but did not till after the miraculous production of the fire, and the no less extraordinary disappearance of the angel, understand that he had really seen the Lord.—*C.*

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his mercy should be compared with the depths of distress into which our apostasy from him hath brought us.—Oh! what woes befall people in every place and station when God departs from them! They have no comfort, no safety, no protection left. And though the enemies of the Lord are unanimous and hearty against him and his interests, yet certain is their final destruction, since even the irrational creation stands ready armed to destroy them. Eminent and lasting honours await those who heartily espouse the cause of Christ when it is in great danger, and who are determined to conquer or to die; but shame and curses shall descend on those who, for their ease or carnal advantage, remain neutral and unconcerned. Such as would save their lives, by their cowardice or carnal fears, shall lose them; and such as are afraid or ashamed to join God's people in an evil day, shall be held as deserters from God's camp, and treated accordingly. Death makes easy work with the mightiest heroes; and bitter is the meeting with terrible disasters, when our vain hopes of success, glory, and wealth are wound up to the highest. But how bright and lasting the glory of such as fight the good fight of faith, and work by love to the Lord! Their path is like the rising sun, shining brighter and brighter to the perfect day.

CHAPTER VI. [Ver. 5. The accuracy and vividness of this description those only can fully realize who have witnessed both a flight of locusts and an inroad of a great nomad tribe. Locusts devour everything—so do Arabs. I have seen a great tribe of the Anezeh sweeping over a country in a desolating stream from 20 to 30 miles wide, eating, trampling down, and desolating everything before them. The Midianites appear to have crossed the Jordan at the fords of Succoth, marched up the valley of Jezreel, and then spread out over Esdraelon. They sent their marauding and plundering parties to all parts of the country. The Arabs do so still; and the only way the industrious peasants can secure their grain is by hiding it as soon as it is threshed in those ancient subterranean granaries which abound all through Palestine. *P.*]

REFLECTIONS.—Neither judgments nor mercies, however often repeated, can restrain revolting and rebellious hearts from the most abominable crimes. But they who abuse God's common benefits in prodigality and luxury, live often to feel the want of them in hunger and nakedness. What arrant cowards men are often made by their own guilty and accusing consciences! And after all, in the day of distress, there is no hope but in God himself: and when his service

Lord GOD! [h]for because I have seen an angel of the LORD face to face.

23 And the LORD said unto him, [i]Peace *be* unto thee; fear not: thou shalt not die.[6]

24 Then[k] Gideon built an altar there unto the LORD, and called it [l]Jehovah-shalom: unto this day it *is* yet in [m]Ophrah of the Abiezrites.

25 ¶ And it came to pass the same night, that the LORD said unto him, [n]Take thy father's young bullock, even[7] the second bullock of seven years old,[8] and throw down the altar of Baal that thy father hath, and cut down the grove[o] that *is* by it;

26 And [p]build an altar unto the LORD thy God upon the top of this rock,[9] in the ordered[1] place, and take the second bullock, and offer a burnt-sacrifice[q] with the wood of the grove which thou shalt cut down.

27 Then Gideon took ten men of his servants, and [r]did as the LORD had said unto him: and *so* it was, because he [s]feared his father's household, and the men of the city, that he could not do *it* by day, that he did *it* by night.

28 ¶ And when the men of the city arose early in the morning, behold, the altar of Baal was cast down, and the grove was cut down that *was* by it, and the second bullock was offered upon the altar *that was* built.

29 And they said one to another, Who hath done this thing? And when they inquired and asked, they said, Gideon the son of Joash hath done this thing.

30 Then the men of the city said unto Joash, [t]Bring out thy son, that he may die; because he hath cast down the altar of Baal, and because he hath cut down the grove that *was* by it.

31 And Joash said unto all that stood against him, [u]Will ye plead for Baal? will ye save him? he that will [x]plead for him, let him be put to death whilst *it is yet* morning: if he *be* a god, let him plead for himself, because *one* hath cast down his altar.[2]

A.M. 2792 or 2758.
B.C. 1212 or 1246.

h Ex. 33.20. Ge. 32.30;16.13. ch.13.22. De. 5.5,24,26.

i Ge.43.23. Ro. 1.7. Jn.20.19,26;14.27.

6 The angel had reappeared to allay the fears of Gideon, arising from the impression that it was impossible to see God and live.—*C.*

k ver.25-27;ch.21.4.

l That is, *the LORD* send *peace*, Ex.17.15.Je.23.6.Ezc. 48.35.

m ver 11.

n Ge.35.2.Mat.6.24. Ps.101.2. Job 2[illegible]3. 2 Co.6.15,16. 1 Ki.1[illegible]1. Ex.23.24;34.13. 1 Ti.1.5.

7 Or, *and.*

8 Why is the second bullock mentioned, and its age? (1) The Midianites had carried off all the cattle they could discover, ver. 4, so that Joash, a man of rank, with a large establishment of servants, see ver. 27, had no ox of three years old, the proper age for such a sacrifice. See Ge.15.9. (2) The choice of an ox of seven years may have had a reference to the past seven years of Midianitish oppression. (3) Most probably he is called the *second*, not in reference to one of greater age or value, but in reference to his place in the plough, meaning the *off* or right hand bullock.—*C.*

o ch.3.7. Ex.34.13.

p ver 20, 21, 24. Job 22.23. Ps.101 2.

9 Heb. *strong place.*

1 Or, *in an orderly manner.*

q Le.1.

r Mat. 16. 24. Ga. 1. 16. De.4.1,2.

s Ps. 112. 5. Jn. 3. 1. Thus he first reformed religion, and afterwards engaged in war.—*C.*

t Jn. 16. 2. Ac. 26. 9. Phi.3.6. Pr.1.16. Is. 59. 7.

u Ex.23.2. Nu.14.6.

x ver. 3. Pr. 2[illegible]. De. 17.2-7;13.1-17. Ex. 20. 3,4.23.32. 6.

2 How is this reconcilable with his possessing an altar to Baal? ver. 25. He was a timid conformist in evil times to a religion his conscience did not approve; but inspired by the courage of his son, he now avows his true sentiments. Yet mark the sad effect of this time-serving. (1) His son is preferred before him to deliver his country. (2) His household and fellow-citizens are unsparing idolaters. (3) His son narrowly escapes being murdered.—*C.*

A.M. 2792 or 2758.
B.C. 1212 or 1246.

3 Called Gideon, Jerubbaal, that is, *let Baal plead.*—*C.*

y Or, *Jerubbesheth*, i.e. let shame plead, 2 Sa.11.21.

z Is.8.9,10. Ps. 118. 10-12;3.1;27.2,3.

a Jordan westward, ch.7.24. Jos.3.16,17;19. 18.

b ch.3.10.1 Ch.12.18. 2 Ch.24.20. Lu.24.49. 1 Co.12.8-11.

4 A special vocation to a duty manifested by a measure of the Spirit of God within him, endowing him with faith in God, zeal for his honour, and courage to do his will.—*C.*

5 Heb. *clothed.*

c ch.3.27. Nu.10.3.

6 Most probably the use of the *trumpet* and its different calls was still preserved by the Israelites as a mode of telegraphing in their dispersion. We have known such a mode successfully practised beyond any ordinary power of delation, and in spite of a strong military and civil force.—*C.*

d ver.11,24; ch. 8. 2, 27,32. Jos.17.2. Nu.26. 30.

7 Heb. *was called after him.*

e ver. 14, 17-20. Ps. 103.13,14:86.17. Ge.15. 8:24.14. Ex.4.1-9. Is.7. 11.

f De.32.2. Ho. 14.5. Ps.147.19,20. Mat. 10. 5,6;15.24. These trials signified that by turns the Jews and Gentiles should share the means of grace.

g Ge.18.32.

8 This was not *tempting* God, but humbly saying, 'Lord, I believe, help thou mine unbelief.'—*Note*, let those who would accuse Gideon of unjustifiable hesitation consider how often God was required to display his truth and love to their own souls before they could encounter the world and follow him.—*C.*

h Mat. 8. 12. Ac. 13. 46;28.28. Ps.107.33-35. Is.35.6,7;43.19,20. Ro. 11.20.

CHAP. VII.

a ch.6.32.

b Jos.3.16.12. Ec.9. 10. Ps.119.60.

c Trembling, ch. 6. 3,33.1 Sa.14.15;13.7.

1 Another trait in the character of Gideon is developed here, (1) his early hours, by which the most eminent men have ever been distinguished (see Ge. 22.3); (2) his prudent regard, as a general, to the accommodation of his army in pitching his camp beside a sufficient well of water.—*C.*

32 Therefore on that day he called [3]him [y]Jerubbaal, saying, Let Baal plead against him, because he hath thrown down his altar.

33 ¶ Then[z] all the Midianites, and the Amalekites, and the children of the east, were gathered together, and [a]went over, and pitched in the valley of Jezreel.

34 But [b]the Spirit of the LORD[4] came [5]upon Gideon, and [c]he blew a trumpet;[6] and [d]Abiezer was gathered after him.[7]

35 And he sent messengers throughout all Manasseh; who also was gathered after him: and he sent messengers unto Asher, and unto Zebulun, and unto Naphtali; and they came up to meet them.

36 ¶ And Gideon said unto God, [e]If thou wilt save Israel by mine hand, as thou hast said,

37 Behold, I will put a fleece of wool in the floor; *and* if the dew [f]be on the fleece only, and *it be* dry upon all the earth *beside*, then shall I know that thou wilt save Israel by mine hand, as thou hast said.

38 And it was so: for he rose up early on the morrow, and thrust the fleece together, and wringed the dew out of the fleece, a bowl-full of water.

39 And Gideon said unto God, [g]Let not thine anger be hot against me, and I will speak but this once: Let me prove,[8] I pray thee, but this once with the fleece; let it now be [h]dry only upon the fleece, and upon all the ground let there be dew.

40 And God did so that night: for it was dry upon the fleece only, and there was dew on all the ground.

CHAPTER VII.

1 *Gideon's army of two and thirty thousand is, by God's direction, reduced to three hundred.* 9 *He is encouraged by the dream and interpretation of the barley-cake.* 16 *His stratagem of trumpets and lamps in pitchers.* 24 *The Ephraimites take Oreb and Zeeb.*

THEN [a]Jerubbaal, (who *is* Gideon,) and all the people that *were* with him, [b]rose up early, and pitched beside the well of [c]Harod:[1] so that the host of the Midianites were on the

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is so reasonable, ingratitude to him, the God of mercy and grace, cannot fail highly to aggravate our transgressions. It is the indispensable duty of ministers to deal plainly and closely with their hearers' consciences, as conviction of sin is a hopeful token of approaching deliverance; and God often chooses that time for delivering us when our case appears most desperate. But how hard is it to reconcile our afflictive experiences with the promises of God to us—to believe either what God has done, or what he will do, when present providences appear just the reverse! Yet God delights to honour such as are humble. Let not his saints therefore consider their weakness, when felt, as any reason for evading the great work which God puts into their hands. With infinite condescension God gives not only unalterable promises, but even miraculous signs, for the encouragement of his faint-hearted servants. And such as enjoy noted communion with him eagerly desire to prolong the visit, and to testify their grateful regard to him and to his messengers. If God calls us to extraordinary work, we must, without delay, and regardless of the will of wicked men, begin reformation at home. Nor, however zealous we have been in the cause of wickedness, must we be ashamed to change our conduct, or to protect the innocent. When God calls men to hard work, he can easily furnish them with assistants, even where they could least have been expected. And yet, after all, their unbelieving jealousies render necessary new tokens of God's presence and assistance in it.

CHAPTER VII. [Ver. 16. *He put a trumpet in every man's hand.* How can we account for the ease with which Gideon obtains 300 trumpets in such a wretched and oppressed country, and especially 300 men qualified by practice, and it requires no little, to blow on them? By recollecting that the Levites used the trumpets in the worship of the Lord; and that being now laid aside, the use of the trumpet had probably been transferred to the worship of their idols, and extended from the Levites to all the people. The circumstance of so many trumpets and qualified blowers favours the idea suggested in the note on preceding chapter, ver. 34, that the oppressed Israelites had established something equivalent to telegraphic communication, by means of the different trumpet-calls. *C.*]

Ver. 22. [*The Lord set every man's sword against his fellow.* The host of the enemy was not exclusively Midianitish, but included the Amalekites and the various Arab tribes called 'children of the East,' ch. 6. 33, it is therefore easy to comprehend how such a mixed multitude, numerous as grasshoppers, might mistake each other for enemies, and commit the kind of self-slaughter recorded. *C.*]

REFLECTIONS.—When God affords remarkable encouragement, his service should be undertaken with the greatest earnestness: and let us remember that God is apt to try his people's faith thoroughly in the progress of their work, who insisted too much in trying him in their entrance on it. When multitudes flock to God's standard, many of them are ordinarily unfit for his service: many never weigh the consequences, and therefore quickly start aside. And such as are enslaved by the fear of men are better out of God's camp than in it; for God will take every means to convince his people that they ought to have no dependence on an arm of flesh. And happy are they who can believe his promise, when he lays aside almost every apparent means of accomplishing it. But seasonable and sympa-

MAT WEAVERS AT THEIR LOOMS—NEAR THE PLACE WHERE JOSHUA CRUSHED THE CONFEDERACY OF THE NORTHERN TRIBES OF CANAAN UNDER JABIN, KING OF HAZOR. [JUDGES, vii: 12.]—"And the Midianites, and the Amalekites, and all the children of the East, lay along in the valley like grasshoppers for multitude; and their camels were without number, as the sand by the seaside for multitude." We give here a picture of mat weavers at their looms simply to illustrate the character of the people that represent in modern times the ancient inhabitants of this land. This primitive loom we found near the waters of Merom just above where the Marsh of Huleh begins. It is in a Bedouin village, and the occupation of the natives is mat weaving. The rushes from which they make these mats grow on the banks of the Jordan. This is doubtless a characteristic picture applicable to this region in all its history. In this view we are looking toward the East, and the hour is about twelve o'clock noon.

north side of them, by the hill of Moreh, in the [a]valley.[2]

2 And the LORD said unto Gideon, The people that *are* with thee *are* [b]too many for me to give the Midianites into their hands, lest Israel vaunt themselves against me, saying, Mine own hand hath saved me.

3 Now therefore go to, proclaim in the ears of the people, saying, [c]Whosoever *is* fearful and afraid, let him return and depart early from mount Gilead.[3] And there returned of the people twenty and two thousand, and there remained ten thousand.

4 And the LORD said unto Gideon, The people *are* yet *too* many; bring them down unto the water, and I will [d]try them for thee there: and it shall be, *that* of whom I say unto thee, This shall go with thee, the same shall go with thee; and of whomsoever I say unto thee, This shall not go with thee, the same shall not go.

5 So he brought down the people unto the water: and the LORD said unto Gideon, Every one that lappeth of the water with his tongue, as a dog lappeth,[4] him shalt thou set by himself; likewise every one that boweth down upon his knees to drink.

6 And the number of them that lapped, *putting* their hand to their mouth, were three hundred men: but all the rest of the people bowed down upon their knees to drink water.

7 And the LORD said unto Gideon, [e]By the three hundred men that lapped[5] will I save you, and deliver the Midianites into thine hand: and let all the *other* people go every man unto his place.

8 So the people took victuals in their hand, and [f]their trumpets: and he sent all *the rest of* Israel, every man unto his tent, and retained those three hundred men. And the host of Midian was [g]beneath him in the valley.

9 ¶ And it came to pass the same [h]night, that the LORD said unto him, [i]Arise, get thee down unto the host; for I have delivered it into thine hand.[6]

10 But if [k]thou fear to go down,[7] go thou with Phurah thy servant down to the host:

11 And[l] thou shalt hear what they say; and afterward shall thine hands be strengthened to go down unto the host. Then went he down with Phurah his servant unto the outside of the armed[p] men that *were* in the host.

12 And [q]the Midianites, and the Amalekites, and all the children of the east, lay along in the valley like grasshoppers for multitude; and their camels *were* without number, as the sand by the sea-side for multitude.

A.M. 2792 or 2758.
B.C. 1212 or 1246.

[a] Ge.12.6.

2 The well or fountain of Harod, now called Ain Jâlûd, is situated on the south side of the valley of Jezreel, at the base of Mount Gilboa, about a mile east of the site of the city of Jezreel. The fountain is large, bursting from the hill side, forming a large pond, and sending forth a stream down the valley to Bethshean. The 'hill of Moreh' is a bare ridge, three miles north beyond the plain. At its south-western base, in sight of Harod, is the village of Shunem, near which the Midianites were encamped. *P.*

[b] Ge.4.6. 1 Co.1.27, 2 Co.10.4,5. De.8.17.

[c] De.20.8. Mat.13.21. Re.21.8,27.14.

3 Gilead certainly lay on the east, while Gideon was now on the west of Jordan. How then are any to depart from a place where they were not? Some have supposed that though Gilead Proper was on the east of Jordan, the continuation on the west might also have been called Gilead. Others suppose Gilead an error, and that it should be Gilboa, but this change is unsupported by authority.—*Hales*. Hales reads it thus—'Whosoever from mount Gilead is afraid,' &c., a reading most likely in the Manuscripts from that district, as they were nearest to their Midianitish oppressors.—*C.*

[d] Heb. *separate, purify*. Mal.3.3. 1 Sa.16.6,7. I will give thee a sign who are fit for service.

4 Not by immersing the tongue in the water, like the dog, but by lifting or rather throwing up the water by the hand, 6, into the mouth,—a mode of drinking still practised by many eastern travellers with great dexterity.—*C.*

[e] ch.18.9, 1 Sa.14.6. Is.41.14, 10. Le.26.7,8. Jos.23.10.

5 The army coming up in companies, such as the well could admit, it would be easy to select those that lapped without any divulging of the reason; and as to the apparently trivial way be the most decided tests of disposition and character, the greediness of those that bowed on their knees may have indicated a people slaves to appetite, and forgetful of danger while it was gratified; while those who lapped indicated that forbearance and self-restraint with only such necessary indulgence as left them best prepared for any sudden emergency or danger.—*C.*

[f] Le.23.24. ch.6.34, ver.19. It seems they took no arms.

[g] ch.6.33, ver.1.

[h] Job.4.13. Ge.15.1. Mat.1.20.

[i] Jos.1.5-9. Ge.46.2,3. Is.43.1,2,41.10,14-16. He.13.5,6.

9 Gideon was encamped *above* the fountain, on the steep declivity of Gilboa; not on the plain, for there his little band would have been exposed to the assault of the vast host of Midian. *P.*

[k] ch.4.8,9. Ex.4.10, 14.

[l] Ge. 24. 14. ver. 13, 14; ch.6.36-40.

[p] Or, *ranks by five*, Ex.13.18.

[q] ch.6.5,33; 8.10. Is. 8.9,10; 48.19. Ps.33.10; 3.1; 18.10-12.

7 A brave man may

A.M. 2792 or 2758.
B.C. 1212 or 1246.

fear. Indeed a just estimate and avoidance of danger is absolutely necessary in a leader. God has compassion on the man' infirmity, and allows us to borrow encouragement from companionships. —*Note*. Let us remember how much Christians could encourage one another in danger and aid one another in difficulties: 'Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the royal law of love.'—*C.*

[r] ch.6.1,3,13; 8.10. Ge.41.57. Ps.44.14. Je.46.23.

[s] Nu.23.5. 24.10. 1 Ki.22.22.

8 Heb. *the breaking thereof.*

[t] Ge.24.26,27. Ex.4.31. Ps.34.1,2.

9 Mark the piety of Gideon. It is not said he *rejoiced*, but that he *worshipped*: that is, he took not the form of selfishness, but of godliness. *C.*

[u] ch.4.14. 1 Co.10.4-6. Jos.1.5,9. De.31.6,8.

1 Heb. *trumpets in the hand of all of them.*

[v] Is.58.12. Ju.16.5. 2 Co.4.5,6,10.4,5.

2 Or *fire-brands*, or *torches*.

[w] ch.9.48. 1 Co.11.1. Mat.10.24.

[x] ver 20. 1 Sa.17.47. 2 Ch.20.15,17.

3 The word *sword* is properly supplied here from ver 18. It is found in some of the earliest translations and in several MSS. Still it is most likely to have been omitted by Gideon, as in our Hebrew Bibles; and that the action of drawing the sword fully and emphatically supplied its place, and explained his meaning. Or the words may be translated—'For the Lord and for Gideon.' —*C.*

4 The battle-cry which Gideon gave his men was a noble and inspiriting one—'For the Lord and for Gideon.' There is no necessity to add the word 'sword.' When the Midianites were surprised at dead of night, and when roused from sleep by the crash of the pitchers, the rout of the trumpets, and the sudden blaze of 300 torches round the camp, then the Israelites cried as they rushed upon the panic-stricken Midianites, 'The sword of the Lord, and of Gideon.' *P.*

[y] Ex.14.24. Re.16.14. Th 5.3. Mat.24.42, 44 Pr.27.1.

5 The Hebrews had three *watches*; the Romans four. The first Hebrew watch was completed at midnight, at which time Gideon assailed the sleeping Midianites. The Roman division is found in the New Testament, because Israel had then come under subjection to that iron government.—*C.*

[z] Ps.2.9. Je.13.13,14; 19.11.

[a] Jos.6.4,16,20. 2 Co. 10.4,5.1-7.

[b] Ex.14.13. 2 Ch.20. 17. Is.41.7,15,16.1.

[c] Ps.83.1. 2 Ki.7.6,7. Ex.14.25.

[d] Ps.83.10. Is.9.4.10.5, 14. Hab.3.14. Ch.20.23.

6 Or, *removed*.

7 Heb. *up*.

[e] 1 Ki.1.12,19,16.

[h] ch.6.35,7.3.

[i] ch.3.28; 8.1-3. Ro. 15.30. Phi.1.27.

[k] ch.3.28; 12.5. Jos.2. 7.

8 The fords—the passes of the Jordan. *C.*

13 And when Gideon was come, behold, *there was* a man that told a dream unto his fellow, and said, Behold, I dreamed a dream, and, lo, [r]a cake of barley-bread tumbled into the host of Midian, and came unto a tent, and smote it that it fell, and overturned it, that the tent lay along.

14 And his [s]fellow answered and said, This *is* nothing else save the sword of Gideon the son of Joash, a man of Israel: *for* into his hand hath God delivered Midian, and all the host.

15 And it was *so*, when Gideon heard the telling of the dream, and the [s]interpretation thereof, that he [t]worshipped,[9] and returned into the host of Israel, and said, [u]Arise; for the LORD hath delivered into your hand the host of Midian.

16 ¶ And he divided the three hundred men *into* three companies, and he put a trumpet[1] in every man's hand, with [w]empty pitchers, and lamps[2] within the pitchers.

17 And he said unto them, [v]Look on me, and do likewise: and, behold, when I come to the outside of the camp, it shall be, *that* as I do, so shall ye do.

18 When I blow with a trumpet, I and all that *are* with me, then [x]blow ye the trumpets also on every side of all the camp, and say, *The sword*[3] of the LORD, and of Gideon.[4]

19 ¶ So Gideon, and the hundred men that *were* with him, came unto the outside of the camp [a]in the beginning of the middle [b]watch; and they had but newly set the watch: and they blew the trumpets, and [b]brake the pitchers that *were* in their hands.

20 And the three companies [c]blew the trumpets, and brake the pitchers, and held the lamps in their left hands, and the trumpets in their right hands to blow *withal:* and they cried, The sword of the LORD, and of Gideon.

21 And they [d]stood every man in his place round about the camp: and [e]all the host ran, and cried, and fled.

22 And the three hundred blew the trumpets, and the [f]LORD set every man's sword against his fellow, even throughout all the host; and the host fled to Beth-shittah in[8] Zererath, *and* to the border[7] of [g]Abel-meholah, unto Tabbath.

23 And the [h]men of Israel gathered themselves together out of Naphtali, and out of Asher, and out of all Manasseh, and pursued after the Midianites.

24 ¶ And Gideon [i]sent messengers throughout all mount Ephraim, saying, Come down against the Midianites, and [k]take before them the waters unto Beth-barah[8] and Jordan. Then

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thizing are the consolations of God to his people. By the most inconsiderable incidents he can promote and encourage us to the greatest exploits. With great ease he can rout and destroy his most presumptuous and numerous enemies, and make them to kill one another, or flee when none pursueth, while his people behold his salvation. But it is proper for us to assist the people of God against their enemies, and to mark the distinguished providences of God as a mean of

all the men of Ephraim gathered themselves together, and took the waters unto [l]Beth-barah and Jordan.

25 And they took [m]two princes of the Midianites, Oreb and Zeeb:[9] and they slew Oreb upon the rock Oreb, and Zeeb they slew at the wine-press of Zeeb; and pursued Midian, and brought the heads of Oreb and Zeeb to Gideon on[n] the other side Jordan.

CHAPTER VIII.

1 *Gideon pacifieth the Ephraimites.* 4 *Succoth and Penuel refuse to relieve Gideon's army.* 10 *Zebah and Zalmunna are taken.* 13 *Succoth and Penuel are chastised.* 18 *Gideon revengeth his brethren's death on Zebah and Zalmunna.* 22 *He refuseth the government which the people offer him.* 24 *His ephod the cause of idolatry.* 28 *Midian subdued.* 29 *Gideon's children, and death.* 33 *The Israelites' idolatry and ingratitude.*

AND the men of Ephraim said unto him, [a]Why hast thou served us thus, that thou calledst us not when thou wentest to fight with the Midianites? And they did chide with him sharply.

2 And he said unto them, [b]What have I done now in comparison of you? *Is* not the gleaning of the grapes of Ephraim better than the vintage of Abi-ezer?[1]

3 God[c] hath delivered into your hands the princes of Midian, Oreb and Zeeb: and what was I able to do in comparison of you? Then their anger[2] was abated toward him when he had said that.

4 ¶ And Gideon came to Jordan,[3] *and* passed over, he, and the three hundred men that *were* with him, [d]faint, yet pursuing *them.*

5 And he said unto the men of [e]Succoth, Give, I pray you, [f]loaves of bread unto the people that follow me; for they *be* faint, and I am pursuing after Zebah and Zalmunna, kings of Midian.

6 And the princes of Succoth said, [g]*Are* the hands of Zebah and Zalmunna now in thine hand, that we should give bread unto thine army?

7 And Gideon said, Therefore, when the LORD hath delivered Zebah and Zalmunna into mine hand, then I will tear[4] your flesh with the thorns of the wilderness, and with briers.[5]

A.M. 2792 or 2758.
B.C. 1212 or 1246.

l Perhaps Jn.1.28.

m Ps.83.11.Is.10.26.

9 The personal names, both among the Israelites and other ancient people of the East, were all significant, and sometimes bestowed at birth by parental authority, and sometimes in after-life to mark some historical occurrence. The names of these two Midianitish princes signify 'Raven' and 'Wolf,' exhibiting a remarkable similarity to the names of the American Indians; with whom the 'Great Raven,' the 'Great Hawk,' the 'Great Snake,' are favourite names of chieftains. —*C.*

n ch. 8. 4, *i.e.* the east side of it.

CHAP. VIII.

a Heb. *What thing is this thou hast done unto us?* ch.12.1.2Sa. 19.41. Job 5.2. Ec.4.4. Pr.21.23,24.

b Pr.15.1;25.11.ch.7. 24,25;ver.3.Phi.2.3.

1 An answer distinguished alike by modesty and good temper—modesty, in underrating his own achievements; and good temper, in bearing with most unreasonable and ungrateful treatment.—*C.*

c 2 Ch.20.17.Ps.44.3; 115.1; 118.10-16. ch.7. 24,25.

2 Heb. *spirit.*

3 Having completed the narrative of the victory gained by the Ephraimites, the historian goes back in the order of time to bring up the story of Gideon.—*P.*

d 1 Sa.30.10. 2 Co.4. 8,9.Ps.37.24.

e Ge.33.17.Ps.60.6.

f De.23.4.2Sa.17.28. Ge.14.18.1 Sa.25.8.

g 1 Ki.20.11.1 Sa.25. 10,11.ch.5.25.Phi.2.21. Pr.18.23;21.23,24.

4 Heb. *thrash.*

5 It is most probable the idea of tearing, or rather of thrashing them with thorns and briers, arose from looking at the lacerated bodies of his weary army. But had Gideon a right to utter the threat or inflict the punishment? Yes, if justly deserved; for he was divinely appointed, like Joshua, to the supreme power, and the Succothites were guilty of a gross breach of the law, in refusing bread to a hungry brother.—*C.*

A.M. 2792 or 2758.
B.C. 1212 or 1246.

h Ge.32.30. 1 Ki.12. 25.ver.6.

i ver. 7. 1 Ki. 22. 27, 28.

6 See note on ver. 7.—*L.*

7 A place about the south-east border of the Gadites or Reubenites.

k ch.7.12,22;20.2,15, 46.2 Sa.24.9.2 Ki.3.26.

8 Or, *an hundred and twenty thousand, every one drawing a sword.*

9 Karkor never occurs elsewhere as the name of a place. It signifies *rest,* and the meaning seems to be, that the army had bivouacked, and was suddenly surprised. Persons accustomed to European armies can scarcely think that so great a multitude of soldiers could have been congregated, or so many slain. Let such recollect, however, that amongst the nomades of Midian, &c., every full-grown man was a soldier, and that Xerxes led a million of men against the petty states of Greece, who, under that Providence that was preparing for the downfall of the Persian, and elevation of the Grecian empire, were likewise routed by a handful of Greeks, as Midian by 300 Israelites.—*C.*

l Nu.32.35,42.

m ch.18.27. 1 Sa.15. 32.1 Th.5.3.

n Ps.83.11, 12. Am. 2.14,Re.6.15,16.

1 Heb. *terrified.*

o ch.1.24,25.1 Sa.30. 11–15.

2 Gideon here exhibits a striking instance of true political wisdom and religious principle. Political wisdom directs punishment for correction and example. But false or worldly policy would have punished indiscriminately the whole town. True policy, being subjected to religious principle, pauses, inquires, discriminates, and punishes only the guilty. —*C.*

3 Heb. *writ.* This chastisement of the rulers of Succoth and Penuel was justly due to their haughty, unbrotherly, and barbarous conduct.

p ver.7. Pr.10.13;29. 15;1.31;12.13;19.29; 22. 10;26.3.

4 Heb. *made to know.*

q 1 Ki.12.25.ver.9.

r ver.14,16. 2 Sa. 20. 20, *i.e.* the elders.

5 We are not informed what aggravation of the stated offence drew down this severity; but there can be no reason to doubt, that one who had so carefully distinguished the guilty from the innocent at Succoth, must have had good reason for this severity at Penuel.—*C.*

s ch.4.6;6.33.

t Ps.12.2. Jude 16.

6 Heb. *according to the form,* &c.

8 And he went up thence to [h]Penuel, and spake unto them likewise: and the men of Penuel answered him as the men of Succoth had answered *him.*

9 And he spake also unto the men of Penuel, saying, When I [i]come again in peace, I will break down this tower.[6]

10 ¶ Now Zebah and Zalmunna *were* in Karkor,[7] and their hosts with them, about fifteen thousand *men,* all that were left of all the hosts of the children of the east: for [k]there fell an hundred and twenty thousand men[8] that drew sword.[9]

11 And Gideon went up by the way of them that dwelt in tents, on the [l]east of Nobah and Jogbehah, and smote the host: for the host was [m]secure.

12 And when Zebah and Zalmunna fled, he pursued after them, and [n]took the two kings of Midian, Zebah and Zalmunna, and [1]discomfited all the host.

13 ¶ And Gideon the son of Joash returned from battle before the sun *was up,*

14 And [o]caught a young man of the men of Succoth, and inquired of him:[2] and he described[3] unto him the princes of Succoth, and the elders thereof, *even* threescore and seventeen men.

15 And he came unto the men of Succoth, and said, Behold Zebah and Zalmunna, with whom ye did upbraid me, saying, *Are* the hands of Zebah and Zalmunna now in thine hand, that we should give bread unto thy men *that are* weary?

16 And [p]he took the elders of the city, and thorns of the wilderness and briers, and with them he taught[4] the men of Succoth.

17 And he [q]beat down the tower of Penuel, and slew the [r]men of the city.[5]

18 ¶ Then said he unto Zebah and Zalmunna, What manner of men *were they* whom ye slew at [s]Tabor? And they answered, [t]As thou *art,* so *were* they; each one [6]resembled the children of a king.

19 And he said, They *were* my brethren, *even* the sons of my mother: *as* the LORD

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awakening our thankfulness, or confirming our faith on after occasions.

CHAPTER VIII. [Ver. 3. The Midianites were under four chiefs. When the camp was surprised by Gideon the vast multitude rushed down the valley of Jezreel to the Jordan, and made for the fords of the river. Gideon, with his handful of men, could not prevent their passage. But he sent swift messengers to the Ephraimites, who were probably collected in their mountains, just above the fords of the Jordan, to watch the results of the struggle. The moment they heard the tidings they rushed down into the valley. By the time they gained the fords the two principal chiefs had already crossed; but two lesser chiefs, Oreb and Zeeb, were still on the west bank. They were captured and slain. Gideon had passed over, probably at a ford higher up, in pursuit of the other chiefs of Midian. The Ephraimites overtook him and presented to him the heads of Oreb and Zeeb. It was then the remonstrance was addressed to Gideon, and his able reply given. *P.*]

Ver. 4. [*Faint, yet pursuing them.* Duty, when justly appreciated, is always a pleasure; but in many cases the pain and toil of duty are grievous to flesh and blood. The conduct of Gideon's army is the true measure for performance of a difficult duty, in which the believer is *faint, yet pursuing,* Ga. 6. 9. *C.*]

Ver. 8. [The origin of this name, and the position of the place, are given in the remarkable narrative in Ge. 32. 24, sq. Peniel was on the north bank of the Jabbok. The route taken by the fleeing host after crossing the fords at Succoth was up the glen of the Jabbok, which falls into the Jordan a few miles below Succoth. *P.*]

Ver. 12. [The Ephraimites joined Gideon immediately after crossing the Jordan. His army, too, was doubtless greatly increased from the tribes of Reuben and Gad. The Midianites were retreating through an enemy's country. Every town and village would endeavour to harass and slay those who had so long tyrannized over the land. This will account for the tremendous slaughter mentioned in ver. 10. It was not till Zebah and Zalmunna, with the shattered remnant of their vast army, had passed the defiles of Gilead and gained the eastern desert that they thought themselves secure. Even thither, however, the fiery Gideon followed them. The site of Karkor, where the final victory was gained, is unknown; but it must have been on the borders of Arabia, east of Bashan. The Midianites were there entirely overthrown, and their two great chiefs captured. Only the leading facts of the story are here given. Isaiah, ch. 9. 4; 10. 26, and the Psalmist, Ps. 73. 9–11, repeatedly allude to details not mentioned in this passage; and show that the victory of Gideon was regarded as one of the most signal triumphs of Israel. *P.*]

Ver. 16. [*Taught the men of Succoth.* It is a fact in human nature that few, perhaps none, can be taught anything without privation or suffering. The Succoth-

SEACOAST, BEYROUT. [JUDGES viii: 33.]—"And it came to pass, as soon as Gideon was dead, that the children of Israel turned again, and went a whoring after Baalim, and made Baal-berith their God." Bochart supposed that Baal-berith (Judges viii: 33) was the god Baal in the city of Berith, or Beyrout. Dr. Thomson does not think this supposition too far-fetched to merit consideration, for he says, "We know from many ancient authors that the chief seat of Baal worship was in the regions around Byblus and Beyrout." This city was early occupied by the Phœnicians. This is the most beautiful and healthy region in this part of Syria. There is the best bay for shipping here at the head of the Mediterranean. This place is referred to by Strabo, Ptolemy, Pliny, Josephus, and other heathen as well as Christian authors.

liveth, if ye had saved them alive, I would not slay you.[7]

20 And he said unto Jether his first-born, Up,[u] *and* slay them: but the youth drew not his sword; for he feared, because he *was* yet a youth.

21 Then Zebah and Zalmunna said, [x]Rise thou, and fall upon us: for as the man *is, so is* his strength. [y]And Gideon arose, and slew Zebah and Zalmunna, and took away the ornaments that *were* on their camels' necks.[8]

22 ¶ Then the men of Israel said unto Gideon, [z]Rule thou over us, both thou, and thy son, and thy son's son also;[9] for thou hast delivered us from the hand of Midian.

23 And Gideon said unto them, [a]I will not rule over you, neither shall my son rule over you: the LORD shall rule over you.

24 And Gideon said unto them, I would desire a request of you, that ye would [b]give me every man the ear-rings[1] of his prey: (for they had golden ear-rings, because they *were* Ishmaelites.)

25 And they answered, We will willingly give *them*. And they spread a garment, and did cast therein every man the ear-rings of his prey.

26 And the weight of the golden ear-rings that he requested was a thousand and seven hundred *shekels* of gold,[2] besides ornaments, and collars,[3] and purple raiment, that *was* on the kings of Midian, and besides the chains that *were* about their camels' necks.

27 And Gideon [c]made an ephod thereof, and put it in his city, *even* in Ophrah:[4] and all Israel went thither a whoring after it: which thing became a snare unto Gideon, and to his house.

28 ¶ Thus [d]was Midian subdued before the children of Israel, so that they lifted up their heads no more: and the country was in quietness [e]forty years in the days of Gideon.

29 ¶ And Jerubbaal the son of Joash [f]went and dwelt in his own house.

c Is.8.20.Ro.10.2.Ga.4.18. Ex.[illegible]23.33.1 Sa.23.9,10.ch.17.6.ver.33.De.7.16. 4:10.26;41.14-16.Ps.83.9-12. *d* Is.9. *e* ch.3.11.[illegible]31. See the note on ch.3.11. *f* Ne.5.14,15.

A.M. 2792 or 2758. B.C. 1212 or 1246.

7 The Midianites were brethren to the Hebrews, being the descendants of Abraham, and called Ishmaelites, ver. 24, from being commingled with them; and were therefore not included under the sentence against Canaan: Those princes, however, suffer justly, for they were not merely robbers, but self-convicted murderers.—*C.*

u Jos.10.24. Ps. 149. 9. He wished to hearten him, and inure him to destroy the enemies of God's people.

x ch.9.54. 1 Sa. 31.3. Re.6.

y Ps.83.11;149.9.

8 Or, *ornaments like the moon.*

z 1 Sa.8.5;12.12. Jn. 6.15.

9 This is the first proposal of hereditary monarchy, in which there was no specific impropriety, had they consulted the Lord, and received his sanction. Both in this case, and afterwards in that of Saul, it was based unhappily upon an ungrateful rejection of God.—*C.*

a 1 Sa. 8, 6, 7; 10. 19; 11.12. ch. 2. 16. 1 Co 7. 20–24.2 Co.1.24.1 Pe.5. 3.

b Ex.32.4;12.35. Ge. 24.22; 37.25; 16.10,11. 1 Pe. 3.3 4.

1 The Hebrew *nezem* may signify a nose-jewel or an ear-ring, or simply a ring of any kind. The Arabs, especially Arab women, wear large quantities of ornaments, some of great weight and value. They also decorate the necks and trappings of their horses and dromedaries with valuable ornaments.—*P.*

2 Estimating the *shekel* at half an ounce, the whole amount of gold is 73 lbs. 4 oz., worth about £3300.—'*Ornaments*'—the same word is applied to the ornamental part of the camels' furniture, ver. 21.—'*Collars*,' translated in the margin 'sweet jewels,' and by some supposed to mean *smelling-bottles*, or other depositories for perfume—an interpretation not improbable.—*C.*

3 Or, *sweet jewels.*

4 God had commanded an altar to be built at Ophrah; Gideon, without order from God, now makes an ephod, which, from considering the conduct of Micah, ch. 17. 5, 12, and of the Danites, ch. 17. 30, suggests the idea of a priesthood, and worship, and sacrifices organized by Gideon, contrary to the divine order, which confined them to one place, which, in the meantime, was Shiloh.—*Note*, Whatever apparently plausible and pious reasons may be assigned for forms and acts of will-worship, they always become a snare to the heart. The sight of an image or painting may excite strong emotion; but it is an emotion which finally associates with the image or the picture, and puts them, in some manner, into the place of God. Will-worship is literally a snare—it takes the soul captive where it expects no danger.—*C.*

g Ge.46.26. Ex. 1. 5. ch.9.2.5.

5 Heb. *going out of his thigh.*

h Ge.22.24;16.15.

6 Heb. *set.*

i Ge.15.15;25.8. Job 5.26.Jos.24.29,30.

7 B.C. 1172 or 1213.

k ch.6.11.

l Jos.24. 31. 2 Ki. 12. 2.ch.2.7,10,11.2 Ch.24. 17,18.

m Ex.34.15,16.Je.3. 9.Ho.2.16.Ja.4.4.

8 *Baal-berith* signifies 'covenant Baal,' or 'Baal of the covenant,' *i.e.* Baal as a god with whom the people had entered into covenant. His worship was established at Shechem, and it may therefore be inferred that his worship was an imitation of the worship of Jehovah, with whom the Israelites had made a covenant in the time of Joshua at this very place. Now in their miserable infatuation, instead of keeping their solemn covenant with Jehovah, they set up Baal in his place.—*P.*

n Ps. 78. 11; 106. 13, 21.Je.2.32.Ec.12.1.

o ch.9.5,16-18,24,56. Ec.9.14,15.

CHAP. IX.

B.C. 1172 or 1213.

a ch.8.31. Ge.33 18; xxxiv.

1 The last verse of the foregoing chapter closed with recording the ingratitude of Israel to Gideon and his family. This ingratitude to man had commenced with ingratitude to God, and both are punished by the ambition and tyranny of Abimelech. — *Note*, There are many ways in which God punishes irreligious nations, such as war, pestilence, and famine; but two others are not less common, nor less terrible—the anarchy of the multitude—or the tyranny of an ambitious and successful leader.—*C.*

b Ps.83.3,4,11,12.Je. 18.18.1 Ki.12.28.

2 Heb. *What is good, whether*, &c.

c Ge. 29. 14. 2 Sa. 19. 13. 1 Ch.11.1.

d Ps.10.3. Pr. 1. 11–14:10.23;7.21–23.

3 Heb. *after.*

30 And Gideon had [g]threescore and ten sons of his body[5] begotten: for he had many wives.

31 And his [h]concubine that *was* in Shechem, she also bare him a son, whose name he [6]called Abimelech.

32 ¶ And Gideon the son of Joash [i]died[7] in a good old age, and was buried in the sepulchre of Joash his father, in [k]Ophrah of the Abiezrites.

33 And it came to pass, [l]as soon as Gideon was dead, that the children of Israel turned again, and went [m]a whoring after Baalim, and made Baal-berith their god.[8]

34 And the children of Israel [n]remembered not the LORD their God, who had delivered them out of the hands of all their enemies on every side:

35 Neither[o] showed they kindness to the house of Jerubbaal, *namely*, Gideon, according to all the goodness which he had showed unto Israel.

CHAPTER IX.

1 Abimelech by conspiracy with the Shechemites, and murder of his brethren, is made king. 7 Jotham by a parable rebuketh them, and foretelleth their ruin. 22 Gaal conspireth with the Shechemites against him. 30 Zebul revealeth it. 34 Abimelech overcometh them, and soweth the city with salt. 46 He burneth the hold of the god Berith. 50 At Thebez he is slain by a piece of a millstone. 56 Jotham's curse is fulfilled.

AND Abimelech[a] the son of Jerubbaal[1] went to Shechem unto his mother's brethren, and [b]communed with them, and with all the family of the house of his mother's father, saying,

2 Speak, I pray you, in the ears of all the men of Shechem, Whether *is* better[2] for you, either that all the sons of Jerubbaal, *which are* threescore and ten persons, reign over you, or that one reign over you? remember also [c]that I *am* your bone and your flesh.

3 And his mother's brethren [d]spake of him in the ears of all the men of Shechem all these words: and their hearts inclined to [3]follow Abimelech; for they said, He *is* our brother.

4 And they gave him threescore and ten *pieces* of silver out of the house of Baal-berith;

ites needed a severe lesson to rebuke their inhumanity. Still Europeans who have not attended to eastern ideas and customs, will be ready to imagine this infliction much greater than in reality it was. In most European countries corporal punishment implies some kind of degradation, and is chiefly or entirely confined to the most abandoned offenders. In the East, especially in Persia, it carries no idea of degradation, and is inflicted on the highest officer of state as readily as on the lowest menial. *C.*]

Ver. 19. [*The sons of my mother.* In a country where polygamy was tolerated, *brother* did not convey the same endearment as 'son of my mother.' *C.*]

Ver. 20. [*Up and slay them.* It may seem strange to European eyes that Gideon should order his son to slay the two princes. But the Hebrews had no public executioner. The witnesses and the people inflicted the sentence of death. Till this day, in the East, where there is a public executioner, it is one of the highest offices of honour; so was the occasional appointment amongst the Hebrews. See 1 Ki. 2. 25, 29, 31, 35. *C.*]

Ver. 21. [The Hebrew word translated 'ornaments' signifies 'little moons;' *i.e.* ornaments of gold and silver of crescent form. Such ornaments are to this day universally worn by the nomad tribes of Arabia. The origin of the peculiar shape was doubtless the worship of Astarte, or the moon. The ornaments were dedicated to the goddess, and those who wore them were supposed to be under her protection. *P.*]

Ver. 28. [*The country was in quietness forty years.* This is now the third time it has been said, 'The land had rest forty years,' ch. 3. 11; 5. 31, a coincidence so strange that its probability has been questioned. But besides the historic authority, which no mere hypothesis or doubt has a right to call in question, this was the period of 'tentation in the wilderness,' and which God thus repeats to bring, by the association of similarity, his judgments to remembrance. *C.*]

REFLECTIONS.—Only by pride cometh contention. Evil persons are extremely jealous of their carnal honours, and apt to reckon the just exaltation of everybody else an injury done to themselves. It is common for cowards to pretend valour when the danger is over or distant; but humility disposes a man to think meanly of his own works, and to put honour from himself to his neighbour; and meanwhile adds a double lustre to all its gifts, graces, or attainments. Soft words most effectually turn away wrath; nor must we count it strange to be abused by the tongues of those whose lives we have saved at the hazard of our own. Having begun a good work we must go on with it: notwithstanding the most heavy and unnatural discouragements, perseverance will be infallibly crowned with success. The security of sinners most certainly proves their ruin; and it meets them when and where they thought it was quite over; for men's pride brings them low; and the insolence of their tongues renders them miserable.—It is just and proper for magistrates sharply to correct those who are barbarous or abusive: and men's distress often occasions new discoveries of their guilt. Though hand should join in hand sinners shall not pass unpunished. If one agent fear, another will dare to execute the judgment of God upon them.

FALLS OF NABLOUS—IN THE ANCIENT CAPITAL OF ISRAEL. [JUDGES, ix:7.]—"And when they told it to Jotham, he went and stood in the top of mount Gerizim, and lifted up his voice, and cried, and said unto them, Hearken unto me, ye men of Shechem, that God may hearken unto you." It was here in Shechem that Jotham gave the striking parable of the trees. Jotham was the youngest son of Gideon. His parable of the reign of the bramble is the earliest example of the kind. No place in Palestine could have been more appropriate for the expression of this parable than Shechem. Because of the many springs that rise within its environs, there is always a tropical luxuriance about the vegetation here, and it was standing in the midst of these trees, doubtless, that Jotham said: "The trees went forth on a time to annoint a king over them; and they said unto the olive tree, Reign thou over us," etc.

wherewith Abimelech hired [c]vain and light persons, which followed him.

5 And he went unto his father's house at Ophrah, and [d]slew his brethren, the sons of Jerubbaal, *being* threescore and ten persons, upon one stone: notwithstanding yet Jotham, the youngest son of Jerubbaal, was left; for he hid himself.

6 And all the men of Shechem gathered together, and all the [e]house of Millo, and went and [h]made Abimelech king, [i]by the plain of the pillar that *was* in Shechem.

7 ¶ And when they told *it* to Jotham, he went and stood in the top of [k]mount Gerizim,[4] and lifted up his voice and cried, and said unto them, Hearken unto me, ye men of Shechem, that God may hearken unto you.

8 The [l]trees went forth *on a time* to anoint a king over them;[5] and they said unto the olive-tree, [m]Reign thou over us.

9 But the olive-tree said unto them, Should I leave my fatness, wherewith by me they [n]honour God and man, and go to be promoted[6] over the trees?[7]

10 And the trees said to the fig-tree, Come thou, *and* reign over us.

11 But the fig-tree said unto them, [o]Should I forsake my sweetness, and my good fruit, and go to be promoted over the trees?

12 Then said the trees unto the vine, Come thou, *and* reign over us.

13 And the vine said unto them, Should I leave my wine, which [p]cheereth God and man,[8] and go to be promoted over the trees?

14 Then said all the trees unto the [q]bramble, Come thou, *and* reign over us.

15 And the bramble said unto the trees, If in truth ye anoint me king over you, *then* come *and* put your trust in [r]my shadow; and if not, [s]let fire come out of the bramble,[9] and devour the cedars of Lebanon.

16 Now therefore, if ye have done truly and sincerely, in that ye have made [t]Abimelech king, and if ye have dealt well with [u]Jerubbaal and his house, and have done unto him according to the deserving of his hands;

17 (For my father fought for you, and [z]adventured his life far, and delivered you out of the hand of Midian;

18 And ye [y]are risen up against my father's house this day, and have slain his sons, threescore and ten persons, upon one stone, and have made [z]Abimelech, the son of his maid-servant, king over the men of Shechem, because he *is* your brother;)

19 If ye then have dealt truly and sincerely with Jerubbaal and with his house this day, *then* [a]rejoice ye in Abimelech, and let him also rejoice in you:

20 But if not, [b]let fire come out from Abimelech, and devour the men of Shechem, and the house of Millo; and let fire come out from the men of Shechem, and from the house of Millo, and devour Abimelech.

21 And Jotham ran away, and fled, and went to [c]Beer, and dwelt there, for fear of Abimelech his brother.

22 ¶ When Abimelech had reigned three years[1] over Israel,

23 Then [d]God sent an evil spirit[2] between Abimelech and the men of Shechem; and the men of Shechem dealt treacherously with Abimelech:

24 That the [e]cruelty *done* to the threescore and ten sons of Jerubbaal might come, and their blood be laid upon Abimelech their brother,

A.M. 2832 or 2791. B.C. 1172 or 1213.

c ch 11.3. 2 Ch.13.7. Job 30.8. Giddy-headed and unsettled.

d 2 Ki. 10. 7; 11. 1. 2 Ch.21.4. Mat.23.35.

e ver.20,22,2 Sa.5.9. 2 Ki.12.20.

h 1 Sa.8.5,19, 20; 10. 24; 11.15. Ho.8.4; 13.10, 11.

i Or, *by the oak of the pillar*, Jos. 24. 26. 1 Ki.12.1,20,25.

k De.11.29. Jos.8.33. Jn.4.20.

4 Shechem lay in the valley between Ebal and Gerizim, and the side next Shechem being nearly perpendicular, afforded Jotham a safe position from which to expostulate with the people.—*C.*

l 2 Ki. 14. 9. By this parable Jotham hints that as Abimelech, the basest of the family, had thrust himself into power, which his worthy father and brethren refused, it should issue in a plague to himself and his assistants.

5 The most ancient parable upon record. —*C.*

m ch.8.22.

n Le.2.1. Ex.29.2,7; 35.14. 1 Ki. 19. 15. Ps. 104.15. The oil anointed God's priests, served for light in his tabernacle, and was used in meat-offerings; and the wine cheered God as used in drink-offerings.

6 Heb. *go up and down for* other *trees.*

7 Man was honoured by oil; prophets, priests, and kings having, under the Jewish economy, been anointed to office by it. God was honoured by the burning of oil in the golden candlestick, and the use of it in some of his offerings. —*C.*

o De.17.20;32.15.

p Nu.15. 5, 7, 10. Ps. 104.15. Pr.31.6.

q Or, *thistle*, 2 Ki. 14.9.

8 That there are Christian sacrifices with which 'God is well pleased' the apostle testifies, He. 13. 16. Wine was an essential part of certain of the Mosaic sacrifices, the types and emblems of the true. Wine is therefore said to 'cheer' God, because the outpouring of it as a drink-offering was a godly renunciation of all abuse of his mercies; and it 'cheers' man, according to the

A.M. 2832 or 2791. B.C. 1172 or 1213.

text, not when abused as an unhallowed stimulant to luxury, but when used with thanksgiving, as prescribed to Timothy for his 'often infirmities,' or given as a restorative, as described by Solomon, to him 'that is ready to perish.'—*C.*

r Da.4.12. Is.30.2,3. Eze.17.23;31.6,17. La. 4.20.

s Eze. 19. 14. Da. 3. 22. Ex.15.5,9,10. ver. 20, 49.

9 'Bramble,' in the margin *thistle*. The Septuagint translates it by a word applied to a species of buckthorn, a plant transferred from Asia to Europe in the time of Augustus. The fruit is very abundant, its only claim to superiority; and its wood is said to be singularly combustible, and well calculated to aid in consuming its loftier subjects.—*C.*

t The bramble, ver. 14.

u ver.8,10,12.

x Heb. *cast his life*, Es.4.16. Ro.16.4. Ac. 12.11. ch.vii.viii.; 12.3. 1 Sa.19.5.

y ver.3-5. Ps.109.4.

z ch.8.31; ver.6,14.

a Ps.28.4; 52.1–6.

b ver.15,23; ch.7.22.2 Ch. 20. 22, 23. Ps.28.4; 21.9, 10; 52. 5; 120. 3, 4; 140.10,11. Pr.11 31; 13. 21.

c Jos.19.8, or Nu.21. 16.

1 B.C. 1169 or 1210.

d ver.15,20.2 Ch.10. 15; 18.19,20. 1 Sa.16.14. Is.19.14; 33.1. 2 Th. 2. 11,12. Mat.7.22.

2 Of the invisible world of spirits we know nothing beyond the few facts recorded in Scripture. Amongst these, however, is the Satanic possession of wicked men, both as individuals and communities. As to the mode of this possession we may neither speculate nor dogmatize. It may be actual, as in the days of our Lord; or merely influential, by blinding the eyes or deceiving the heart. Still, in either or in any other manner, the evil spirit is commissioned, and sent to execute deserved judgment on worldly and ungodly men.—*C.*

e 1 Sa. 15. 33. Est. 9. 25. Mat.23. 34. Re. 16. 6;13.10.

It is much better to be of a humble spirit with the lowly than to divide the spoil with the proud. Ambition to exalt one's family is ordinarily a ruinous snare. But it is very dangerous for rulers, in church or state, to humour people in matters of religion, or to indulge their carnal ease or honour in that point. What appears innocent at first may soon become a dangerous snare. Small beginnings of superstition or idolatry lead to still greater abominations: and when God removes the restraints, men will quickly relapse to their wonted or worse idolatries. It is hard to make base minds grateful, either to God or to their human benefactors: but it is easy to decoy them into one form of wickedness after another.

But in this Hebrew judge let Jesus, the great deliverer, be discerned. His condition on earth was mean and debased; his call to his work express, solemn, seasonable, and necessary; and miraculous the repeated confirmations of it. Being the mighty God, and endowed with the Spirit above measure, he, with burning zeal, offered his sacrifice of himself, overthrew idolatry and restored the true worship of God, beginning in his own country of Judea. By a few weak and unarmed preachers sounding the gospel trumpet and displaying its light and fire from their earthen vessels he did, and shall, foil Satan, the world, and death, with their innumerable agents. And at the last day, being revealed in flaming fire, and attended with the trump of God, he shall spread terror and ruin among all his opposers. Kindly he invites his brethren of mankind to share in his victories, and to follow him that they may divide the spoil. Meekly he convinces and pacifies his unreasonable friends: but the most righteous judgment he did and will execute upon his despisers, of Judah and of Rome, and upon all such as refuse his people or ministers their necessary supplies.

CHAPTER IX. [Ver. 4. *They gave him threescore and ten pieces of silver.* The value of the piece of silver cannot be positively ascertained, but there can be scarcely a doubt that it was the shekel, value little above two shillings. That so small an amount should hire a sufficient number of followers to render his success probable, will not astonish any one who is historically acquainted with the great value of money in certain periods and states of society, and also with the short period of service for which mercenaries have often been engaged.—*Vain and light persons.* Empty, unsettled, poor, and vagabond—having nothing to lose, and everything to covet, to hope for, or to plunder—the ordinary tools of all such unprincipled revolutions—the disgraces of the society that has reared them without education or employment; and finally, the scourge of Providence to a negligent and godless people. *C.*]

Ver. 6. [*Millo* signifies a rampart composed of two walls with the space between them filled up with earth or stones; then generally a fortress or citadel. 'All the house of Millo,' means all the inhabitants of the castle of Shechem; the same who are described in ver. 46 as 'all the men of the tower of Shechem.' 'The plain of the pillar,' or rather 'the *oak* of the pillar,' was apparently the oak that marked the spot of Jacob's sanctuary at Shechem, where he erected an altar and called it *El-elohe-Israel*, Ge. 33. 20; 35. 4. *P.*]

Ver. 54. [*That men say not of me, A woman slew him.* Pride is one of the most natural and inveterate propensities of the unrenewed human heart. Zebah and Zalmunna felt pride gratified in dying by the hand of a valiant man instead of a timid boy, and here Abimelech desires to die by the hand of one of his martial followers, that he may escape the imaginary disgrace of dying by the hand of a weak woman.—*Note*, How hard must it be to humble pride, seeing that it is stronger than death! What need to learn of him that is meek and lowly in heart, and to mortify pride that we may live and die like him! *C.*]

REFLECTIONS.—For the transgression of a land many and base are the princes thereof. Such as have wicked purposes stick at nothing to gain their end; and being conscious of their own bad designs, are apt to suspect, or at least accuse, others who are innocent of the same ill intentions: and instruments are never wanting to assist in the most bloody and ruinous conduct. Proud and evil men push after that elevation which wise and humble persons shun: nor is any one more overbearing and insolent than a low mind raised above his station. Such as enter into rule as foxes in craft, often rule like lions in cruelty, and die like dogs in disgrace. Accomplices in wickedness readily become plagues and murderers to one another; and none are nearer to ruin than those upon whom fair warnings are lost. When kingdoms are once disjointed one base villain readily sets up against another, and traitors mutually distrust and betray each other. When men are intoxicated with wine they are fit for murder, treason, and every other evil work: but insolent boast-

which slew them; and upon the men of Shechem, which aided him in the killing[3] of his brethren.

25 And the men of Shechem set [f]liers in wait for him in the top of the mountains, and they robbed all that came along that way by them: and it was told Abimelech.[4]

26 And Gaal the son of Ebed came with his brethren,[g] and went over to Shechem: and the men of Shechem put their confidence in him.

27 And they went out unto the fields, and gathered their vineyards, and trod *the grapes*, and [h]made merry, and went into the [i]house of their god, and did eat and drink, and [k]cursed[5] Abimelech.

28 And Gaal the son of Ebed said, [l]Who *is* Abimelech, and who *is* Shechem, that we should serve him? *Is* not *he* the son of Jerubbaal? and Zebul his officer? Serve [m]the men of Hamor the father of Shechem; for why should we serve him?[6]

29 And [n]would to God this people were under my hand! then would I remove Abimelech. And he said to Abimelech, [o]Increase thine army, and come out.[7]

30 ¶ And when Zebul, the ruler of the city, heard the words of Gaal the son of Ebed, his anger was kindled.[8]

31 And he sent messengers unto Abimelech privily,[p] saying, Behold, Gaal the son of Ebed, and his brethren, be come to Shechem; and, behold, they fortify the city against thee.

32 Now therefore [q]up by night,[9] thou and the people that *is* with thee, and lie in wait in the field:

33 And it shall be, *that* in the morning, as soon as the sun is up, thou shalt rise early, and set upon the city: and, behold, *when* he and the people that *is* with him come out against thee, then mayest thou do to [1]them [r]as thou shalt find occasion.

34 ¶ And Abimelech rose up, and all the people that *were* with him, by night, and they laid wait against Shechem in four companies.

35 And Gaal the son of Ebed went out, and stood in the entering of the gate of the city: and Abimelech rose up, and [s]the people that *were* with him, from lying in wait.

36 And when Gaal saw the people, he said to Zebul, Behold, there come people down from the top of the mountains. And Zebul said unto him, Thou [t]seest the shadow of the mountains as *if they were* men.[2]

37 And Gaal spake again, and said, See, there come people down by the middle[3] of the land, and another company come along by the plain of Meonenim.[4]

38 Then said Zebul unto him, [u]Where *is* now thy mouth, wherewith thou saidst, Who *is* Abimelech, that we should serve him? *Is* not this the people that thou hast despised? Go out, I pray now, and fight with them.

39 And Gaal went out before the men of Shechem, and fought with Abimelech.

40 And Abimelech chased him, and he fled before him; and many were overthrown *and* wounded, *even* unto the entering of the gate.

41 And Abimelech dwelt[5] at Arumah: and [x]Zebul thrust out Gaal and his brethren, that they should not dwell in Shechem.[6]

42 And it came to pass on the morrow, that the people went out into the field;[7] and they told Abimelech.

43 And he took the people, and divided them into three companies, and laid wait in the field, and looked, and, behold, the people *were* come forth out of the city; and he rose up against them, and smote them.

44 And Abimelech, and the company that *was* with him, [y]rushed forward, and stood in the entering of the gate of the city; and the two *other* companies ran upon all *the people* that *were* in the fields, and slew them.

45 And Abimelech fought against the city all that day; and he took the city, and slew the people that *was* therein, and [z]beat down the city, and sowed it with salt.[8]

46 ¶ And when all the men of the tower[9] of Shechem heard *that*, they entered into [a]an hold of the house of the god Berith.

47 And it was told Abimelech, that all the men of the tower of Shechem were gathered together.

48 And Abimelech gat him up to mount [b]Zalmon, he and all the people that *were* with him; and Abimelech took an axe in his hand, and cut down a bough from the trees, and took it, and laid *it* on his shoulder, and said unto the people that *were* with him, [c]What ye have seen me do,[1] make haste, *and* do as I *have done*.

49 And all the people likewise cut down every man his bough, and followed Abimelech, and [d]put *them* to the hold, and set the hold on fire upon them: so that all the men of the tower of Shechem died also, about a thousand men and women.

50 ¶ Then[e] went Abimelech to Thebez,[2] and encamped against Thebez, and took it.

51 But there was a strong tower[3] within the city, and thither fled all the men and women,

A.M. 2835 or 2794. B.C. 1169 or 1210.

8 Heb. *strengthened his hands to kill.*

f Jos. 8. 4, 12, ch. 20. 29, 37. Pr. 1. 11, 12.

4 Not that they were robbing, for he was as unprincipled as themselves, but that they were lying in wait to seize or to slay him.—*C.*

g Kinsmen, Ge. 13. 8; 19. 7. It seems Gaal was a Canaanite, ver. 28.

h Ps. 4. 7. Is. 16. 10. Am. 6. 1, 3, 5, 6. ch. 16. 25; 18. 20; 19. 6, 9. 2 Sa. 13. 28.

i ver. 4; ch. 16. 23. Ex. 32. 6, 19.

k 1 Sa. 17. 43. Le. 24. 11. Pr. 24. 24. Is. 8. 21.

5 Most probably induced the idolatrous priests to pronounce a solemn anathema against him.—*C.*

l Ex. 5. 2. 1 Sa. 25. 10. 1 Ki. 12. 16. ver. 1, 30, 36, 46.

m Descendants, Ge. 34. 2, 6.

6 Gaal was a Canaanite, the descendant of the ancient chiefs of Shechem. He was the instrument employed in stirring up strife between Abimelech and the Shechemites, some of whom appear to have been Canaanites. Gaal's words may be thus interpreted:—'Who is Abimelech? and who is Shechem?' *i.e.* the section of the Shechemites attached to Abimelech. He speaks contemptuously of them. Replying to his own questions he says: 'Is he (Abimelech) not son of Jerubbaal?' who overthrew the altar of our god. 'And is not Zebul, his officer, set over that section of the Shechemites who obey Abimelech?' Having thus shown that both Abimelech and his general should be treated with contempt, Gaal sets forward his own claims as descendant of the ancient princes of Shechem.—*P.*

n De. 5. 29. 2 Sa. 15. 4. 1 Ki. 20. 11. Ro. 1. 30. Ps. 10. 3.

o 2 Ki. 14. 8; 18. 23. Is. 36. 8, 9.

7 It is not said where Abimelech was, but from the expression, 'Come out,' it is evident he was in some stronghold at a distance from Shechem, with a considerable number of followers.—*C.*

8 Or, *hot.*

p Heb. *craftily*, or *to Tormah*, ver. 41.

q Pr. 4. 16; 1. 16, 10, 11–16. Is. 8. 21. Ps. 36. 4. Ro. 3. 15, 16. ver. 34.

9 Abimelech was advised to get near the city by night, lest Gaal should take advantage of him in difficult passes on the top of the mountain (see ver. 25), where neither skill, bravery, nor numbers could avail him.—*C.*

1 Meaning that they were neither in prowess nor numbers equal to contend with Abimelech and his desperate bands.—*C.*

r Heb. *as thine hand shall find*, Le. 25. 28. 1 Sa. 10. 7; 25. 8. Ec. 9. 10.

s One of the four companies, ver. 44.

t Mar. 8. 24. This he spoke in derision, as well as in order to deceive.

2 The probability is, that Gaal's vision was imperfect, and the treacherous Zebul deceives him to gain time.—*C.*

3 Heb. *navel.*

A.M. 2835 or 2794. B.C. 1169 or 1210.

4 Or, *the regarders of times, soothsayers.*

u Where is now your courage and boasting? 2 Ki. 14. 8–14. ver. 28, 29.

5 Waiting for an opportunity to surprise Shechem.

x ver. 28, 30.

6 After Gaal's defeat it was easy to expel him, for an unprincipled people like the Shechemites can never be faithful to an unfortunate leader.—*C.*

7 About their business, or to do honour to Baal-berith their idol.

y ver. 15, 29.

z 1 Ki. 12. 25. De. 29. 23. Zep. 2. 9. Ps. 1. 7. 34. ver. 6; ch. 1. 7. Ja. 2. 13. Sowing a place with salt marked it out for perpetual desolation and barrenness.

8 Most or perhaps all kinds of salt in moderate quantity promotes vegetation, but in large quantity produces absolute sterility. And this latter fact is most probably the origin of sowing conquered cities with salt. Farther, as God ordered *salt* to be sprinkled on all his sacrifices, a custom which the heathen adopted also, either from the patriarchs or from Moses, it is not unlikely that the salting of ruins might have some reference to the city being made an offering. And as salt was used in confirmation of covenants, it might be employed to indicate the vowed determination of the conqueror never to rebuild it. Thus Hadrian strewed with salt the ruins of Jerusalem; and thus Frederick Barbarossa, in 1162, ploughed up the site of Milan and sowed it with salt.—*C.*

9 Probably a castle in the vicinity of Shechem, to which a number of the people had fled for safety. Such towers or citadels are to be found in most considerable towns of western Asia. Distrusting the protection which this tower afforded, they retreated to the hold of the god Berith: probably some strong fortress of their temple, built perhaps upon one of the mountains in the neighbourhood. It may be compared, says Patrick, to the Roman capitol, or to the temple of Jerusalem in after times, which, Josephus says, was impregnable.—*P.*

a ch. 8. 33; ver. 4, 27. Ps. 115. 8. 1 Ki. 18. 26. Is. 28. 15. 2 Ki. 1. 2–4.

b Ps. 68. 14.

c ch. 7. 17, 18. Pr. 1. 11, 12.

1 Heb. *I have done.*

d ver. 15, 20.

e 2 Ki. 14. 10; 15. 16. 2 Sa. 11. 21.

2 A town of Ephraim, 13 miles northeast of Shechem. It is now called Tubas, and stands on a hill side, just above a plain. The environs are rich, abounding in olives.—*P.*

3 Such towers or citadels are almost universal in the cities, towns, and even villages of western Asia, sometimes as retreats for the authorities in popular commotions, and sometimes as places of security for the property of the inhabitants in the case of sudden invasion by marauders.—*C.*

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ings of valour in the fumes of wine ordinarily issue in cowardice and shame. Nor can they who are rebels themselves justly expect fidelity from their associates; for rebellions, even against evil princes, usually issue in the ruin of the traitors. Civil wars are usually the most inhuman, in which the innocent and guilty perish without distinction. But what miseries wicked rulers entail upon their poor subjects! And how terrible is their end at last, when God returns their murder and other wickedness on their heads! When God hath finished his work with them he debases and destroys them. They die in their sins; and the methods they

and all they of the city, and shut *it* to them, and gat them up to the top of the tower.

52 And Abimelech came unto the tower and fought against it, and went hard unto the door of the tower to burn it with fire.

53 And a certain woman [f]cast a piece of a millstone upon Abimelech's head, and all to break his skull.[4]

54 Then he called hastily unto the young man his armour-bearer, and said unto him, Draw thy sword, and slay me, that men say not of me, [g]A woman slew him. And his young man thrust him through, and he died.

55 And [h]when the men of Israel saw that Abimelech was dead, they departed every man unto his place.

56 ¶ Thus [i]God rendered the wickedness of Abimelech, which he did unto his father, in slaying his seventy brethren:

57 And all the evil of the men of Shechem did God render upon their heads: and [k]upon them came the curse of Jotham[5] the son of Jerubbaal.

CHAPTER X.

1 Tola judgeth Israel in Shamir; and after him Jair, whose thirty sons had thirty cities. 6 The Philistines and Ammonites oppress Israel. 10 In their misery God sendeth them to their false gods. 15 Upon their repentance he pitieth them.

AND after Abimelech there [a]arose, to [1]defend[2] Israel, Tola the son of Puah, the son of Dodo, a man of Issachar; and he dwelt in Shamir in mount Ephraim.

2 And he judged Israel twenty and three years, and died, and was buried in Shamir.

3 ¶ And after him arose Jair,[3] a Gileadite, and judged Israel twenty and two years.

4 And [b]he had thirty sons that rode on thirty ass-colts,[4] and they had thirty cities, which are called [c]Havoth-jair unto this day, which *are* in the land of Gilead.[5]

5 And Jair died, and was buried in Camon.

6 ¶ And [d]the children of Israel did evil again in the sight of the LORD, and served Baalim, and Ashtaroth, and the gods of Syria, and the gods of Zidon, and the gods of Moab, and the gods of the children of Ammon, and the gods of the Philistines, and forsook the LORD, and served not him.

A.M. 2835 or 2794. B.C. 1169 or 1210.

f ver. 15,20 2 Sa.11. 21. Je.50.45;49.20. Job 31.3.

4 '*All to break*,' which implies intention; but it should be printed, '*all to brake*,' to declare a fact. '*All to*' was an ancient form of expressing in English *altogether, entirely*. The Hebrew and the Septuagint require this translation.—*C.*

g ch.4.21; 5.26,27. 1 Sa.31 4,5. 2 Sa.11.21. 1 Ki.16.18. Mat.27.5.

h 1 Ki.22.35,36. 2 Sa. 18.16.

i ver. 24. Ps. 11. 6; 9. 12,16; 140. 11. Ac.28.4. Pr.5.22; 11.3,21. Ec. 9.2. 21.10.5,6.

k ver. 15, 20. Jos. 6. 26. 1 Ki.16.34.

5 'The curse causeless will not come,' Pr. 26. 2; but 'the curse of the Lord is in the house of the wicked,' Pr.3.33. The curse of Jotham, therefore, was nothing in itself; but, in so far as it was of the Lord, and upon the wicked, it came in retributive judgment.—*C.*

CHAP. X.

a ch.3.9,15;4.6;2.16, 18.He.5.4.

1 Or, *deliver*.

2 Heb. *save*.

3 Perhaps Jair began to rule on the east of Jordan not long after Tola began to govern on the west of it.

b ch.12. 14; 5. 10. Pr. 17.6.

4 This simple statement is specially valuable, (1) as an indication of the manners and state of the people; (2) as a note that the history must have been written at or very near the time; (3) as it assumes not, after the manner of secular history, any dignity for its heroes beyond their own recorded actions. Josephus seems to have been so sensible of this, that he changes the *asses* into *horses*, to give importance in the eyes of the Romans, for whom he wrote.—*C.*

c Or, *the villages of Jair*, Nu.32.41.

5 Jair was probably a descendant of Jair the son of Manasseh, who conquered the small towns of Gilead, and called them *Havoth-Jair*. There were then but twenty-three of them; but the sons of Jair the Ogite increased the number to thirty, and revived the old name.—*P.*

d ch.2.11,13;3.7;4.1; 6. 1; 13. 1. 1 Ki.11. 33. 1 Sa. 5. 2. Eze.16.25,26. Je.2.13. Perhaps this was not long after Tola and Jair began to judge.

A.M. 2835 or 2794. B.C. 1169 or 1210.

e ch.2.14, 15, 20. De. 32. 16–22, 30. Is. 59. 2. Le.26.24,25.1 Sa.12.9.

6 He had redeemed them from Egyptian slavery, he now gave them up to the Philistines.—*C.*

f ver. 5. Is. 30. 13. 1 Th.5.3.

7 Rather 'from that year,' as the word is translated, 2 Ki.14.3.—*C.*

8 Heb. *crushed*.

g ch.3.13;6.3,5.2Ch. 15.5. De.28.65.

h ch. 3.9,15; 4.3; 6. 6. 1 Sa. 7. 2, 6; 12. 10. Ps. 106.44;107.13,19,28.

i ch. 2.1–3;iii. iv. vii. Ex.vii.-xiv. 1 Sa.12.7–11. Ne.9.26–30. Eze.20. 5–33.

9 The Alexandrian Septuagint reads 'Midianites;' the Vulgate, 'Canaanites.' There seems no good reason for departing from the common reading, though the people are never mentioned before or after as oppressors of Israel. They were probably a tribe of Arabians inhabiting Maon. See Jos.15.55.—*C.*

k De.32.15. Je.2.13; 18.7,8. Jonah 3.4;2.4.

1 Now God did deliver them again; did he then change his purpose? And if he did change it, did he now tell the truth? The answer is easy: God says, 'Ye have *forsaken* me, and *served* other gods; wherefore, I will deliver you,' that is, '*you*' (as serving other gods) 'no more;' whereupon (ver. 16) they 'put away the strange gods, and served the Lord,' and he delivered them, being a new people.—*C.*

l De. 32. 37, 38. 1 Ki. 18.27,28. 2 Ki.3.13. Je. 2.28. Pr. 1.24–32.

m Jonah 2.4. Job 33. 27; 34. 31, 32. Je.3.13. 1 Sa.3.18. 2 Sa.10.12; 15. 26;24.10,14. Lu.13.8,9.

2 Heb. *is good in thine eyes*.

n 2 Ch.7. 14. Ho. 14. 1–3.8.

3 Heb. *gods of strangers*. [They indicated the sincerity of their repentance by utterly renouncing idolatry. If our repentance be real, we will renounce and forsake the sins which we confess. The reformation on this occasion seems to have been permanent, for we read not of their falling into idolatry during the time of those three judges which succeeded Jephthah. —*J.*]

o Is.63.9–14. Ho. 11. 8. Zec. 2. 8. Joel 2. 13. Ps.106. 45; 135. 14. De. 32. 36. Je.31. 20. La. 3. 33.

4 Heb. *was shortened*.

5 Heb. *cried together*.

p Ge.31.49. ch.11.11, 29,34. Jos.11.3,8.

q ch.11.5–8. De.20.5, 6. Ps.44.14,15. Is.34.12; 3.6,7. 2 Sa.5.8. Jos.5.16. 1 Sa.17.25,26.

7 And [e]the anger of the LORD was hot against Israel, and he sold them[6] into the hands of the Philistines, and into the hands of the children of Ammon.

8 And that [f]year[7] they vexed and [8]oppressed the children of Israel eighteen years, all the children of Israel that *were* on the other side Jordan, in the land of the Amorites, which *is* in Gilead.

9 Moreover,[9] the children of Ammon passed over Jordan to fight also against Judah, and against Benjamin, and against the house of Ephraim; so that Israel was sore distressed.

10 ¶ And [h]the children of Israel cried unto the LORD, saying, We have sinned against thee, both because we have forsaken our God, and also served Baalim.

11 And [i]the LORD said unto the children of Israel, *Did* not *I deliver you* from the Egyptians, and from the Amorites, from the children of Ammon, and from the Philistines?

12 The Zidonians also, and the Amalekites, and the Maonites,[9] did oppress you; and ye cried to me, and I delivered you out of their hand.

13 Yet [k]ye have forsaken me, and served other gods: wherefore I will deliver you no more.[1]

14 Go [l]and cry unto the gods which ye have chosen; let them deliver you in the time of your tribulation.

15 ¶ And the children of Israel said unto the LORD, [m]We have sinned: do thou unto us whatsoever seemeth good unto thee;[2] deliver us only, we pray thee, this day.

16 And they [n]put away the strange [3]gods from among them, and served the LORD: and [o]his soul was grieved[4] for the misery of Israel.

17 ¶ Then the children of Ammon were gathered together,[5] and encamped in Gilead: and the children of Israel assembled themselves together, and encamped in [p]Mizpeh.

18 And the people *and* princes of Gilead said one to another, [q]What man *is he* that will begin to fight against the children of Ammon? he shall be head over all the inhabitants of Gilead.

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took to secure their fame do but serve to perpetuate their disgrace. But let us remember that there is no refuge for us amidst all our spiritual enemies, and from the hand of an angry God, but in Christ the Saviour of sinners, and the stronghold of faithful people.

CHAPTER X. [Ver. 1. *Shamir in Mount Ephraim.* There was another Shamir in the hill country of Judah, Jos. 19. 22, therefore this city is specially described as belonging to Ephraim. Of Tola, nothing particular is related but his defence or deliverance of Israel, and the character of distinguished valour generally bestowed upon the whole family of Issachar, 1 Ch. 7. 1. *C.*]

Ver. 6. [*Forsook the Lord and served not him.* A religion addressed to the senses has wonderful attractions either for a very refined or a very sensual people, two states that may be either separate or combined. When refinement and sensuality are combined, religion chiefly consists in a taste for painting, statuary, music, processions, and ceremonies, with great moral laxity, compensated by pilgrimages, penances, or fines. Where sensuality reigns alone, the evils are the same, but the hope of remedy greater; for the refinement is wanting by which idolatry is recommended and its grosser deformities covered from the eyes. *C.*]

Ver. 10. [*The children of Israel cried unto the Lord.* Under whose government this occurred we are not expressly told. From the following chapter it would seem to have been in a kind of *interregnum*, between the death of Jair and the elevation of Jephthah. The time, however, is of no importance. The convictions of sin, and religious revival indicated, are the points of real importance. *C.*]

Ver. 11. [*The Lord said unto the children of Israel.* By whom the Lord spoke, whether by a prophet or the high-priest, or by his angel, we are not informed. By reference to ch. 13. 3 it would appear most probable that in this case it was the Lord himself that spoke. *C.*]

REFLECTIONS.—God can easily heap wealth on families, or render them happy with a moderate share; and it is a great mercy to a country when God raises up one impartial administrator of justice after another. Those whose hearts were never changed soon relapse into the very sins for which they had often severely smarted, and even become more and more wicked: and when single rods of wrath are quickly contemned God will, in justice or in love, apply his double strokes; strokes on every hand! But if at last they bring us to a kindly sense of sin and cordial crying to God, we must esteem them amongst his greatest mercies; and though sharp the trial, and God refuse to hear our distresses, yet let not the soul that is even frowned out of doors despair. If he makes us plead guilty at his

CHAPTER XI.

1 The covenant between Jephthah and the Gileadites, that he should be their head. 12 His embassy to the king of Ammon, which proveth fruitless. 29 Jephthah's vow. 32 His conquest of the Ammonites. 34 He performeth his vow on his daughter.

NOW Jephthah[c] the Gileadite was a mighty man of valour, and he *was* the son of an harlot:[1] and Gilead begat Jephthah.

2 And Gilead's wife bare him sons: and his wife's sons grew up, and they [b]thrust out Jephthah, and said unto him, Thou shalt not inherit in our father's house; for thou *art* the son of a [c]strange woman.

3 Then Jephthah fled from[2] his brethren, and dwelt in the [d]land of Tob:[3] and [e]there were gathered [e]vain men[4] to Jephthah, and went out with him.

4 ¶ And it came to pass [f]in process of time, that the children of Ammon made war against Israel.[5]

5 And it was so, [g]that, when the children of Ammon made war against Israel, the elders of Gilead went to fetch Jephthah out of the land of Tob:

6 And they said unto Jephthah, Come and be our captain, that we may fight with the children of Ammon.

7 And Jephthah said unto the elders of Gilead, [h]Did not ye hate me, and expel me out of my father's house? and why are ye come unto me now when ye are in distress?

8 And the elders of Gilead said unto Jephthah, Therefore we [i]turn again to thee now, that thou mayest go with us, and fight against the children of Ammon, and be our head over all the inhabitants of Gilead.

9 And Jephthah said unto the elders of Gilead, [k]If ye bring me home again to fight against the children of Ammon, and the LORD deliver them before me, shall I be your head?

10 And the elders of Gilead said unto Jephthah, The LORD [l]be witness between us, if we do not so according to thy words.

11 Then Jephthah went with the elders of Gilead, and the people made him head and captain over them: and Jephthah uttered all his[m] words before the LORD in Mizpeh.[6]

12 ¶ And Jephthah [n]sent messengers unto the king of the children of Ammon, saying, What hast thou to do with me, that thou art come against me to fight in my land?

A.M. 2858 or 2839.
B.C. 1146 or 1105.

CHAP. XI.

a He.11.32. ch.3.10. Ge.31.25,48.2 Ki.5.1.

1 Heb. *a woman, an harlot.*

b Ge. 21. 10. ver. 7. De.23.2.

c Pr.2.16; 5.3-5, *i.e.* a whore.

2 Heb. *from the face.*

d 2 Sa.10.6.

3 A petty kingdom of Syria, on the east of the Hauran, having Zoba on the north and the Ammonites on the south. It was a populous district, as it furnished 12,000 men to the confederacy against David, 2 Sa.10.6.—*C.*

e ch.9.4.1 Sa.22.2.

4 Being driven from his family, Jephthah was compelled to seek a subsistence where he could find it; and, accordingly, in those rude and turbulent times, became a leader of a band composed of necessitous men like himself, who followed him in his incursions upon the surrounding territories.—*C.*

f Heb. *after days,* ch.10.8.

5 The Ammonites had begun to make incursions, ch. 10. 9; encouraged by success, they proceeded to a regular invasion, ver.17, with a view to the complete subjugation of Israel.—*C.*

g ch.10.9-14. Pr. 24. 10.

h Ge.37.27;45.4.ver. 2.Pr.17.17.

i Lu. 17, 3. ver. 18. Ex.8.8,28;9.28;10.17. 1 Ki.13.6.

k Nu. 32. 20-22. Ge. 24.5.

l Heb. *be the hearer between us,* De. 1. 16. 1 Ki.3.11. Ge.16.5; 31. 53.1 Sa.24.12.

m ver.7,9; ch.10.17. 1 Sa.11.14,15.

n Pr. 25. 8, 9. Nu.21. 21;20.14. De.20.10,11.

6 This Mizpeh was situated to the east of Jordan, in Gilead, Ge.31.49. There was another to the west, in Judah, Jos. 15. 38. The uttering all his words 'before the Lord,' indicates that Jephthah had retained his religion, though in exile and amongst an idolatrous people—a pious decision of character, that, amongst all his difficulties, pointed out the man who had faithfully served his God, and best fitted now to serve his country. *C.*——Mizpeh of Gilead was the great gathering-place and sanctuary of the transjordanic tribes. What Mizpeh of Benjamin was on the west the other was on the east. It is called Ramoth-Mizpeh in Jos.13.26, but it is distinct from the Mizpah where Jacob and Laban met.

A.M. 2858 or 2839.
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About three miles north-west of Salt (Ramoth-Gilead) is the highest peak east of the Jordan. Its summit is broad and flat, and would form a fine gathering-place for a nation of warriors. This is doubtless the site of Mizpeh.—*P.*

o Ps.27.12.Pr.19.5,9. Nu.21.26-30.

7 The land was not taken from the Ammonites, but from the Amorites, ver.21; but an ancient claim was here revived to give a colour to the invasions.—*C.*

p Ps.120.7.Ro.12.18. Mar.9.50.He.12.14.

8 Jephthah seems to have been a warrior, a politician, and strict observer of the law; for Moses required that war should never be made without a previous offer of peace.—*C.*

q De.2.9,19. Ne.6.8. Ac.24.12.

r Ex.xii.-xix. Nu.x. xx.1-3;3-30.

9 There were a very few draught oxen and waggons, presented by the princes for the service of the tabernacle, Nu. 7. 7, 8, but the mass of the people were on foot, Ps. 66. 6, a circumstance worthy of note, as it will go far to account for the slowness of some of their marches, in which children and infirm persons must have been carried on the backs of parents and relatives.—*C.*

s Nu.20.14-21. De.2. 4-8,29.

t Nu.20.1,16.

u Nu.20 22;21 10,12, 13;33.37 44.

1 That is, not the west, as opposed to the east; but on the north, opposite Moab, of which kingdom the Arnon was the northern boundary.—*C.*

x Nu.21.13;22.36.

y Nu.21.21-35. De.2. 26-37;3.1-17. Jos.13.8-32.

z De.2.36;3;3.1-17. Nu.32.1-41. Jos.13.8-32. Ge. 36.22.

2 From Arnon on the south to Jabbok on the north, and from the Arabian desert on the east to Jordan on the west.

a Nu.21.29. 1 Ki.11. 7.2 Ki.23.13. Je.48.13.

3 This was no acknowledgment of the deity of Chemosh, but merely an appeal to the Ammonites on their own principles. Indeed, it was a virtual, implied, and understood denial that Chemosh was a god, for Jephthah asserts an indefeasible right to the disputed territory, by virtue of a grant from Jehovah.—*C.*

b Ge. 15, 18-21. Nu. 21. 21-35. Jos. 12.1-24. Ps.44.2,3;78.55. Jude 3.

c Nu. 22. 2. De. 23.4. Jos.24.9. Mi.6.5.

13 And the king of the children of Ammon answered unto the messengers of Jephthah, [o]Because Israel took away my land,[7] when they came up out of Egypt, from Arnon even unto Jabbok, and unto Jordan: now therefore restore those *lands* again peaceably.

14 And Jephthah [p]sent messengers[8] again unto the king of the children of Ammon,

15 And said unto him, Thus saith Jephthah, [q]Israel took not away the land of Moab, nor the land of the children of Ammon:

16 But when Israel [r]came up from Egypt, and walked[9] through the wilderness unto the Red sea, and came to Kadesh;

17 Then [s]Israel sent messengers unto the king of Edom, saying, Let me, I pray thee, pass through thy land: but the king of Edom would not hearken *thereto.* And in like manner they sent unto the king of Moab; but he would not *consent:* and [t]Israel abode in Kadesh.

18 Then [u]they went along through the wilderness, and compassed the land of Edom, and the land of Moab, and came by the east side of the land of Moab, and pitched on the other side[1] of Arnon, [z]but came not within the border of Moab; for Arnon *was* the border of Moab.

19 And [y]Israel sent messengers unto Sihon king of the Amorites, the king of Heshbon; and Israel said unto him, Let us pass, we pray thee, through thy land unto my place.

20 But Sihon trusted not Israel to pass through his coast: but Sihon gathered all his people together, and pitched in Jahaz, and fought against Israel.

21 And the LORD God of Israel delivered Sihon and all his people into the hand of Israel, and they smote them: so Israel possessed all the land of the Amorites, the inhabitants of that country.

22 And they possessed [z]all the coasts of the Amorites, from Arnon even unto Jabbok,[2] and from the wilderness even unto Jordan.

23 So now the LORD God of Israel hath dispossessed the Amorites from before his people Israel, and shouldest thou possess it?

24 Wilt not [c]thou possess that which [c]Chemosh thy god giveth thee to possess?[3] so [b]whomsoever the LORD our God shall drive out from before us, them will we possess.

25 And[c] now, *art* thou any thing better than

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bar, renounce our idols, and submit to his mercy, there is hope in our end. His fatherly heart is touched with our wretchedness, and ready to receive the returning prodigals. He is loath to give up his people to utter destruction: and when he restores his favourable smiles, they powerfully animate our hearts against every foe. But it is of great importance in our spiritual warfare to have proper leaders and directors; and especially that we cleave close to Christ, the great Captain of his people.

CHAPTER XI. [Ver. 1. *Son of an harlot.* Some high authorities propose to translate the word 'hostess,' 'a tavern-keeper; such persons however in the eastern countries around Canaan are, in modern times, totally unknown; nor do we see any indications in the Scriptures that would lead to the belief of their existence in ancient times. Taking the word as it stands in our version—and we believe it must be so taken—it indicates an important fact, that an unworthy parent may have a worthy child. See Eze. 18. 2, &c. *C.*]

Ver. 5. [*The elders of Gilead went to fetch Jephthah.* It is of no little importance for the encouragement of the young, to see that in all cases a distinguished man finds distinguishing employment. Talents, industry, and acquirements may for a time remain in obscurity, but some event will still occur to call them into exercise, and assign them due reward.—*Note,* Let not this fact encourage either pride or vain expectations; humility of expectation is one of the most essential handmaidens of success. *C.*]

Ver. 35. [*I have opened my mouth unto the Lord.* However imperfect the character of Jephthah may be, piety to the Lord was his predominant feeling, and his acquaintance with Scripture familiar, as is obvious from ver. 9, 11, 15–17, as well as from this verse. Therefore, nothing can, *a priori,* appear more unlikely, than that a man, familiar with Scripture, and piously disposed, should vow a sacrifice most solemnly denounced in Scripture, Le. 20. 2; nor can it be readily supposed, that a believer who would not dare to profane the altar by 'the price of a dog,' Ex. 23. 18, would

Balak the son of Zippor king of Moab? did he ever strive against Israel, or did he ever fight against them,[4]

26 While Israel dwelt in Heshbon and her towns, and in Aroer and her towns, and in all the cities that *be* along by the coasts of Arnon, three[d] hundred years? why therefore did ye not recover *them* within that time?

27 Wherefore I have not sinned against thee, but thou doest me wrong to war against me: the[e] LORD the Judge be judge this day between the children of Israel and the children of Ammon.

28 Howbeit[f] the king of the children of Ammon hearkened not unto the words of Jephthah which he sent him.

29 ¶ Then [g]the Spirit of the LORD came upon Jephthah,[5] and he passed over Gilead and Manasseh, and passed over [h]Mizpeh of Gilead, and from Mizpeh of Gilead he passed over *unto* the children of Ammon.

30 And Jephthah [i]vowed a vow unto the LORD, and said, If thou shalt without fail deliver the children of Ammon into mine hands,

31 Then it shall be, that whatsoever cometh forth[6] of the doors of my house to meet me, when I return in peace from the children of Ammon, shall surely be the LORD's, [k]and I will offer it up for a burnt-offering.[7]

32 ¶ So Jephthah passed over unto the children of Ammon to fight against them; and the LORD delivered them into his hands.

33 And he smote them from [l]Aroer, even till thou come to Minnith, *even* twenty cities, and unto the plain[8] of the vineyards, with a very great slaughter. Thus the children of Ammon were subdued before the children of Israel.

34 ¶ And Jephthah came to Mizpeh unto his house, and, behold, [m]his daughter came out to meet him with timbrels and with dances; and she *was his* only child:[9] besides her he had neither son nor daughter.

35 And it came to pass, when he saw her, that he rent [n]his clothes, and said, Alas, my daughter! thou hast brought me very low, and thou art one of them that trouble me: [o]for I have opened my mouth unto the LORD, and I cannot go back.

36 And she said unto him, My father, *if* thou hast opened thy mouth unto the LORD, do to me according to that which hath proceeded out of thy mouth; forasmuch as the LORD hath taken vengeance for thee of thine enemies, *even* of the children of Ammon.

37 And she said unto her father, Let this thing be done for me: let me alone two months, that I may go up and down upon the mountains, and [p]bewail my virginity,[1] I and my fellows.

38 And he said, Go. And he sent her away *for* two months: and she went with her companions, and bewailed her virginity upon the mountains.

39 And it came to pass at the end of two months, that she returned unto her father, who [q]did with her *according* to his vow which he had vowed: and she knew no man. And it was a custom[2] in Israel,

40 *That* the daughters of Israel went [3]yearly to lament[4] the daughter of Jephthah the Gileadite four days in a year.

CHAPTER XII.

1 *The Ephraimites, quarrelling with Jephthah, and discerned by the word Shibboleth, are slain by the Gileadites.* 7 *Jephthah dieth.* 8 *Ibzan, who had thirty sons and thirty daughters,* 11 *and Elon,* 13 *and Abdon, who had forty sons and thirty nephews, judge Israel.*

AND the men of Ephraim [a]gathered themselves together, and went northward,[1] and

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A.M. 2858 or 2839. B.C. 1146 or 1165.

4 The Moabites appear to have extended their conquests into this now disputed territory as far as Heshbon; but it had been wrested from them by the Amorites, from whom it was taken by Moses by divine authority.—*C.*

d Jos.11.18; 23.1. ch. 3.11,30; 5.31; 8.28; 9.22; 10. 2, 3, 8, *&c.* between 1452 and 1152.

e Ge.16.5; 18. 25; 31. 53. Ps.50.6. 1 Sa.24.12.

f Pr.21.29; 16.18. Ps. 120.7; 68.30. 2 Th. 3.2.

g ch.3.10; 6.34. 1 Ch. 12.18. He.11.32.

5 All valuable endowments are, in Scripture, attributed to the 'Spirit of the Lord,' from those of the accomplished artist, Ex.31.2, to those of the sanctified Christian, 1 Co. 6.11; and accordingly the undertaking of Jephthah is attributed to the Spirit coming upon him. But this coming of the Spirit is not to be considered as any mere enthusiastic impulse upon mind or body; but as light in the understanding to discover duty, faith to trust in God, zeal for his glory, love for his church, then grievously persecuted,—all which united produce that devotedness and courage that fit men for great and dangerous undertakings, and to which, under Providence, success is ordinarily to be traced. —*C.*

h ch.10.17.

i Ge.28.20. Ps.67.11. Nu.xxx. Ec.5.2,4. Ga. 4.18.

6 Heb. *that which cometh forth, which shall come forth.*

7 The whole difficulty of this perplexing narrative originates in this verse, and depends upon the translation of a single Hebrew letter, and which is sometimes rendered *and*, and sometimes *or*, according to the current of the passage. Thus, the words of the tenth commandment might be literally rendered, 'Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife, *and* his man-servant, *and* his maid-servant,' &c.; but the law obviously requires that it be rendered *or*, and not *and*. Now, if for *and* we substitute *or*, as is done in the tenth commandment, Jephthah will stand relieved from any vow to sacrifice his daughter, and merely to devote her to the Lord, as the law provided in the case of Nazarites or vows.—*C.*

k It might be rendered, *or I will offer it*, &c., Le.27.11. Is.66.3. De.23.18. 34.De.2.36; 3.12. Is.17.2. Eze.27.17. *l* Nu.32. 8 Or, *Abel.*

A.M. 2858 or 2839. B.C. 1146 or 1165.

m Ex.15.20. 1 Sa.18. 6. Ps.68.25.

9 Heb. *of himself.*

n Ge.37.29,34; 44.13. Nu.14.6. 2 Sa. 13.36. 1 Ki.21.27. 2 Ki.19.1. Es. 4.1. Ac.14.14. Job 1.20. Jer.9.5.

o Le.27.28,29. Ps.15. 4; 119. 106. Nu. 30. 2, 5. Ec.5.2.

p 1 Sa.1.6. Lu. 1.25. It was a reproach in Israel for a woman to die childless.

1 Those interpreters, and with whom we concur, who believe that Jephthah's daughter was devoted to *celibacy*, not to *sacrifice*, rest somewhat upon this verse; and though the Scriptures make no mention of any such institution of celibacy in Israel, yet as there was nothing in the law that absolutely forbade it, and as it is reiterated in the end of ver. 39, it seems to cast considerable weight into the scale of the most mild and merciful interpreters. It is but justice, however, to add, that the weight of authority, both Jewish and Christian, lies on the side of the actual sacrifice.—*C.*

q ver. 31. Le. 27. 28, 29. Is. 66. 3. There is too much reason to believe that he really offered her in sacrifice.

2 Or, *ordinance.*

3 Heb. *from year to year.*

4 Or, *to talk with*, i.e. to celebrate her praises, and bewail her untimely end.

CHAP. XII.

a Heb. *were called*, ch.8.1. Ec.4.4. Ps. 109. 4. Jn.10.32. Pr.18.3,6,7; 21.23,24. Ja.3.6,8.

1 The passage should be thus translated: 'And the men of Ephraim gathered themselves together, and passed over to Zaphon.' The Hebrew word *Zaphon* also means 'northward:' but here it is manifestly a proper name. It was a city of Gad, which stood on the east bank of the Jordan, near Succoth.—*P.*

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profane it still more by a sacrifice, not only illegal, but most cruel and unnatural. *C.*]

Ver. 40. [*Went yearly to lament the daughter of Jephthah.* The word translated 'to lament,' signifies also 'to praise, celebrate, or talk with.' An attention very natural in her young companions, and consolatory to the unhappy recluse, debarred from the hope of every Israelitess, that of being 'a mother in Israel,' and probably the mother of Messiah. In conclusion, Jephthah is celebrated by Paul as an example of *faith*, He. 11. 32, which we judge impossible had he been guilty of an act, whatever might be the motive, still worse than that of Cain, and which would have identified his religion with the worst feature of the idolatry of Canaan. *C.*——The record of Jephthah's vow in ver. 31 may be thus translated, 'That which (or, he who) cometh to meet me out of the doors of my house, when I return in peace from the children of Ammon, shall belong to the Lord, or (or, and) I will offer it for a burnt-offering (or, a whole-offering).' The Hebrew word translated 'and' may mean 'or;' and the context alone can decide. If rendered 'or' the difficulty is at once removed. But even admitting that it means 'and,' the passage may be satisfactorily explained. The word rendered 'burnt-offering' does not necessarily involve the idea of *burning*, but simply of going up upon the altar, or of complete surrender and dedication to the Lord. When a virgin is said to be so offered, she was set apart as a *spiritual whole-offering*, belonging henceforth entirely to the Lord.—The terms in which the sacred writer records the fulfilment of the vow, leads to the conclusion that Jephthah's daughter was not sacrificed. Her entreaty that he would give her two months *to lament her virginity*, is surely out of all keeping with the supposition that she was to be put to death. To mourn her virginity does not mean to mourn because she was to die on the altar, but because she was to live a virgin. Then observe the statement made by the historian after he relates that Jephthah 'did with her according to the vow which he had vowed:' '*And she knew no man.*' Is this in harmony with the supposition of a sacrificial death? *P.*]

REFLECTIONS.—The indulgers of lawless lust ordinarily entail both misery and shame upon the unhappy fruit of their guilty amours. But it is unreasonable for us to reproach a man with the unhappiness of his birth, when his practice deserves a more honourable relation. God often first debases those whom he intends to exalt, and marks men's sins, not only in their distress, but also in the means of their deliverance. Whorish Israel must now be delivered and governed by the bastard son of a harlot, lately an exile: but no man ought to be trampled on or despised; we may need his help ere we die. And if we have injured any, it is proper to entreat their pardon as quickly as possible. No injuries should render us implacable. Agreements ought to be very explicit and distinct; and, if important, ought to be ratified with solemn prayer. Before entrance on war the most solemn acknowledgments should be made to God, and repeated endeavours peaceably to compose every difference; that so, if war cannot be avoided, we may prosecute it with a good conscience, and depend on God for success in it. For it is reasonable that such as delight in war should be ruined by it. Unjust men are ready to insist upon the most antiquated claims; and however many practise injustice, few choose to be reckoned unjust. But when the Lord hath given us anything by special grant, we may insist upon the possession of it. To receive it from him, use it to his glory, keep it for his sake, and return it to him when he calls for it, is part of the duty which we owe to him. What care ought to be taken in contracting a solemn vow, that it may never prove a snare to our soul! And having engaged to anything lawful we must in no wise go back. But it is mournful when parents, by their rashness, involve their obedient children in sin, in misery, or in death; and kind and comforting to make the joys and griefs of our neighbours our own. In this world how is our wine mixed with water; our triumphs with distress; our joys with grief! Let these things make me long for the better country above.

CHAPTER XII. [Ver. 4. The meaning of this difficult passage appears to be the following: 'Refugees of Ephraim are ye Gileadites in the midst of Ephraim and Manasseh.' This contemptuous remark was not intended to apply to the whole tribes of Reuben and Gad, but only to those warriors whom Jephthah had gathered round him out of Gilead, and by whom he had conquered the Ammonites. *P.*]

Ver. 6. [The Ephraimites had crossed the Jordan

said unto Jephthah, Wherefore passedst thou over to fight against the children of Ammon, and didst not call us to go with thee? we will burn thine house upon thee with fire.[2]

2 And Jephthah said unto them, [b]I and my people were at great strife with the children of Ammon; and when I called you, ye delivered me not out of their hands.

3 And when I saw that ye delivered *me* not, I[c] put my life in my hands, and passed over against the children of Ammon, and the LORD delivered them into my hand: wherefore then are ye come up unto me this day, to fight against me?

4 Then Jephthah gathered together all [d]the men of Gilead, and fought with Ephraim: and the men of Gilead smote Ephraim, because they said, Ye Gileadites *are* [e]fugitives[3] of Ephraim among the Ephraimites, *and* among the Manassites.

5 And the Gileadites [f]took the passages of Jordan before the Ephraimites: and it was *so*, that when those Ephraimites which were escaped said, Let me go over; that the men of Gilead said unto him, *Art* thou an Ephraimite? If he said, Nay;

6 Then said they unto him, [g]Say now Shibboleth; and he said, Sibboleth:[4] for he could not frame to pronounce *it* right. Then they took him, and slew him at the passages of Jordan: and [h]there fell at that time of the Ephraimites forty and two thousand.[5]

7 And Jephthah judged Israel six years.[6] Then died Jephthah the Gileadite, and was buried in *one of* the cities of Gilead.

8 ¶ And after him Ibzan of [i]Beth-lehem judged Israel.

9 And he [k]had thirty sons and thirty daughters, *whom* he sent abroad, and took in thirty[7] daughters from abroad for his sons: and he judged Israel seven years.

10 Then died Ibzan, and was buried at Beth-lehem.

11 ¶ And after him Elon, a Zebulonite, judged Israel:[8] and he judged Israel ten years.

12 And Elon the Zebulonite died, and was buried in Aijalon, in the country of Zebulun.

A.M. 2858 or 2839.
B.C. 1146 or 1105.

2 Men often judge by success, and not by principle, and become jealous of the successful leader whom they would not aid in one of his struggles. The Ephraimites were also most probably stimulated by envy and covetousness when considering the spoil that must have been gleaned in the conquest of twenty cities. *C.*—In their address to Gideon in circumstances somewhat similar, ch. 8. 1, we have already had a proof of the domineering, ambitious spirit of this tribe. They began early to indicate a disposition to lord it over their brethren. In this instance their haughtiness met with its reward.—*I.*

b ch.11.12-33.

c ch.9.17. 1 Sa. 19. 5; 28.21. Job13.14. Ps.119. 109. Ro.16.4. Re.12.11.

d ch.11.10. De.4.47, 48.

e Ne.4.4. 1 Sa.25.10. Pr.15.1;12.13. Ye are the very scum and refuse of these two tribes.

3 It is by no means unlikely, from consulting chap. 11. 3, that there might be a portion of truth in this railing accusation, which made it the more offensive as a general statement; it was, however, untrue.—*C.*

f ch.3.28;7.24. Jos.2. 7.

g Mat. 26. 73; 12. 36, 37. Mar.14.70. Ps.64.8.

4 *Shibboleth*, a stream; *sibboleth*, a burden. Nothing is more common than for the people of one kingdom or province to be utterly unable to pronounce some of the vowel or consonant sounds of another.—*C.*

h Pr.18.19; 12.13; 29. 23;17.20. Ec.10.12.

5 At the last census, Nu. 26. 37, the Ephraimites amounted but to 32,500, so number slain appears in our translation unreasonably large. If the *and* be considered as a mark not of numeration, but of addition, the number cut off would amount merely to 2040.—*C.*

6 Cir. 1140 or 1139.

i Ge. 35. 19. Mi. 5.2. Mat.2.1.

k ch.10.4;ver.14.

7 The sons and daughters - in - law continued to live with Ibzan, a custom uncommon amongst persons of rank, or even among the poor in those countries, but still followed in parts of the continent of Europe, and said to be productive of great family attachment.—*C.*

8 B.C. 1123 or 1142.

A.M. 2881 or 2862.
B.C. 1123 or 1142.

9 B.C. 1123 or 1142.

l Heb. *sons' sons*, Pr.17.6.

m ch.10.4;5.10.

1 B.C. 1125 or 1134.

n Ge.14.7. Ex. 17.8. 1 Sa.15.7.

2 About six miles W.S.W. of Shechem, upon the summit of a tell, among low hills, stands a little village called *Ferata*, which is identical with the ancient Pirathon.—*P.*

CHAP. XIII.

B.C. 1135 or 1155.

a ch.2.1;13.7;4.1;6.1; 10.6.1 Sa.12.9.

1 Heb. *added to commit*, &c. Perhaps this servitude under the Philistines commenced about the tenth year of that under the Ammonites, ch. 10. 8, or under Ibzan, ch. 12. 8.

2 See note on ch. 8.28.—*C.*

b Jos. 19. 41; 15. 33. ver.25; ch.16. 31; 18. 2, 11.2 Ch.11.10.

3 Zorah, now called *Surah*, stands on a spur of the mountains, which projects into the plain of Philistia on the north of Bethshemesh.—*P.*

c Ge.16.1;25. 21;29. 31.1 Sa.1.7. Lu.1.7.

d Christ, ch. 2. 1; 6. 11. Ge.17.16; 18. 10. Is. 63.9. Lu.1.13,31.

e Ge.17.16;25.23; 30. 22. 1 Sa.1.20. Lu.1. 13, 31.

f Nu.6.2,3.

4 The vow of the Nazarite required this abstinence. To attract attention to the prophecy concerning the deliverer, the rules of Nazaritism are extended to the mother. The Scriptures often and evidently intimate, what human observation has daily confirmed, that more of the character and future progress of children depend upon mothers than upon fathers. Without searching, or perhaps being able to search, farther into the causes of this fact, enough appears to account for it in the greater intercourse of mothers with their children in childhood, when the future character is generally formed, and that beforemany suppose that any bias has been given.—*C.*

g ch.16. 17. Nu. 6. 5. 1 Sa.1.11. Lu.1.15. La. 4.7. Am.2.11,12.

h 1 Sa.7.13.2 Sa.8.1. Mat.1.21.

i De. 33. 1. 1 Ki. 17. 18.2 Ki.4.9. Jos.14.6. 1 Ti. 6. 11. &c., as she conceive I a holy prophet; but it was the angel Jehovah or Christ.

5 She supposed him a prophet of God from his conversation, which was godly, and his countenance, which was terrible.—*C.*

k Job 34.32. Ac.9. 6. Pr.3.5,6.

13 ¶ And after him Abdon the son of Hillel, a Pirathonite, judged Israel.[9]

14 And he had forty sons, and thirty [l]nephews, that [m]rode on threescore and ten asscolts: and he judged Israel eight years.

15 And Abdon the son of Hillel the Pirathonite died,[1] and was buried in Pirathon, in the land of Ephraim, in the mount of the [n]Amalekites.[2]

CHAPTER XIII.

1 Israel is in the hand of the Philistines. 2 An angel appeareth to Manoah's wife. 8 The angel appeareth to Manoah. 15 Manoah's sacrifice, whereby the angel is discovered. 24 Samson is born.

AND the children of Israel [a]did evil [1]again in the sight of the LORD; and the LORD delivered them into the hand of the Philistines forty years.[2]

2 ¶ And there was a certain man of [b]Zorah,[3] of the family of the Danites, whose name *was* Manoah; and his wife *was* [c]barren, and bare not.

3 And the [d]angel of the LORD appeared unto the woman, and said unto her, [e]Behold now, thou *art* barren, and bearest not: but thou shalt conceive, and bear a son.

4 Now therefore beware, I pray thee, and [f]drink not wine nor strong drink, and eat not any unclean[4] *thing:*

5 For, lo, thou shalt conceive, and bear a son; and [g]no razor shall come on his head: for the child shall be a Nazarite unto God from the womb: and he shall [h]begin to deliver Israel out of the hand of the Philistines.

6 ¶ Then the woman came and told her husband, saying, A [i]man of God[5] came unto me, and his countenance *was* like the countenance of an angel of God, very terrible: but I asked him not whence he *was*, neither told he me his name.

7 But he said unto me, Behold, thou shalt conceive, and bear a son; and now drink no wine nor strong drink, neither eat any unclean *thing:* for the child shall be a Nazarite to God from the womb to the day of his death.

8 ¶ Then Manoah entreated the LORD, and said, O my Lord, [k]let the man of God which thou didst send come again unto us, and teach us what we shall do unto the child that shall be born.

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to Gilead for the purpose of chastising Jephthah for his presumption. They themselves already presumed to rule Israel. Their bitter taunt brought upon them a bitter revenge at the hand of the rude eastern warrior. Having overthrown them on the battle-field, he intercepted them at the fords of the Jordan as they were attempting to cross to their native mountains. A difference in the pronunciation of a word enabled the Gileadites to identify the refugees. It is a remarkable fact that to this day the inhabitants of the country east of the Jordan pronounce certain letters in a manner entirely different from those on the west. *P.*]

Ver. 14. [*That rode on threescore and ten ass-colts.* This circumstance is mentioned as the most intelligible historical evidence of the fulfilment of the promises of God, and mark of the peace and prosperity of the land, so long as the people continued faithful to his covenant. *C.*]

REFLECTIONS.—Quarrels between brethren are often the most bitter and violent; for the most causeless wrath is the most outrageous and cruel. The most spotless characters are the fairest marks for envy; and the most signal services often expose men to the most virulent abuse of those whom they have saved from misery. But disregard of a calm self-vindication frequently forces the injured to harder measures. How mischievous is an insolent abusive tongue! It sets on fire the whole course of nature, and is set on fire of hell, and often issues in the ruin of the proprietor. They who are most in fault would often save themselves by being clamorous against the innocent: but the greatest boasters are usually the greatest cowards. Both God and men take pleasure in abasing the proud. These Ephraimites had gloried in their tribe; now they deny it. Lately they went over Jordan to burn Jephthah's house upon him; now they sneak homeward and are cut off from their own. Lately they reviled the Gileadites as fugitives; now, from an infirmity peculiar to their own country, they are discerned and slain in their flight. God sometimes calls men to an office without putting any remarkable work in their hand: and the days of the saints' honour or life are often but few and evil. Death's shafts fly thick—let us therefore so number our days as to apply our hearts unto wisdom.

CHAPTER XIII. [Ver. 23. *Have told us such things as these.* To argue from the past to the future is one of the soundest principles of piety. The believer 'calls to remembrance his song in the night;' 'he remembers the days of old;' especially he argues that, 'if God spared not his own Son, but freely gave him up to the death for us all, how much more will he also with him freely give us all things?' So argued

9 And God [l]hearkened to the voice of Manoah; and the angel of God came again unto the woman as she sat in the field: but Manoah her husband *was* not with her.

10 And [m]the woman made haste, and ran, and showed her husband, and said unto him, Behold, the man hath appeared unto me, that came unto me the *other* day.[6]

11 And Manoah arose, and went after his wife, and came to the man, and said unto him, *Art* thou the man that spakest unto the woman?[7] And he said, I *am*.

12 And Manoah said, Now let thy words come to pass: [n]how shall we order[8] the child? and *how* shall we do[9] unto him?[1]

13 And the angel of the LORD said unto Manoah, Of all that I said unto the woman let her beware.

14 She [o]may not eat of any *thing* that cometh of the vine, neither let her drink wine or strong drink, nor eat any unclean *thing:* all that I commanded her let her observe.

15 ¶ And Manoah said unto the angel of the LORD, I pray thee, let us detain thee until we [p]shall have made ready a kid for thee.[2]

16 And the angel of the LORD said unto Manoah, Though thou detain me, I will not eat of thy bread; and if thou wilt offer a burnt-offering, [q]thou must offer it unto the LORD: for Manoah knew not that he *was* an angel of the LORD.

17 And Manoah said unto the angel of the LORD, What *is* thy name, that when thy sayings come to pass we may [r]do thee honour?[3]

18 And the angel of the LORD said unto him, [s]Why askest thou thus after my name, seeing it *is* [3]secret?[4]

19 So Manoah [t]took a kid with a meat-offering, and offered *it* upon a rock unto the LORD: and *the angel* [u]did wondrously;[5] and Manoah and his wife looked on.

20 For it came to pass, when the flame went up toward heaven from off the altar, that the angel of the LORD [x]ascended in the flame of the altar: and Manoah and his wife looked on *it*, [y]and fell on their faces to the ground.

21 (But the angel of the LORD did no more appear to Manoah and to his wife.) Then Manoah knew that he *was* an angel of the LORD.

22 And Manoah said unto his wife, [z]We shall surely die, because we have seen God.

23 But his wife [a]said unto him, If the LORD were pleased to kill us, he would not have received a burnt-offering and a meat-offering at our hands; neither would he have [b]showed us all these *things;* nor would, as at this time, have told us *such things* as these.

24 ¶ And the woman bare a son, and called his name Samson:[6] and [c]the child grew, and the LORD blessed him.

25 And the [d]Spirit of the LORD began to move him at times in [e]the camp of Dan, between Zorah and Eshtaol.[7]

CHAPTER XIV.

1 *Samson desireth a wife of the Philistines.* 5 *In his journey to Timnath he killeth a lion.* 8 *In a second journey he findeth honey in the carcass.* 10 *Samson's marriage-feast.* 12 *His riddle by his wife is made known.* 19 *He spoileth thirty Philistines.* 20 *His wife is married to another.*

AND Samson went down to [a]Timnath,[1] and [b]saw a woman in Timnath of the daughters of the Philistines.

2 And he came up, and told his father and his mother, and said, I have seen a woman in Timnath of the daughters of the Philistines; now therefore [c]get her for me to wife.

3 Then his father and his mother said unto him, *Is there* never a woman among the daughters of [d]thy brethren, or among all my people, that thou goest to take a wife of the [e]uncircumcised Philistines? And Samson said unto his father, Get her for me; for she pleaseth[2] me well.[3]

4 But his father and his mother knew not that it *was* [f]of the LORD, that he sought an occasion against the Philistines; for at that time the Philistines [g]had dominion over Israel.

5 ¶ Then went Samson down, and his father and his mother, to Timnath, and came to the vineyards of Timnath: and, behold, a young lion roared against him.[4]

6 And[h] the Spirit of the LORD came mightily upon him, and he [i]rent him as he would have

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A.M. 2869 or 2849. B.C. 1135 or 1155.

l Ps.65.2. Mat.7.7-11.

m Ec.9.10; 4.10. Jn.1.45¹4.28,29.

6 The word 'other' is not in the original, and the verse had better be translated 'in this day,' 'to-day.'—*C.*

7 Manoah, as well as his wife, takes the angel for a mere prophet. — *Note,* Christians are just as liable to mistake in estimating the true character of God's messengers. Men no doubt they are, and not angels; still the character of messenger, and the truth of their message, entitle them to esteem 'for their work's sake.'—*C.*

n Ge. 18.19. Pr. 4. 4; 22.6.Ep.6.4.

8 Heb. *What shall be the manner of the,* &c.

9 Or, What *shall he do?*

1 Heb. What shall be *his work?*

o ver. 4. Nu. vi. Le. xi. De.12. 32. Mat. 28. 20.

p ch.6.18,19. Ge. 18. 5.Lu.24.30,31,41-43.

2 'In many things all offend, and in all things they come short,' but no servant of God is ever charged with want of hospitality. It distinguished all the patriarchs, it distinguished the primitive Christians, and it is enjoined as a duty of perpetual obligation on the church, He. 13.2.—*C.*

q ch. 6. 26; ver. 23. He.11.6.Le.i.

r 1 Sa.9.8.1 Ki.14.3.

s Ge.32.29.Is.9.6.

3 Or, *wonderful?*

4 The word here translated *secret,* is, in Is. 9. 6, translated *wonderful,* and is the evident meaning here. It is as if the angel had said, 'Why askest thou after my name? since, seeing the wonderful things I state, and the wonderful impression made by my appearance, must suggest that my name, my proper description, is *wonderful.*'—*C.*

t ch.6.26. 1 Sa.7. 9. 1 Ki.18.30-38.

u Jos.5.13. ch. 6. 21. 1 Ki.18.38.

x ch.6.21. 1 Ki.2.41. Ps.47.5. He.1.3, Ke. 8. 3.4

y Ge.17.3.Mat.17.6. Eze.1.28.Da.10.9.

5 There is a characteristic and most expressive play upon the word 'wonderful' here. The angel said his name was 'wonderful,' *i.e.* it was absolutely and supremely wonderful, as a predicate applicable to God alone. Then, when the offering is laid on the rock, the historian says, 'and *wonderful* was the act,' or event which followed, and which is recorded in ver.20.—*P.*

z Ex.33.20.De.5.26. ch.6.22.

a 1 Co.12.21. 2 Ki.5. 13.Ge.4.4,5.Ps.86.17.

b Ps.25.14. Pr. 3. 32. Jn.14.22.

6 Serving like the sun.

c 1 Sa.3.19.Lu.2.52.

d ch.3.10;6.34;11.29. Jn.3.34.

e ch.18.12; 16.31; 18. 2,11. Jos.19.41;15.33.

7 *Mahaneh - Dan* (translated 'camp of Dan') is here a proper name. It was given to the spot in which the Danites who migrated from the inheritance of their fathers to Laish, in the north of Palestine, as recorded in ch. 18. 12, had encamped. It was situated between the towns of Zorah (Samson's native city) and Eshtaol.—*P*

CHAP. XIV.

B.C. 1115 or 1135.

a Ge. 38. 12-14. Jos. 15.57;19.43.

1 Timnath stood on the point of a low ridge, west of Bethshemesh, and southwest of the much higher ridge on which the town of Zorah stood. The phrase, 'Samson *went down,*' proves that the writer was familiar with the geography of the district.—*P.*

b Ge.6.2;34.2.

c Ge. 21. 21; 24. 3-8; 28.1.2.

d Ge.13.8;24.27, *i.e.* kinsmen.

e ch.15.18. Ge.34.14. 1 Sa.14.6;17.26,36. Ex. 34.12. De.7.2.

2 Heb. *she* is *right in mine eyes.*

3 The marriage with a daughter of the Philistines was not forbidden, the prohibition of marriage, De. 7. 1-3, extending only to the seven nations, Hittites, Girgashites, Amorites, Perizzites, Hivites, and Jebusites, to none of whom the Philistines belonged: for the Philistines did not descend from Canaan, but from Mizraim, another son of Ham, 1 Ch.1.11,12. —*C.*

f 2 Ch.10.15;22.7;25. 20. Ps.115.3. Ex.3.22.

g ch.10.7;13.1;15.11.

4 Heb. *in meeting him.* This was an emblem of the Philistines and the devil.

h ch.3.10;11.29.1Sa. 11.6.

i 1 Sa.17.34.ch.15.8, 15;16.30. 1 Jn.3. 8. Col. 2.15. Zec.4.6.

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the wife of Manoah, one of the most perfect specimens of good understanding and solid piety that the Scriptures anywhere record. *C.*]

Ver. 25. [*The Spirit of the Lord began to move him at times.* Many changes take place between childhood and youth; still the child is generally the miniature of the future man, in character as much as in body. Parental partiality is not indeed either the most impartial or most accurate judge; but if a community notice any extraordinary endowments of a child, they seldom fail to be developed in the man. These extraordinary qualifications may, or may not, be indicated by bodily form; but their origin the Scriptures ascribe not to matter, organization, and form, but to the Spirit of the living God. See note on ch. 11. 29. *C.*]

REFLECTIONS.—Where there is the greatest danger and the least prospect of relief, it often comes. Mercies long waited for are rendered remarkably valuable for the encouragement of others to wait on the Lord. And to support the sinking spirits of his people, God often issues promises of salvation long before they are fulfilled. Those whom God honours to be deliverers of churches and nations, ought to be remarkably holy themselves, and devoted to the service of God. Parents ought to beware of infecting their children with anything of fleshly lusts; and married persons ought to communicate their spiritual experiences one to another. Divine instructions animate our desire after further fellowship with God: and how ready is God to satisfy such longing desires! Such as enjoy real communion with him wish all their relations to share of it. And such as know the real importance of children, will be earnestly desirous of God's direction and assistance in their education, for his honour. Mercies are mercies indeed only when they are rightly managed. But so treacherous are our memories and hearts, that we need line upon line, and precept upon precept; and to have always at hand a loving and careful remembrancer. Gratitude to God and to his ministers for his sake is highly agreeable; but let us never tempt the one nor the other with our curious inquiries. What God conceals we may be holy without the knowledge of; and if we ask in prayer what is not for our real advantage, it is a great mercy to have our suit denied. But how animating is it to behold an ascending Redeemer carrying our hearts and services, all inflamed with his love, along with him! Let not his saints, through unbelief, be afraid of their signal mercies, or afraid to die in the Lord; but ever put a just and favourable construction on the providences of God, and ever look to Jesus' sacrifice as the great foundation of their hopes and comforts. God's promises shall most certainly be fulfilled. And how pleasant to observe the early impressions of God's Spirit upon our children!

CHAPTER XIV. [Ver. 4. *Sought an occasion against the Philistines.* God overrules what men desire wrong and do wrong, as well as what they desire right and do right. By the envy of Joseph's brethren, which envy he condemned, he yet sent Joseph to Egypt to

TOWER OF THE FORTY MARTYRS—SITUATED IN THE COUNTRY ALLOTTED TO THE TRIBE OF DAN TO WHICH SAMSON BELONGED. [JUDGES, xiii: 25.]—"And the Spirit of the Lord began to move him at times in the camp of Dan between Zorah and Eshtaol." We give a picture here of the tower of the forty martyrs in Ramleh because it illustrates a scene in the country originally belonging to the tribe of Dan. And Samson to whom reference is made in this verse as being moved by the Spirit of the Lord was one of the children of this tribe. This tower is known as the White Mosque, White Tower or Tower of the Forty Martyrs, and the Moslems call it the Tomb of the Forty Champions. It is situated about a quarter of a mile from the town of Ramleh. The tower is Saracenic, square, and beautifully built. It is about 120 feet high. It is thought to have been finished in the year 1318. There is a Mahommedan tradition that forty companions of the Prophet are buried in the vaults of this mosque.

rent a kid, and *he had* nothing in his hand: but[k] he told not his father or his mother what he had done.[5]

7 And he went down and talked with the woman; and she pleased Samson well.

8 ¶ And after a time he returned to [l]take her, and he turned aside to see the carcass of the lion; and, behold, *there was* a swarm of bees and[6] honey in the carcass of the lion.[7]

9 And he took thereof in his hands, and went on eating, and came to his father and mother, and he gave them, and they did eat: but he told not them that he had taken the honey out of the carcass of the lion.

10 ¶ So his father went down unto the woman: and Samson [m]made there a feast; for so used the young men to do.

11 And it came to pass, when they [n]saw him, that they brought [o]thirty companions to be with him.

12 ¶ And Samson said unto them, I [p]will now put forth a riddle unto you: if ye can certainly declare it me within the [q]seven days of the feast,[8] and find *it* out, then I will give you thirty sheets,[9] and thirty change of garments:

13 But if ye cannot declare *it* me, then shall ye give me thirty sheets, and thirty [r]change of garments. And they said unto him, Put forth thy riddle, that we may hear it.

14 And he said unto them, [s]Out of the eater came forth meat, and out of the strong came forth sweetness. And [t]they could not in three days expound the riddle.

15 And it came to pass on the seventh day, that they said unto Samson's wife, [u]Entice thy husband, that he may declare unto us the riddle, lest[x] we burn thee and thy father's house with fire:[1] have ye called us to take that we have?[2] *is it* not *so?*

16 And Samson's wife [y]wept before him, and said, Thou dost but hate me, and lovest me not: thou hast put forth a riddle unto the children of my people, and hast not told *it* me. And he said unto her, Behold, I have not told *it* my father nor my mother, and shall I tell *it* thee?

17 And she wept before him the seven days,[3] while their feast lasted: and it came to pass on the seventh day, that he told her,[4] because she lay sore upon him: and [z]she told the riddle to the children of her people.

18 And the men of the city said unto him on the seventh day, before the sun went down, What *is* sweeter than honey? And what *is* stronger than a lion? And he said unto them, If ye had not ploughed with my [a]heifer, ye had not found out my riddle.

19 ¶ And[b] the Spirit of the LORD came upon him,[5] and he went down to Ashkelon, and slew thirty men of them, and took their spoil,[6] and gave change of garments unto them which expounded the riddle: and his [c]anger was kindled, and he went up to his father's house.

20 But Samson's wife was *given* to his companion, whom he had used as his [d]friend.

A.M. 2889 or 2869.
B.C. 1115 or 1135.

[k] Is.42.2.Mat.11.29.

5 Three traits already distinguish Samson's character. (1) Deference to his indulgent parents; (2) Mingled with no little self-will—apparent contradictions that often meet fond parents giving way to their children's wishes. See ver. 2,3. (3) Silent modesty in regard to his own achievements, ver.6, the constant accompaniment of what is called a great mind. —*C.*

[l] Mat.1.20,Ge.29.21.

6 In a warm clime, swarming with vultures and jackals, the lion in a day or two would be reduced to a mere skeleton, perfectly fit for the reception of bees.—*C.*

7 What comfort to Christ and his people, and what honour to his Father, is in his victory over sin, Satan, death, and hell.

[m] Ge.29.22. Jn.2. 1-9.

[n] 1 Sa.10.23,16.6.

[o] 1 Sa.18.20,21. Mat. 9.15.

[p] 1 Ki.10.1. Eze.17. 2. Mat.13.11.ver.13,16.

[q] Ge.29.27.ver.17.

8 The time employed in the marriage-feast, and the number of the guests, indicate a state of rude abundance, where a destructive expense is often incurred at the founding of a family, which serves to depress or impoverish it through its future history. Such customs still prevail in the East, and in some of the less civilized portions of Europe.—*C.*

9 Or, *shirts.*

[r] Ge. 45. 22. 2 Ki. 5. 22.

[s] Jn.6.51–56. 2 Co.4. 17.

[t] 1 Co.2.14,15. Mat. 13.11. Jn.6.32–60.

[u] Ge. 3. 6. ch. 16. 5. Job 31.27. Pr.5.3,6.3.

[x] ch.15.6.

1 The lawless state of society indicated by this threat must be held in view when we consider the remaining parts of the history of Samson.—*C.*

2 Heb. *to possess us*, or *to impoverish us.*

[y] ch.16.15. Job 2.12.

3 Or, the rest of *the seven days*, &c.

4 It is easy to do right for a little time, just so long as it is agreeable to our constitution and habits, as modesty and secrecy evidently were to Samson. The difficulty lies in persevering to do right, and to carry our first resolutions into effect. Samson refused to discover his secret till near the end of the seventh day; importunity and tenderness made him his own betrayer. Peter was bold for a little in the garden—temptation overcame him in the judgment-hall.—*C.*

A.M. 2889 or 2869.
B.C. 1115 or 1135.

[z] Mi.7.5. Joh.2.9. Pr. 2.16,17.

[a] Wife, ver. 15–17. Mi.7.5.

[b] ch.3.10;11.29.1 Sa. 11.6.ver.6. An uncommon impulse of the Spirit.

5 The Spirit of the Lord presented before him the lawless wrongs to which his country was subjected, and endowing him with supernatural strength and courage, sent him down to punish robbers, murderers, and manstealers.—*C.*

6 Or, *apparel.*

[c] Against his wife and her friends, ver. 15–17;ch.15.2.

[d] Principal, Jn. 3. 29.

CHAP. XV.

B.C. 1110 or 1130.

[a] Ge. 38. 17. Lu. 15. 29.

[b] Ge.6.4;44.1.ch.16.1. Joel 3.3.

[c] ch.14.19. Ac.26.9.

[d] Ge. 24. 34; 38.14. 1 Co.7.36.

1 Heb. *let her be thine.*

[e] Or, *Now shall I be blameless from the Philistines, though,* &c., ch.14.15.

[f] Ca. 2.15. Ps.63.10. La.5.18. Nc.4.3. The foxes were extremely plenty in some places of the lot of the Danites, and he might have assistants in catching them.

2 The Hebrew word signifies *jackals*, which are very numerous in Palestine. On one occasion I bivouacked in the mountains in the heart of Samson's country, and from the howling I calculated that there must have been hundreds of jackals around me.—*J.*

3 *Torches.*

4 The destruction of grain, olive-trees, and vines will be easily understood by those who have seen the plain of Philistia, and know the mode of cultivation. There are no fences; the corn-fields extend for miles in one uninterrupted expanse. Grain is sown, and grows luxuriantly around the vines and beneath the branches of the olives. In a dry and sunny country like Palestine, the fire, when once kindled, would spread rapidly, and burn fiercely. Samson must have watched the success of his clever scheme of destruction from the heights of Zorah with rare delight.—*P.*

[g] ch.14.15. Pr. 10.24; 22.8. Ho.8.7. 1 Th.4.6.

5 Such extemporaneous ebullitions of popular fury indicate both a rude state of society and a weak government; yet is it instructive to see how treachery (ch. 14. 17), in seeking to avoid threatened evil(ch. 14. 15), brings down upon its head the very punishment from which there can be no doubt the bravery of Samson would have defended his relatives. —*C.*

CHAPTER XV.

1 *Samson is denied his wife.* 3 *He burneth the Philistines' corn with foxes and firebrands.* 6 *His wife and her father are burned by the Philistines.* 7 *Samson smiteth them hip and thigh.* 9 *He is bound by the men of Judah, and delivered to the Philistines.* 14 *He killeth a thousand of them with a jawbone.* 18 *God openeth a fountain in Lehi to relieve his thirst.*

BUT it came to pass within a while after, in the time of wheat harvest, that Samson visited his wife with [a]a kid; and he said, I will [b]go in to my wife into the chamber: but her father would not suffer him to go in.

2 And her father said, [c]I verily thought that thou hadst utterly hated her; therefore [d]I gave her to thy companion: *is* not her younger sister fairer than she? take her,[1] I pray thee, instead of her.

3 ¶ And Samson said concerning them, [e]Now shall I be more blameless than the Philistines, though I do them a displeasure.

4 And Samson went and caught [f]three hundred foxes,[2] and took fire-brands,[3] and turned tail to tail, and put a fire-brand in the midst between two tails.

5 And when he had set the brands on fire, he let *them* go into the standing corn of the Philistines, and burnt up both the shocks, and also the standing corn, with the vineyards *and* olives.[4]

6 Then the Philistines said, Who hath done this? And they answered, Samson, the son-in-law of the Timnite, because he had taken his wife, and given her to his companion. And the Philistines came up and [g]burnt her and her father with fire.[5]

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preserve the life of his father and brethren. So now, by the imprudent though not unlawful marriage of Samson, 'he seeks occasion against the Philistines,' to punish them by their unnatural quarrels with their adopted relatives. *C.*]

REFLECTIONS.—It is dangerous to be guided by the eye in the choice of our marriage companions: but it is needful and proper to submit ourselves to the authority of parents, who are over us in the Lord, as their property, and parts of themselves. And nothing ought they to object to so urgently as to children's marrying with such as seem irreligious. God often indeed carries on his great purposes by means which cannot be justified in us; for when people are wandering out of God's way, they have reason to expect dangers, and even devils, to meet with and oppose them. It is glorious when great exploits are attended with great humility; and highly becoming when persons keep up an affecting remembrance of what God has done for them, and cheerfully allow their parents a share of what they acquire by their labour. And it is prudent to amuse ourselves and others at cheerful entertainments with something instructive and useful. God often brings the sweetest mercies out of the severest trials; but the treacherous pretences of affection speedily issue in dislike and mischief. Secrets, once trusted out of our own breast, seldom continue long such. Rash marriages often issue in sudden separations; and if women's affections once stray from their husbands, their persons will soon follow. Nor are any more apt to defile the bed than false pretenders to friendship.

CHAPTER XV. [Ver. 4. *Samson went and caught three hundred foxes.* The species of fox here meant is admitted upon all hands to be the jackal, of which Volney, the enemy of all Scripture, admits from his own observation, that 'they are concealed by hundreds in the gardens, and among ruins and tombs.' There could therefore be little difficulty, by aid of a few friends and nets, in taking the three hundred which Samson employed. *C.*]

Ver. 5. [*When he had set the brands on fire.* We are neither informed what material Samson employed to fasten the foxes, nor its length, nor what species of

BOAT AND OARSMEN, JAFFA—IN THE TERRITORY OF THE PHILISTINES. [JUDGES, xv: 3.]—"And Samson said concerning them, Now shall I be more blameless than the Philistines, though I do them a displeasure." This picture of a boat and oarsmen in Jaffa is given here because illustrating a scene in one of the oldest cities of the world, and a city belonging for awhile to the Philistines. This picture gives us an idea of how such travelers are carried to the shore in Jaffa as have previously arranged for a tour of the Holy Land through some dragoman or guide. Such travelers are met out at sea, and with their baggage are taken in charge as soon as the anchor is cast. The pilgrim has no trouble whatever. Everything has been arranged for his coming. The party who made the trip to secure the pictures that illustrate this work made all the arrangements for a tour of the Holy Land in London.

7 ¶ And Samson said unto them, [h]Though ye have done this, yet will I be avenged of you, and after that I will cease.

8 And he smote them [i]hip and thigh[5] with a great slaughter: and he went down and dwelt in the top of the rock Etam.

9 ¶ Then the Philistines went up, and pitched in Judah, and spread themselves in [k]Lehi.

10 And the men of Judah said, Why are ye come up against us? And they answered, [l]To bind Samson are we come up, to do to him as he hath done to us.

11 Then three thousand men of Judah went[6] to the top of the rock Etam, and said to Samson, Knowest[7] thou not that the Philistines *are* rulers[m] over us? what *is* this *that* thou hast done unto us? And he said unto them, As they did unto me,[8] so have I done unto them.

12 And they said unto him, We are come down to bind thee, that we may [n]deliver thee into the hand of the Philistines. And Samson said unto them, Swear unto me, that ye will not [o]fall upon me yourselves.

13 And they spake unto him, saying, No; but we will [p]bind thee fast, and deliver thee into their hand: but surely we will not kill thee. And they bound him with two new cords, and brought him up from the rock.

14 ¶ *And* when he came unto Lehi, the [q]Philistines shouted against him: and the [r]Spirit of the LORD came mightily upon him; and the cords that *were* upon his arms became as flax that was burnt with fire, and his bands loosed[9] from off his hands.

15 And he found a new[1] jaw-bone of an ass, and put forth his hand and took it, and [s]slew a thousand men therewith.

16 And Samson said, With the jaw-bone of an ass, heaps upon heaps, with the jaw of an ass have I slain a thousand men.

17 And it came to pass, when he had made an end of speaking, that he cast away the jaw-bone out of his hand, and called that place [2]Ramath-lehi.[3]

18 ¶ And he was [t]sore athirst, and called on the LORD, and said, [u]Thou hast given this great deliverance into the hand of thy servant: and now [v]shall I die for thirst, and fall into the hand of the uncircumcised?

19 But God clave an hollow place that *was* in [w]the jaw,[4] and there came water thereout; and when he had drunk, his spirit came again, and he revived: wherefore he called the name thereof [x]En-hakkore, which *is* in Lehi unto this day.

20 And he [a]judged Israel in the days of the Philistines twenty years.

CHAPTER XVI.

1 *Samson at Gaza escapeth, and carrieth away the gates of the city.* 4 *Delilah, corrupted by the Philistines, enticeth Samson.* 6 *Thrice she is deceived.* 15 *At last she overcometh him.* 21 *The Philistines take him, and put out his eyes.* 22 *His strength renewing, he pulleth down the house upon the Philistines, and dieth.*

THEN went[a] Samson to [b]Gaza, and saw there an harlot,[1] and went in unto her.

2 *And it was told* the Gazites, saying, Samson is come hither. And they [c]compassed *him* in, and laid wait for him all night in the gate of the city, and were quiet[2] all the night, saying, In the morning, when it is day, we shall [d]kill him.

3 And Samson lay till midnight, and arose at midnight, and [e]took the doors of the gate of the city, and the two posts,[3] and went away with them, bar[4] and all, and put *them* upon his shoulders, and carried them up to the top of an hill that *is* before Hebron.[5]

4 ¶ And it came to pass afterward,[6] that he [f]loved a woman in the valley[7] of Sorek, whose name *was* [g]Delilah.

5 And the lords of the Philistines came up unto her, and said unto her, Entice him, and see wherein his great strength *lieth*, [h]and by what *means* we may prevail against him, that we may bind him to afflict[8] him; and we [i]will give thee, every one of us, [k]eleven hundred *pieces* of silver.[9]

6 And Delilah said to Samson, [l]Tell me, I pray thee, wherein thy great strength *lieth*, and wherewith thou mightest be bound to afflict thee.

7 And Samson said unto her, [m]If they bind

A.M. 2894 or 2874. B.C. 1110 or 1130.

h ch.14.4,19. Ro.12.19.

i De.28.35. Eze.9.5,6. Perhaps he killed them with his feet.

5 The interpretations of this phrase have been exceedingly numerous, as, 'horsemen resting on the hip—footmen on the thigh,' 'with his leg on their thigh,' 'shoulder upon thigh,' the slaughtered falling so close to each other, &c. &c. To these we venture to add another view, premising that, in Scripture, *the thigh* is the place of the sword, Ps. 45.3. 'He smote them *hip* and *thigh*,' that is, those who fled and those who fought, smiting down the braver part, and pursuing and overtaking the cowardly.—*C.*

k The place of the jaw-bone, ver.17.

l So the Jews delivered Christ bound to Pilate, Mat.27.2.

6 Heb. *went down.*

7 The people were at this time in a most degraded condition. Their words to Samson plainly declare that they were much more afraid of irritating their oppressors, than anxious to assert their independence.—*I.*

m ch.11.7; 13.1; 14.4. De.28.13,47,48.

8 They had burned his wife, to whom, weakly, though treacherous, he seems still to have been attached, ver. 1.—*C.*

n ch. 8. 6. Ac. 7. 25. Phi. 2. 21. Mat. 26. 46-50.

o Kill, ver. 13; ch. 8. 21. 1 Ki.2.25,34.

p Mat.27.1.

q ch.5.30; 16.24. Ex. 14.3,5.

r Zec. 4. 6. ch. 3. 10; 11.29; 14.6,19. 1 Sa.17. 34. Ps.118.11. Phi.4.13.

9 Heb. *melted.*

1 Heb. *moist.*

s ch.3.31; 1 Sa.17.49, 50. 2 Sa.23.8,18. Zec.4. 6. 1 Co.1.21,27.

2 That is, *the lifting up*, or *casting away of the jaw-bone.*

3 Boothroyd interprets the word, 'the hill of the jaw-bone,' which appears preferable to the ordinary marginal reading. *C.*—The name of the place before the conflict was evidently Lehi, as appears from verses 9 and 14; perhaps so called from the peculiar shape of some hill or rock. After the slaughter of the Philistines, Samson, with a characteristic pun and play upon the word, makes it descriptive of his signal and singular victory. The site of Lehi is unknown.—*I.*

t ch. 8. 5. 2 Co.4.8,9. Jn.19.28. 1 Pe.2.21,24.

u Ps.3.7,8; 18.3,6,44.

A.M. 2894 or 2874. B.C. 1110 or 1130.

v He.11.32. 1 Sa. 17. 36. 2 Sa.1. 20. Mat. 14. 30,31.

w Lehi, ver. 17. It is the name of the place.

4 This word should not have been translated *jaw*, but left as *Lehi*, the proper name of the place, as appears from the end of the verse. For as the well was still in being when the book was written, and known by the name of Enhakkore, it could not have originated in a hollow of the bone, but in a hollow of the earth, where it still continued to flow.—*C.*

x That is, *the well of him that cried.* As Ge.16.13; 22.14; 28. 19; 35.15. Ps.34.6; 120.1.

a ch.13.5; 16.31; 11.7.

CHAP XVI.

B.C. 1100 or 1120.

a ch.15.1. Ge. 38.16, 18. Ezr.9.1,2.

b Ge. 10. 19. Jos. 15. 47; 13.3. ch.3.2,3.

1 Heb. *a woman an harlot.*

c 1 Sa.23.26.

2 Heb. *silent.*

d ch.15. 18. Mat. 21. 38.

e Ps.127.2; 58.18; 107. 16. Je. 5. 10. Is. 63.1-3; 25. 8. Ho.13, 14. He. 2. 14,15. Mar.16.4.

3 The rude condition of architecture indicated by the doors of a city being hung on two posts, and closed with a single bar, will serve to prepare the mind for a temple so inartificially constructed, that one mighty man might bring down its chief supports, as Samson does at a subsequent period of his history.—*C.*

4 Heb. *with the bar.*

5 Literally, 'in the face of Hebron, *i.e.* facing or looking towards Hebron. There is a little hill about a mile east of Gaza, from the top of which there is a commanding view away across the wide plain towards the distant hills of Hebron. Here, a very old tradition says, Samson deposited the gate of Gaza. The site of the gate itself is still shown; and the name and deeds of Samson are as familiar to the Mohammedans of Gaza as they are to the Christian student.—*C.*

6 1095 or 1115.

f Ps.144.3,Ne.13.26. 1 Co.10.6. Pr.22.14; 23. 27,Ec.7.26.

7 Or, *by the brook.*

g A consumer, Pr. 5.11; 6.26.

h ch.14.15. Pr.7.26.

8 Or, *humble.*

i Nu.22.17. Mat. 26. 15.1 Ti.6.10.

9 There were five lords of the Philistines—Gaza, Ashdod, Ekron, Askelon, Gath. The lowest estimate makes this bribe £5577, 10*s.*; the highest, that of Waserus, estimates about £700.—*C.*

k About £627 in all, ch.17.2. Mat.26.15. *l* Ps.12.2. Pr.23.27; 26.28; 22.14; 6.26; 7.21. Ec.7.26. *m* Ro.3.8. Ga.6.7. Ps.25.21; 119.8. Col.3.9.

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combustible was used; objections arising from particular suppositions are therefore no more than suppositions. The question is, Was the matter practicable? And any one who considers that statement in the former note as to the multitudes of foxes, and the facilities of obtaining them—who considers the habits of the animals and the state of the country—and who would but exercise a little ingenuity—will find no difficulty in devising means for the execution of Samson's plan. It is specially to be remembered, that it is not said that Samson let them all loose from one point, or that it was all effected in one night. *C.*]

REFLECTIONS.—An alliance into profane and graceless families, or giving way to unreasonable jealousies, are sources of great unhappiness: but when we have done our duty to prevent a quarrel, we cannot be charged with the consequences of it. Passion is terrible to all around, but it is glorious when the offended party is the first in coveting reconciliation. God often makes use of his people's enemies to avenge their quarrel. And such as by sin seek to avoid suffering, only bring upon themselves more terrible destruction. The people of God indeed have need to expect but little repose in this world. One conflict closely succeeds to another: and those whom God raises up to be deliverers in church or state frequently receive the most base and treacherous abuse from their friends, for whose sake they spend their pains and risk their life. But if God be for us, no matter what or who may be against us, or how small our assistance be: for though humbling providences closely follow after the most exalting, that we may know that we are but flesh, frail flesh, and may be constrained to a constant dependence on God, and fervent supplication to him; yet will he supply all our wants and fill our mouths with his praise.

CHAPTER XVI. [Ver. 1. *Gaza*, 62 miles south-west of Jerusalem. It must have been very ancient, as it is mentioned Ge. 10. 19. It was taken shortly after the death of Joshua, Ju. 1. 18, but must have been soon recovered by the Philistines. It subsequently became a place of great strength, and stood a siege of three months against Alexander the Great. It is at present inhabited by Turks and Arabs, and contains about 3000 inhabitants. *C.*]

Ver. 3. [*Samson lay till midnight.* While infidels delight to point to the failings and sins recorded of God's servants, and to deduce from them an argument against the Bible, the believer, with all propriety, adduces from the record of them an irresistible argument on behalf of the Bible. The Bible is the only book that ever recorded the faults and sins of those who may be called its heroes. Were the lives of infidels as faithfully recorded, they would perhaps be slower in bringing railing accusations. The conduct of Samson is a sad disgrace to a Nazarite and a judge—a melancholy example of the weakness of human nature and the power of sin. *C.*]

Ver. 20. ['The superhuman strength of Samson did not reside in his hair as hair, but in the fact that God

JERUSALEM ROAD—PASSING THROUGH THE TERRITORY OF DAN. [JUDGES, xvi.]—We give this picture here as an illustration of the sixteenth chapter of Judges, because it illustrates the Jerusalem road from Jaffa to the Holy City, which has in all ages been the great highway through the territory that once belonged to the tribe of Dan, whose most famous historical character, perhaps, was Sampson. This picture was taken on Monday morning, May 23, 1894. You observe two of the parties on the camels looking back with a great deal of interest. They appeared to be very curious to understand our proceedings. They little dreamed that their pictures were being taken, and that they would be used in all parts of the English-speaking world to illustrate the Bible, the product of their own land. It is difficult to comprehend how deeply ignorant the natives of Palestine are. They cannot read, and they have no conception whatever of the modern world. They are as blank in mind as their ancestors in the days of Abraham.

me with seven [1]green[2] withs[3] that were never dried, then shall I be weak, and be as another[4] man.[5]

8 Then the lords of the Philistines brought up to her seven green withs which had not been dried, and she [n]bound him with them.

9 (Now *there were* men lying in wait, abiding with her in the chamber.) And she said unto him, The Philistines *be* upon thee, Samson.[6] And he brake the withs, as a thread of tow is broken when it [o]toucheth the fire: so his strength [p]was not known.

10 And Delilah said unto Samson, Behold, thou hast mocked me, and told me lies: now tell[q] me, I pray thee, wherewith thou mightest be bound.

11 And he said unto her, [r]If they bind me fast with new ropes[7] that never were occupied,[8] then shall I be weak, and be as another man.

12 Delilah therefore [s]took new ropes, and bound him therewith, and said unto him, The Philistines *be* upon thee, Samson. (And *there were* liers in wait abiding in the chamber.) And he brake them from off his arms like a thread.

13 And Delilah said unto Samson, Hitherto thou hast mocked me, and told me lies: tell me wherewith thou mightest be bound. And he said unto her, [t]If thou weavest the seven locks[9] of my head with the web.

14 And she fastened[1] *it* with the pin, and said unto him, The Philistines *be* upon thee, Samson. And he awaked out of his sleep, and went[u] away with the pin of the beam, and with the web.[2]

15 ¶ And she said unto him, [x]How canst thou say, I love thee, when thine heart *is* not with me? thou hast mocked me these three times, and hast not told me wherein thy great strength *lieth*.

16 And it came to pass, when she pressed him daily with her words, and urged him, *so* that his soul was [y]vexed unto death,

17 That he told her [z]all his heart, and said unto her, There hath not come [a]a razor upon mine head; for I *have been* a Nazarite unto God from my mother's womb: if I be shaven, then my strength will go from me, and I shall become weak, and be like any *other* man.[3]

18 And when Delilah saw that he had told her all his heart, she sent and called for the lords of the Philistines, saying, Come up this once; for he hath showed me all his heart. Then the lords of the Philistines came up unto her, and [b]brought money in their hand.

19 And [c]she made him sleep upon her knees: and she called for a man, and she caused him to shave off the seven locks of his head; and she began to afflict him, and his strength went from him.

20 And she said, The Philistines *be* upon thee, Samson. And he awoke out of his sleep, and said, I will go out, as at other times before, and shake myself. And he wist not that [d]the LORD was departed from him.[4]

21 But the Philistines took him, [e]and [5]put out his eyes, and brought him down to Gaza, and [f]bound him with fetters of brass; and he [g]did grind in the prison-house.[6]

22 Howbeit[h] the hair of his head began to grow again after he was shaven.[7]

23 ¶ Then the lords of the Philistines gathered them together for to offer a great sacrifice unto [i]Dagon their god, and to rejoice: for they said, Our god hath delivered Samson our enemy into our hand.

24 And when the people saw him, they [k]praised their god: for they said, Our god hath delivered into our hands our enemy, and the destroyer of our country, which slew many of us.[8]

25 And it came to pass, when their [l]hearts were merry, that they said, Call for Samson, that he may make us sport. And they called for Samson out of the prison-house; and he made them[9] sport:[m] and they set him between the pillars.

26 ¶ And Samson said unto the lad that held him by the hand, Suffer me that I may feel the pillars whereupon the house standeth, that I may lean upon them.

27 Now the house was full of men and women; and all the lords of the Philistines *were* there: and *there were* [n]upon the roof about three thousand men and women,[1] that beheld while Samson made sport.

28 And Samson [o]called unto the LORD, and said, O Lord GOD, remember me, I pray thee, and strengthen me, I pray thee, only this once, O God, that I may be at once avenged of the Philistines for my two eyes.[2]

29 And Samson took hold of the two middle

A.M. 2909 or 2889.
B.C. 1095 or 1115.

1 Or, *new cords*.
2 Heb. *moist*.
3 Josephus says they were tendrils of the vine; the original word might, however, be applied to any vegetable bands, as of grass, of which some kinds form ropes of great strength.—*C.*
4 Heb. *one*.
5 The man who falls into one sin is generally certain to be drawn into another. In company of Delilah Samson is induced, partly it may be in jest, and partly to escape importunity, to tell direct falsehoods. What hope were there for such sinners, were it not that the mercy of the Lord abideth for ever.—*C.*
n Pr.6.26; 21.22. Ec. 7.26.
6 Why did not Samson leave Delilah on discovery of her treachery? It may be one of those cases, not rare with backsliders like Samson, in which they seem infatuated by an ill-placed attachment; or, what is more likely, Delilah cunningly contrived to appear rather to give warning of danger, than to betray her companion.—*C.*
o Heb. *smelleth*, Ps. 58.9.
p Jn.5.14.
q Pr.6.26;7.13; 26.28. Ps.12.2;55.21.
r Ps.25.21. Ep.4.25. Ro.3.8.
7 The former ropes had been of dry materials, those now to be employed are green and new.—*C.*
8 Heb. *wherewith work hath not been done*.
s Pr.6.26;7.22. Ec.7. 26.
t ver.7,11,17.
9 The hair seems to have been divided into seven portions, as emblematic of the seven endowments of the Spirit of God, seven being the numerical emblem of completeness. See Is. xi.—*C.*
1 Having woven his locks in the web that was in the loom, she rolled it up on the beam, and then fastened the beam that it might not turn backward.
u Ezr.9.13,14. Da.9. 7,8. Je.3.25.
The eastern web alluded to is but an inch or two in breadth, and the loom merely a slight stake or pin fastened in the ground.—*C.*
x ch.14.16; ver.6,10, 13. Pr.2.16;5.3–14; 6.25, 26;7.13,21,22;22.14; 23. 27;26.28. Ec.7.26.
y Heb. *shortened*, Job 21.4. Pr.7.26.
z 2 Ch.15.2. Pr.18.2. Ps.62.8.
a ch.13.5. Nu. 6. 5. 1 Sa.1.11. Lu.1.15.
3 How Samson came to know that his strength was connected with his hair, as the emblem of Nazaritism, does not appear. The most probable account is that the preservation of his hair was a direction of the angel of the Lord: he was taught to expect the divine aid only so long as his directions were observed, —*Note*, Samson's great strength was connected with a part of the body with the least apparent vitality, and of the least apparent value. So the Christian's great strength lies in faith and dependence— qualities utterly disregarded by the world; but so long as he retains them, his treacherous sins—the Philistines—never can subdue him.—*C.*
b Nu. 22. 7. ver. 5. 1 Ti.6.10. Mat.26.15.
c Pr.7.21,23;5.8–11; 6.26;26.28;22.14; 23.27. Ec.7.26. Ho.3.13.
d Ho.9.12. Jos.1.12. Je. 9. 23, 24; 2.17, 19; 4. 18. Mat.17.16,20. Is.59. 1,2.
4 What an awful discovery! Beware, beware, O professing Christian; it is a fearful thing to sleep and to sin till the grieved Spirit departs!—*C.*
e ch.16.1; 14.1. Je.2. 19. Pr.14.14;5.22;1.31.
5 Heb. *bored out*.
f Ho.9.12. Ps.107.11.
g Is.47.2. Mat.24.41.
6 The mills still used in many parts of the East are merely two small stones, of which the upper one is turned round a centre by means of a piece of timber tied at one end to a beam, and having the other inserted into a hole near the edge of the upper stone, by which means it is turned round by the hand.—*C.*
h De.32.36. Ps. 106. 44,45.
7 Or, *as when he was shaven*.
i 1 Sa. 5. 2. Ro.1.23, 25.
k Da.5.4. Hab.1.16. Re.11.10.
8 Heb. *and who multiplied our slain*.
l ch.9.27; 18.20;19.6, 9. 2 Sa.13.28.
9 Heb. *before them*.
m Job 30. 9. He. 11. 36. Ps.35.16. Mat.26.67, 68;27.29.
n De.22.8. Jos.2.8. 2 Sa.11.2. Their roofs were so flat that people might walk on them.
1 The temple, like other eastern buildings, had a flat roof, which was densely crowded with spectators; and Samson must have been exhibited in the court below. The existence of two middle pillars shows there were more; but if two were taken from the central parts of a semicircle—a very probable figure for a place where show, not privity, was the object—the staying and balancing of the building being destroyed, the whole would most probably fall together. Sir Christopher Wren has described an oval building which would be totally destroyed by the removal of one central pillar.—*C.*
o He. 11. 32. Ps. 50. 15;91.15;116.4. 2 Ch.20. 12.
2 Was Samson justifiable in this prayer? If there had been evil in it, God would not have granted it. He did not pray for private revenge, but for public justice of the oppressors of his country, and, as a magistrate, though in bonds, he executes the sentence.—*C.*

was with or near him. But God was with him so long as he maintained his condition as a Nazarite. As soon as he broke away from this by sacrificing the hair which he wore in honour of the Lord, God departed from him, and with God went his strength' (*Keil*). *P.*]

Ver. 22. [*The hair of his head began to grow.* There is reason to think that Samson's discovery that the Lord had sensibly departed from him, was the beginning of his repentant return to God, and that thus with the growing of his hair he felt his supernatural powers returning. *C.*]

Ver. 23. [*Dagon their god.* The common opinion is that Dagon, which signifies a *fish* or *corn*, is described by Diodorus Siculus as a woman's head and body, terminating in a fish, somewhat resembling the imaginary European figure of the mermaid. *C.*]

REFLECTIONS.—Dangerous is it to ramble into the company of such as are lewd or frothy. The wrath of God hangs over the bed of lewdness; and the more secure sinners are, the nearer is their destruction. How impossible is it to preserve in safety the persons who are infatuated with fleshly lust! They are fixed in the basest slavery: nor can repeated warnings awaken them to consideration. Where the love of money is rooted in the heart, it will not hesitate to betray soul and body at once, for a supposed competent bribe. And, indeed, they who trust either honour or life to a base woman deserve to be betrayed. God justly gives up men to suffer who give up themselves to sin: and sensual lusts especially bring men at last to the most fearful misery. But dreadful is their ruin who ensnare and make sport with the falls and sufferings of God's people or servants; for God will graciously return to his penitent children, and renew their strength, in order that before and in death they may be avenged of their spiritual enemies.—But this Jewish hero illus-

pillars upon which the house stood, and on which it was borne up,[3] of the one with his right hand, and of the other with his left.

30 And Samson said, Let me[4] die with the Philistines.[5] And he bowed himself with *all his* might; and the house [p]fell upon the lords, and upon all the people that *were* therein: so the [q]dead which he slew at his death were more than *they* which he slew in his life.

31 Then his brethren, and all the house of his father, came down, and took him, and brought *him* up, and [r]buried him between [s]Zorah and Eshtaol, in the burying-place of Manoah his father: and he judged Israel twenty years.

CHAPTER XVII.

1 Of the money that Micah first stole, then restored, his mother maketh images, 5 and he ornaments for them. 7 He hireth a Levite to be his priest.

AND there was a man of [a]mount Ephraim, whose name *was* Micah.[1]

2 And he said unto his mother, [b]The eleven hundred *shekels* of silver that were taken from thee, about which thou cursedst, and spakest of also in mine ears, behold, the silver *is* with me; I took it. And his mother said, [c]Blessed *be thou* of the LORD, my son.[2]

3 And when he had restored the eleven hundred *shekels* of silver to his mother, his mother said, [d]I had wholly dedicated the silver unto the LORD[3] from my hand for my son, to [e]make a graven image and a molten image; now therefore I will restore it unto thee.

4 Yet he restored the money unto his mother; and his mother took two hundred *shekels* of silver, and gave them to the founder, who made thereof a graven image and a molten image: and they were in the house of Micah.

5 ¶ And the man Micah had an house of gods,[4] and made an [f]ephod, and teraphim, and [g]consecrated[5] one of his sons, who became his priest.

6 In[h] those days *there was* no king in Israel, *but* every man did *that which was* right [i]in his own eyes.

7 ¶ And there was a young man out of [k]Beth-lehem-judah of the family of Judah, who *was* a Levite, and he sojourned there.

8 And the man [l]departed out of the city from Beth-lehem-judah, to sojourn where [m]he could find *a place:* and he came to [n]mount Ephraim, to the house of Micah, as he journeyed.[6]

9 And Micah said unto him, Whence comest thou? And he said unto him, I *am* a Levite of Beth-lehem-judah, and I go to sojourn where I may find *a place.*

10 And Micah said unto him, Dwell with me, and be unto me [o]a father and a priest, and I will give thee ten *shekels* of silver[7] by the year, and a suit[8] of apparel,[9] and thy victuals. [p]So the Levite went in.

11 And the Levite was content to dwell with the man; and the young man was unto him as one of his sons.

12 And Micah [q]consecrated the Levite; and the young man became his priest, and was in the house of Micah.

13 Then said Micah, [r]Now know I that the LORD will do me good, seeing I have a Levite to *my* priest.

A.M. 2909 or 2889. B.C. 1095 or 1115.

3 Or, *he leaned on them.*
4 Heb. *my soul.*
5 That is, not a prayer for death, but a prayer of resignation: as much as to say, If it be thy will, I am contented to die for my country's deliverance.—*C.*
p 1 Th. 5.2,3. Ec. 9. 12. Mat.24.38,39. Job 31.3,Re.11.13.
q ch. 14.19; 15.8, 15. Phi.2.8.Col.2.15.He.2. 14,15.
r ch. 13. 2. Jn.19.38-42.
s Jos.15.33;19.41.ch. 13.2,25; 18. 2,11. 2 Ch. 11. 10.

CHAP. XVII.

B.C. cir. 1430.

a Jos.15.9;17.15,18.
1 It would appear from a careful study of history that the events recorded in this and the following chapters of the book of Judges occurred at a period immediately after the death of Joshua, and long before the time of Samson or Jephthah. This must not be considered an error. The book contains a series of remarkable incidents in early Israelitish history; but it does not give a continuous narrative, nor does it profess to be chronologically arranged. It is probable that the death of Samson occurred at least 300 years after the event with which this chapter opens.—*P.*
b £125, 9*s.* 4½*d.*
c Ps.10.3.Ex.20.7.
2 It is here carefully to be noted that great events may originate from the most trifling incidents; and that the language of piety may be employed in the practice of idolatry.—*C.*
d ch.18.5,18.Is.66.3.
e Ex. 20. 4. Le.19.4; 26.1. De.12.30.ch.8.27. Is.40.19; 41.7; 44.9-13; 46.6,7. Je.10.3-5. Hab. 2.18,19.
3 It is here farther to be remarked that though stinginess in the cause of religion is apostolically condemned, 2 Co.9.6, yet liberality is no proof that the worship to which it dedicates is acceptable, or the heart of the giver right with God.—*Note,* God requires first the heart, then the hand; but the open hand of the idolater may often put to shame the narrow-mindedness of the Christian.—*C.*
4 The translation in the plural is evidently correct: the place being a house, not of God, that is, of JEHOVAH, the one living and true God, but of *gods,* idols, the work of men's hands.—*Note,* 'The refuge of lies,' adopted by almost every form of idolatry, is to deny a plurality of gods, or the worship of idols, and to assert that the various attributes of the one God are represented by the visible forms, and that the idols are not worshipped, but God worshipped through them. But let none be deceived by this pretence; God is not thus to be mocked.—*C.*
f ch. 8. 27. Ge.31.19. Ho.3.4.
g Ex. 24. 5. 1 Ki. 12. 31.13.33.
5 Heb. *filled the hand.*
h ch.18.1;19.1,25;19.1. Ge.36.31. Ps.12.4.
i De.12.8. Pr.3.5;14. 12. Je.10.23;44.17. Tit. 3.3.
2 ch.19.1,2,18. Mat. 2. 6. Mi. 5. 2, not that ch.19.15.
l Ne.13.10,11.
m ver.11. Ro.16.18. Phi.2.21.
n ver.1;ch.18.13.
6 Heb. *in making his way.*
o ch.18.10.2 Ki.6.21; 8.5;13.14.18.22.21.
7 About 23*s.* sterling.
8 Or, a *double suit,* &c.
9 Heb. *an order of garments.*
p Eze.13.19. 1 Ti. 6. 10.2Ti.4.19.Phi.3.19;2. 21.
q Ex. 24. 5. 1 Ki. 12. 31.13.33.ver.5.2 Ch.13. 19.
r Pr.13.7; 14.12. Ps. 30.2;52.7.

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triously typifies our almighty Redeemer. Express and seasonable were the predictions concerning him, and supernatural the manner of his birth. Solemn was his separation to the service of God; invigorating the spiritual influence which he received; and early and marvellous his exploits. By obedience and death he fulfilled the broken law; and conquered sin, Satan, the world, and death: and sweet is the provision provided by it for himself and his friends; nay, for sinners of mankind, even the chief! Important are his parables, and known only to such as have fellowship with him. Basely was he betrayed by Judas and his countrymen, and delivered to the Gentiles that he might be crucified. His enemies rejoiced to shut his eyes in death, and to imprison him in a grave. Making him the object of their derision, they sealed him up, and watched him in his tomb; but he brake the bands, and carried off the gates and bars of death; and ascending up on high, led captivity captive. All alone he performed his wonderful exploits. By a voluntary death, according to his Father's will, he destroyed thousands of principalities and powers. By the contemned preaching of the gospel he conquers thousands of souls, and kills ten thousands of lusts.—But how dreadful is his justice! By the Romans, like fire-branded foxes, he spread destruction among his Jewish opposers, and burned up their cities: by furious and ravaging Goths, Saracens, Tartars, Turks, &c., he resented, and will resent, the injuries done to his Christian cause: and how tremendously shall his righteous will over all at last prevail!

CHAPTER XVII. [Ver. 5. *Ephod and teraphim.* 'Ephod,' the principal part of the priest's dress, and particularly remarkable for having engraved on precious stones the names of the tribes, Ex. 23.4–6, &c., an emblem of the communion of saints and the preciousness of God's people to the heart of the great High-priest. 'Teraphim:' the word signifies images, but of what form is not precisely known. See note on ch. 18. 14. *C.*]

Ver. 6. [*In those days there was no king in Israel.* The time is not precisely known, farther than that it was after the days of Joshua, and most probably *soon* after the death of Joshua; for Phinehas, the grandson of Aaron, was still alive, see ch. 20. 28. This and the following chapters may therefore be considered as an *appendix* to the *memoirs* of the judges. *C.*]

Ver. 7. [*A young man out of Bethlehem-judah, of the family of Judah, who was a Levite.* His father may have been of Levi, his mother of Judah, or this 'Bethlehem-judah' may have belonged to the particular division of the tribe of Judah which bore the family name of Judah; for each tribe was divided into distinct families. *C.*]

Ver. 13. [*The Lord will do me good, seeing I have a Levite to my priest.* Micah was a worldly, superstitious, ignorant man—the proper elements of an idolater. *Worldly,* for he stole his mother's silver; *superstitious,* for he gave it back, not from a moral feeling of honesty, but dread of a curse; *ignorant,* for he is led by the name of a Levite, without any reference to the law of God as to the priestly family or place of worship. *C.*]

REFLECTIONS.—Covetousness most frequently besets people in their old age; and churlish parents and thievish children often meet together. It is dreadful when those losses which should make men pray, cause them to curse and blaspheme. Hasty imprecations light unexpectedly where the curser least intended them. Reconcilement in sin is quickly effected: and the most covetous wretches liberally devote their idolized substance to the service of the devil. From what small beginnings are the vilest corruptions introduced into nations and churches! The grossest idolatries are often varnished with high pretences to religion. But sad are the times when faithful ministers are almost starved for want! and what an easy prey for Satan and his agents are unsettled professors, and especially rambling clergymen! God readily leaves those to debase themselves who have once abandoned themselves to a neglect of his worship and service: and permits those who should be reprovers of sin to be principal countenancers of it for the sake of their belly. And upon what slight, nay, damnable grounds, do hardened sinners reckon themselves entitled to the favour of God!

CHAPTER XVIII. [Ver. 7. The earliest name of Laish was *Leshem.* It was situated in a rich valley between Hermon and Lebanon, at one of the great fountains of the Jordan. Its occupation by the Phœnician inhabitants of Sidon is easily accounted for. Sidon was a commercial city. Built on the coast, with only a narrow strip of plain beside it, and the rocky side of Lebanon over it, a supply of food had to be brought from a distance. The plain around Laish is one of the most fertile in Syria; the enterprising Phœnicians took possession of it, built a town, and placed in it a colony of labourers, expecting to draw from it an unfailing supply of grain and fruit. The old colonists lived quiet luxurious lives, revelling in the richness of the glorious plain, and far removed alike from the control and protection of their parent city Sidon. They thus became an easy prey to the warlike Danites. The country round it was described by the spies just as it would be described by any observant visitor at the present day. *P.*]

Ver. 29. [The city of *Dan* is mentioned in the narrative of Abraham's pursuit of the eastern kings who had plundered Sodom, Ge. 14. 14. If the name *Dan* was first given to the city in the time of the judges, how could it have been known to Moses, who had died at least fifty years previously! Some suppose

CHAPTER XVIII.

1 *The Danites send five men to seek out for them an inheritance.* 3 *At the house of Micah they consult with the Levite, and are encouraged in their way.* 7 *They search Laish, and bring back news of good hope.* 11 *Six hundred men are sent to surprise it.* 14 *On the way they rob Micah of his priest and his consecrated things.* 27 *They win Laish, and call it Dan.* 30 *They set up idolatry, wherein Jonathan the Levite, and his sons, inherit the priesthood.*

IN those[a] days *there was* no king in Israel:[1] and in those days the tribe of the Danites sought them an inheritance to dwell in; for unto[b] that day *all their* inheritance had not fallen unto them among the tribes of Israel.[2]

2 And the children of Dan sent of their family five men from their coasts, men[3] of valour, [c]from Zorah, and from Eshtaol, to spy out the land, and to search it; and they said unto them, Go, search the land: who, when they came to [d]mount Ephraim, to the house of Micah, they lodged there.

3 When they *were* by the house of Micah, they [e]knew the voice of the young man the Levite:[4] and they turned in thither, and said unto him, Who brought thee hither? and what makest thou in this *place?* and what hast thou here?

4 And he said unto them, [f]Thus and thus dealeth Micah with me, and hath hired me, and I am his priest.

5 And they said unto him, [g]Ask counsel, we pray thee, of God, that we may know whether our way which we go shall be prosperous.

6 And the priest [h]said unto them, Go in peace: [i]before the LORD *is* your way wherein ye go.

7 ¶ Then the five men departed, and came to [k]Laish, and saw the people that *were* therein, how they dwelt careless, after the manner of the Zidonians, quiet and secure; and *there was* no magistrate[5] in the land, that might put *them* to shame in *any* thing; and they *were* far from the Zidonians, and had no business with *any* man.[6]

8 And they came unto their brethren to Zorah[l] and Eshtaol; and their brethren said unto them, What *say* ye?

9 And they said, Arise, that we may go up against them: for we have seen the land, and, behold, it *is* very good; and *are* ye [m]still? [n]be not slothful to go, *and* to enter to possess the land.

10 When ye go, ye shall come unto a people secure, and to a large land: for [o]God hath given it into your hands;[7] a place [p]where *there is* no want of any thing that *is* in the earth.

11 ¶ And there went from thence of the family of the Danites, out of Zorah, and out of Eshtaol, six hundred men appointed[8] with weapons of war.

12 And they went up, and pitched in [q]Kirjath-jearim, in Judah: wherefore they called that place [r]Mahaneh-dan unto this day; behold, *it is* behind Kirjath-jearim.

13 And they passed thence unto [s]mount Ephraim, and came unto the house of Micah.

14 ¶ Then answered the five men that went to spy out the country of Laish, and said unto their brethren, Do ye know that [t]there is in these houses an ephod, and teraphim,[9] and a graven image, and a molten image?[1] now therefore [u]consider[2] what ye have to do.

15 And they turned thitherward, and came to the house of the young man the Levite, *even* unto the house of Micah, and [x]saluted him.

16 And the six hundred men appointed with their weapons of war, which *were* of the children of Dan, stood by the entering of the gate.

17 And the five men that went to spy out the land went up, *and* came in thither, *and* [y]took the graven image, and the ephod, and the teraphim, and the molten image: and the priest stood in the entering of the gate, with the six hundred men *that were* appointed with weapons of war.

18 And these went into Micah's house, and fetched the carved image, the ephod, and the teraphim, and the molten image. Then said the priest unto them, What do ye?

19 And they said unto him, Hold thy [3]peace, [z]lay thine hand upon thy mouth, and go with us, and be to us [a]a father and a priest: *is it* better for thee to be a priest unto the house of one man, or that thou be a priest unto a tribe and a family in Israel?

20 And the [b]priest's heart was glad; and he took the ephod, and the teraphim,[4] and the graven image, and went in the midst of the people.

21 So they turned and departed, and put the little ones, and the cattle, and the carriage, before them.

22 ¶ *And* when they were a good way from the house of Micah, the men that *were* in the houses near to Micah's house were gathered together, and overtook the children of Dan.

23 And they cried unto the children of Dan: and they turned their faces, and said unto Micah, What aileth thee, that thou comest with such a company?[5]

24 And he said, Ye have taken away [c]my

A.M. 2579 or 2589. B.C. 1425 or 1415.

CHAP. XVIII.

a ch.17.6;21.25;19.1. Ps.12.4.

1 No supreme magistrate existed at the time, but the precise period is no farther to be ascertained than by reference to note on preceding chapter, ver. 6.—*C.*

b ch.1.34. Jos.19.47. They suffered the Canaanites to keep it from them.

2 'For there had fallen to it, until that day, among the tribes of Israel, an allotted portion.' The meaning of this statement is illustrated by the context. From ver. 2, 11 it is evident the Danites were settled on the mountain slopes west of Judah, so that they were not absolutely without inheritance. Their inheritance, however, was not enough for them. The Philistines were so powerful that they could not drive them from the plain; and they were therefore obliged to look elsewhere for a settlement.—*P.*

3 Heb. *sons.*

c ch. 13. 2, 25; 16. 31. Jos.19.41; 15.33. 2 Ch. 11.10.ver.8,11.

d ch.17.1,8. Jos.15.9; 17.15,18.ver.13.

e ch.12.6. Mat.26.73.

4 The tribe of Dan adjoined that of Judah, and they recognized what in modern phrase would be called the provincial dialect of the Levite who had been bred in Judah.—*C.*

f ch. 17. 10, 12. Eze. 13.19. 2 Ti.4.10. 1 Ti.6. 10.

g Ho.4.12. Ac.8.10,11 Ki.22.5,6. Eze.21.21.

h Ne. 6. 8. Je. 23. 21. 1 Ki.22.12.

i De. 11.12. Ps.33.18; 34.15. Ye shall prosper.

k Jos. 19. 47. ver. 27, 28. Re.18.7. Ps.12.4. Je. 44.17.

5 Heb. *possessor*, or *heir of restraint.*

6 Many MSS. of the Septuagint read, 'no intercourse with Syria,' which lay on the side opposite to Zidon. This view is supported by the great similarity in the Hebrew of the words *Adam*, man, and *Aram*, Syria; but the words in the text are quite intelligible, when taken to mean they had no trade, and minded nothing but idle pleasure, to which their soil and climate so largely contributed. See ver. 10.—*Note*, The blessings of God in a happy climate and fertile soil are, by the sinfulness of men, frequently converted into curses.—*C.*

l ver. 2; ch. 13. 2, 25. Jos.19.41; 15.33. 2 Ch. 11.10.

m Ex.14.14.ch.16.2. Jos.18.3. Pr.21.25.

n 1 Sa.4.9. Jos.18.3.

o Jos.6.16. De. 2. 29; 4.1.

7 Again, as in ch. 17.2,3, we observe the name of God on the lips, when hearts are ready to forsake him and turn to idolatry. —*Note*, The language of piety is never to be trusted unless it be accompanied by the fruit of the Spirit. Mat.7.16;15.8.—*C.*

p Ex.3.8. De.8.7–10; 11.11,12. Ne.9.25. Eze. 20.6.

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8 Heb. *girded.*

q Jos. 9. 17; 15. 60. 1 Sa.7.1,5.

r Or, camp of Dan, ch.13.25.

s ch. 17. 1;19. 1. Jos. 15.9;17.15,16. 1 Sa.1.1.

t ver.3,4;ch.17.4,5.

9 Of the form of the *teraphim*, generally said to signify *images* and *idols*, nothing precise is known. Cocceius thinks they were the cherubim. From comparing this verse with Ho. 3. 4, and considering the enumeration of things known, and seeing what is wanted to complete the externals of divine worship, we are inclined to think the word, being plural, includes *altar, candlestick, censers, laver*, &c. &c.—*C.*

1 *Molten image*, means evidently here and elsewhere, an image produced by pouring molten metal into a mould. By *graven image*, we cannot understand such a *cast* finished by the graver, but, more probably, figures or inscriptions on a flat surface accompanied with emblematical devices.—*C.*

u ver.5. Pr.19.27. Is. 8.20.

2 'Consider whether it would not be advisable to carry these with us.' Having here, and through means of these, received an oracular response, they seem to recommend the carrying of them off, and the setting up of worship among themselves, as if thus to secure God's presence and favour.—*J.*

x Heb. *asked him of peace*, Ge. 37. 14. 2 Ki.4.26.

y Ex.32.20. ch.17.3. Is.46.1,2.

3 This was the token of silence. These men were very ignorant, and concluded that they should, by taking Micah's gods, secure the presence and favour of the God of Israel in their expedition and settlement. They perhaps supposed the piety of their motives, and the goodness of their intentions, would justify the end. But it was a base robbery of Micah, aggravated by the Levite's ingratitude and their menaces.—*J.*

z Job 21.5;29.9;40.4. Pr.30.32. Mi.7.16.

a ch.17.10.2 Ki.6.21; 8.8,9;13.14.

b ch.17.10,11. Pr.30. 15. Is. 56. 10. Je. 3. 6. Eze. 13. 19. Ac. 20. 33. 1 Ti. 6. 10. 2 Pe.2.3,15. Phi.3.19;2.21.

4 The renewed enumeration of the *materiel* of Micah's idolatry, in which there is no mention of the altar, &c. which we know were portable, seems to favour, if not to confirm, the interpretation of *teraphim* suggested in the note on ver.14.—*C.*

5 Heb. *that thou art gathered together.*

c Ps. 115. 7, 8. Je. 50. 38;51.17. Eze.23.5 Ke. 17. 2. Hab. 2.18,19. Is. 44.9–20.

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that the name was inserted in the book of Genesis by a later writer. This is scarcely probable. It has been suggested that there was another place of the same name in that region; and in 2 Sa. 24. 6 mention is made of *Dan*-jaan. Another solution may be given. Like Hebron and Jerusalem this city may have had two ancient names, *Laish* and *Dan*. The former had come into general use at the time of the Danite conquest; but the latter was better known in the days of Abraham, and the Danites revived it in honour of their progenitor. *P.*]

REFLECTIONS.—Outward straits will push men to great diligence for obtaining the comforts of this life; and often they go far to seek that which, by attending to God's direction, they might have had near home. Very often such are permitted of God to fall into ruinous snares: and however earnestly they shun outward wants or hazards, they rush headlong into the most sinful temptations. When men are ignorant or negligent of consulting God and his word, they readily apply to the devil for direction and encouragement; and receive answers to their wish. But accomplices in wickedness ordinarily prove unfaithful to one another. And none is more apt to be treacherous than a clergy-

KURYET-EL-ANAB—WHERE THE ARK REMAINED TWENTY YEARS. [JUDGES, xviii:12.]—"And they went up and pitched in Kirjath-jearim in Judea." Kuryet-el-Anab is supposed by some to be the ancient Kirjath-jearim. This place is now called Abu Gosh, after a famous old robber who lived here and whose descendants still reside in the village. A tomb has been built to his memory here by his relatives, and this is one of the most thrifty looking villages between Jaffa and Jerusalem. Kirjath-jearim is first mentioned as one of the four cities of the Gibeonites. The ark remained here for 20 years and was removed from this place by David to the house of Obed-edom the Gittite. Eusebius and Jerome speak of this city and describe it as a village at the ninth mile between Jerusalem and Lydda, and these requirements are exactly fulfilled in Kuryet-el-Anab.

gods which I made, and the priest, and ye are gone away; and what have I more? and what *is* this *that* ye say unto me, What aileth thee?

25 And the children of Dan said unto him, Let not thy voice be heard among us, lest angry[a] fellows run upon thee, and thou [e]lose thy life, with the lives of thy household.[6]

26 And the children of Dan went their way: and when Micah saw that they *were* too strong for him, he turned, and went back unto his house.

27 ¶ And they took *the things* which Micah had made, and the priest which he had, and came[f] unto Laish, unto a people *that were* at quiet and secure: and they smote them with the edge of the sword, and burnt the city with fire.

28 And *there was* no deliverer, because it *was* far from [g]Zidon,[7] and they had no business with *any* man; and it was in the valley that *lieth* by [h]Beth-rehob: and they built a city, and dwelt therein.

29 And they called the name of the city Dan,[i] after the name of Dan their father, who was born unto Israel: howbeit the name of the city *was* Laish at the first.

30 ¶ And the children of Dan [k]set up the graven image: and Jonathan the son of Gershom, the son of Manasseh,[8] he and his sons were priests to the tribe of Dan until the day of the [l]captivity of the land.[9]

31 And they set them up Micah's graven image, which he made, [m]all the time that the house of God was in Shiloh.

CHAPTER XIX.

1 *A Levite goeth to Bethlehem to fetch home his concubine.* 16 *An old man entertaineth him at Gibeah.* 22 *The Gibeonites abuse his concubine to death.* 29 *He divideth her into twelve pieces, which he sendeth to the twelve tribes of Israel.*

AND it came to pass in those days, [c]when *there was* no king in Israel, that there was a certain Levite sojourning on the side of mount[b] Ephraim, who took to him [c]a concubine[1] out of [d]Beth-lehem-judah.

2 And his concubine [e]played the whore against him, and went away from him unto her father's house to Beth-lehem-judah, and was there[2] four whole months.[3]

A.M. 2579 or 2589. B.C. 1425 or 1415.

d Heb. *bitter of soul*, 2 Sa. 17. 8.

e Heb. *gather thy soul, and the soul of*, &c., Ps. 26. 9. Nu. 27. 13.

8 *Note*, How soon idolatry, under a colour of piety, becomes a robber, a threatener of death —a persecutor.—*C.*

f ver. 10. Jos. 19. 47; 11. 11.

g Their protectors, Jos. 11. 8. 13. 23, 4, 12.

7 The distance was not more than about 25 miles direct, but the nature of the intervening country may have greatly increased the difficulty of communication.—*C.*

h Nu. 13. 21. Jos. 19. 28, 30 21. 31. 1 Ch. 6. 75.

i Jos. 19. 47. Ge. 14. 14. ch. 20. 1.

k Heb. *set up before them*, Ex. 20. 4. Le. 26. 1. De. xiii. 1; 17. 2–7; 27. 15; 31. 16, &c.; 32. 16, 17, 21.

8 Hebrew scholars are aware that the introduction of a single letter changes *Moses* into *Manasseh*, and it is generally considered that this was the original reading, and that for the credit of the family of Moses the letter was inserted, first above the word *Moses*, from which position it afterwards crept into the word. We can see no reason, however, for supposing, there might not be a Gershom and Manasseh in the tribe of Levi, as stated in the text.

l 1 Sa. 4. 10. Ps. 78. 60, 61. 2 Ki. 15. 29; 17. 6, 23.

9 Many eminent expositors, by a slight change on a Hebrew word, read 'captivity of the ark,' as related 1 Sa. 4. 5. But, without sufficient MS. authority, we judge it worse than unadvisable to suggest or sanction such changes.—*C.*

m About 310 or 330 years, Jos. 18. 1. 1 Sa. iv. Ps. 78. 60.

CHAP. XIX.

a ch. 17. 6; 18. 1; 21. 25. Ps. 12. 4.

b ch. 17. 1, 8. Jos. 17. 15, 16; 24. 33.

c Ge. 22. 24; 25. 1, 6. Mal. 2. 15.

1 Heb. *a woman a concubine*, or *a wife a concubine*.

d Ge. 35. 19. Mat. 2. 6. Mi. 5. 2. ch. 17. 7; ver. 2, 18.

e Pr. 30. 21. Ge. 16. 6.

2 Heb. 'And was there days— four months.' The second clause appears to be in opposition to and explanatory of the preceding more general expression 'days.'—*P.*

3 Or, *a year and four months.*

A.M. 2579 or 2589. B.C. 1425 or 1415.

f ch. 15. 1.

g Ge. 34. 3 35. 21. Ho. 2. 14. Le. 19. 17. Ga. 6. 1.

h Heb. *to her heart*, Ho. 2. 14.

i Heb. *Strengthen*, Ge. 18. 5. Ps. 104. 15. 1 Ki. 13. 7.

4 The orientals have generally two meals a day, one from ten to twelve in the morning, and the other, which is the principal, about seven in the evening. As they usually rise as soon as it is light, and there is a long interval to breakfast, they usually take some small matter that cannot be called a meal, such as a crust of bread and a cup of coffee. —*J.*

k ch. 16. 25; 19. 27. 1 Sa. 25. 36. Est. 1. 10. Lu. 12. 19. 1 Th. 5. 3. Re. 11. 10, 13. ver. 9, 22.

5 This narrative, at once so simple and so tragical, is in this part calculated and intended to convey a great moral lesson —the dangers resulting to families and friends from indiscreet hospitality. This man had a kind and hospitable spirit, but not under the restraint of moderation and prudence: the result is seen in the light conduct and melancholy end of his daughter.—*Note*, Hospitality is a duty of perpetual obligation, but must be limited by the restraints of temperance and piety.—*C.*

6 The woman's father seems to have been highly pleased with the reconciliation of the parties. Of the grounds of that reconciliation we are not informed; but we may remark, that it is not certain that the woman had been guilty of the crime which our rendering of ver. 2 would imply. Several versions simply state that she had disliked her husband.—*J.*

7 Heb. *till the day declined.*

8 Heb. *is weak.*

9 Heb. It is *the pitching time of the day.*

l Pr. 27. 1. Ja. 4. 13, 14.

1 Heb. *to thy tent.*

2 Heb. *to over against.*

m Jos. 15, 63; 18. 16, 28. ch. 1. 8. 2 Sa. 5. 6.

n Ge. 10. 16. Jos. 15. 63; 18. 28. ch. 1. 8. 2 Sa. 5. 6.

3 The king of Jebus was conquered by Joshua, ch. 10. 1, 23, and the territory occupied by Israel, ver. 42; but the Jebusites continued in copartnership in the city of Jebus, Jos. 15. 63; and at this time had, most probably, expelled the Israelites entirely.—*C.*

3 And her husband arose, and [f]went after her, [g]to speak [h]friendly unto her, *and* to bring her again, having his servant with him, and a couple of asses: and she brought him into her father's house; and when the father of the damsel saw him, he rejoiced to meet him.

4 And his father-in-law, the damsel's father, retained him; and he abode with him three days: so they did eat and drink, and lodged there.

5 And it came to pass on the fourth day, when they arose early in the morning, that he rose up to depart: and the damsel's father said unto his son-in-law, [i]Comfort thine heart with a morsel of bread,[4] and afterward go your way.

6 And they sat down, and did eat and drink both of them together: for the damsel's father had said unto the man, Be content, I pray thee, and tarry all night, and let thine heart be [k]merry.[5]

7 And when the man rose up to depart, his father-in-law urged him; therefore he lodged there again.

8 And he arose early in the morning on the fifth day to depart: and the damsel's [6]father said, Comfort thine heart, I pray thee. And they tarried until afternoon,[7] and they did eat both of them.

9 And when the man rose up to depart, he, and his concubine, and his servant, his father-in-law, the damsel's father, said unto him, Behold, now the day draweth toward evening,[8] I pray you tarry all night: behold, the day groweth to an end;[9] lodge here, that thine heart may be merry; and [l]to-morrow get you early on your way, that thou mayest go home.[1]

10 But the man would not tarry that night, but he rose up and departed, and came [2]over against [m]Jebus, (which *is* Jerusalem,) and *there were* with him two asses saddled; his concubine also *was* with him.

11 *And* when they *were* by Jebus, the day was far spent; and the servant said unto his master, Come, I pray thee, and let us turn in unto this city of the Jebusites, and lodge in it.

12 And his master said unto him, We will not turn aside hither into [n]the city of a [3]stranger,

man who is ambitious of preferment, and chiefly concerned for his honour and his salary. Deplorable is the case of those who have gods which can be taken from them, and hearts which cannot part with them, though they be the means of their ruin. But hard is their state when men dare not complain of injustice or robbery without risking their life; and unhappy is the condition of those who are destitute of proper government, especially if they are also plunged into carelessness and carnal security; for prosperity in an evil way encourages men to persevere in it. And the most sinful customs, when once they are established, are the most permanent: it is far easier to keep them out than to root them out.

CHAPTER XIX. [Ver. 1. *It came to pass in those days when there was no king in Israel.* That is, during some of the periods between the death of one judge and the election of another. During these times, however, the country was not altogether without local governments, exercised by the heads of families and territorial princes of the congregation, Jos. 9. 18; but the want of a strong general government permitted such popular outrages against strangers, who had no local friends, as the shocking narrative in this chapter records. *C.*]

Ver. 2. [*His concubine played the whore against him.* The translation probably charges the unhappy woman with more guilt than she had really incurred. Josephus and other authorities conceive she had merely *separated* from her husband. Had her guilt been greater, when eastern manners are considered, it is not probable her father would have received her into his house. *C.*]

REFLECTIONS.—How great is the sovereignty of God in honouring Bethlehem, which lately furnished an idolatrous priest, and now an adulterous concubine, with the birth of his distinguished King and of his only Son! Worthless clergymen and evil women are the greatest plagues to society: and parents' indulgence of their children, and infidelity to marriage-vows, often issue in wide-spread ruin. Frequently the intended kindness of friends is a real injury; and what was designed for our welfare becomes a trap to ensnare us. Where we might reasonably expect distinguished kindness, we often meet with the most abominable neglect and most ruinous abuse. Apostates from God are often void of humanity and natural affection; while truly charitable sojourners on earth are patterns of hospitality and brotherly-kindness; look out for, and are happy in finding, opportunities of doing good, particularly to ministers of Christ. We are apt to hope that our troubles are at an end when the worst storm is but gathering. To what horrible lengths in wicked-

that is not of the children of Israel: we will pass over to Gibeah.

13 And he said unto his servant, Come, and let us draw near to one of these places to lodge all night, in °Gibeah, or in Ramah.

14 And they passed on, and went their way; and the sun went down upon them *when they were* by Gibeah, which *belongeth* to Benjamin.[3]

15 And they turned aside thither, to go in *and* to lodge in Gibeah: and when he went in, he sat him down in a street of the city; for *there was* no man that ᵖtook them into his house to lodging.[4]

16 ¶ And, behold, there came an old man from[q] his work out of the field at even, which *was* also of mount Ephraim; and he sojourned in Gibeah: but the men of the place *were* Benjamites.[r]

17 And when he had lifted up his eyes, he saw a wayfaring man in the street of the city: and the old man said, Whither goest thou? and whence comest thou?

18 And he said unto him, We *are* passing from Beth-lehem-judah toward the side of mount Ephraim; from thence *am* I: and I went to Beth-lehem-judah, but I *am now* going to the[s] house of the LORD;[5] and there *is* no man that ᵗreceiveth me to house.

19 Yet there ᵘis both straw[6] and provender for our asses; and there is bread and wine also for me, and for thy handmaid, and for the young man *which is* with thy servants: *there is* no want of any thing.

20 And the old man said, ᵛPeace *be* with thee: howsoever, *let* all thy wants *lie* upon me; only[y] lodge not in the street.

21 So he brought him into his house, and gave provender unto the asses: and they ᶻwashed their feet, and did eat and drink.

22 ¶ *Now,* as they were making their hearts merry, behold, the men of the city, certain sons[a] of Belial, beset ᵇthe house round about, *and* beat at the door, and spake to the master of the house, the old man, saying, Bring forth the man that came into thine house, that we may ᶜknow him.

A.M. 2579 or 2589.
B.C. 1425 or 1415.

o Jos. 18. 25, 28. ver. 14, 16; ch. xx. 1 Sa. 13. 2, 16. Is. 10. 29. Ho. 5. 8; 9. 9; 10. 9.

p Bethlehem is about 4 miles or 1½ hour's travel south of Jerusalem. Gibeah is nearly 3 miles north of the city, and Ramah 2 miles north of Gibeah. They are all upon the direct route from Bethlehem to Mount Ephraim. Gibeah was strongly situated on the top and sides of a conical hill, on the very crest of the mountain range. It was the native place of Israel's first king, and was thence called 'Gibeah of Saul.'—*P.*

p Heb. *gathered,* He. 13. 2. Mat. 25. 35, 43.

4 A note of the manners of the times is of some importance in settling the meaning of the Hebrew word translated *harlot.* For the honour of the character of Rahab, Jos. 2. 1, of the mother of Jephthah, Ju. 11. 1, some strenuously contend it should be translated *hostess* or *inn-keeper.* The text clearly shows there were in those days and countries no such persons; had there been an accustomed lodging-house, the Levite would not have rested with his wife and servant in the street. *C.*

q Ge. 3. 19. Ec. 1. 13. 2 Th. 3. 10. Ep. 4. 28. Ps. 104. 23; 128. 2.

r Sons of Jemini, Ge. 35. 18.

s ch. 18. 31; 20. 18, 26; 21. 12. Jos. 18. 1. 1 Sa. 1. 3, 7.

5 The Hebrew words may be translated as follows: 'And the house of Jehovah I walk in (as an attendant Levite).' The meaning is not that he was now going to the house of the Lord, for he states positively that he is going to Mount Ephraim The object of the remark seems to be, 'Though I serve in God's house, and should be welcomed there, yet there is no man in this inhospitable town to receive me into his house.'—*P.*

t Heb. *gathereth,* ver. 15.

u Ja. 2. 15, 16. 1 Jn. 3. 17. Mat. 10. 10. 1 Co. 3. 14; 9. 14.

v ch. 6. 23. Ge. 43. 23. 1 Sa. 25. 6. 1 Ch. 12. 18. Ga. 5. 16.

y Ge. 19. 2, 3; 18. 3; 24. 31.

z Ge. 18. 4; 19. 2; 24. 32. 2 Sa. 11. 8. 1 Ti. 5. 10.

a De. 13. 13. 1 Sa. 1. 16; 2. 12; 10. 27; 25. 25, &c.

b Ge. 19. 4. Ho. 9. 9; 10. 9.

c Ge. 4. 1; 19. 5. Ro. 1. 27. 1 Co. 6. 9. Jude 7.

6 Hay is seldom mentioned in Scripture; straw, frequently. The state of agriculture must have been very imperfect, and all the grass at the time burned up—a thing not only common but constant in many eastern countries during summer, so that the carrying of straw for two asses was necessary in so short a journey; the distance from Bethlehem to Shiloh being not more directly than about thirty miles.—*Note,* A lawless state of society is as incompatible with prosperity as with morality.—*C.*

d 2 Sa. 13. 12. Ge. 19. 6–8.

7 Eastern notions of hospitality may account for this proposal, but can neither palliate nor defend it. It tells an intelligible but melancholy story of the morals of the times.—*C.*

e Ge. 34. 7. De. 21. 21. Jos. 7. 15. 2 Sa. 13. 12, 13. ch. 20. 6.

f Ge. 19. 8. Ro. 3. 8.

8 Heb. *the matter of this folly, i.e.* sodomy.

g Ge. 4. 1. Jo. 5. 7, 8. Ho. 7. 4–7; 10. 9; 11. 9.

h Ge. 1. 26, 27. 1 Pe. 3. 6.

i ch. 20. 5.

9 He makes no appeal to the local authorities; when it is probable some of the chief men of the city were concerned in the wickedness.—*C.*

k 1 Sa. 11. 7. Ga. 4. 18. Ro. 10. 2.

1 This is a most frightful narrative, and while it awakens thoughts of horror, should equally awaken thoughts of thankfulness for the civilizing power of Christianity, and efficient protection of well-ordered government. The Levite, no doubt, sent a circumstantial account of the wicked conduct of the Gibeonites; and the spectacle of the fragments of the murdered woman was calculated to rouse the tribes to ample vengeance. The practice existed in Israel, but the victim was a bullock, 1 Sa. 7. 11; and from Lucian we learn that the Scythians and Molossians had a similar custom. The Crean Tarigh, a cross seared in fire and quenched with blood, in which the Highland chieftains of Scotland were wont to summon their clans to battle, seems to have originated in similar ideas.—*C.*

l Jos. 9. 14. 1 Sa. 25. 13. ch. 20. 13. Ps. 112. 5. Pr. 13. 10; 20. 18; 11. 14; 15. 22; 24. 6.

23 And the man, the master of the house, went out unto them, and said unto them, ᵈNay, my brethren, *nay,* I pray you, do not *so* wickedly;[7] seeing that this man is come into mine house, do not this ᵉfolly.

24 Behold, ᶠ*there is* my daughter, a maiden, and his concubine; them I will bring out now, and humble ye them, and do with them what seemeth good unto you: but unto this man do not so vile a thing.[8]

25 But the men would not hearken to him: so the man took his concubine, and brought her forth unto them; and ᵍthey knew her, and abused her all the night until the morning: and when the day began to spring, they let her go.

26 Then came the woman in the dawning of the day, and fell down at the door of the man's house where her ʰlord *was,* till it was light.

27 And her lord rose up in the morning, and opened the doors of the house, and went out to go his way: and, behold, the woman, his concubine, was fallen down *at* the door of the house, and her hands *were* upon the threshold.

28 And he said unto her, Up, and let us be going; ⁱbut none answered. Then the man took her *up* upon an ass, and the man rose up, and gat him unto his place.[9]

29 ¶ And when he was come into his house, he took a knife, and laid hold on his concubine, and ᵏdivided her,[1] *together* with her bones, into twelve pieces, and sent her into all the coasts of Israel.

30 And it was so, that all that saw it said, There was no such deed done nor seen from the day that the children of Israel came up out of the land of Egypt unto this day: ˡconsider of it, take advice, and speak *your minds.*

CHAPTER XX.

1 *The Levite in a general assembly declareth his wrong.* 8 *The decree of the assembly.* 12 *The Benjamites, being cited, make head against the Israelites.* 18 *The Israelites in two battles lose forty thousand.* 29 *They destroy by a stratagem all the Benjamites, except six hundred.*

THEN ᵃall the children of Israel went out, and the congregation was gathered together as one man, ᵇfrom Dan even to Beersheba, with

CHAP. XX.

a ver. 2, 8, 11. 1 Sa. 11. 7. 2 Sa. 1. 9, 14. Ezr. 3. 1.

b 1 Sa. 3. 20. 2 Sa. 3. 10; 24. 2; 17. 11. 1 Ki. 4. 25. Dan being the city northmost, and Beersheba the most south, the phrase from Dan to Beersheba denotes the whole country.

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ness will not apostate professors go! and what barefaced impudence continuance in lewdness begets! When sinners are once given up to their own hearts' lust they easily sink into the most unnatural crimes: and when they are become desperate in wickedness, they will neither bear restraint nor hear admonition. When we commit one sin to avoid a greater, we ordinarily plunge ourselves into further snares: and God fearfully marks sin in its punishment. The fleshly lust which had been this woman's sin, is now made her punishment. And in justice never will he extenuate men's wickedness. With the most deliberate concern, unanimity, and faithfulness, ought the important affairs of churches and nations to be transacted. And such as would obtain God's blessing on a land must seek to purge it by the execution of justice on notorious criminals.

CHAPTER XX. [Ver. 21. *Destroyed down to the ground of the Israelites that day twenty and two thousand men.* As objections to Scripture history have frequently arisen from the numbers of the Israelites coming out of Egypt, or subsequently engaging or falling in battle; an answer has been attempted by showing that some eastern nations placed the *units* first, and thence advanced in their numeration. This mode of eumeration would make the number killed at Gibeah 2020 instead of 22,000, but the 18,000 in ver. 25 silences at once these vain attempts to evade and conciliate rather than to reply to infidelity. The proper reply is the character of the historians, and the internal and external evidences which demonstrate the divine origin of the history.—*Note,* It is worthy of remark, as another and a just reply to infidel objectors, that it is not said, either in ver. 21 or 25, that so many Israelites were slain, but 'destroyed down to the ground,' put, as in modern phrase, *hors de combat. C.*]

Ver. 28. [They had asked, ver. 23, 'Shall I go up again to battle?' and God bade them go, that is, 'go' to be punished for their presumption in the former question, and their neglect in this. Neglect—for they do not ask, 'Wilt thou go with us?' but, 'Shall we go?' Now they add, 'Shall I cease?' and God promises victory. *C.*]

Ver. 47. [About 8 miles north by east of Gibeah, among the wild mountains, is a conspicuous white hill, rising like a cone above the neighbouring hill-tops, and overlooking the whole wilderness down to the Jordan valley. Upon it stands a large village called *Rummon.* This is unquestionably the *Rock Rimmon* on which the Benjamites took refuge. It is admirably adapted for this purpose. A deep ravine cuts off all approach from the south; and other ravines skirt its western and northern sides, making it a natural fortress. The top of the hill is rounded, affording ample space for the refugees; while in the sides are many caverns. *P.*]

REFLECTIONS.—It is comely when professors of the true religion are unanimous and hearty in their zeal against enormous crimes; and when, with prudent deliberations and proper despatch, they proceed to the

the land of Gilead, [e]unto the LORD in Mizpeh.[9]

2 And the chief of all the people, *even* of all the tribes of Israel, presented themselves in the assembly of the people of God, four hundred thousand footmen that [d]drew sword.

3 (Now the children of Benjamin [e]heard that the children of Israel were gone up to Mizpeh.) Then said the children of Israel, Tell[1] *us*, how was this wickedness?

4 And the Levite,[2] the husband of the woman that was slain, answered and said, [f]I came into Gibeah that *belongeth* to Benjamin, I and my concubine, to lodge:

5 And [g]the men of Gibeah rose against me, and beset the house round about upon me by night, *and* thought to have slain me; *and* my concubine have they forced,[3] that she is dead.

6 And [h]I took my concubine, and cut her in pieces, and sent her throughout all the country of the inheritance of Israel: for they have committed [i]lewdness and folly in Israel.

7 ¶ Behold, [k]ye *are* all children of Israel; give here your advice and counsel.

8 ¶ And all the people arose as one man, saying, [l]We will not any *of us* go to his tent,[4] neither will we any *of us* turn into his house:

9 But now, this *shall be* the thing which we will do to Gibeah; *we will go up* [m]by lot against it:

10 And we will take ten men of an hundred throughout all the tribes of Israel, and an hundred of a thousand, and a thousand out of ten thousand, to fetch victual for the people,[5] that they may do, when they come to Gibeah of Benjamin, according to all the folly that they have wrought in Israel.

11 So all the men of Israel were gathered against the city, knit together[6] as one man.

12 ¶ And the tribes of Israel [n]sent men through all the tribe of Benjamin, saying, What wickedness *is* this that is done among you?

13 Now therefore [o]deliver *us* the men, the children[p] of Belial, which *are* in Gibeah, that we may put them to death, and put away evil from Israel. But the children of Benjamin would not [q]hearken to the voice of their brethren the children of Israel:

14 But the children of Benjamin gathered themselves together out of the cities unto Gibeah, to go out to battle against the children of Israel.

15 And the children of Benjamin were numbered at that time, out of the cities, [r]twenty and six thousand men that drew sword, besides the inhabitants of Gibeah, which were numbered seven hundred chosen men.[7]

A.M. 2579 or 2589.
B.C. 1425 or 1415.

e Jos.18.21.ch.11.11. 1 Sa.10.17;7.5. 2 Ki.25. 22. It was near Shiloh, ver.18,26.

9 No less than seven Mizpehs are mentioned in Scripture. The word signifies 'a place of look-out' or 'watch-tower,' and was therefore applicable to many places in Palestine. The Mizpeh here mentioned is in Benjamin. It was situated on the hill now called *Neby-Samwil*, which is the most commanding and conspicuous in the whole region. It rises 600 feet above the plain of Gibeon, which lies immediately to the north of it; and it is 4 miles north-west of Jerusalem. The hill of Gibeah is clearly seen from it, and is only 3 miles distant. The gathering-place of the tribes was doubtless on the northern slope of the hill, and on the broad plain of Gibeon below. No other place among the mountains of southern Palestine was so well adapted for such an assemblage. Being in Benjamin, too, it was calculated to strike terror into the whole tribe.—*P.*

d ch.8.10: ver.15,16. 2 Sa.24.9. 2 Ki.3.26.

e Pr.22.3. Mat.5.25.

1 This word being in the plural, seems to denote that the question was put to more than one. Probably not only the Levite, but the old man who had entertained him, and his servant, were present to bear their testimony.—*I.*

2 Heb. *the man the Levite.*

f ch.19.15-21.

g ch.19.22-28.

3 Heb. *humbled.*

h ch.19.29.

i ch.19.23. Ge. 34. 7. Jos.7.15. 2 Sa.13.12,13.

k Ex. 19.5,6. De. 14. 1,2. ch.19.30.

l ch.5. 9. 10. Pr. 21. 3. ch.21.5.

4 A curious note of the state of Jewish society, as it shows that a part of them were still nomadic shepherds dwelling in tents.—*C.*

m Jos. 14. 2. 1 Ch. xxiv. -xxvi. Ne. 11. 1. ch.1.1,2.

5 This record will account, in a great degree, for the vast numbers occasionally ascribed to the Israelitish armies, as, to speak in modern phrase, we see what an immense commissariat was required to carry provisions for the army.—*C.*

6 Heb. *fellows.*

n De. 20. 10, 11. Jos. 22.13. Ro.12.18; 14.19. He.12.14.

o 2 Sa.20.21

p ch.19.22. De.13.13. 1 Sa. 1. 16; 2. 12; 10. 27; 25.25. 2 Co.6.15.

q 1 Sa.2.25. Ro.1.32 Re.18.4,5. Ho.9.9;10.9.

r ver. 25, 35, 47, 48, with ver.2;ch.8.10.

7 It may be impossible now to account for this presumptuous courage of Benjamin in defying such an army. Some probabilities may be suggested. They may have expected so large an army soon to disband for want of provisions; or they may have expected their indignation soon to cool; or, what is most probable, they may have trusted in the terrible impression of their slingers, who, like the English archers at Cressy and Agincourt, must have made a terrible impression on the close array of their enemies.—*C.*

A.M. 2579 or 2589.
B.C. 1425 or 1415.

s Heb. *shut* or *locked in their right hand*, ch. 3. 15. 1 Ch. 12.2.

8 The wonderful skill of these slingers will help to illustrate David's victory over Goliath. The practice of slinging stones is not yet extinct in Palestine. I have seen shepherds use the sling with wonderful precision and force.—*P.*

t Nu.1.46;26.51. 1 Sa. 11.8;15.4. 1 Ch.21.5.

u Jos.18.1. ch.18.31; 19.18;21.12;ver.26.

9 'And went up to *Bethel*'—not to the tabernacle which was pitched at Shiloh; but to the ark, which appears from ver. 27, 28, to have been brought to Bethel, in order to be near the camp. Bethel was only 5 miles from Mizpeh.—*P.*

v ver.23,27. Jos.9.14. ch.1.1,2. Nu.27.5,21. 1 Sa.22.10,11,12; 30.8. 2 Sa.5.19,23.

1 They did not ask, 'Shall we go up?' which would have referred the whole matter to God; but, 'Which shall go up first?' which referred the secondary part to God, but took the primary decision upon themselves.—*Note*, There is great watchfulness of spirit required, lest, when we ask God's guidance and blessing in any affair undertaken, we should have neglected first to have asked him to let us see, by his word and Spirit, whether it should be undertaken at all. Many who ask counsel both of God and men, mean encouragement and aid in their own plans, rather than guidance to God's plans.—*C.*

w ch.1.2. Ge.49.8-10.

x Ex. 9. 10. Ge. 22.3. Jos.3.16;7.16.

a Ex. 9. 1, 11. Ps. 73. 18,19;33.16. Je.12.1.

b ver.15,17.

c Ps. 78.34,36; 50. 15. Ho.5.15.ver.18,26.

d Job 9.12,13. Ps.97. 2. These two defeats punished the Israelites for their indulgence of sin among themselves, and for their sinful dependence on their superior numbers.

2 'Bethel.' See note on ver. 18.—*P.*

e 1 Sa.7.6. Ne.1.4;9. 1. Ezr.9.4,5; 8.21. Joel 2.12-17;1.14.

f Nu. 27. 21. ver. 18, 23.

g Jos.18.1. Ps.78.60. Je.7.12.

h Nu. 25. 7-13. De. 10.8;18.5. Jos.24.33.

3 Hence it is evident that these supplementary narratives, commencing at ch.xvii., are intended to show the manner in which idolatry and anarchy were introduced, and specially to evince how soon the most blessed work of revival, such as came in in Joshua about the time of crossing the Jordan, may be succeeded by coldness, deadness, forgetfulness, apostasy, idolatry, anarchy, and the most polluting immorality. — *Note*, There is great vanity in men when they talk of the value of institutions as the safeguards of society. Institutions, not of men's devising, but of God's appointing, are good; but the Spirit, word, and grace of God are the only safeguards of churches or nations.—*C.*

i Pr.3.5,6. Je.10.23. 1 Sa.14.37; 23.4. 2 Sa.5. 19,23.ver.18.

k ch.1.2; 7.9. 2 Sa.5. 19,24. 2 Ch.20.17.

l ver. 34. Jos. 8. 4. 2 Sa.5.23.

16 Among all this people *there were* seven hundred chosen men [s]left-handed: every one could sling stones at an hair-*breadth*, and not miss.[8]

17 And the men of Israel, besides Benjamin, were numbered [t]four hundred thousand men that drew sword: all these *were* men of war.

18 ¶ And the children of Israel arose, and went up to the [u]house of God,[9] and [v]asked counsel of God, and said, Which of us shall go up first[1] to the battle against the children of Benjamin? And the LORD said, [y]Judah *shall go up* first.

19 And the children of Israel [z]rose up in the morning, and encamped against Gibeah.

20 And the men of Israel went out to battle against Benjamin; and the men of Israel put themselves in array to fight against them at Gibeah.

21 And the children of Benjamin came forth out of Gibeah, and [a]destroyed down to the ground of the Israelites that day twenty and two thousand men.

22 ¶ And the people, the men of Israel, [b]encouraged themselves, and set their battle again in array in the place where they put themselves in array the first day.

23 (And the children of Israel went up and [c]wept before the LORD until even, and asked counsel of the LORD, saying, Shall I go up again to battle against the children of Benjamin my brother? And the LORD said, Go up against him.)

24 And the children of Israel came near against the children of Benjamin the second day.

25 And Benjamin went forth against them out of Gibeah the second day, and [d]destroyed down to the ground of the children of Israel again eighteen thousand men; all these drew the sword.

26 ¶ Then all the children of Israel, and all the people, went up, and came unto the house of God,[2] and [e]wept, and sat there before the LORD, and fasted that day until even, and offered burnt-offerings and peace-offerings before the LORD.

27 And[f] the children of Israel inquired of the LORD, (for the [g]ark of the covenant of God *was* there in those days,

28 And [h]Phinehas, the son of Eleazar, the son of Aaron,[3] stood before it in those days,) saying, [i]Shall I yet again go out to battle against the children of Benjamin my brother, or shall I cease? And the LORD said, [k]Go up; for tomorrow I will deliver them into thine hand.

29 ¶ And Israel set [l]liers in wait round about Gibeah.

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punishment of them. But infatuated are they who patronize and protect the vicious, especially when at the expense of their own liberties and lives. Proud self-dependence is the ruin of sinners; and such as draw the sword in a bad cause may expect to see it bathed in their own blood. The dispensations of Providence appear very mysterious in thus calling men to work, and yet frowning upon them in the execution of it. But let us not be so inconsiderate as to judge of its use

30 And the children of Israel went up against the children of Benjamin on the third day, and put themselves in array against Gibeah, as at other times.

31 And the children of Benjamin went out against the people, *and* [m]were drawn away from the city; and they began to smite[4] of the people, *and* kill, as at other times, in the highways, of which one goeth up to [n]the house of God,[5] and the other to [o]Gibeah in the field,[6] about thirty men of Israel.

32 And the children of Benjamin said, They *are* smitten down before us, as at the first. But the children of Israel said, [p]Let us flee, and draw them from the city[7] unto the highways.

33 And all the men of Israel [q]rose up out of their place, and put themselves in array at Baal-tamar: and the liers in wait of Israel came forth out of their places, *even* out of the meadows of Gibeah.

34 And there came against Gibeah [r]ten thousand chosen men out of all Israel, and the battle was sore: but they [s]knew not that evil *was* near them.[8]

35 And the LORD smote Benjamin before Israel: and the children of Israel destroyed[9] of the Benjamites that day [t]twenty and five thousand and an hundred men; all these drew the sword.

36 So the children of Benjamin saw that they were smitten: for [u]the men of Israel gave place to the Benjamites, because they trusted unto the liers in wait which they had set beside Gibeah.

37 And the liers in wait hasted, and rushed upon Gibeah; and the liers in wait [w]drew *themselves* along, and smote all the city with the edge of the sword.

38 Now there was an appointed sign[1] between the men of Israel and[2] the liers in wait, that[y] they should make a great flame[3] with smoke to rise up out of the city.

39 And [z]when the men of Israel retired in the battle, Benjamin began to smite[4] *and* kill of the men of Israel about thirty persons; for they said, Surely they are smitten down before us, as *in* the first battle.

40 But when the flame began to arise up out of the city with a pillar of smoke, the Benjamites looked behind them, and, behold, [a]the flame of the city ascended up to heaven.

41 And when the men of Israel turned again, the[b] men of Benjamin were amazed:[5] for they saw that evil was come upon them.[6]

42 Therefore they turned *their backs* before the men of Israel unto the way of the wilderness; but the battle overtook them;[7] and them which *came* out of the cities they destroyed in the midst of them.

43 *Thus* they [c]enclosed the Benjamites round about, *and* chased them, *and* trode them down with ease[8] over against[9] Gibeah toward the sunrising.

44 And there fell of Benjamin eighteen thousand men: all these *were* men of valour.

45 And they turned, and fled toward the wilderness unto the rock of [d]Rimmon: and they gleaned of them in the highways five thousand men; and pursued hard after them unto Gidom, and slew two thousand men of them.

46 So that all which fell that day of Benjamin were [e]twenty and five thousand[1] men that drew the sword: all these *were* men of valour.

47 But[f] six hundred men turned, and fled to the wilderness unto the rock Rimmon, and abode in the rock Rimmon four months.

48 And the men of Israel [g]turned again upon the children of Benjamin, and smote them with the edge of the sword, as well the men of *every* city, as the beast, and all that came to [2]hand: also they set on fire all the cities that they came[3] to.[4]

CHAPTER XXI.

1 The people bewail the desolation of Benjamin. 8 By the destruction of Jabesh-gilead they provide them four hundred wives. 16 They advise them to surprise the virgins that danced at Shiloh.

NOW the men of Israel [a]had sworn in [b]Mizpeh, saying, There [c]shall not any of us give his daughter unto Benjamin to wife.[1]

2 And the people came to the [d]house of God, and abode there till even before God, and lifted up their voices, and wept sore;[2]

3 And said, O LORD God of Israel, why is this come to pass in Israel, that there should be to-day one tribe lacking in Israel?

4 And it came to pass on the morrow, that the people [f]rose early, and built there an altar, and offered burnt-offerings and peace-offerings.

5 And the children of Israel said, Who *is there* among all the tribes of Israel that came not up with the congregation unto the LORD? For they [g]had made a great oath concerning him that came not up to the LORD to Mizpeh, saying, He shall surely be put to death.

6 And the children of Israel [h]repented them for Benjamin their brother, and said, There is one tribe cut off from Israel this day:

7 How shall we do for wives for them that remain, seeing we have [i]sworn by the LORD, that we will not give them of our daughters to wives?

8 ¶ And they said, What one *is there* of the tribes of Israel that came not up to Mizpeh to

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A.M. 2579 or 2589. B.C. 1425 or 1415.

m Jos.8.14-16.

4 Heb. *to smite of the people wounded, as at, &c.*

n Or, *Bethel*, Ge.12. 8;28.19.

5 'One goeth up to *Bethel*.'—*P.*

o Jos.18.24.ch.19.13, 14 Ju.10.29.

6 The battle took place at some little distance from Gibeah, and it appears that several paths radiated from the battle-field, one of them went to Bethel, another direct to the town of Gibeah.—*P.*

p Jos.8.15,16.

7 The discomfiture of the Israelites on the two former occasions had evidently resulted from the presumptuous ardour in attacking the Gibeonites amongst the inclosures of the city, whereby their numbers became rather a mark for the Benjamites than a means either of attack or defence.—*Note*, Self-will, impiety, and presumption generally fail in skilfulness; for when men forget God, their true wisdom, how can they retain even their worldly wisdom.—*C.*

q Jos. 8. 18-22. 2 Sa. 5.23.

r ver.29. Jos.8.22.

s Jos. 8.14. Is. 47.11. ver. 37. Job 21.13. Pr. 29.6. Ec.8.11,12. 1 Th. 5.3. Mat.24.44.

8 That is, the Gibeonites knew not that evil was near.—*Note*, Success in sin blinds the eyes both to temporal danger and [1]the wrath to come.—*C.*

9 Mark the difference between the recital of destruction, ver. 21, 25, 35: 'Down to the ground' is wanting in the last—signifying complete destruction.—*C.*

t ver.15,44-46.

u Jos.8.14-22.

x Or, *made a long* sound, Ex.19.13.ch.4. 6.

1 Or, *time.*

2 Heb. *with.*

y Jos.8.8,20,21.

3 Heb. *elevation.*

z ver.31. Jos.8.15.

4 Heb. *to smite the wounded.*

a Heb. *the whole consumption*, Jos. 8. 19,20.

b Jos. 8.20. Ex.15.9, 10. Pr. 29.6. Lu.17.27, 29; 21.34. Re.18.10. 1 Th.5.3. 2 Pe.2.12. Mat. 24.44.

5 'Observe,' says Henry, 'that the Benjamites in the beginning of the battle were confident that the day was their own. Sometimes God suffers wicked men to be lifted up in successes and hopes, that their fall may be the sorer. See how short their joy is, and their triumphing but for a moment. Evil is near them, and they did not know it; they saw, when it was too late to prevent it, that evil was come upon them. What evils may at any time be near us we cannot tell, but the less they are feared the heavier they fall; sinners will not be persuaded to see evil near them, but how dreadful will it be when it comes, and there is no escaping! 1 Th.5.3.'—*I.*

6 Heb. *touched them.*

A.M. 2579 or 2589. B.C. 1425 or 1415.

7 *Evil*, saith the wise man, *pursueth sinners.* The sinner may have many escapes, nay, apparent temporary victories, but his day cometh at last.—*C.*

c Jos.8.20-22. Ho.10. 9;9.9.

8 Or, from *Menuchach*, &c.

9 Heb. *unto over against.*

d Not that 1 Ch. 6. 77, but perhaps that 1 Sa.14.2.ver.47;ch.21. 13.

e ver.15. The other 1100 were either slain in the former battles, or fled their country.

1 We find it recorded, ver. 35, that 25,100 were destroyed that day, which is made up to 25,000 by the items, ver. 44, 45; but how do these account for the deficient 100? Simply by attending to the difference between *destroyed* and *fell*. *Destroyed* includes the killed and severely wounded; of the latter class there was barely 100. *Fell* describes the killed with the sword, of whom, alas! for the calamity of brethren! there were 25,000.—*C.*

f ch.21.13. Ps.103.9, 10. Is.7.9. Je.14.7. La.3. 32. Hab.3.2.

g De.13.15-17; 7.25. 26.2 Ch.25.13;28.6,9.

2 Heb. *was found.*

3 Heb. *were found.*

4 Alas, for Israel! alas, for Benjamin! Rather alas! for the kindred tribes, Christ's churches! Had Israel and Benjamin but united and fought against the Philistines with half the determination, and half the courage, and half the zeal, with which they fought, almost to extermination, against one another, how much happier had been their lot, how much more glorious their history!—*C.*

CHAP. XXI.

a ch.20.8, Je.4.2.

b ch.20.1,3;ver.5,8.

c Ex.34.12-16. De.7. 2,3.

1 This part of the narrative describes the evil consequences of rash and unhallowed vows.—*Note*, How important to all, but especially to men inflamed by resentment against personal injury, or public wrong, to remember that word, 'Thou shalt not take thy name of the Lord thy God in vain.'—*C.*

d ch. 20. 18, 23, 26. Jos.18.1.ver.12,15.

2 Sorrow for sin is a hopeful but by no means a certain sign of repentance; for there is much difference between feeling sorrow for the inconvenience, annoyance, and loss occasioned by sin to ourselves, and feeling grief for the insult that sin has offered to God. So Israel 'wept sore' for the national injury of their rash vow; but, so far from being truly penitent, they prepare to rectify the vow by a verbal evasion, and to remedy one sin by the perpetration of another.—*C.*

e De.29.24. Ps. 74. 1. Is.63.17. Je.22.8. ver.6, 15.

f Ps.78. 34, 35. ch. 6. 24. 1 Sa.7.17; 11.15; 16. 2,5.2 Sa.24.18,25. 1 Ki. 18.30. Ex.20.24.

g ch.20.4,8;ver.1,18. Ga.4.18.

h Lu.19.41,42. 2 Co. 11.28,29. ver.2,4,15.

i ver.1, 18. Ec.5.2. 1 Sa.25.22. Ps. 15. 4. Pr. 20.25.ch.11.35.

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from the prosperity or adversity which attends it. There is need to wait patiently for the issue of things: and such as punish others should be innocent, or at least penitent themselves. Short is the triumphing of the wicked, and fatal to them at last. It is vain to fight where God is our enemy, or to flee when he pursueth. What desolations sin makes in the earth! but dreadful indeed will be the case of sinners at the last day, when there shall be no rock to hide them, nor mountain to cover them. And who knows what extensive and everlasting woe may proceed from one moment of indulged lust!

the LORD? and, behold, there came none to the camp from [k]Jabesh-gilead to the assembly.

9 For the people were numbered,[3] and, behold, *there were* none of the inhabitants of Jabesh-gilead there.

10 And the congregation sent thither twelve thousand men of the valiantest, and commanded them, saying, [l]Go and smite the inhabitants of Jabesh-gilead with the edge of the sword, with the women and the children.

11 And this *is* the thing that ye shall do, Ye[m] shall utterly destroy every male, and every woman that [n]hath lain by man.[4]

12 And they found among the inhabitants of Jabesh-gilead four hundred young virgins,[5] that had known no man by lying with any male: and they brought them unto the camp [o]to Shiloh, which *is* in the land of Canaan.

13 And the whole congregation sent *some* to speak[6] to the children of Benjamin that *were* in the[p] rock Rimmon, and to [q]call peaceably unto them.

14 And Benjamin came again at that time; and they gave them wives[7] which they had saved alive of the women of Jabesh-gilead: and yet so they [r]sufficed them not.

15 And the people repented them for Benjamin, because that the LORD had made a breach in the tribes of Israel.

16 ¶ Then the elders of the congregation said, How shall we do for wives for them that remain, seeing the women are destroyed out of Benjamin?

17 And they said, *There must be* an inheritance for them that be escaped of Benjamin,[8] that a tribe be not destroyed out of Israel.

18 Howbeit we may not give them wives of our daughters: for the children of Israel [s]have sworn, saying, Cursed *be* he that giveth a wife to Benjamin.

19 Then they said, Behold, *there is* a [t]feast[9] of the LORD in Shiloh yearly,[1] *in a place* which *is* on the north side of Beth-el, on the east side[2] of[3] the highway that goeth up from [u]Beth-el to Shechem, and on the south of Lebonah.[4]

20 Therefore they commanded the children of Benjamin, saying, Go and lie in wait in the vineyards;

21 And see, and, behold, if the daughters of Shiloh come out to [x]dance in dances, then come ye out of the vineyards, and catch you every man his wife of the daughters of Shiloh, and go to the land of Benjamin.

22 And it shall be, when their fathers or their brethren come unto us to complain, that we will say unto them, [y]Be favourable unto them for our sakes; because we reserved not to each man his wife in the war: for ye did not [z]give unto them at this time, *that* ye should be guilty.[5]

23 And the children of Benjamin did so, and took *them* wives, according to their number, of them that danced, whom they caught; and they went and returned unto their inheritance, and [a]repaired the cities, and dwelt in them.

24 And the children of Israel departed thence at that time, every man to his tribe, and to his family, and they went out from thence every man to his inheritance.

25 In[b] those days *there was* no king in Israel: every man did *that which was* [c]right in his own eyes.[6]

A.M. 2579 or 2589. B.C. 1425 or 1415.

k 1 Sa.11.1,3; 31. 11. 2 Sa.2. 5, 6; 21. 12. ver. 10,12.

3 It is to be remembered that this occurred very soon after the death of Joshua, and this accounts for the census of the people being so easy and so accurate, and also for the terrible slaughter that followed the military conflicts of a people who had, in their youth, been all trained to war.—*C.*

l Le. 27. 28, 29. De. 13.15. Jos. 7.24.

m Nu. 31. 17. De. 2. 34.

n Heb. *knoweth the lying with man,* Mat.1.18. Lu.1.34.

4 It ought not to be forgotten in reflecting on the whole of this painful narrative, that the people of Gibeah had been guilty of a crime so heinous and abominable that it was calculated to bring disgrace upon the whole land. The tribe of Benjamin condoned the crime by refusing to give up the perpetrators; and the people of Jabesh-gilead practically became partakers of the guilt by refusing to unite with their brethren in bringing the guilty to punishment.—*P.*

5 Heb. *young women virgins.*

o Jos.18.1. ch. 20.18, 26, 31. 1 Sa.1.3, 24. 2 Sa.7.2. 1 Sa.1.3, 24. 3.21. 4.4. 14.3.

6 Heb. *and spoke and called.*

p ch.20.47, not that 1 Ch.6.77.

q Or, *proclaim peace,* Ps.78.38. Is. 12. 1.

7 Certainly this was not against the letter of the oath, ver. 1, but being against its spirit, it was a mere evasion. —*Note,* Satan never more effectually triumphs, than when he involves men in a rash vow, and then binds them to it, like Herod, by false honour, or leads them to evade, like Israel, by a verbal subterfuge.—*C.*

r Nu.11. 23. Jos. 17. 16.

8 The Benjamites must have their whole inheritance, and therefore all of them need to have wives.

A.M. 2579 or 2589. B.C. 1425 or 1415.

s ver.1,7. Ec.5.2. Ps. 15.4. Pr.20.25.

t Ex. 23. 14–17. Nu. 10. 10; 28. 16, 26; 29. 12. Le. xxiii.

9 This must have been one of the great annual feasts, and though none but the 'daughters of Shiloh' were expected to attend, it is to be recollected that the Mosaic law did not require the attendance of the women, but only of the males, on these solemnities. —*C.*

1 Heb. *from year to year.*

2 Or, *towards the sun-rising.*

3 Or, *on.*

u Ge. 12.8; 13.3, 18.

4 This is as to st accurate description of the position of Shiloh: north of Bethel, east of the great road that runs from Bethel to Shechem, and south of Lebonah.—*P.*

x Ex. 15. 20. ch. 11. 34. 2 Sa.6.14. 1 Sa.18.6. In this they but eluded their oath; and rapine and fraud were added to perjury.

y Or, *gratify us in them,* Col.3.12. He.13. 1.

z ver.1, 7, 18. Pr. 20. 25.

5 That is, ye have sworn not to *give* your daughters to the Benjamites; and, as ye have not given, but the Benjamites have *taken* them, ye are free of any guilt. —*Note,* How flimsy is the sophistry with which sinners succeed in satisfying conscience. This is that very spirit of the Pharisees, which, in after days, our Lord so loudly rebuked, and so solemnly condemned, Mat. 15. 3, 6. Mar.7.11.—*C.*

a ch.20.48.

b ch.17,6; 18. 1; 19.1. Ps.12.4. Hab.1.14.

c De.12.8. Pr.3.5,14. 12. Je.10.23. Lu.10.15.

6 The repetition of this expression seems evidently intended to remind us that the best laws will not administer themselves, and that therefore civil rulers have been appointed of God, as a 'terror to evil-doers.' It is also as evidently intended to remind rulers that they rule for God, and are the administrators, not of their own will, but of his. —*C.*

CHAPTER XXI. [Ver. 4. *Offered burnt-offerings and peace-offerings.* The transition from a peace-offering to another act of extermination seems an almost incredible contradiction. But the history of human nature furnishes many instances of not merely making professed religious services the prelude to cruelty, but of actually commingling them together. The history of the crusades against the Waldenses affords an example of the one, and the *autos-da-fe* of the Spanish inquisition afford an example of the other—the massacre of St. Bartholomew in some degree exceeds both; for the massacre of the sleeping and unoffending Huguenots was celebrated at Rome by a solemn *Te Deum.* *C.*]

REFLECTIONS.—Rash oaths are ordinarily ensnaring. True zeal may be carried too far. And there is often an overdoing in well-doing.—War may be ill ended that was well begun. Even necessary justice ought to be executed with deliberation and deep compassion; for strong passions prepare work for an after repentance. And one rash step, or even rash word, sometimes draws after it the most terrible consequences.

In perplexities and distress it is proper to have recourse to God and the atoning blood of his Son. He can extricate us in a decent and honourable manner. But amidst violent fits of repentance, men are often readier to support their own authority than to consult God, and to extirpate brethren rather than Canaanites. Dancing, even without mixture of sexes, often renders persons an easy prey. And who knows how often the ambuscades of evil spirits transport souls from the dancing-floor into everlasting destruction! How great the confusion of an unsettled government! It is a great mercy for a land to have proper rulers in church or state.

THE BOOK OF RUTH

Is another appendix to the history of the Judges; calculated to represent the marvellous providence of God, the propriety of constant dependence thereon; and to show the happy issue of patience, humility, and industry. It was probably penned by Samuel, and relates to events which happened about the time of Ehud or Barak, Ju. iii. or iv.; particularly the afflictions of Naomi and Ruth, ch. i.; their industry and humility, ii.; their alliance with Boaz, iii.; and happy settlement by means thereof, iv.

[The ancient Jews, and some of the early Christian fathers, accounted Ruth a part of the book of Judges, regarding that whole book as a series of independent narratives, arranged without regard to chronological order. The author of Ruth is unknown, but it has been ascribed with much probability to Samuel. It would appear to have been written a considerable time after the events recorded in it occurred; for in ch. 4. 7 we find reference made to one of its incidents as being an old custom. It could not have been written sooner than the time of king David, for his name is mentioned; and one of the objects of the book evidently was to illustrate David's genealogy. Another probable object in writing this book and placing it in the Canon, was 'to pre-intimate, by the recorded adoption of a Gentile woman into the family from which Christ was to derive his origin, the final reception of the Gentile nations into the true church as fellow-heirs of the salvation of the gospel.' *P.*]

CHAPTER I.

1 Elimelech, driven by famine into Moab, dieth there. 4 Mahlon and Chilion, his sons, having married wives of Moab, die also. 6 Naomi returning homeward, 8 dissuadeth her two daughters-in-law from going with her. 14 Orpah leaveth her, but Ruth with great constancy accompanieth her. 19 They two come to Bethlehem, where they are gladly received.

A.M. cir. 2684.
B.C. cir. 1320.

NOW it came to pass, [a]in the days when the judges ruled,[1] that there [b]was a famine in the land: and a certain man of Beth-lehem-judah went to [c]sojourn in the country of Moab, he, and his wife, and his two sons.[2]

2 And the name of the man *was* Elimelech, and the name of his wife Naomi, and the name of his two sons Mahlon and Chilion, [d]Ephrathites of Beth-lehem-judah: and they came into the country of Moab, and continued[3] there.

3 And [e]Elimelech, Naomi's husband, died; and she was left, and her two sons.

4 And they [f]took them wives of the women of Moab;[4] the name of the one *was* [g]Orpah, and the name of the other [h]Ruth: and they dwelled there about ten years.

5 And [i]Mahlon and Chilion died also both of them; and the woman was left of her two sons and her husband.[5]

6 ¶ Then [k]she arose with her daughters-in-law, that she might return from the country of Moab: for she had heard in the country of Moab how that the LORD had [l]visited his people in[m] giving them bread.

7 Wherefore she [n]went forth out of the place where she was, and her two daughters-in-law with her; and they went on the way to return unto the land of Judah.

8 And Naomi said unto her two daughters-in-law, Go, [o]return each to her mother's house: [p]the LORD deal kindly with you, as ye have dealt with the dead, and with me.

9 The LORD grant you that ye [q]may find rest, each *of you* in the house of her husband. Then [r]she kissed them: and they lifted up their voice, and wept.

10 And they said unto her, Surely we will [s]return with thee unto thy people.

11 And Naomi said, Turn again, my daughters: why will ye go with me? *are* there yet *any more* sons in my womb, that they[t] may be your husbands?[6]

12 Turn again, my daughters; go *your way;* for I am [u]too old to have an husband. If I should say, I have hope, *if* I should have an husband[7] also to-night, and should also bear sons;

13 Would ye tarry[8] for them till they were grown? would ye stay for them from having husbands? nay, my daughters: for it grieveth me much[9] for your [1]sakes, [x]that the hand of the LORD is gone out against me.

14 And they lifted up their voice, and wept again: and Orpah [y]kissed her mother-in-law; but Ruth [z]clave unto her.

15 And she said, Behold, thy sister-in-law is gone back unto her people, and unto her gods: [a]return thou after thy sister-in-law.

16 And Ruth said, [b]Entreat me not[2] to leave thee, *or* to return from following after thee: for whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge: thy people *shall be* my people, and thy God my God.[3]

A.M. cir. 2694.
B.C. cir. 1310.

CHAP. I.

a About 1320, in the time of Ehud. Ju.iii.

1 Heb. *judged.*

b Ge.12.10; 43.1. Ju. 6. 4, 6, 9 Ki.8.1. Ps. 33. 18,19;107.34. De.28.23, 24.

c Ps.120.5.ver.4.

2 'The country of Moab' lay to the east and south-east of the Dead Sea. Its northern border was the river Arnon, its southern Edom, and its eastern the great Midbar or plain of Arabia.—*P.*

d Ge.35. 19. Mi. 5. 2. Ju. 17. 7, 8; 19. 1, 2, 18. 1 Sa.17.12.1 Ch.4.4.

3 Heb. *were.*

e Ps.34.19.2 Ki.4.1.

f De.7.3;23.3. Ne.13. 1.1 Ki.11.1,2.

4 For the lawfulness of a marriage between an Israelite and Moabitess, see note on Ju.14.3.—*C.*

g ver.14.

h Mat.1.5.ch.ii.-iv.

i Le. 26. 16. De. 32. 35,36,39. Ps. 34. 19; 89. 30–32. Je.2.19.

5 A woman bereft of the husband of her youth, and her two manly sons, and with two unprovided and fatherless daughters - in - law, ver. 8, presents a melancholy picture of human life. But, like the shorn lamb, the less protected from the storm, the more sensibly does she illustrate the government of Providence, and the triumphs of natural affection, matronly prudence, and religious principle, Je.49.11.—*C.*

k Ho.2.6–14;5.15;14. 1–3. Ps.73.27,28;68.5.

l Ge.21.1. Ex.3.16. 1 Sa. 2. 21. Lu. 1. 68. Ps. 103.8,9.

m Mat.6.11. Pr.30.8. 1 Ti.6.8.

n Ex. 18. 27. ver. 10, 14. Pr. 17. 17.

o ch.2.11. Phi.4.8.

p 2 Ti.1.17,18. Ep.5. 22. Col.3.18.

q ch.3.1. Ep.5.22.

r Ge.29.11; 31.28,55; ver.14.

s Ps.16.3;119.63.

t De.25.5. Ge.38.11.

6 See the law of widows to demand their husbands' brothers—with the ordinance for their release if they did not choose to marry them, De.25.5.—*C.*

u 1 Ti.5.9. Ge.17.17; 18.11,12.

7 Or, *if I were with an husband.*

8 Heb. *hope.*

9 Heb. *I have much bitterness.*

1 This presents a beautiful feature in the character of Naomi; she feels the hand of God heavy upon herself, but forgetting her own losses, her grief is for her daughters-in-law. —*Note,* See this divine principle perfectly exhibited in Christ, Jn.18.8, where, resigned to the will of his Father, his anxieties are all alive to the safety of his disciples. See farther how this same comparative disregard of self, and anxiety for the welfare of others, is required of all believers, Phi. 2. 4. See also Lu.23.28.—*C.*

x Job 19.21. Ps.39.9.

y ver. 9. Ge. 31. 28. 1 Ki. 19. 20. 2 Ti. 4. 10. Phi.3.19. He.10.38.

z Pr.17.17. He.10.39. Mat.16.24; 10.37;19.27, 29. 1 Ki.19.20.

a Jos.24.15. 2 Ki.2.2, Lu.24.28.

b Ac 21.13. Mat.16. 23,24. 1 Th.1.6,9. 2 Co. 6.14–18.

2 Or, *be not against me.*

3 One of the strongest examples of human affection upon record, and expressed in the most pathetic language; but specially remarkable for the manner in which piety to God sublimes the feelings of the heart.—*C.*

CHAPTER I. [Ver. 1. *In the days when the judges ruled.* The date of the events in this book it is impossible to fix with any certainty, farther than that it was between the days of Joshua and Saul. It is evident, however, either that two or more judges ruled contemporaneously, or that the emigration of Naomi took place under one judge, and her return under another. But as the book relates to the time of Boaz, whose descendants were allied to Jesse and David; and as Nahshon, their ancestor, was contemporary with Moses, and his son Salmon the father of Boaz, the date must be some time in the first half of the government of the judges.—*A famine in the land.* No one that reads the history of the times of Gideon, Ju. 6. 4, 6, 11, can wonder at the occurrence of famine. But while men clearly discover the secondary causes of want—a weak and unsettled government, and the cruel oppression of invaders—let them not overlook the other causes, the sins of an ungrateful people, and the judgments of an offended God. *C.*]

Ver. 15. [*Return thou after thy sister-in-law.* Naomi has been blamed for attempting to send her daughters back to an idolatrous land, instead of bringing them with her to Canaan; but her accusers do not reflect how Israel, at this time, was probably as idolatrous as Moab, as undoubtedly it was during much of the time of the judges. Besides, in the lips of Naomi, an evident believer in Jehovah, the word *Elohim*, translated *gods*, does not necessarily convey any recognition of *polytheism.*—*Note,* The words of God's people should be judged, not by any meaning they will bear, or that may be forced upon them, but by the meaning that coincides with their acknowledged faith and character. *C.*]

LOWER POOL OF SOLOMON—SITUATED NEAR THE FIELDS WHERE RUTH GLEANED WHEAT LEFT BY THE REAPERS OF BOAZ. [RUTH, ii:2.]—"And Ruth, the Moabitess, said unto Naomi, Let me now go to the field, and glean ears of corn after him in whose sight I shall find grace. And she said unto her, Go, my daughter." The pools of Solomon are about three miles from the town of Bethlehem and not a great distance from the fields where Ruth gleaned in the field after the reapers of Boaz. The above is called the lower pool of Solomon because it is the last of the three, the two others standing above it. Water from this pool passes to Bethlehem, and perhaps directly through the very field where Boaz met and talked so kindly to Ruth, the damsel that came back with Naomi out of the country of Moab. This reservoir of water would float one of the largest ocean steamers.

17 Where thou diest, will I die, and there will I be buried: [c]the LORD do so to me, and more also, *if ought* but death part thee and me.

18 When she saw that she was stedfastly minded[4] to go with her, [d]then she left speaking unto her.

19 ¶ So they two went until they came to Beth-lehem.[e] And it came to pass, when they were come to Beth-lehem, that all the city was moved about them,[5] and they said, [f]*Is* this Naomi?

20 And she said unto them, Call me not Naomi,[6] call me Mara: [7] for the Almighty hath dealt[g] very bitterly with me.

21 I went out full, and the LORD hath brought me home again empty: why *then* call ye me Naomi, seeing the LORD hath [h]testified against me, and the Almighty hath afflicted me?

22 So Naomi returned, and Ruth the Moabitess, her daughter-in-law, with her, which returned out of the country of Moab: and [i]they came to Beth-lehem in the beginning of barley harvest.[8]

CHAPTER II.

1 *Ruth gleaneth in the fields of Boaz.* 4 *Boaz taking notice of her,* 8 *showeth her great favour.* 18 *That which she got, she carrieth to her mother-in-law.*

AND Naomi had a [a]kinsman of her husband's, a mighty man of wealth, of the family of Elimelech; and his name *was* Boaz.

2 And Ruth the Moabitess said unto Naomi, Let me now go to the field, and [b]glean ears of corn after *him* in whose sight I shall find grace.[1] And she said unto her, Go, my daughter.

3 And she went, and came and gleaned in the field after the reapers: and her [c]hap was to light on a part of the field[2] *belonging* unto Boaz, who *was* of the kindred of Elimelech.

4 ¶ And, behold, Boaz came from Beth-lehem, and said unto the reapers, [d]The LORD *be* with you. And they answered him, The LORD bless thee.[3]

A.M. cir. 2694. B.C. cir. 1310.

c 1 Sa. 3. 17; 25. 22. 2 Sa. 3. 9, 35. 1 Ki. 2. 23; 19. 2; 20. 10. Ga. 2. 20. Ac. 11. 23.

4 Heb. *strengthened herself.*

d Ac. 21. 14.

e ver. 1, 2. Ge. 35. 19. Ju. 12. 8; 17. 7–9. 1 Sa. 16. 1, 4. 2 Ch. 11. 6. Mi. 5. 2. Mat. 2. 1, 16. Jn. 7. 42.

5 A proof of the rank of Naomi before her emigration, and of the simplicity of the state of society, in which the departure or return of any one moved a whole city. In an active state of a commercial nation, such an event would not move a village.—*C.*

f La. 2. 15. Job 2. 12.

6 That is, *pleasant.*

7 That is, *bitter.*

g He. 12. 11. La. 3. 1–20. Ps. 73. 14; 88. 1–18. Job xix. xxx.

h Job 10. 17; 13. 26; 16. 8. Mal. 3. 5. Ja. 5. 3. De. 19. 15.

i Ps. 91. 11. Le. 23. 10. Ge. 22. 14. De. 32. 36. 1 Co. 10. 13.

8 In the end of March or beginning of April.—*P.*

CHAP. II.

a ch. 3. 9, 12, 13; ver. 3. 1 Ch. 2. 11, 12. Mat. 1. 5. Job 19. 25. Pr. 7. 4.

b Le. 19. 9, 10; 23. 22. De. 24. 19, 20. Ep. 4. 28.

1 Industry, humility, filial deference, and dependence on favour rather than any sense of her own merit, beautifully characterize the conduct of Ruth.—*C.*

c Heb. *hap happened,* Mat. 10. 29. 1 Sa. 23. 27. Es. 6. 1, 2. 2 Ki. 5. 6, 29. Pr. 16. 9.

2 The eastern fields being generally uninclosed, Boaz, though a mighty man of wealth, has but a part of one—but that one was a cultivated district. *C.*——The word 'field' must not be understood here in its usual English acceptation. The Hebrew term *sadeh* means 'a level tract of cultivated land' of any extent. For example, the fertile plain of Mesopotamia is called *Sadeh Aram.* The whole cultivated territory of Bethlehem was called *sadeh.*—*P.*

d Ju. 6. 12. Ps. 129. 8; 118. 26. Col. 4. 6.

3 These are beautiful examples of pious address and response, giving a most favourable though incidental view both of Boaz and his servants.—*C.*

A.M. cir. 2694. B.C. cir. 1310.

4 An office still common in all countries where cultivation of grain is extensive.—*C.*

e Ge. 24. 2; 29. 4.

f ch. 1. 16, 19, 22. Is. 11. 10.

g Pr. 15. 33. Ps. 138. 6. 1 Pe. 5. 5, 6. Ja. 4. 6, 7, 10.

6 The polished manners of Ruth do not forsake her in her poverty.—*Note,* Plainness of speech is to be commended, but rudeness and bluntness are far from plainness—they are, in fact, most conventional modes of speaking, and far from consistent with the gentle wisdom of Christianity.—*C.*

h Pr. 27. 23; 28. 19. Ec. 9. 10. Ro. 12. 11. Ga. 6. 9.

6 The temporary or perhaps permanent shed raised over the thrashing-floor, in which a retreat from the sun would be a luxury, and necessary at noon.—*C.*

i 1 Sa. 3. 6, 9. 2 Ki. 5. 13. He. 13. 2, 3.

k Phi. 4. 8. 1 Jn. 3. 18. Le. 19. 9. De. 24. 19.

7 The males and females must have been ranged in separate bands.—*C.*

l Job 29. 12. Ps. 105. 15.

m Ge. 26. 18; 24. 18–20. Mat. 10. 42. Jn. 4. 7, 11.

n Ge. 17. 3. 1 Sa. 25. 23. Lu. 1. 48. 2 Sa. 9. 8; 19. 28.

o Ps. 37. 5, 6; 45. 10. Pr. 31. 31. He. 11. 8, 9.

8 There appears a difference between this verse and ch. 1. 8, where only the mother is mentioned, who therefore seems to have been a widow. But Naomi spoke of what she knew, Boaz of what he had heard; and the discrepancy is very natural. Their mother might have been married again, which would render both statements correct.—*C.*

p He. 6. 10. 2 Jn. 8. 2 Ti. 1. 18; 4. 8. 1 Ti. 4. 8.

q Ps. 17. 8; 91. 4; 36. 7; 61. 4; 57. 1. Mat. 23. 37.

9 This is not a metaphor, but a literal statement. The wings referred to are the wings of the cherubim shadowing the mercy-seat.—*C.*

r Ge. 33. 8, 10; 43. 14. Pr. 11. 27; 1 s. 15; 22. 1.

1 Or, *I find favour.*

2 Heb. *to the heart.*

s 1 Sa. 25. 41. Pr. 15. 33.

5 Then said Boaz unto his servant that was set over the reapers,[4] Whose damsel *is* this?

6 And the servant that was [e]set over the reapers answered and said, It *is* [f]the Moabitish damsel that came back with Naomi out of the country of Moab.

7 And she said, [g]I pray you,[5] let me glean and gather after the reapers among the sheaves: so she came, and hath [h]continued even from the morning until now, that she tarried a little in the house.[6]

8 Then said Boaz unto Ruth, Hearest thou not, [i]my daughter? [k]Go not to glean in another field, neither go from hence, but abide here fast by my maidens.[7]

9 *Let* thine eyes *be* on the field that they do reap, and go thou after them: have I not charged the young men that they shall [l]not touch thee? and when thou art athirst, [m]go unto the vessels, and drink of *that* which the young men have drawn.

10 Then [n]she fell on her face, and bowed herself to the ground, and said unto him, Why have I found grace in thine eyes, that thou shouldest take knowledge of me, seeing I *am* a stranger?

11 And Boaz answered and said unto her, [o]It hath fully been showed me all that thou hast done unto thy mother-in-law since the death of thine husband; and *how* thou hast left thy father and thy mother,[8] and the land of thy nativity, and art come unto a people which thou knewest not heretofore.

12 The LORD [p]recompense thy work, and a full reward be given thee of the LORD God of Israel, under whose [q]wings thou art come to trust.[9]

13 Then she said, Let me [r]find favour[1] in thy sight, my lord; for that thou hast comforted me, and for that thou hast spoken [2]friendly unto thine handmaid, though I be [s]not like unto one of thine handmaidens.

Ver. 17. [*The Lord do so to me, and more also.* That is, let the Lord smite me with death—and *more also,* that is, with the judgment to follow—if I prove false to this engagement. *C.*]

Ver. 21. [*The Almighty hath afflicted me.* This reference of her affliction to the hand of God contains no murmuring or repining, but the spirit of humble resignation to his sovereign will. She even admits she deserved her affliction, and that it was a witness from God against her.—*Note,* Nothing so effectually lightens affliction as pious resignation to the will of God. But woe unto him that striveth with his Maker! Is. 45. 9. *C.*]

REFLECTIONS.—Numerous and diversified are the arrows in God's quiver for the punishment of men's sins: and often, while his enemies riot in plenty, his people are pinched with scarcity and want. A diligent care to provide for our family is highly commendable: but it is seldom safe to flee from God's land, though he frown on it; or to suffer scarcity of bread to draw us from the ordinances of God. It is not in fleeing from God's mighty hand, but in humbling ourselves under it, that safety lies. It is not in outrunning crosses, but in taking them up and following Christ, that true comfort is to be had. Young people often mistake in their marriage, through want or neglect of their parents' advice. But marriages and deaths are near neighbours, and one death in a family is but the forerunner and warning of another. Both comforts and crosses are often nearer us than we suspect; and if we are shut up into the society of the wicked, we should escape for our life as soon as our hindrances are removed. It is a mercy when God imbitters our condition of distance from himself, that we may be weaned from it and hastened to our heavenly home; but yet it is pleasant to see near relations knit together in love, and loath to part. With the most strong and fixed resolution should we set out in the Lord's way, as we know not what repeated and strong temptations we may have to turn back: but the difficulties of the way, which discourage the temporary believer, will but bind the faithful soul the more closely to Jesus Christ. Nothing, no, not death, can separate them from him and his people. Poverty and age make great alterations on mankind: and it is proper that all around should remark it with solemn awe and cordial sympathy; for surely it is but madness to set our heart on that comeliness and wealth which so quickly fade. Let us therefore keep waiting on God in the way of his judgments; in patience possessing our souls; eyeing the Lord's hand in all that we meet with; humbling ourselves under humbling providences; mourning, but never murmuring, under his hand; and ever remarking how the minutest circumstances of our lives are directed by the overruling providence of God.

CHAPTER II. [Ver. 4. In travelling through Palestine at the present day the salutations here recorded are heard on every highway and in every harvest-field. 'The Lord be with you' is the invariable salutation of stranger or native, rich or poor, on approaching a band of reapers, or meeting a company of wayfarers; and the invariable reply is, 'The Lord bless thee.' Gleaning is now as commonly practised as it was in the days of Ruth. *P.*]

Ver. 9. [In every harvest-field there is a skin or jar of water for the use of the reapers. Sometimes it has to be brought from a great distance; this must have been the case at Bethlehem, where it had to be drawn up besides from deep wells or cisterns. It was a greater favour to poor Ruth than we can well conceive in this country, to permit her to drink of the water in the field. *P.*]

Ver. 14. [*Dip thy morsel in the vinegar.* A sauce prepared from vinegar in which bread is dipped is still a common food in the East, and, in conjunction with olives, is highly relished by a people not habituated to luxury. *C.*——This is a characteristic trait of eastern life. I have myself witnessed similar scenes in various

14 And Boaz said unto her, [t]At meal-time come thou hither, and eat of the bread, and dip thy morsel in the vinegar. And she sat beside the reapers: and he reached her [u]parched *corn*,[3] and she [x]did eat, and was sufficed, and left.

15 And when she was risen up to glean, Boaz commanded his young men, saying, Let her glean even among the sheaves, and reproach her[4] not:[5]

16 And [y]let fall also *some* of the handfuls of purpose for her, and leave *them*, that she may glean *them*, and rebuke her not.

17 So she [z]gleaned in the field until even, and beat out that she had gleaned; and it was about an [a]ephah of barley.

18 ¶ And she took *it* up, and went into the city; and her mother-in-law saw what she had gleaned: and she brought forth, and gave to her [b]that she had reserved after she was sufficed.[6]

19 And her mother-in-law said unto her, Where hast thou gleaned to-day? and where wroughtest thou? Blessed be he that did take knowledge of thee. And she showed her mother-in-law with whom she had wrought, and said, The man's name with whom I wrought to-day *is* Boaz.

20 And Naomi [c]said unto her daughter-in-law, Blessed *be* he of the LORD, who hath not left off his kindness to the living and[7] to the dead. And Naomi said unto her, The man *is* near of kin unto us, [d]one of our next kinsmen.

21 And Ruth the Moabitess said, [e]He said unto me also, Thou shalt keep fast by my young men,[8] until they have ended all my harvest.

22 And Naomi said unto Ruth her daughter-in-law, *It is* [f]good, my daughter, that thou go out with his maidens, that they meet[9] thee not[1] in any other field.

23 So she [g]kept fast by the maidens of Boaz to glean unto the end of barley harvest, and of wheat harvest; and dwelt with her mother-in-law.

CHAPTER III.

1 *By Naomi's instruction,* 6 *Ruth lieth at Boaz's feet.* 8 *Boaz acknowledgeth the right of a kinsman.* 14 *He sendeth her home in the morning with six measures of barley.*

THEN Naomi her mother-in-law said unto her, [a]My daughter, shall I not seek rest for thee, that it may be well with thee?

A.M. cir. 2694. B.C. cir. 1310.

t Pr.11.27. Lu.14.12-14. 1.52. Is.32.8.

u 1 Sa.17.17; 25.18. 2 Sa.17.28.

3 Corn parched by having had the straw burned to near the ears, or dried on heated stones or iron plates, still forms no inconsiderable part of every day's food in Arabia and the surrounding countries. —*C.*

x Pr.11.25. De.11.15; 8.10. Jn.6.12,13.

4 Heb. *shame her not.*

5 From ver. 7 we learn that the gleaning was not by right, but by permission. For though gleaning was amply provided for by the Mosaic law, it would appear to have commenced, not during the reaping time but after. Gleaning was long practised in England, and was held to be an inherent right of the poor, till a decision of the Court of Common Pleas decided against it. In Ireland it was not relinquished until two acts of parliament were successively brought against it in the reign of Henry VIII. c. 25 and 28.—*C.*

y Is.32. 8. Ps. 112.9. Pr.11. 25, 26; 14. 21, 31; 29.7; 22. 9; 28.27; 31.20. De.15. 7, 9, 11. Job 31. 25; 31.16,19.

z Pr.31.27; 11. 25,26. 2 Th.3.10.

a About three pecks, Ex.16.36.

b That meat, ver. 14. Jn.6.12,13. 1 Ti.5.4.

6 'And she (Ruth) brought forth (from her pocket), and gave to her (mother-in-law) that she had reserved (from the parched corn which Boaz gave her) after she was sufficed.' This is the interpretation given by the Chaldee paraphrase, and it appears to be the correct one.—*P.*

c ch.3.10. Job 29. 12, 13. 2 Ti.1.16-18. Pr.17. 17; 19.17.

7 Us, my husband, and two sons.

d Or, *one that hath right to redeem*, Le. 25. 25. De. 25.5-7. Job 19.25.

e ver.8,9.

8 This is an evident contradiction of ver. 8, but the fault lies in the translation, not in the original. The Hebrew word rendered here 'young men' signifies *servants* generally, male and female.—*C.*

f Tit.2. 4. Pr. 27. 10; 22.6; 3.21-24. Ge. 34.1. Ca.1.8. Jn.15.6.

9 Or, *fall upon thee.*

1 *Fall upon thee not*, that is, most probably, other gleaners. For, strange to say, few are more tenacious of imaginary or real privileges than the poor; and strangers they are, in all countries, ready to drive away as unauthorized intruders. —*C.*

g 1 Ti.5. 13. Pr. 6. 8; 13.1; 31.19; 14.1.

CHAP. III.

a ch.1.9. 1 Co. 7. 36. Je.49.11.

A.M. cir. 2694. B.C. cir. 1310.

b Pr.18.24. ch. 2. 20, 23. De. 25.5, 6. Job 19. 25. He.2.11, 14.

1 The night may have been chosen for sake of the land-breeze that in most warm climates springs up in the evening. Before modern improvements in machinery, winnowing, in many parts of Europe, was by means of a skin stretched tight upon a hoop, and the grain being slowly shaken off the edge, dropped down perpendicularly, while the chaff was carried off by the wind. In some of the northern kingdoms it is performed by a wooden shovel, which a man, sitting down, thrusts into the heap of grain, and then throwing the grain suddenly over his head, the grain and chaff are separated, according to their specific gravities.—*C.*

c 2 Sa. 14. 2. Ps. 104. 15. Mat. 6.17. 1 Ti.2.9. Ca.1.7,8.

d Or, *lift up the clothes that are on his feet*, Ju. 3. 24. Ro. 13.14.

e Ep.6.1. Ex. 20. 12. Pr.15.33; 18.11. Lu.14. 11.

f 1 Co.10.31. Ge. 43. 34. Ju.16.25; 19.6,9.

g 1 Th. 5. 22. Tit. 1. 15.1 Co.6.18.

2 He may at first have taken the sleeper for some one that had died there—robber or assassin it could not be supposed, so as to excite fear on account of danger.—*C.*

3 Or, *took hold on.*

h ch.2.10,13.1 Sa.25. 41. Lu.14.11. Pr.15.33; 18.11.

i Ge.20. 16. Eze. 16. 8, *i.e.* marry me.

k Or, *one that hath right to redeem*, ch. 2.20.

4 From Eze. 16. 8, &c., it is evident that the covering with the skirt was a Jewish marriage ceremony, and so it remains till this day. If it be inquired why Ruth did not wait to see if Boaz should seek her to wife, the answer is plain; the Mosaic law evidently provided that, in such cases, it lay with the widow to claim if she chose; but that she could not be claimed, though she might be refused.—*C.*

l 1 Co.13.4,5. ch.2.4, 20.

m ch.1.8, 1 Ti. 5. 11. Tit.2.4,5,12.

5 Heb. *gate.*

n Pr.12.4; 31.31.

6 A virtuous character in male or female will always find its proper level, and will generally come to be acknowledged by the community.—*C.*

o 1 Th.4.6. Mat.7.12. De.25.5,6.

p Ps.119.60. Ec.9.10.

q ch.2.20. Mat.7.12. Jos.24.15. Phi.4.8.

2 And [b]now *is* not Boaz of our kindred, with whose maidens thou wast? behold, he winnoweth barley to-night in the threshing-floor.[1]

3 Wash[c] thyself therefore, and anoint thee, and put thy raiment upon thee, and get thee down to the floor: *but* make not thyself known unto the man, until he shall have done eating and drinking.

4 And it shall be, when he lieth down, that thou shalt mark the place where he shall lie, and thou shalt go in, and [d]uncover his feet, and lay thee down; and he will tell thee what thou shalt do.

5 And she said unto her, [e]All that thou sayest unto me I will do.

6 ¶ And she went down unto the floor, and did according to all that her mother-in-law bade her.

7 And when Boaz had eaten and drunk, and [f]his heart was merry, he went to lie down at the end of the heap of corn: and she [g]came softly, and uncovered his feet, and laid her down.

8 And it came to pass at midnight, that the man was afraid,[2] and turned[3] himself; and, behold, a woman lay at his feet.

9 And he said, Who *art* thou? And she answered, I *am* Ruth [h]thine handmaid: [i]spread therefore thy skirt over thine handmaid; for thou *art* a near [k]kinsman.[4]

10 And he said, [l]Blessed *be* thou of the LORD, my daughter: *for* thou hast showed [m]more kindness in the latter end than at the beginning, inasmuch as thou followedst not young men, whether poor or rich.

11 And now, my daughter, fear not; I will do to thee all that thou requirest: for all the city[5] of my people doth know that thou *art* [n]a virtuous woman.[6]

12 And now it is true that I *am thy* near kinsman: howbeit [o]there is a kinsman nearer than I.

13 Tarry this night, and it shall be [p]in the morning, *that* [q]if he will perform unto thee the part of a kinsman, well; let him do the kinsman's part: but if he will not do the part of a kinsman to thee, then will I do the part of a kinsman to thee, *as* the LORD liveth: lie down until the morning.

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parts of Palestine. The evening meal on the harvest-field is simple. It is spread on the ground. There are piles of thin cakes, and dishes of olives, and various kinds of vegetables steeped in a sour sauce like vinegar. Each one takes a piece of bread, dips it in the sauce, and perhaps takes up on it a portion of the vegetable, and then eats it. It is a very common practice for the master to lift a piece of bread and present it to a guest. I have more than once seen the gleaners invited to take part in the evening meal. *P.*]

REFLECTIONS—How infinite is the condescension of God in taking notice of a poor Moabitish gleaner! Let me then never be proud, for I know not to what straits I may be reduced in life; and never let me be ashamed of honest industry. If the Lord debase me, it is my honour to concur with his providence, and to be content with the least and coarsest crumbs from his hand. In caring for my poor or aged friends, let me with diligence depend upon his kindness, and thank him for every circumstance thereof. Whether I am master or servant, let a savour of Christ and religion always attend me; and the law of kindness be in both heart and mouth. If I am a stranger, let me be always humble, mannerly, and thankful. If I am not, let me show kindness to strangers, especially to those who are such from a love to Christ. Who knows how they may bless, or even reward me? For the poorest, by their earnest prayers, may return the richest rewards to the most wealthy. The more highly others think of me, let me think the more humbly of myself: and let me always regard my benefactors, and with the utmost care make choice of my companions. A modest, humble, and respectful behaviour, accompanied with a tender regard to parents in age and poverty, is commendable even in the meanest. And when we go out in the way of duty, depending on God, who knows with what rich blessings we may return loaded? Happy is that family where parents and children mutually vie in deep concern for one another's real welfare. And comfortably may even the poorest live together, if they have but godliness with contentment, which is great gain.

CHAPTER III. [Ver. 4. *Uncover his feet, and lay thee down.* This is the ordinary mode in which servants still sleep in many parts of the East, lying in a

14 ¶ And she lay at his feet until the morning: and she rose up before one could know another. And he said, [r]Let it not be known that a woman came into the floor.

15 Also he said, Bring the [7]vail that *thou hast* upon thee, and hold it. And when she held it, [s]he measured six *measures*[8] of barley, and laid *it* on her: and she went into the city.

16 And when she came to her mother-in-law, she said, Who *art* thou, my daughter?[9] And she told her all that the man had done to her.

17 And she said, These six *measures* of barley gave he me: for he said to me, Go not empty[1] unto thy mother-in-law.

18 Then said she, [t]Sit still, my daughter, until thou know how the matter will fall: for the man will not be in rest until he have finished the thing this day.[2]

CHAPTER IV.

1 *Boaz calleth into judgment the next kinsman.* 6 *He refuseth the redemption according to the manner in Israel.* 9 *Boaz buyeth the inheritance.* 11 *He marrieth Ruth.* 13 *She beareth Obed the grandfather of David.* 18 *The generations of Pharez unto David.*

THEN went Boaz up [a]to the gate,[1] and sat him down there: and, behold, the kinsman of whom Boaz spake [b]came by; unto whom he said, Ho, such a one! turn aside, sit down here. And he turned aside, and sat down.

2 And he took [c]ten men of the elders of the city, and said, Sit ye down here. And they sat[d] down.

3 And he [e]said unto the kinsman, Naomi, that is come again out of the country of Moab, selleth a parcel of land, which *was* our brother Elimelech's:

4 And I thought to advertise thee,[2] saying, Buy[f] *it* before the inhabitants, and before the elders of my people. If thou wilt redeem *it*, redeem *it:* but if thou wilt not redeem *it, then* tell me, that I may know: for *there is* none to redeem *it* besides thee; and I *am* after thee. And he said, I will [g]redeem *it.*

5 Then said Boaz, What day thou buyest the field of the hand of Naomi, [h]thou must buy *it* also of Ruth the Moabitess, the wife of the dead, to raise up the name of the dead upon his inheritance.

6 ¶ And the kinsman said, I cannot redeem *it* for myself, [i]lest I mar mine own [3]inheritance: redeem thou my right to thyself; for I cannot redeem *it.*

7 Now[k] this *was the manner* in former time in Israel,[4] concerning redeeming, and concerning changing, for to confirm all things; a man plucked off his shoe,[5] and gave *it* to his neighbour: and this *was* a testimony in Israel.

8 Therefore the kinsman said unto Boaz, [l]Buy *it* for thee: so he drew off his shoe.

9 ¶ And Boaz said unto the elders, and *unto* all the people, Ye *are* [m]witnesses this day, that I have bought all that *was* Elimelech's, and all that *was* Chilion's and Mahlon's, of the hand of Naomi.

10 Moreover, [n]Ruth the Moabitess, the wife of Mahlon, have I purchased to be my wife, to raise up the name of the dead upon his inheritance, that [o]the name of the dead be not cut off from among his brethren, and from the gate of his place:[6] ye *are* witnesses this day.

11 And all the people that *were* in the gate, and the elders, said, *We are* witnesses. [p]The LORD make the woman that is come into thine house like [q]Rachel and like Leah, which two did build the house of Israel; and do thou worthily[7] in Ephratah, and be famous[8] in Bethlehem:

12 And let thy house be like [r]the house of Pharez, [s](whom Tamar bare unto Judah,) of the seed which the LORD shall give thee of this young woman.

13 ¶ So Boaz [t]took Ruth,[9] and she was his wife: and when he went in unto her, [u]the LORD gave her conception, and she bare a son.

14 And the [x]women said unto Naomi, Blessed *be* the LORD, which hath not left thee this day without a kinsman, that his name may be famous in Israel.

15 And he shall be unto thee a [y]restorer of

A.M. cir. 2694. B.C. cir. 1310.

[r] Ec. 7. 1. Pr. 22. 1. Ro.12.17. 2Co. 8.21. 1 Th. 5. 22. 1 Co.10.32. 1 Pe.2.12.

[7] Or, *sheet* or *apron.* [Some translate it *apron*, some *cloak* or *robe;* it must have been stronger than what the word *veil* represents to Europeans.—*C.*]

[s] Is. 32. 8. 1 Jn. 3.18. Ga.6.10. 2 Co.9.6,7.

[8] The quantity cannot be ascertained. The Targumists make it fifteen gallons. The phrase, 'laid it on her,' intimates a considerable weight.—*C.*

[9] The meaning is, 'In what circumstances dost thou come? What hast thou accomplished?' —*P.*

[1] Go not without some token of my regard. Some imagine barley, which is not so valuable with us as wheat, was too mean a thing to bestow upon her. But they do not consider that in these countries it was a better sort of corn than it is in these parts of the world; for bread was commonly made of it, and that not only by the poor, but the better sort, of which we find examples both in the Old Testament and in the New.—*I.*

[t] Ps. 37. 3–5. Is. 28. 16. He. 10. 36, 37. Ja. 5. 7.

[2] A truly pious man can neither be rash nor precipitate, neither can he be wavering, undecided, or illatory, where duty is concerned: his real character is serious in considering duty, cautious in foreboding consequences, decided in principle, speedy in action—such was Boaz.—*C.*

CHAP. IV.

[a] De. 16. 18; 17. 5; 22. 15; 21. 19.

[1] In warm countries the greater part of business is transacted in the open air; and the *gate*, where streets converged, became consequently the chief place of resort, comprising often the place of traffic and the seat of law. —*C.*

[b] Pr. 16. 9. ch. 2. 3. Es. 6. 1–5.

[c] Ex. 18. 21. 1 Ki. 21. 8.

[d] Pr. 20. 8. Job 29. 7, 25.

[e] Ps. 112. 5. Pr. 13. 10; 14. 8.

[2] Heb. *I said I will reveal in thine ear.*

[f] Je. 32. 7, 8. Ro. 12. 17. Phi. 4. 8. 2 Co. 8. 21. Pr. 21. 3.

[g] Le. 25. 25.

[h] Ge. 38. 8. De. 25. 5, 6.

A.M. cir. 2694. B.C. cir. 1310.

[i] 1 Ti. 5. 8. Pr. 27. 23. He was not inclined to have the poor young widow.

[3] I cannot redeem it on that condition, &c. This seems no subterfuge, but a plain statement of fact. In several ways the purchase might have marred his inheritance. (1) By loading him with a considerable debt, which he might with difficulty pay off. (2) If he had a family by a former wife, his son by her would inherit his father's own hereditary property; and out of that hereditary property must be derived the money for the purchase. (3) If he had a wife living, he might mean that his property would be marred by taking another, which (for the hardness of their hearts) their law permitted.—*C.*

[k] De. 25. 7, 9.

[4] It would appear from this incidental remark that at the time the narrative was written the practice referred to was an old one, and had gone out of use.—*P.*

[5] This signified the transfer of the property.

[l] ch. 3. 13. Je. 32. 7, 8.

[m] Ps. 112. 5. Mat. 10. 16; 18. 16. Je. 32. 10–12.

[n] Ho. 12. 12. Ge. 29, 18, 19, 27.

[o] Ps. 128. 3–5. Je. 22. 23. De. 25. 5, 6.

[6] The genealogy, however, never gives the name of Mahlon. But this is to be accounted for in two ways. (1) The name of Boaz is retained, on account of the celebrity he had justly acquired by his generous conduct to Ruth. (2) Because Mahlon's legitimate place in the genealogy is sufficiently recorded according to law. (3) Because the retention of the name of Boaz gives a second evidence of the Moabitish origin of Ruth, who, as a type, the ingrafting into the genealogy of our Lord, exemplifies the calling of the Gentiles into the fellowship of the covenant of promise.—*C.*

[p] Ge. 24. 60. 1 Sa. 2. 20. Ps. 127. 3. 128. 3–5.

[q] Ge. xlvi. Nu. 1. ii. xxvi.

[7] Or, *get thee riches* or *power.*

[8] Heb. *proclaim* thy *name.*

[r] Ge. 46. 12. Nu. 26. 20. 1 Ch. ii. iv.

[s] Ge. 38. 29. 1 Ch. 2. 4. Mat. 1. 3.

[t] ch. 3. 11. Ps. 15. 4.

[9] B.C. cir. 1309.

[u] Ge. 30. 22. 31. 5. 25, 29. 1 Sa. 1. 27. 2. 5, 6. Ps. 113. 9; 127. 3.

[x] Ro. 1. 15. Lu. 1. 48, 58.

[y] Ps. 23. 3. 1 Sa. 12. 11.

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direction across their masters' feet. This translation is not to be construed by European customs or sentiments, but by the customs of the time and place, by the religious and benevolent character of Boaz, and the innocence and purity of Naomi and Ruth. *C.*]

Ver. 7. [*His heart was merry.* There is a striking connection between piety, benevolence, a pure conscience, and cheerfulness, or even well-regulated mirth. We have heard the laughter of fools, and men think it joyful; but this we have also felt, that the more godly men become, the more cheerful and happy they become. —*Note,* It is a debt that religious men owe to the world, to convince them, by the mildness, meekness, and cheerfulness of their demeanour, that religion is neither austere nor melancholy, while yet it is staid and serious. *C.*——This scene is in every respect characteristic of the East. During the harvest rain never falls in Palestine, and the nights are warm and balmy. The whole agricultural population are then accustomed to bivouac round the thrashing-floors, which are usually at some distance from the villages. They all sleep in the open air—masters and labourers alike. This is considered no hardship. A large portion of the population of Palestine sleep in the open air during the summer in preference. I have often done so myself. *P.*]

Ver. 15. [The veil worn by the peasant women of Syria and Palestine is a piece of strong calico, from two to three yards in length by half as much in width. It is thrown over the head, and can be so worn as to envelop the whole person, or to hang down the back in graceful folds. The end of the veil is not unfrequently used to serve the purpose of a bag for carrying grain or fruit. *P.*]

REFLECTIONS.—It is often safest for young widows to marry. And it is the duty of parents to promote the settlement of their children in a comfortable marriage: for it is no small mercy when the married state fixes the affections at a rest in which it is well with the parties. Dress and cleanliness are commendable, so far as they are calculated to engage proper affections. But in courtship and marriage there ought always to be a strict attention to the commands of God. It is not enough that we do no evil;—we must indulge ourselves in no appearance of it. But what an advantage is it when we have to do with such as have the deepest regard to our chastity and honour; who are disposed to think no evil, but to interpret our innocent familiarities in the best sense; and who, in matters of importance, will certainly be faithful and diligent! Yea, hopeful is the match which is made up in dependence on God and regard to the authority of parents. But we cannot be too ready to start at temptations which steal softly upon us; nor too careful to remove every occasion from the envenomed tongue of slander. What is liable to be misinterpreted had best never be known. And when we circumspectly proceed in the way of our duty, we may comfort our minds in the hope of God's salvation in due time.

CHAPTER IV. [Ver. 5. *Thou must buy it also of Ruth the Moabitess.* If the kinsman should buy the land from Ruth, it is not very apparent how it could follow from the purchase that he was to take Ruth to wife. Kennicott and others, on the authority of some very valuable MSS., render the passage, 'Thou shalt also obtain Ruth the Moabitess, the wife of the dead;' and this, at all events, is the sense of the passage. *C.*]

Ver. 8. [*So he drew off his shoe.* This was not an

ENTRANCE TO GROTTO IN CHURCH OF NATIVITY—IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD WHERE BOAZ AND RUTH MET. [RUTH, iv: 17.]—"And the women her neighbors gave it a name, saying, There is a son born to Naomi; and they called his name Obed: he is the father of Jesse, the father of David." We give a picture of the entrance to the grotto in the Church of the Nativity to illustrate this particular Scripture, for our Savior was a direct descendant of David, and thus through him related to Ruth, the Moabitish damsel. The door we see above is the opening into the manger where our Savior was born. Steps lead down a dimly-lighted stairway, and crowds of pilgrims from all parts of the world come here to look in upon this sacred place. Treasures are also brought from all parts of the world and deposited here. Lamps of silver and gold are suspended, and there is constantly a light in this place.

thy life, and [z]a nourisher of thine old age: for thy daughter-in-law, which loveth thee, which is[a] better to thee than seven sons, hath born him.

16 And Naomi took the child, and laid it in her bosom, and became [b]nurse unto it.

17 And the women her neighbours [c]gave it a name, saying, There is a son born to Naomi; and they called his name [d]Obed:[1] he *is* the father of Jesse, the father of David.

A.M. cir. 2694.
B.C. cir. 1310.

[z] Ge 45.11; 47.12. 1 Ki 17.9, 15.
[a] 1 Sa.1.8. Pr.17.17.
[b] Ge.24.59;35.8.
[c] Lu.1.58,59. Ro.12.11,12,15.
[d] Serviceable, ver. 15, 21, 22. Ro.12.11. 1 Ch.2.12,15. Mat.1.5,6. Lu.1.31,32.
1 *Obed*, a servant, as distinguished from the sons whom she had lost in her prime of life. This was to be a servant of her old age.—*C.*
[e] 1 Ch. 2.4–15. Lu.3.31. Nu.1.7. Ge.49.10.
[f] Or, *Salmah*, 1 Ch. 2.11,51.54.

A.M. cir. 2694.
B.C. cir. 1310.

[g] 1 Sa.16.1. Ps.75.6; 113.7.
2 'This passage is given by Matthew word for word in the genealogy of Christ, that we may see that this history looks not so much to David as to Jesus Christ, who was proclaimed by all as the Saviour and Redeemer of the human race, and that we may learn with what wonderful compassion the Lord raises up the lowly and despised to the greatest glory & majesty' (*Brentius*).—*P.*

18 ¶ Now these *are* the generations of Pharez: [e]Pharez begat Hezron,

19 And Hezron begat Ram, and Ram begat Amminadab,

20 And Amminadab begat Nahshon, and Nahshon begat [f]Salmon,

21 And Salmon begat Boaz, and Boaz begat Obed,

22 And [g]Obed begat Jesse, and Jesse begat David.[2]

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example of the widow demanding marriage of the nearest kinsman, in which case she was directed to unloose his shoe. This was merely a case of the surrender of right, and drawing off the shoe was a fact in attestation, as more easily maintainable in evidence than any form of words or documents. In many European countries wood, earth, and stone are given as tokens both of surrender and investiture. *C.*]

Ver. 9. [*I have bought all that was Elimelech's, and all that was Chilion's and Mahlon's, of the hand of Naomi.* The property of the sons had reverted to the mother in point of fact, or its reverting may have been admitted in point of law, because any right derived through Ruth might have been afterwards questioned and difficult to establish. The right of Naomi, passing, however, under the silence or with the consent of Ruth, could not be questioned or disturbed. *C.*]

REFLECTIONS.—It is pleasant indeed to behold a man diligent in business, and the providence of God succeeding his endeavours;—to see in marriage the principal regard paid to the holiness and virtue of the partner, not to beauty or wealth;—to see persons of honest intentions risking the most strict and public cognizance;—to see the professed followers of Christ using the most fair and open dealing in all their agreements;—to see affectionate lovers depending wholly on God to make them comfortable to one another;—to see humility, virtue, prudence, and honesty, issuing in remarkable honour and happiness;—to see God raising up the poor, and causing them to sit with princes; and making up the loss of those relations from whom they expected much comfort, in the enjoyment of those from whom they expected nothing;—to see neighbours rejoicing in one another's welfare;—and to see the providences of God, in every circumstance, leading and directing us to Jesus, David's Lord. But, in fine, in Boaz the Bethlehemite I discern Jesus our kinsman-redeemer, who remembered us in our low estate;—pitying our poor and miserable condition, and moved, not indeed by any respectful behaviour in us, but his own infinite compassion, he hath allowed us sinners of the Gentiles to glean in the field of his oracles and ordinances. For our encouragement he hath appointed handfuls of precious promises, and offers of grace and salvation for our use. At infinite expense, and with infinite care and equity, he hath espoused our race, and raised up a seed of servants to God. Let us, conscious of our poverty and affected with his kindness, return him the most humble and thankful acknowledgments. Let us glean for our souls only in his field. Let us abide by his maidens, the faithful ministers of his word. Let us approach his throne of grace in the full assurance of faith, pleading that he, as our nearest kinsman, would spread his robes of righteousness, and garments of salvation, over our naked souls. And let us commit our way to him: he will bring it to pass, and perfect that which concerns us.

THE FIRST BOOK OF

SAMUEL.

This book and the following are denominated from the prophet SAMUEL, perhaps because he wrote the first twenty-four chapters of this; at least from his being the subject of much of it; and whatever relates to David, the subject of the other, is but the issue of his unction to the kingdom by Samuel. This book contains the history of at least eighty years; and exhibits an account (1) Of Eli's negligence and the wickedness of his sons; with the terrible calamities occasioned by these to the Israelites; and even to the Philistines, who took captive the ark, ii.–vi. (2) Of Samuel's birth; education; call to be a prophet; deliverance and government of Israel; resignation of his government; and death, i. ii. iii. vii.–xii. xiii. xv. xvi. xix. xxv. (3) Of the Israelites' resolute demand of a king; and the instalment, prosperity, maladministration, and unhappy end of Saul, viii.–xxvi. xxviii. xxxi. (4) Of the unction of David to be king; his diverting of Saul when melancholy with his music; his conquest of Goliath; his friendship with Jonathan; persecution by Saul; marriage with Michal the daughter of Saul, and with Abigail the widow of Nabal; his retreat into the land of the Philistines; discharge from their army; and his slaughter of the Amalekites who had burned Ziklag, xvi.–xxvii. xxix. xxx.

[The books of Samuel were originally regarded as one. The first time the division into two books was made was on the publication of the Septuagint version, about B.C. 260. But long after that period they formed only one book in Hebrew manuscripts; and the early Rabbins universally speak of them as 'The Book of Samuel.' In the first edition of the Hebrew Bible, printed in 1488, they appeared as one continuous history; and it was not until the year 1518 that the present division was adopted in the Bible printed at Venice.

Although this book bears the name *Samuel*, this is no proof that Samuel was its author, any more than that Ruth and Esther were the authors of the books which bear their names. It is a remarkable fact that there is not in this book itself, or in any other book of Scripture, or in Josephus, a single statement throwing light on the authorship. The common belief in the church is that the first twenty-four chapters were written by Samuel, and the rest by the prophets Nathan and Gad. This view was probably suggested by 1 Ch. 29. 29; though, as will be shown (see note on that passage), there is really nothing in that passage to sanction it. The authorship of the books of Samuel must be regarded a matter of conjecture.

The precise date of the book cannot be fixed; but there are incidental allusions, especially in the early chapters, tending to prove that the narrative must have been written by a contemporary. The language and style also show the book to be of the golden age of Hebrew literature. There appear to be traces of different authors, who probably took up in succession the thread of history, each drawing it out as far as his own knowledge extended.

In the study of the books of Samuel, it is of great importance to read in connection the parallel history of Chronicles. Much additional light is thus thrown upon the narrative, and upon the sentiments of the Jewish people, and the tendency of Jewish thought and feeling at two different epochs.

Samuel, whose name this book bears, was one of the most prominent characters in Jewish history. He was a connecting link between two epochs and two forms of government. He was the last of the judges, and he was the founder of the monarchy. He was also the first of the great line of prophets whose writings embody the leading events in the history of the Jewish church, and whose predictions embody the leading doctrines of the Christian church. Peter makes emphatic mention of him in this latter character:—'All the prophets from Samuel and those that follow after, as many as have spoken, have likewise foretold of these days.' It is remarkable that of all the great men of Israelitish history Samuel is the only one whose genealogy is unknown. We cannot tell with certainty from what tribe he sprung. It is generally supposed he was a Levite, because he was attached to the sanctuary; but thoughtful examination shows that this is mere conjec-

ture, for his dedication originated in his mother's vow, and the ecclesiastical duties he subsequently discharged, he discharged as a prophet and not as a priest.—There is another circumstance worthy of note in the life of Samuel. It was he who instituted the system of regular institutions for religious training. They appear to have been established at the noted sanctuaries. There young men were instructed at first under his immediate superintendence (1 Sa. 10. 5, 10; 19. 20). His instructions were remarkably blessed and acknowledged of God. The spirit of prophecy often descended on the whole company of his disciples, and was even imparted, as in the case of Saul (1 Sa. 10. 11), to others who were brought into immediate connection with them. Gad, Nathan, and David were pupils of this first and greatest of prophetic teachers. The schools of Jewish law and literature, and the universities and colleges of Christendom, may be regarded as the natural developments of the schools founded by Samuel. *P.*]

CHAPTER I.

1 Elkanah a Levite, having two wives, worshippeth yearly at Shiloh. 4 He cherisheth Hannah, though barren, and provoked by Peninnah. 9 Hannah in grief prayeth for a child. 12 Eli at first rebuking her, afterwards blesseth her. 19 Hannah having born Samuel, stayeth at home till he is weaned. 24 She presenteth him to the LORD according to her vow.

A.M. 2869 or 2833. B.C. 1135 or 1171.

NOW, there was a certain man of Ramathaim-zophim, of [a]mount Ephraim,[1] and his name *was* [b]Elkanah, the son of Jeroham, the son of Elihu, the son of Tohu, the son of Zuph, an Ephrathite.

2 And he had [c]two wives; the name of the one was Hannah, and the name of the other Peninnah: and Peninnah had children, but Hannah had no children.

3 And this man went up out of his city [d]yearly,[2] to worship and to sacrifice unto the LORD of [3]hosts [e]in Shiloh: and the two [f]sons of Eli, Hophni and Phinehas, the priests of the LORD, were there.

4 ¶ And when the time was that Elkanah offered, he gave to Peninnah his wife, and to all her sons and her daughters, [g]portions.[4]

5 But unto Hannah he gave [h]a worthy[5] portion; [i]for he loved Hannah; but the LORD had shut up her womb.

6 And her [k]adversary also provoked her sore, for to make her fret, because the LORD had shut up her womb.

7 And *as* [l]he did so year by year,[6] when she went up[7] to the house of the LORD, so she provoked her; therefore she wept, and did not eat.

8 Then said Elkanah her husband to her, Hannah, [m]why weepest thou? and why eatest thou not? and why is thy heart grieved? *am* not I [n]better to thee than ten sons?

9 ¶ So Hannah rose up after they had eaten in Shiloh, and after they had drunk:[8] (now Eli the priest sat upon a seat by a post of [o]the temple of the LORD:)

10 And she *was* [p]in bitterness of soul,[9] and prayed unto the LORD, and wept sore.

11 And she [q]vowed a vow, and said, O LORD of hosts,[1] if thou wilt indeed look on the affliction of thine handmaid, and remember me, and not forget thine handmaid, but wilt give unto thine handmaid a man-child,[2] then I will give him unto the LORD all the days of his life, and [r]there shall no razor come upon his head.

12 And it came to pass, as she [s]continued praying[3] before the LORD, that Eli marked her mouth.

13 Now Hannah, she [t]spake in her heart; only her lips moved, but her voice was not heard: therefore Eli [u]thought she had been drunken.

14 And Eli said unto her, [x]How long wilt thou be drunken? put away thy wine from thee.

15 And Hannah answered and said, [y]No, my lord; I *am* a woman of a sorrowful spirit:[4] I have drunk neither wine nor strong drink, but have [z]poured out my soul before the LORD.

16 Count not thine handmaid [a]for a daughter of Belial: for [b]out of the abundance of my complaint[5] and grief have I spoken hitherto.

17 Then Eli answered and said, [c]Go in peace: and the God of Israel grant *thee* thy petition that thou hast asked of him.

18 And she said, [d]Let thine handmaid find grace in thy sight. So the woman went her way, and did eat, and her [e]countenance was no more *sad*.[6]

19 ¶ And they rose up in the morning [f]early, and worshipped before the LORD, and returned, and came to their house to Ramah: and El-

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CHAP. I.

a Jos. 17. 15, 18. Ju. 17. 1; 19. 1.

1 From these words it would at first sight appear as if Ramathaim had been situated in the district called Mount Ephraim. The construction of the original does not, however, make this certain. The words may mean, not that Ramathaim was in Mount Ephraim, but rather that Elkanah was in some way of Mount Ephraim, though resident in Ramathaim. —*P.*

b 1 Ch. 6. 27–34. Ju. 13. 5.

c Ge. 4. 23; 29. 23, 29, 31. Ju. 13. 2.

d Ex. 23. 14, 17; 34. 23. De. 16. 16.

2 Heb. *from year to year.*—[The marginal reading 'from year to year' is the preferable translation; for 'yearly' signifies but *once a year*—'from year to year' may include the three annual visits which the law required of the sanctuary.—*C.*]

e Jos. 18. 1. Ju. 18. 31; 21. 12; 18. 31. ch. 3. 21; 4. 3. Ps. 78. 60. Je. 7. 12, 14. ver. 24.

f ch. 2. 12–17, 34; 4. 4, 11, 17. ver. 4.

g De. 12. 17; 16. 11. Le. 3. 4, 5, 17. 1 Sa. 9. 22.

4 All the family were entitled to partake of the peace-offerings, being a sacrifice and feast conjoined: an emblem of communion through sacrifice, both between God and men, and worshipper and worshipper.—*C.*

h Ge. 43. 34. ch. 9. 23.

5 The giving of 'double portions,' to mark affection or respect, was a custom, civil,—not a religious ordinance. Joseph, Ge. 43. 34, gave not merely a double but a fourfold portion to Benjamin. It is still practised, both in the east of Europe and the western parts of Asia.—*C.*

i Ge. 29. 30; 16. 2; 20. 18; 30. 2.

k Le. 18. 18. Job 1. 11; 2. 9, 6. 14.

l ver. 3, 21. ch. 2. 19.

6 Or, *From the time that she, &c.*

7 Heb. *from her going up.*

m Job 6. 14. 2 Th. 5. 14. Ju. 2. 1, 4, 5.

n Ru. 4. 15. Pr. 17. 17; 18. 24.

8 The priests and their families partook of the sacrificial meal and drank certain portions of the libations. It was after this meal that Hannah went to weep and pray at the sanctuary.—*P.*

o *i.e.* the tabernacle, ch. 3. 3, 15; 22. 7. Ex. xxvi. xl. 2 Sa. 7. 2.

p Job 6. 2, 3; 7. 15; 9. 18; 10. 1. Is. 38. 2, 3, 15. La. 3. 15.

9 Heb. *bitter of soul.*

q Ge. 28. 20. Nu. 21. 2; 30. 8. Ju. 11. 30. Ec. 5. 4.

1 The first mention of *hosts* in Scripture occurs, Ge. 32. 2, where Mahanaim signifies camps, armies, hosts, &c.; these were angels. The second instance occurs, Ex. 12. 41, where the *hosts* are God's delivered people, in marching array, going forth to war. A third instance occurs, Is. 40. 26, where the word evidently signifies the sun, moon, and stars of heaven.—*Hosts* are therefore angels, men, or stars, arranged in order by the almighty Ruler. —*C.*

2 Heb. *seed of men.*

r Nu. 6. 5. Ju. 13. 5; 16. 17.

s Ja. 5. 16. Ep. 6. 18. Col. 4. 2. Lu. 18. 1.

3 Heb. *multiplied to pray.*

t Ne. 2. 4. Ro. 8. 26. Ex. 14. 15.

u Ac. 11. 3. 1 Co. 13. 7.

x Mat. 7. 1, 3. Job 11. 14–22. Pr. 4. 24.

y Pr. 15. 1; 25. 15.

4 Heb. *hard of spirit.*

z Ps. 62. 8; 142. 2. La. 2. 19.

a De. 13. 13. ch. 2. 12; 10. 27; 25. 6.

b Ps. 102. title. Job 6. 2, 3; 10. 1.

5 Or, *meditation.*

c Ex. 4. 18. Ju. 18. 6. ch. 25. 35; 29. 7. 2 Ki. 5. 19.

d Ge. 32. 5; 33. 8, 15. Ru. 2. 10, 13.

e Ec. 9. 7. Ro. 15. 13. Ps. 119. 81; 27. 13, 14.

6 Nothing so much promotes cheerfulness as pious prayer, with such sure dependence as Scripture warrants, that our prayers will be heard, so far as they may serve for God's glory and our own good.—*C.*

f Ps. 5. 3; 119. 147. Pr. 8. 17. Ge. 21. 26

CHAPTER I. [Ver. 1. *Ramathaim-zophim.* This is the only place in Scripture in which the full name occurs. In other places it is written simply *Ramah*, of which *Ramathaim* appears to be the dual ('the two Ramahs'), and *Zophim* indicates that *Zuph*, one of Samuel's ancestors, had migrated from his home in Ephrata and settled in a district which was thence called 'the land of Zuph,' 1 Sa. 9. 5. The position of the city is one of the great difficulties of biblical geography. Some seven or eight different localities have been mentioned by different writers as its probable site. None of them appear to me to accord with all the statements of the sacred writers. From a careful comparison of these statements, I have been led to conclude that Ramah was situated a few miles to the west or south-west of Bethlehem; but the exact site is unknown. *P.*——*An Ephrathite.* Not that Elkanah was an Ephraimite, that is, of the tribe of Ephraim, but merely a dweller in one of the Levitical cities within the bounds of that tribe; for Elkanah was a Levite, and of the family of Kohath, 1 Ch. 6. 34; 33. 27, 28. *C.*]

Ver. 3. [*Lord of hosts.* The title here for the first time used appears to be an abbreviation of *Jehovah God of Hosts.* It is applied to the Lord as the supreme Ruler of the universe, who governs all the powers of heaven, visible and invisible, who rules the spheres, and exercises dominion over the earth and all that is therein. *P.*]

Ver. 9. [*Temple of the Lord.* From mention of the temple, some have supposed that this book was not written till after the time of Solomon. But as the temple is mentioned, Ps. 5. 7; 25. 4, in the time of David, no inference as to time can be drawn from the use of the word. *C.*]

Ver. 11. [*And she vowed a vow.* There was a twofold vow—1st. That the son she prayed for should be dedicated to the Lord, and should serve him all his life; 2d. That he should be a Nazarite, as is implied in the words 'there shall no razor come upon his head.' As a descendant of Levi his business was to serve the Lord; but by his maternal vow he was bound to a still closer and holier service. *P.*——*Remember me, and not forget thine handmaid.* These are not equivalent expressions, approaching tautology, but expressions in which the thoughts vary from each other with the delicacy with which the commingling colours in a painting vary, yet concur. She pleads, (1) Her affliction; (2) Entreats remembrance of her without any characteristic; (3) Prays not to be forgotten as an handmaid, a servant;—all just arguments of prayer, which she had a right to plead with God, to whom she looks in faith, through sacrifice.—*I will give him unto the Lord all the days of his life.* As a Kohathite, see ver. 1, he was devoted to the Lord from 25 to 50, but his mother devotes him from his birth, and all his days after 50. An emblem of true Christian education, in which a parent 'trains up a child in the way he should go;' and of believing perseverance, for, 'when such an one is old, he will not depart from it.' *C.*]

Ver. 16. [*Belial* is not a proper name; it signifies 'worthlessness.' 'A daughter of worthlessness' is equivalent to 'a worthless woman;' the quality being here, as is common in Hebrew idiom, personified. *P.*]

REFLECTIONS.—A divided family is most unhappy: and they bring upon themselves redoubled

kanah knew Hannah his wife; and the LORD remembered[g] her.

20 Wherefore it came to pass, when the time was come about,[6] after Hannah had conceived, that she bare a son,[7] and called his name Samuel,[8] *saying,* Because I have asked him of the LORD.[9]

21 And [h]the man Elkanah, and all his house, went up to offer unto the LORD the yearly sacrifice, and his vow.

22 But [i]Hannah went not up;[1] for she said unto her husband, *I will not go up* until the child be weaned, and *then* I will bring him, that he may appear before the LORD, and there abide[k] for ever.

23 And Elkanah her husband said unto her, Do what seemeth thee good; tarry until thou have weaned him: only the LORD [l]establish his word.[2] So the woman abode, and [m]gave her son suck, until she weaned him.

24 ¶ And when she had weaned him, she took[n] him up with her, with three bullocks,[3] and one ephah of flour, and a bottle of wine,[4] and brought him unto the house of the LORD in Shiloh:[5] and the child *was* young.

25 And they slew a bullock, and brought the child to Eli.

26 And she said, Oh my lord! [o]*as* thy soul liveth, my lord, I *am* the woman that stood by thee here, praying unto the LORD.

27 For[p] this child I prayed; and the LORD hath given me my petition which I asked of him:

28 Therefore also I have [6]lent[7] him to the LORD; as long as he liveth he shall be lent to the LORD. And [q]he worshipped the LORD there.[8]

CHAPTER II.

1 *Hannah's song in thankfulness to God.* 12 *The sin of Eli's sons.* 18 *Samuel's ministry.* 20 *By Eli's blessing Hannah is more fruitful.* 22 *Eli reproveth his sons.* 27 *A prophecy against Eli's house.*

AND Hannah [a]prayed, and said, My heart rejoiceth in the LORD; [b]mine horn is exalted in the LORD; my [c]mouth is enlarged over mine enemies; because I [d]rejoice in thy salvation.

2 *There*[e] *is* none holy as the LORD:[1] for *there is* none besides thee; neither *is there* any rock like our God.

3 Talk[f] no more so exceeding proudly; let *not* arrogancy come out of your mouth: for the LORD *is* [g]a God of knowledge, and by him actions are weighed.

4 The [h]bows of the mighty men *are* broken, and they that stumbled are girded with strength.

5 *They* [i]*that were* full have hired out themselves for bread; and *they that were* hungry ceased: so that the [k]barren hath born seven; and [l]she that hath many children is waxed feeble.

6 The[m] LORD killeth, and maketh alive: [n]he bringeth down to the grave, and bringeth up.

7 The LORD [o]maketh poor, and maketh rich: he bringeth low, and lifteth up.[2]

8 He[p] raiseth up the poor out of the dust, *and* lifteth up the beggar from the dunghill, to set *them* among princes, and to make them inherit the throne of glory: for the [q]pillars of the earth *are* the LORD's, and he hath set the world upon them.[3]

9 He [r]will keep the feet of his saints, and the wicked shall be [s]silent in darkness;[4] for [t]by strength shall no man prevail.

10 The[u] adversaries of the LORD shall be broken to pieces; out of heaven shall he thunder upon them: the LORD [x]shall judge the ends of the earth; and he shall [y]give strength unto his king, and exalt the horn of his anointed.[5]

11 And Elkanah went to Ramah to his house; and the child did [z]minister unto the LORD before Eli the priest.

12 ¶ Now [a]the sons of Eli *were* sons of Belial; they knew not the LORD.[6]

13 And the priest's custom with the people *was, that* when any man offered sacrifice, the priest's servant came, while the flesh was in seething, with a flesh-hook of three teeth in his hand;

14 And he struck *it* into the pan, or kettle, or caldron, or pot; [b]all that the flesh-hook brought up the priest took for himself. So they did in Shiloh unto all the Israelites that came thither.

15 Also, before [c]they burnt the fat, the priest's servant came, and said to the man that sacrificed, Give flesh to roast for the priest; for he will not have sodden flesh of thee, but raw.

16 And *if* any man said unto him, Let them not fail to burn the fat presently,[7] and *then* take *as much* as thy soul desireth; then he

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A.M. 2869 or 2833.
B.C. 1135 or 1171.

[g] Ge.8.1;21.1.ver.11.
[6] Heb. *in revolution of days.*
[7] 1134 or 1170.
[8] i.e. *Asked of God.*
[9] The words 'because I have asked him of the Lord' are not to be regarded as an etymological explanation of the name Samuel, but rather an supposition founded on the facts connected with his birth. *Samuel* signifies 'heard of God.'—*P.*
[h] Ex.23.14–17;34.23. De.16.16. Jo.5.14.15.
[i] Ex.23.17;34.23. De.16.16.
[1] This was no evidence of religious neglect in Hannah, for she was not legally bound to go, the males only being required to appear before the Lord, and her resolution to stay at home being founded on the care of her child.—*Note,* Christians should well examine the reasons they employ for absence from the sanctuary. If satisfactory to conscience, the Lord desires mercy, not sacrifice; but let conscience be satisfied on scriptural grounds.—*C.*
[k] ver. 11. Ex. 21. 6. Le. 27. 28. De. 18. 6, 7. Ps.110.4.Is.9.7.
[l] 2 Sa.7.25.Is.44.26.
[2] Both Elkanah and Hannah seem to have considered the response of the high-priest, ver.17, as prophetic, and an evidence of the acceptance of Hannah's vow. This is agreeable to Jn.11.51.—*C.*
[m] Ge.21.7. Ps. 22.9. Ju.13.4,14.
[n] Lu.2.22.De.16.16. Nu.15.9,10. 2 Ti. 3. 15. Ex.23.15;34.20.
[3] For a burnt-offering, a sin-offering, and a peace-offering.—*C.*
[4] Such bottles were skins curiously joined together, so as to contain liquids.—*C.*
[5] 1127 or 1167.
[o] ch.17.55;20.3.2Sa. 11.11;14.9.2 Ki.2.4,6;4. 30.
[p] ver. 11, 13. Mat. 7. 7. Is.45.11.
[6] Or, *returned him, whom I have obtained by petition, to the LORD.*
[7] That is, devoted him, designated him by vow to God.—*C.*
[q] i.e. Samuel, ver. 24.2 Ti.3.15.
[8] From ch. 2. 11 it appears the child was of sufficient age to aid Eli in the service. Hence we may conclude that the person who worshipped the Lord, ver. 28, was Samuel. The worship of a child! How beautiful! He knew the Scriptures from childhood, and they had made him wise unto salvation.—*C.*

CHAP. II.

B.C. 1127 or 1167.
[a] Phi.4.6;3.3. Lu. 1. 46,47.
[b] Ps.92.10;112.9;148. 14;18.2;89.17.
[c] Ex.15.2. Ju. 5. 1, 2. Ps.71.8.Re.18.20.
[d] Is.12.2,3. Lu.1.47. Ps.118.14.
[e] Ex.15.11. Ps.73.25; 86. 8; 89. 6, 8. Is. 40.17. Jos.24.19. De. 3.24; 32. 4,30,31,39.1 Co.10.4.
[f] Mat. 3. 9, 10. Jude 15. Pr.29.23; 8. 13. Lu. 14.11.
[1] Holiness in God is his entire separation from evil, and his entire devotedness of zeal to his own glory. In God, holiness is original; in man, derivative. None can therefore be holy as the Lord; men become holy because he is holy.—*C.*
[g] Ps.147.5. Je.17.10; 16.19.He.4.12,13.
[h] Ps.76.3; 44. 9. He. 11. 34. Ju.4.15. Is.41.11, 14–16.Am.5.9.
[i] Lu. 1. 53; 14. 11; 6. 20,21,24,25. Ja.4.6, 5.1–6.
[k] ch.1.20; ver.21. Ps. 113.9. Ru.4.11.
[l] ch.1.6. Je.15.9.
[m] De. 32. 39. Job 5. 18. Ho.6.1. Re.1.18.
[n] ch.20. 3 Is. 26. 19. Ps.18.5; 116.3; 130. 1. 2 Co.1.9,10.
[o] Job 1 21;42.12. Ps. 102.10; 107.35–41; 75.5, 6.
[2] The pious ascription to God of all that the world calls *fortune,* is a most happy frame, whether for prosperity or adversity. It keeps us humble in the one, it teaches resignation in the other.—*C.*
[p] Ps.113.7;xviii.xxi. xxii.cxvi.Job 5.11;12. 1 Sa.1.52. 1 Ki.16. 2.1s.22.20–24. Lu.1.52.
[q] Job 38 4,5. Ps.102. 25;104.5;24.2;75.3. Ga. 2.9.
[3] A beautiful picture of God's providence, 'upholding all things by the word of his power,' He.1.2.—*C.*
[r] Ps. 91. 11; 121. 5.8; 94.18.Pr 16.9.
[s] Ps.94.17;9. 17. Job 5.14. Is. 15.1. Je. 8.14. Ec. 5. 17. Zep. 1. 15. Mat.22.12.
[4] 'This is the condemnation, that light has come into the world, but men have loved darkness,' that is, the banishment of God and his truth from all their thoughts, wherefore, in judgment, when their actions are weighed, they are cast into outer darkness. There, while infidelity and pride are silent for ever, their inheritance is 'weeping and gnashing of teeth.'—*C.*
[t] Ps.33.16. Pr. 21.31. Ec.9.11.ch.17.49. Zec. 4.6. Job 9.4;40.2,11,12.
[u] ch.7.10;12.18.2Sa. 22.14,15. Ps.2.9.
[x] ch.vii.xvii. 2 Sa.v. viii. Ps.2.8,9; 22. 27,29. Is.45.22.
[y] Ps.18.32–48;89.3,4, 21–37. Mat.28.18.2 Sa. viii.x.
[5] That is, his Messiah, in whose future appearing Hannah expresses her faith. The *horn* is the emblem of power.—*C.*
[z] ver.18;ch.1.28;3.1, 15.
[a] De. 13. 13. Ju. 19. 22.ch.10.27;25.17.2 Sa. 16.7; 22.6. 1 Ki.21.10. 2 Co.6.15. Tit.1.16. 1 Jn. 2.3,4. Je.9.3. Ho.4.1,6. Mal.2.8. Ro.1.28–30.
[6] Sons of *worthlessness,* as the expression signifies—for man has no worth, but as he knows God to be his God, and has chosen him for his sure portion.—*C.*
[b] Is.56.11. Ex.29.27, 28.Le.7.34.
[c] Le.3,4. Is. 56.11. Phi.3.19.
[7] Heb. *as on the day.*

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trouble and vexation who dare transgress God's institution of marriage in order to obtain redoubled pleasures. Rarely do we behave aright under either remarkable prosperity or remarkable adversity: under the former, the heart swells with pride; under the latter, it sinks and rends with discontent and murmuring. The fretfulness of our temper often lays us open to continual uneasiness; and the unthankfulness of our heart doubles our affliction by overlooking our mercies. But sinful and hurtful is that grief which diverts us from our duty to God, and imbitters the comfort which we have in him. Our most deserved crosses are abundantly mixed with undeserved mercies; and religion and reason will afford us a cure. Distress ought to make us double our diligence in attending on the ordinances of God. Fervent prayers and solemn vows are often means of relief to broken spirits: yea, it is peculiarly becoming under sore trials, and amidst general apostasy and profaneness, to be punctual and earnest attenders on the ordinances of God. But base and devilish must that spirit be which can take pleasure to vex the distressed in mind, even when they are attending upon God's solemn worship. It is more becoming to balance others' abuse with our tender affection, and do all that we can to comfort those who are cast down. For peculiarly afflicting is it to perplexed souls to have the godly, and even ministers, misinterpreting their wrestlings with God as hypocrisy and wickedness. Yet, however distressing, injurious reproach should always be answered with the greatest candour and meekness. And men, convinced of their mistake, should turn their sinful censures into fervent prayers for the persons injured. Devotions towards God ought to be preferred to every convenience of our own. Early and earnest devotions are the best presages of happy days and successful undertakings: and nothing but works of necessity and mercy ought to detain us from the solemn worship of God. With the most distinguished expressions of gratitude ought we to commemorate the mercies which we have received in answer to our prayers. Children ought to be carefully trained up, not merely with an eye to the law of nature,

DAN—WHERE JEROBOAM BUILT A TEMPLE AND ESTABLISHED THE WORSHIP OF THE GOLDEN CALF. [I. SAMUEL, iii : 20.]—"And all Israel, from Dan even to Beer-Sheba, knew that Samuel was established to be a prophet of the Lord." This is the well known city which marks the northern frontier of Palestine. It was originally called Laish or Leshem. (Joshua, xix:47) It is now called Tell el-Kadi. It is three miles from Cæsarea Philippi. This was once a very historic place. Here Jeroboam built a temple and established the worship of the golden calf. We have now nothing but a thicket of reeds, oaks and oleanders, which entirely hide the shapeless ruins, but are kept fresh and green by the waters of one of the sources of the Jordan. This is one of the most beautiful places for a city in Palestine. The region round about it is of unrivaled fertility, but the ancient city of Dan is without a single inhabitant. Thus the prophecy uttered concerning it is fulfilled to the letter.

would answer him, *Nay;* but thou shalt give *it me* now: and if not, I will take *it* by force.[8]

17 Wherefore the sin of the young men was very[d] great before the LORD;[9] for men abhorred the offering of the LORD.

18 ¶ But Samuel [e]ministered before the LORD, *being* a child, girded with a linen ephod.

19 Moreover, his mother made him a little coat, and brought *it* to him [f]from year to year, when she came up with her husband to offer the yearly sacrifice.

20 ¶ And Eli [g]blessed Elkanah and his wife, and said, The LORD give thee seed of this woman for the loan[1] which is lent to the LORD. And they went unto their own home.

21 And the LORD [h]visited Hannah, so that she conceived, and [i]bare three sons and two daughters. And the child Samuel [k]grew before the LORD.[2]

22 ¶ Now Eli [l]was very old, and heard all that his sons [m]did unto all Israel; and how they lay with the women that [n]assembled *at* the door of the tabernacle of the congregation.

23 And he said unto them, [o]Why do ye such things? for I hear of your evil dealings[3] by[p] all this people.

24 Nay, my sons: for *it is* [q]no good report that I hear; ye make the LORD'S people to[4] transgress.[5]

25 If [r]one man sin against another, the judge shall judge him: but [s]if a man sin against the LORD, who shall entreat for him? Notwithstanding they [t]hearkened not unto the voice of their father, because[6] the LORD would slay them.

26 And the child Samuel [u]grew on, and was in favour both with the LORD, and also with men.[7]

27 ¶ And there came [z]a man of God unto Eli,[8] and said unto him, Thus saith the LORD, Did[y] I plainly appear unto the house of thy father, when they were in Egypt in Pharaoh's house?

28 And [z]did I choose him out of all the tribes of Israel *to be* my priest, to offer upon mine altar, to burn incense, to wear an ephod before me? and [a]did I give unto the house of

A.M. 2879 or 2839.
B.C. 1125 or 1165.

8 What a melancholy example of religious defection, when the lips of the people and not of the priests retain the knowledge of God, and when they who should inculcate piety are the most prominent in violating the law.—*C.*

d Ge. 10. 10; 13. 13. Mal. 2. 8. Ho. 4. 1.

9 The portions which legally belonged to the priest out of these offerings were 'the heave-leg' and 'the wave-breast.' These portions he was to receive after the fat of the sacrifice had been burned upon the altar, Le. 7. 30–34. To take the flesh, and roast it for food, before the offering to God was completed, was a crime amounting to robbery of God.—*P.*

e ver. 11; ch. 3. 1; 22. 18. Ex. 28. 4. 2 Sa. 6. 14.

f ch. 1. 3, 21. Ex. 23. 14–17; 34. 23. De. 16. 16.

g Ge. 14. 19; 27. 27, 29; xlviii. 15.

1 Or, *petition, which she asked,* &c.

h Ge. 21. 1. ch. 1. 19, 20.

i Ep. 3. 20. ver. 5. Ps. 113. 9.

k ver. 26; ch. 3. 19. Lu. 1. 80; 2. 40, 52.

2 Grew up in the service of the Lord, both in stature and in knowledge, and in piety and in character. What a blessed sight to the mother on her annual visit, when bodily growth and spiritual grace kept pace with each other.—*C.*

l ch. 8. 1.

m ver. 13–17. Je. 3. 3. Ho. 7. 4; 6. 9.

n Heb. *assembled by troops,* Ex. 38. 8.

o Ju. 15. 10. Ac. 9. 4.

3 Or, *I hear evil words of you.*

p Is. 3. 9. Je. 3. 3; 8. 12. Ho. 4. 6; 5. 1.

q 1 Ti. 3. 7. ver. 17, 22.

4 Or, *to cry out.*

5 Amongst the greatest evils of sin is its multiplying in others. Hence the responsibility of sin in men of rank, from them it propagates more speedily, and their judgment is the more heavy from the Lord.—*C.*

r De. 25. 1–3; 17. 8–11.

s Nu. 15. 30. ch. 3. 14. Ge. 13. 13.

t 2 Ch. 25. 16. Pr. 15. 10. Ps. 69. 27. 1 Jn. 2. 11, 19. Jn. 12. 39, 40.

6 For '*because,*' the translation should be '*wherefore*' or '*therefore,*' as in Ps. 116. 10. —*C.*

u Pr. 3. 4. Lu. 1. 80; 2. 52. Ac. 2. 47. Ro. 14. 18.

7 Piety does not always obtain a good report from men, still there are occasions in which they concur. —*C.*

x ch. 9. 6. 2 Pe. 1. 21. 1 Ti. 6. 11.

8 1106 or 1126.

z Ex. 29. 4–35. Nu. 17. 5, 8. 2 Sa. 12. 7.

a Le. 2. 3, 10; 6. 16; 7. 7, 10. 24. De. 18. 1.

A.M. 2898 or 2878.
B.C. 1106 or 1126.

b De. 32. 15. ver. 13–17. Mal. 1. 12, 13.

9 They despised the part allotted to the priest by the law, and would choose what pleased their own epicurean tastes. —*C.*

c Jos. 18. 1. Ju. 21. 2.

d Le. 10. 12. Mat. 10. 37. Lu. 14. 26.

1 Eli not only allowed his sons to take what part they pleased, instead of the part appointed by the law, but he also permitted them to take it before the sacrifice was offered, thus honouring them above God.—*C.*

e Ex. 28. 43; 29. 9.

2 *I.e.* Ithamar.

f 2 Ch. 15. 2.

3 Such promises are sometimes called conditional. But this is a mode of speaking not perfectly safe. If it were, then the fulfilment of God's promises would depend on the creature, and not on God. Such promises are not conditional; they are simply promises with a declared or implied threatening. In this case the threatening is inflicted, and Eli's house is cast out.—*C.*

g Ps. 91. 14. Jn. 12. 26. Nu. 11. 20. Mal. 2. 9.

h Job 22. 9. Ps. 37. 37. ch. 4. 11; 22. 18, &c. 1 Ki. 2. 26, 27.

i Or, *the affliction of the tabernacle for all the wealth which God would have given Israel,* ch. 4. 11. Ps. 78. 59–64. 1 Ki. 2. 26, 27.

4 Not a rival priest in his office, but the Philistine enemy in possession of his ark and sanctuary, and wasting the wealth of Israel.—*C.*

5 Heb. *men.*

k 1 Ki. 13. 3. ch. 3. 12; 4. 11, 17. Nu. 14. 37. Ps. 55. 23.

l Eze. 44. 15. 1 Ch. 29. 22. 1 Ki. 1. 8, 45; 2. 27, 35. Ile. 7. 24. 28.

m ch. 25. 28. Ex 1. 21. 1 Ki. 2. 24. Nu. 25. 13. Eze. 44. 15. 2 Ch. 6. 8–15. Ne. 13. 10, 11.

n Eze. 44. 10–12. 1 Ki. 2. 27.

6 Just as a man discovers his own appearance better by looking into a mirror than by examining himself; so men are frequently led to self-examination and repentance rather by the afflictions that come through their families, than by any spontaneous movement of their own minds. The history of Eli is written not as a record of an obscure though public man, but as a warning to all fathers, especially to those in office, to chasten their children while there is hope.—*C.*

7 Heb. *favour.*

8 Or, *somewhat about the priesthood.*

CHAP. III.

B.C. 1100 or 1120.

a ch. 2. 11, 18; ver. 15. Served as a priest in the lower employments.

b Ps. 74. 9. Mi. 3. 7. Am. 8. 11, 12. Is. 13. 12.

thy father all the offerings made by fire of the children of Israel?

29 Wherefore [b]kick ye at my sacrifice,[9] and at mine offering, which I have commanded [c]*in my* habitation; and [d]honourest thy sons above me,[1] to make yourselves fat with the chiefest of all the offerings of Israel my people?

30 Wherefore the LORD God of Israel saith, [e]I said indeed, *that* thy house, and the house of thy father,[2] should walk before me for ever: but now the LORD saith, [f]Be it far from [3]me; for [g]them that honour me I will honour, and they that despise me shall be lightly esteemed.

31 Behold, the days come, that I [h]will cut off thine arm, and the arm of thy father's house, that there shall not be an old man in thine house.

32 And thou shalt see [i]an enemy[4] *in my* habitation in all *the wealth* which *God* shall give Israel: and there shall not be an old man in thine house for ever.

33 And the man of thine, *whom* I shall not cut off from mine altar, *shall be* to consume thine eyes, and to grieve thine heart: and all the increase of thine house shall die in the flower of their age.[5]

34 And this *shall be* [k]a sign unto thee, that shall come upon thy two sons, on Hophni and Phinehas; in one day they shall die both of them.

35 And [l]I will raise me up a faithful priest, *that* shall do according to *that* which *is* in mine heart and in my mind: and I will [m]build him a sure house; and he shall walk before mine Anointed for ever.

36 And it shall come to pass, *that* every one that [n]is left in thine house shall come *and* crouch to him for a piece of silver, and a morsel of bread,[6] and shall say, Put[7] me, I pray thee, into one of the priest's offices,[8] that I may eat a piece of bread.

CHAPTER III.

1 *How the word of the Lord was first revealed to Samuel.* 11 *God telleth Samuel the destruction of Eli's house.* 15 *Samuel, though loath, telleth Eli the vision.* 19 *Samuel acknowledged as a prophet.*

AND the child Samuel [a]ministered unto the LORD before Eli. And [b]the word of the

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as they are ours, but chiefly with an eye to the promise of grace, as they are given to God. And with great care and expedition ought we to perform our vows, particularly in the solemn surrender of our children to God.

CHAPTER II. [Ver. 3. *By him actions are weighed.* The idea of actions being weighed, as in the balance of God, is one well calculated to lead us to examine ourselves. Whether we will hear, or whether we will forbear, God will weigh.—*Note,* How needful then to pray, God be merciful to us sinners! How blessed our refuge in the 'blood that cleanseth from all sin!' *C.*]

Ver. 35. [These words are prophetical. They have reference to Eli's successors, Samuel and Zadok; but this reference is only primary. Of neither of them could it be said, 'He shall walk before mine Anointed for ever.' They embrace the whole line of the priesthood, as types; and are perfectly fulfilled in the person and work of the Messiah. *P.*]

REFLECTIONS.—We owe to God the most exalted praises upon receipt of his favours. Yea, pleasant and valuable mercies should always lead to an affecting contemplation of the excellences which are in God himself. The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him; and he often shows them things to come. Nothing is returned with such certainty and interest as that which is lent to the Lord: and early activity in God's service is a hopeful presage of an eminently useful life. But dreadful and threatening is the appearance when those who fill the highest offices in church or state beeome absolute monsters in impiety, lust, and rapacity. It is criminal to administer to such only a soft rebuke; and their contempt of reproof is an awful prelude of near and certain destruction. God permits such contemners to proceed in their wickedness till they have ripened themselves for ruin. Parents' indulgence of their children in sin may occasion fearful distresses to their family and nation; and the most tremendous judgments appear marked out for those who disregard even the mildest reproofs of their parents. The more remarkable the favours which have been abused, the more tremendous the judgments which may be expected; and sharers in sin shall share in correspondent punishment. But God's work and cause will never fall to the ground for want of hands to carry it on. Though ministers' wickedness may destroy themselves, it cannot destroy the ministry. The church is founded on a Rock, which the gates of hell cannot prevail against. Jesus, the faithful priest on his throne, is her principal governor, who can turn out her wicked officers, and fill their room with such as will be faithful unto death.

LORD was precious[1] in those days; *there was* no [c]open vision.

2 And it came to pass at that time, when Eli *was* laid down in his place, and [d]his eyes began to wax dim, *that* he could not see;

3 And [e]ere the lamp of God went out[2] in the temple of the LORD, where the ark of God *was*, and Samuel was laid down *to sleep;*

4 That the LORD [f]called Samuel: and he answered, Here *am* I.

5 And he ran unto Eli, and said, Here *am* I; for thou calledst me. And he said, I called not; lie down again. And he went and lay down.

6 And the LORD called yet again, Samuel. And Samuel arose, and went to Eli, and said, Here *am* I; for thou didst call me. And he answered, I called not, my son; lie down again.

7 Now[g] Samuel did not yet know the LORD,[3] neither was the word of the LORD yet revealed unto him.

8 And the LORD [h]called Samuel again the third time. And he arose, and went to Eli, and said, Here *am* I; for thou didst call me. And Eli perceived that the LORD had called the child.[4]

9 Therefore Eli said unto Samuel, Go, lie down; and it shall be, if he call thee, that thou shalt say, [i]Speak, LORD; for thy servant heareth. So Samuel went and lay down in his place.

10 And the LORD came, and stood, and called, as at other times, Samuel, Samuel! Then Samuel answered, Speak; for thy servant heareth.

11 ¶ And the LORD said to Samuel, Behold, I[k] will do a thing in Israel, [l]at which both the ears of every one that heareth it shall tingle.

12 In that day [m]I will perform against Eli all *things* which I have spoken concerning his house: when I begin,[5] I will also make an end.

13 For[m] I have told him,[6] that I will judge his house for ever, for the iniquity which he knoweth: because his sons made themselves vile,[7] and he [o]restrained them not.[8]

14 And therefore I have sworn unto the house of [p]Eli, [r]that the iniquity of Eli's house shall not be purged[1] with sacrifice nor offering for ever.

A.M. 2904 or 2884. B.C. 1100 or 1120.

1 'The word of the Lord' means the prophetic word — the word spoken, or in vision revealed to one of the prophets. It was 'precious,' *i.e.* it was of rare occurrence; 'there was no open vision.' The sins and backslidings of the people had shut out the light of the divine countenance. —*C.*

c Heb. *broken*, Ju. 7.15.

d Ge. 27. 1; 48. 8, 10. ch.4.15.

e Ex.27.20,21;30.7,8. Le.24.2,3.2 Ch.13.11.

2 Ex. 27. 20 requires that the lamps 'should burn always,' and Josephus tells us part of the seven were extinguished in the morning, part burned through the day. Ex. 30. 8 distinctly shows they did not burn all day, as they were lighted in the evening. From this verse it is evident the lamp was allowed to 'go out' by its own burning, and was not extinguished.—*C.*

f Ps.99.6.1 Co.12.28. Ga.1.15.He.5.4.

g Or, *Thus* did *Samuel before he knew the LORD, and before the word of the LORD was revealed unto him*, Ac.19.2.

3 Did not know him as a speaker to man; though he knew him as a lawgiver, as the God of providence, and hearer of prayer. —*C.*

h Job 33.14,15.

4 Jehovah speaking to a child! what a picture of condescension! Let infidelity mock if it will. God, who gave man both a tongue and a voice, can surely speak, else he can make a creature more accomplished than the Creator. And if he can speak, assuredly a holy child is a nobler auditor than a hoary sinner.—*C.*

i Ac.9.6. Is.6.8. Ps. 85.8.ver.10.

k Am.3.6,7. Is.45.7.

l 2 Ki.21.12. Je.19.3. Ps.119.120.

m ch.2.27–36.Zec.1. 6. Lu.21.13,35.

5 Heb. *beginning and ending.*

n ch.2.27–36. Ge.19. 13. 2 Ch.20.12.Zec.1.6. Joel 3.12.

6 Or, *And I willtell him*, &c.

7 Or, *accursed.*

o ch.2.22–25. 1 Ki.1. 6. Pr.29.15.

8 Heb. *frowned not upon them.*

9 Amongst the many purposes subserved by elevated rank, one is the lesson administered by the depth of its fall. Let the kings and judges of the earth therefore 'be wise and kiss the Son.'—*C.*

p ch.2.25. Nu.15.30. Je. 15.1. Eze.24.13. Is. 22.14;He.10.26–31.

1 There is no obstruction to the personal salvation of any of Eli's descendants; it lies altogether against their official restoration as a house, and it stands as a warning for ever to every abuser of religious ordinances and official influence. —*C.*

q ch.1.9,Jos.18.1.

r Da.4.19. Je.1.6–8.

2 Amongst the characteristic traits of Samuel, one, and not the least worthy of observation, is his continual readiness when called. His uniform answer is—*hers am I.* Let children, who cannot but admire Samuel's success in life, remember that it was founded, under Providence, upon two principles —piety to God, and uniform readiness for duty.—*C.*

s Ru. 1. 17. 1 Ki. 22. 16. Mat. 26.63.

3 Heb. *so add.*

4 Or, *word.*

t Ju. 10. 15. 2 Sa. 16. 10. Ps. 39.9;119.75. Job 1.21. Is. 39.8.

u Ge. 39.2,21. ch.18. 14. Ac.7.9,10. Da 6.21, 22. Is. 43. 2. Ro. 8. 31. He.13.5,6.

x 1 Ki.8.56. Is.44.26.

5 Men's hearts were predisposed to listen to him, and God fulfilled his predictions, and realized the soundness of his opinions.—*C.*

y Ju.20.1. 2 Sa.3.10; 17.11;24.2,7.1 Ki.4.25.

6 Or, *faithful.*

z He. 1. 1. Ge. 12. 7; xv. Nu.12.6. Am.3.7.

7 By the 'Word that was with God, and was God.' See Ge.15.1,2,4,6-8, where the meaning of the 'Word of the Lord' is established beyond controversy.—*C.*

CHAP. IV.

B.C. 1096 or 1116.

a Or, *came to pass.* ch.3.11. Samson had killed many Philistines, Ju.16.30.

b ch.7.12;5.1.

1 The name *Eben-ezer* ('stone of help') was not given to this place till a later period, ch. 7. 12; but as it became a noted place, and as the name became historical, it is here employed by the sacred writer.—*P.*

c Jos.15.53, or 19.30. 1 Ki.20.30.

2 Heb. *the battle was spread.*

d Jos. 7. 4, 5, 12. Ps. 106.41;78.62.

e De.20.24. Jos. 7. 7, 8. Je. 22.8. La. 3.40.

f ch.14.18. Nu.14.44, 45; 31.6. Jos.5.15–17;6. 4,5-2Sa.15.25. Je.7.4,8.

3 Heb. *take unto us.*

4 Nothing is more common than to trust in emblems rather than realities. The ark here obtains the confidence due to God alone. So Christians sometimes look upon prayer, baptism, and the Lord's supper as able to save them, whereas they are but guides to the 'Lamb of God,' and mere dead elements without the Spirit of life.—*C.*

g ch. 1. 3. Jos. 18. 1. Ju.18.31. Ps.78. 60. Je. 7.12,14.

h Nu. 10. 33. Ex. 34. 28. De.10.1–5.

15 ¶ And Samuel lay until the morning, and opened the doors of [q]the house of the LORD. And Samuel [r]feared to show Eli the vision.

16 Then Eli called Samuel, and said, Samuel, my son. And he answered, Here *am* I.[2]

17 And he said, What *is* the thing that *the LORD* hath said unto thee? I pray thee hide *it* not from me: [s]God do so to thee, and [s]more also, if thou hide *any* thing[4] from me of all the things that he said unto thee.

18 And Samuel told him every whit, and hid nothing from him. And he said, [t]It *is* the LORD; let him do what seemeth him good.

19 ¶ And Samuel grew, and [u]the LORD was with him, and [x]did let none of his words fall to the ground.[5]

20 And all Israel, [y]from Dan even to Beersheba, knew that Samuel *was* established[6] *to be* a prophet of the LORD.

21 And the LORD [z]appeared again in Shiloh: for the LORD revealed himself to Samuel in Shiloh by the word of the LORD.[7]

CHAPTER IV.

1 *The Israelites are smitten by the Philistines at Ebenezer.* 3 *They fetch the ark to the terror of the Philistines.* 10 *They are smitten again, the ark taken; Hophni and Phinehas are slain.* 12 *Eli at the news, falling backward, breaketh his neck.* 19 *Phinehas' wife, through grief, falleth in labour, is delivered of Ichabod, and dieth.*

AND the word of Samuel [a]came to all Israel. Now Israel went out against the Philistines to battle, and pitched beside [b]Eben-ezer:[1] and the Philistines pitched in [c]Aphek.

2 And the Philistines put themselves in array against Israel: and when they joined [2]battle, [d]Israel was smitten before the Philistines; and they slew of the army in the field about four thousand men.

3 ¶ And when the people were come into the camp, the elders of Israel said, [e]Wherefore hath the LORD smitten us to-day before the Philistines? [f]Let us fetch[3] the ark of the covenant of the LORD out of Shiloh unto us, that, when it cometh among us, it may save us out of the hand of our enemies.[4]

4 So [g]the people sent to Shiloh, that they might bring from thence the [h]ark of the covenant of the LORD of hosts, which dwelleth

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CHAPTER III. [Ver. 13. *His sons made themselves vile, and he restrained them not.* The charge against Eli is his knowledge of his sons' misconduct, and neglect of restraint. He gave excellent advice, see ch. 2. 23, but it wanted determination and energy. He had allowed his sons to outgrow his authority, and now he pleads with them in vain. *C.*]

Ver. 17. [*God do so to thee, and more also, if thou hide anything.* Eli anticipated evil, he remembered the man of God, ch. 2. 27, his conscience smote him, his sons grieved him, he cannot expect good *for* them as he knows no good *of* them, and he is anxious to hear the worst. Therefore he says, 'God do so,' &c.; that is, let God inflict all the judgments, and more, upon you than he has threatened against me, if you do not tell me the truth.—*Note,* This was not an imprecation, but a legal form of appeal to God; for, be it remembered, the same words may be a blasphemy or a prayer according to place, circumstances, and person who utters them. *C.*]

REFLECTIONS.—Dreadful is the case of a church when her fellowship with God is interrupted: but great the mercy, that God raises up new instruments in his church to carry on his work when others have proved unfaithful. Early piety is often honoured with special intimacy with God; when God passes by his aged saints, who have offended him, and perfects praise out of the mouths of babes and sucklings. But it becomes aged ministers to be well satisfied with the Lord's carrying on his work, even at the expense of dishonouring themselves; and to be ready to assist those whose rising glory may eclipse their own. It is an unspeakable mercy when God repeats his calls to men till he renders them effectual: and promising is the appearance when such extraordinary revelations animate men to the very lowest offices in religion, instead of rendering them proud; especially when humble modesty and exact fidelity meet together. Ministers must often begin their work with fearful denunciations of God's wrath against sinners. Yea, how terribly God judges even the sins of his own people, and of their families! He renders their condition base, tormenting, and in appearance desperate; and the most abundant measure of grace is requisite to render one resigned to such a stroke; yet resignation is the proper and only way to lighten the burden. But frequently he renews his visits to those who had been early seekers of him; and such as improve one gracious visit shall not be long without a second. Yea, the most abundant care shall be taken to honour his faithful servants, and to verify their words in the salvation or destruction of mankind.

CHAPTER IV. REFLECTIONS.—Lesser judgments only exasperate hardened sinners against the Lord, instead of making them search their ways and return to him; while those who are most destitute of the power of godliness glory in, and trust to, their external forms and privileges.—Sinners are often perfectly secure when their destruction comes upon them

TEMPLE OF THE ARK, SHILOH—WHERE THE ARK RESTED FROM JOSHUA TO SAMUEL. [I. SAMUEL, iv: 4.]—"So the people sent to Shiloh, that they might bring from thence the ark of the covenant of the Lord of hosts, which dwelleth between the cherubim; and the two sons of Eli, Hophni and Phinehas, were there with the ark of the covenant of God." Shiloh is called the place of rest. In Judges, xxi: 19, it is said that Shiloh is "on the north side of Bethel, on the east side of the highway that goeth up from Bethel to Shechem, and on the south of Lebonah." So the traveler now going north from Jerusalem stops the first night just a little way south of Shiloh. Shiloh was one of the most sacred of the Hebrew sanctuaries. The ark of the covenant was kept at Shiloh from the last days of Joshua to the time of Samuel. The ungodly conduct of the sons of Eli occasioned the loss of the ark of the covenant which had been carried into battle against the Philistines.

between[i] the cherubims:[5] and the two sons of Eli, Hophni and Phinehas, *were* there [k]with the ark of the covenant of God.

5 And when the ark of the covenant of the LORD came into the camp, [l]all Israel shouted with a great shout, so that the earth rang again.

6 And when the Philistines heard the noise of the shout, they said, What *meaneth* the noise of this great shout in the camp of the Hebrews? And[m] they understood that the ark of the LORD was come into the camp.

7 And the Philistines [n]were afraid; for they said, God is come into the camp.[6] And they said, Wo unto us! for there hath not been such a thing heretofore.[7]

8 Wo unto us! who shall deliver us out of the hand of these mighty Gods? these *are* the Gods that [o]smote the Egyptians with all the plagues[8] in the wilderness.[9]

9 Be strong, and quit yourselves like men,[1] O ye Philistines! that ye be not servants unto the Hebrews, [p]as they have been to you: quit[2] yourselves like men, and fight.

10 ¶ And the Philistines fought, and Israel was smitten, and they fled [q]every man into his tent: and there [r]was a very great slaughter; for there fell of Israel thirty thousand footmen.

11 And [s]the ark of God was taken; and the two sons of Eli, Hophni and Phinehas, were slain.[3]

12 ¶ And there ran a man of Benjamin out of the army, and came to Shiloh the same day with[t] his clothes rent, and with earth upon his head.[4]

13 And when he came, lo, Eli [u]sat upon a seat by the way-side watching: for his heart trembled for the ark of God. And when the man came into the city and told *it*, all the city cried out.

14 And when Eli heard the noise of the crying, he said, What *meaneth* the noise of this tumult? And the man came in hastily, and told Eli.

15 Now Eli [x]was ninety and eight years old; and his eyes were dim,[5] that he could not see.

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i 2 Sa. 6. 12. 2 Ki. 19. 15. Ps. 80. 1; 99. 1. Ex. 25. 20-22. Nu. 7. 89.

5 That is, on the *mercy-seat*. — *Note*, No throne but that of mercy can be approached by a sinner. —*C.*

k Nu. 4. 15; 10. 33. De. 31. 26. 2 Sa. 15. 24. He. 9. 4 ver. 3.

l Je. 7. 4. Mi. 2. 11. Am. 6. 3. Ju. 15. 14. Job 15. 21.

m ver. 3-5.

n Ex. 14. 25; 15. 14. De. 32, 30, 31.

6 When the Philistines acknowledged God, why did they not prepare to obey him? Because they acknowledged him but as the local, or at most the national God of Israel. They admitted his being, not his attributes. —*C.*

7 Heb. *yesterday*, or *the third day*.

o Ex. vii. xiv. Jos. 2. 10; 9. 10.

8 When he brought Israel into the wilderness.

9 An erroneous statement, illustrative of their imperfect knowledge of the history of the exodus. — *Note*, Superstition and false religion uniformly originate in imperfect religious information. —*C.*

1 Whoever has read the writings of the heathen, such as Homer, one of their highest authorities, must have observed that they considered men often completely competent to fight against their gods and goddesses, and continues to have discomfited them in single combat. —*C.*

p De. 28. 47, 48. Ju. 13. 1; 10. 7.

2 Heb. *be men*.

q 2 Sa. 20. 1. 1 Ki. 12. 16; 22. 36. 2 Ki. 14. 12.

r Le. 26. 25. De. 28. 25. Ps. 78. 62. Is. 10. 3-9. Je. 7. 12, 32.

s Ps. 78. 61, 64; 140. 11 ch. 2 34. Is. 3. 11. Pr. 1. 31; 13. 21.

3 Heb. *died*.

t Ge. 37. 29. Jos. 7. 6. 2 Sa. 13. 19; 15. 32; 1. 2. Job 2. 12.

4 Emblems of the deepest sorrow and bereavement. On the death of a member of a family, and especially of the head of a house in the East, all the near relatives rend their clothes, and sprinkle ashes, dust, or clay upon their heads. —*P.*

u ch. 1. 9. Ps. 137. 5, 6; 69. 9; 119. 139. 2 Co. 11. 27, 28.

x Ps. 90. 10. ch. 3. 2. Ge. 27. 1-39.

5 Heb. *stood*.

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6 Heb. *is the thing*.

y ver. 10, 11.

z Ps. 137. 5, 6; 76. 8; 42. 3. 1o. Phi. 3. 8, 9. La. 2. 15-19.

7 Eli seems a man sincerely pious, but, through mistaken tenderness, weakly pliable; by over indulgence rendering his sons regardless of his parental admonitions, and so bringing them to an ignominious end, his country to ruin, his religion to disgrace, and his own gray hairs with sorrow to the grave. His piety, however, seems predominant, for he bears the whole catalogue of national and family calamities till the capture of the ark is mentioned—his heart can bear no more—he falls fainting, and dies; a monumental warning to parents, church rulers, and governors, and a melancholy illustration of the fact, that one practical imperfection of temper, or management, may neutralize or destroy the effect of many excellences. —*C.*

a ch. 1. 9; ver. 13.

b ch. 2. 31, 32; 3. 12, 13. 2 Ki. 23. 29. Je. 9. 1, 2. Ps. 36. 6. Ro. 11. 33.

8 Or, *to cry out*.

9 Heb. *were returned*.

c Ge. 35. 17, 18. Jn. 16. 20.

d Heb *set not her heart*, Ps. 77. 2. Pr. 25. 20.

e That is, *Where is the glory?* or there *is no glory*, ch. 14. 3.

f Ps. 78. 61; 106. 20. Je. 2. 11. Eze. 7. 20; 24. 21. Ho. 9. 11.

g ver. 18. Ne. 2. 3. Ps. 137. 5, 6; 26. 8; 69. 9; 119. 139. Phi. 2. 4. 2 Co. 11. 27, 28. Jn. 2. 17.

CHAP. V.

B.C. 1095 or 1115.

a Ps. 78. 61.

b ch 4. 1; 7. 12.

c Jos. 11. 22; 15. 46. Ac. 8. 40. As a trophy of victory.

d Ju. 16. 23. Hab. 1. 11, 16. Da. 5. 2, 3. ver. 3, 4; 7. ch. 6. 5.

1 See note on Ju. 16. 23.—*C.*

2 The frequency with which early rising is mentioned in Scripture is well worthy of remark. The custom arose partly from the heat of the climate, which rendered morning and evening the most comfortable time for travel, labour, or religious exercises. Even the worshippers of Dagon rose early,—an example, an admonition, and, alas! often a rebuke to Christians, whose Sabbath mornings are indolently wasted in 'a little more slumber;' who can rise early to serve the world, but who sleep when they should serve their God.—*C.*

e Ex. 7. 12. Ps. 97. 7. Mar. 3. 11. Lu. 10. 18, 20. 2 Co. 6. 14, 15.

16 And the man said unto Eli, I *am* he that came out of the army, and I fled to-day out of the army. And he said, What is there [6]done, my son?

17 And the messenger answered and said, [y]Israel is fled before the Philistines; and there hath been also a great slaughter among the people; and thy two sons also, Hophni and Phinehas, are dead; and the ark of God is taken.

18 And it came to pass, [z]when he made mention of the ark of God,[7] that he fell from off the seat backward, by [a]the side of the gate, and his [b]neck brake, and he died; for he was an old man, and heavy: and he had judged Israel forty years.

19 ¶ And his daughter-in-law, Phinehas' wife, was with child, *near* to be delivered:[8] and when she heard the tidings that the ark of God was taken, and that her father-in-law and her husband were dead, she bowed herself and travailed; for her pains came[9] upon her.

20 And about the time of her death the women that stood by her said unto her, [c]Fear not; for thou hast born a son. But she answered not, [d]neither did she regard *it*.

21 And she named the child [e]I-chabod, saying, [f]The glory is departed from Israel: (because the ark of God was taken, and because of her father-in-law, and her husband:)

22 And [g]she said, The glory is departed from Israel; for the ark of God is taken.

CHAPTER V.

1 *The Philistines having brought the ark into Ashdod, set it in the house of Dagon.* 3 *Dagon is cast down and cut in pieces, and they of Ashdod smitten with emerods.* 8 *The ark being carried to Gath, the men of Gath are smitten with the like plague;* 10 *and also the men of Ekron, when it is brought thither.*

AND the Philistines [a]took the ark of God, and brought it from [b]Eben-ezer unto [c]Ashdod.

2 When the Philistines took the ark of God, they brought it into the house of [d]Dagon, and set it by Dagon.[1]

3 ¶ And when they of Ashdod arose [2]early on the morrow, behold, [e]Dagon *was* fallen upon his face to the earth before the ark of the LORD.

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as a whirlwind. And a good cause may fearfully suffer for the wickedness of those who espouse it. But, very justly, the first and sorest judgments light on the heads of wicked and unfaithful ministers: and quickly they who refused to shed the tears of godly sorrow, are made to shriek under the strokes of judgment. How near the heart of exercised saints do the ark and church of God lie! Yet God pursues his offending servants to the very brink of eternity with awful frowns and fearful strokes; and if they will be unfaithful, they must die without comfort. Pregnant women have need to be in readiness for death; for in an hour which they think not, the Son of man may require their soul. But how great is the misery of a nation when the ordinances and presence of God, which are the glory thereof, are taken from it! Draw near, ye careless, ye indulgent parents, and tremble; behold in what ruin to your family and nation your conduct may issue!

CHAPTER V. [Ver. 1. Ashdod stood on a low rounded hill in the midst of a fertile plain a few miles from the shore of the Mediterranean, and about halfway between Joppa and Gaza. On the top of the hill was the temple of Dagon, then one of the most celebrated shrines in Philistia. The royal city is now represented by a small village of mud hovels. *P.*]

Ver. 3. [The name *Dagon* is derived from *dag*, 'a fish.' The name occurs in the Babylonian mythology, and is applied to a fabled 'fish-god,' who is said to have risen from the waters of the Red Sea, and to have become a benefactor of mankind. His image is represented as having the head and trunk of a man and the lower part of a fish. Dagon was the national god of the Philistines, and had temples at Gaza and Ashdod. The latter after standing for a long period was destroyed by Jonathan Maccabaeus. *P.*]

Ver. 5. [*Nor any that come into Dagon's house tread on the threshold of Dagon.* An acknowledged proof of the power of Jehovah, but which the Philistines, blinded by their idolatry, regard not as supreme and omnipotent, but only as a little, and perhaps for a little time, superior to that of Dagon. Nay, such is the subtlety of Satan (for the heathen sacrificed to devils), 1 Co. 10. 20, that he turns the disgrace to a new source of idolatry, and teaches them to reverence, to worship, the very threshold where their idol lay prostrate and broken. —*Note*, Do not the idolaters of riches, ambition, and pleasures still imitate the foolish Philistines, and worship their idols still, even when convinced of their unsatisfying vanity? *C.*]

REFLECTIONS.—The interest of religion sometimes sinks very low; but God will in due time, and often when it is least expected, make it to triumph. No power of devils or men can withstand him, or even prevent their own ruin. It is very dangerous to profane his holy things. If men will not glorify God by due reverence, he will glorify himself in taking just judgment, and such as contend with him shall be infallibly ruined at last. Men indeed are often more eager to get rid of God's judgments than to get rid of their sins which procured them: and when they smart under his stroke, they are solicitous to have God put from them, rather than to enter into friendly connec-

And they took Dagon, and set him in his place again.

4 And when they arose early on the morrow morning, behold, Dagon *was* fallen upon his face to the ground before the ark of the LORD; and [f]the head of Dagon, and both the palms of his hands, *were* cut off upon the threshold; only *the stump of* Dagon[2] was left to him.[3]

5 Therefore neither the priests of Dagon, nor any that come into Dagon's house, [g]tread on the threshold[4] of Dagon in Ashdod unto this day.

6 ¶ But the [h]hand of the LORD was heavy upon them of Ashdod, and he destroyed them, and [i]smote them with emerods,[5] *even* Ashdod, and the coasts thereof.

7 And when the men of Ashdod [k]saw that *it was* so, they said, The ark of the God of Israel shall not abide with us: for his hand is sore upon us, and [l]upon Dagon our god.

8 They sent therefore and gathered all the lords of the Philistines unto them, and said, What[m] shall we do with the ark of the God of Israel? And they answered, Let the ark of the God of Israel be carried about unto [n]Gath. And they carried the ark of the God of Israel about *thither*.

9 And it was *so*, that, after they had carried it about, the [o]hand of the LORD was against the city with a very great destruction: and he smote the men of the city, both small and great,[6] and they had emerods in their [p]secret parts.

10 ¶ Therefore they sent the ark of God to Ekron.[q] And it came to pass, as the ark of God came to Ekron, that the Ekronites cried out, saying, They have brought about the ark of the God of Israel to us,[7] to slay us and our people.

11 So they sent and gathered together all the lords of the Philistines, and said, Send away the ark of the God of Israel, and let it go again to his own place, that it slay us not, and our people: for there was a [r]deadly destruction throughout all the city; the hand of God was very heavy there.

12 And the men that [s]died not were smitten with the emerods;[8] and [t]the cry of the city went up to heaven.

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[f] Ps.115.4,7. Is.2.18, 41.23,24,46.1. Je.10. 11.

[2] Or, *the fishy part.* It is said the upper part of Dagon resembled a man, and the lower a fish.

[3] It will be seen that the words '*the stump*' are in italics, and have therefore no equivalents in Hebrew. The clause should be rendered: 'Only Dagon (*i.e.* the fish) was left to him.'—*P.*

[g] Zep.1.9. Jos.5.15.

[4] To prostrate one's self on the threshold of a temple was an act of the profoundest reverence; and therefore when Dagon fell before the ark of God, it was as if he worshipped the God of Israel. Maurice, speaking of the destruction of the idol in the temple of Sumnaut, says that fragments of it were sent to the mosques of Mecca, &c., to be thrown down *at the threshold* of their gates and trampled upon by devout Mahometans. The Philistines, however, now looked upon the threshold of Dagon's temple as peculiarly sacred by the touch of their god, and out of reverence forbore to tread on such 'holy ground.'—*J.*

[h] Ex.9.3. Ac. 13. 11. Da.5.3,5.

[i] Ps.78.66. Job 31.3, ver.9 11ch.6.5.

[5] Some species of epidemic accompanied with ulcers, the precise nature of which is not described.—*C.*

[k] Is. 26. 11. Ex. 8, 8, 29; 9.28;10.7; 12.33. ch. 4.8.

[l] ver. 3, 4. Je. 46. 25. Is.19 1.Ex.12.12.

[m] Pr.21.30.Is.8.10.

[n] Jos.11.22. ch.6.17; 17.4; 27.4. 2Sa 21.22. 1 Ch.8.13; 18.1. 2Ch.26. 6.Am.6.2.

[o] ver.6,11,12. Am.2. 14;5.19;9.1–4.

[6] Some diseases affect the rich almost exclusively,others the poor. 'The lords of the Philistines' seem to have so judged, and expected Gath, as a richer district, to escape the epidemic: God, to convince them of their error, smites 'both small and great.'—*C.*

[p] Jos.15.45. Ju.1.18; 3.3.2 Ki.1.2. Am.1.8.

[7] Heb. *me, to slay me and my people.*

[q] Je.48.42–44. Is.13. 7–9.

[r] Je.48.44. Am.5.19. 1 Ki.19.17.

[8] The disease increases in virulence as it advances; and seems now to have become a destructive fever, or plague, which speedily cuts off the patient, and of which the most favourable termination was the severe ulcerated emerods. The emblem of sin and sinners 'waxing worse and worse.'—*C.*

[s] Ex.12.30.Is.15.3–5. Je.25.34;48.3.

A.M. 2909 or 2889.
B.C. 1095 or 1115.

CHAP. VI.

[a] Ps.78.61.ch.v.

[b] Ex.7.11. Da.2.2;4. 6.7;5.7. Is 8.19.

[1] Astrologers, expounders of dreams, augurs, &c., cunning impostors, deceiving an ignorant and superstitious people.—*C.*

[c] Ex. 23. 15; 34. 20. De.16.16.

[2] Heb. *rendering, render.*

[d] Le.v.vi.

[3] These idolaters acknowledge the hand or providence of God in the epidemic that afflicted the Philistines, and thereby rebuke and condemn those pretended wise men who can see nothing in the world but the operation of *cause* and *effect*; that is, of a mere chain of material influences, and who blindly overlook the government of an all-wise Providence.—*C.*

[e] ver.9.

[4] It was the general belief among the ancient heathen that each country had a deity peculiar to itself. The Philistines therefore acknowledged the local supremacy and power of Jehovah. 'They did not regard or reverence him as the one only God, but simply as one of the deities who specially superintended each his own country, province, or city.—*P.*

[f] Je. 46. 25. Is. 24. 2. Job 34.19.

[5] Heb. *them.*

[g] Ex.8.5,17,24;10.14, 15. Joel i.ii. It seems their fields were plagued with mice.

[h] Jos.7.19. Je.13.16; 3.13. Jn.9.24. Re.16.9.

[i] ch 5. 3,4,7. Ex. 12. 12. Nu.33.4. Is.16.1.

[k] Ex. 7. 13; 8.15; 14. 17;9.34,35. Job 9.4; 40. 9.

[6] Or, *reproachfully.*

[7] Heb. *them.*

[l] 2 Sa.6.3. Mar.11.2.

[8] There was great worldly wisdom in this plan, and it certainly required a miraculous interference to bear witness to the glory and providence of God. But as 'all sheep and oxen, and beasts of the field' are his, the irrational creature is obedient, where the rational has rebelled.—*C.*

[m] Heb. *golden vessels*, ver.5,11.

[n] This was a city of the priests, Jos. 21. 16; and on the straight way to Shiloh, the former residence of the ark.

[9] Or, *it.*

[1] *Cause* and *effect*, that is, as has been said on ver.3, a mere chain of material influences, may be considered as the only god of many calling themselves and called philosophers. *Chance*, that is, effect without any cause, is the more senseless, but not less atheistic system of the more ignorant.—*C.*

CHAPTER VI.

1 *After seven months the Philistines take counsel how to send back the ark.* 10 *They bring it on a new cart with an offering unto Beth-shemesh.* 19 *The people are smitten for looking into the ark.* 21 *They send to the inhabitants of Kirjath-jearim to fetch it.*

AND the[a] ark of the LORD was in the country of the Philistines seven months.

2 And the Philistines called for [b]the priests and the diviners,[1] saying, What shall we do to the ark of the LORD? tell us wherewith we shall send it to his place.

3 And they said, If ye send away the ark of the God of Israel, [c]send it not empty; but in any wise return[2] him a [d]trespass-offering:[3] then ye shall be healed, and it [e]shall be known to you why his hand is not removed from you.[4]

4 Then said they, What *shall be* the trespass-offering which we shall return to him? They answered, Five golden emerods, and five golden mice, *according to* the number of the lords of the Philistines: for [f]one plague *was* on you[5] all, and on your lords.

5 Wherefore ye shall make images of your emerods, and images of your [g]mice that mar the land; and ye shall [h]give glory unto the God of Israel: peradventure he will lighten his hand from off you, and from [i]off your gods, and from off your land.

6 Wherefore then do ye [k]harden your hearts, as the Egyptians and Pharaoh hardened their hearts? when he had wrought [6]wonderfully among them, did they not let the people[7] go, and they departed?

7 Now therefore make a [l]new cart, and take two milch kine,[8] on which there hath come no yoke, and tie the kine to the cart, and bring their calves home from them:

8 And take the ark of the LORD, and lay it upon the cart; and put the [m]jewels of gold, which ye return him *for* a trespass-offering, in a coffer by the side thereof; and send it away, that it may go.

9 And see, if it goeth up by the way of his own coast to [n]Beth-shemesh, *then* he[9] hath done us this great evil: but if not, then we shall know that *it is* not his hand *that* smote us; it *was* a chance[1] *that* happened to us.

10 ¶ And the men did so; and took two

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tions with him. But such as tempt God shall find every essay more and more imbittered by his curse and heavy hand upon them. And what has been gotten by fraud or sacrilege must be thrown back again before the sinner feel quietness within him.

CHAPTER VI. [Ver. 4. *Five golden emerods, and five golden mice.* Such votive offerings have been, and still are, common both in heathen countries and amongst superstitious Christians. If it did not previously exist, here is the origin of the custom; and, at all events, this is the earliest historic notice of a practice that flatters human vanity, and indulges will-worship, while it affects to honour God.—*Note*, Almost all the superstitions that have disfigured and degraded Christianity may be clearly traced to their origin in heathenism. *C.*]

Ver. 5. [The invasion of mice still continues to be a plague in several countries. In search of food, or under some unknown impulse, they descend from mountains, and issue from forests, in such myriads as to occupy the whole country, to destroy the hoards of grain, and lay the land as waste as if overrun by the most hostile army. *C.*]

Ver. 16. [Ekron (now *Akîr*) stands on the southern slope of a low ridge which separates the plain of Philistia from Sharon. Immediately to the south of the site, at the foot of the slope, is a broad wady, or depression in the plain, which runs away up eastward to the hills of Judah, gradually contracting and deepening until it becomes a sublime ravine, cutting deeply into the mountain chain. Near the opening of the ravine into the plain, on a broad terrace on its southern bank, are the ruins of Bethshemesh. The route of the ark I was able to trace with ease upon the spot. The kine went down the gentle slope from Ekron, then up the vale towards the mountains, and came at length to a stand in the valley below Bethshemesh. The distance from Ekron is about 10 miles. *P.*]

Ver. 19. [*Smote of the people fifty thousand and threescore and ten men.* How so many persons could be collected into a small village appears so strange as to be considered impossible. Hence every effort of commentators has been made to reduce the number, and so reconcile it with probability. Josephus estimates the people smitten at merely 70. The Syriac and Arabic translations at 5070. Others propose to insert a letter, and thereby reduce the number to 50 out of 1000. These efforts, however, are vain, against the almost universal authority of MSS. and translations. But after all, are not the difficulties totally artificial, the fault not of the text, but the work of the commentators themselves? Let the text, as it will justly bear, be translated and pointed thus:—'And he smote the men

milch-kine, and tied them to the cart, and shut up their calves at home:

11 And they laid the ark of the LORD upon the cart, and the coffer with the mice of gold and the images of their emerods.

12 And the kine took the straight way to the way of [o]Beth-shemesh, *and* went[2] along the highway,[3] lowing as they went, and turned not aside *to* the right hand or *to* the left;[4] and the lords of the Philistines went after them unto the border of Beth-shemesh.

13 And *they of* Beth-shemesh *were* reaping their wheat harvest in the valley: [p]and they lifted up their eyes and saw the ark, and rejoiced to see *it*.

14 And the cart came into the field of Joshua, a Beth-shemite, and stood[5] there, where *there was* a great stone: and they clave the wood of the cart, and [q]offered the kine a burnt-offering unto the LORD.[6]

15 And the [r]Levites took down[7] the ark of the LORD, and the coffer that *was* with it, wherein the jewels of gold *were*, and put *them* on the great stone: and the men of Beth-shemesh offered burnt-offerings and sacrificed sacrifices the same day unto the LORD.

16 And when the five lords of the Philistines had seen *it*, they returned to Ekron the same day.

17 And these *are* the golden emerods which the Philistines returned *for* a trespass-offering unto the LORD; for Ashdod one, for Gaza one, for Askelon one, for Gath one, for Ekron one:

18 And the golden mice, *according to* the number of all the cities of the Philistines *belonging* to the five lords, *both* of fenced cities and of country villages, even unto the [s]great *stone of* Abel, whereon they set down the ark of the LORD: *which stone remaineth* unto this day in the field of Joshua the Beth-shemite.

A.M. 2909 or 2889. B.C. 1095 or 1115.

o ver.9. Jos.15.10,21. 16.

2 Heb. *in a street they went.*

3 *Highway*, not a modern European road, for such works scarcely exist in the East, but merely a way cleared of obstructions. 'Lowing as they went,' the voice of nature calling to their offspring; but a voice of witness for God to the afflicted and humbled Philistines.—*C.*

4 The circumstance of the two kine, which had never before been in the yoke, drawing quietly and keeping the road without a driver, for several miles, neither stopping nor turning aside, and while lowing for their calves, nevertheless urged forward by a stronger impulse to the very place mentioned by the Philistines, and there stopping, is in all respects an astonishing miracle.—*I.*

p Le. 23. 16, 17. Ex. 23.16.

5 It was proper that the priests only should now take care of it.

q Ju.21.4. ch.7.9,17; 11.15; 15.15; 20.6. 2 Sa. 24.18,25. 1 Ki.18.30-38. Ex.20.24.

6 The city and district was the property of the Levites who thus offered an extemporaneous sacrifice to Jehovah. The propriety of the sacrifice in this place is more than questionable. It should have been reserved for Shiloh. Had the Levites respected the law in this particular, it is most probable the Beth-shemites would have also more reverenced the ark, and so have escaped the judgment inflicted on their irreverent curiosity. *C.*—Both cattle and cattle having been employed in this sacred service, they could no longer be used for any secular purpose; and therefore the cattle were sacrificed and the cart was broken up for fuel to consume the sacrifice.—*Clarke.*

r Priests, Nu. 4. 15. 2 Sa.6.6,7.

7 Or, 'for the Levites had taken down.' It had been providentially brought to a Levitical city, and it was right that they only should take care of it.—*I.*

s Or, *great Abel*, *i.e.* mourning, ver.19. Ge.50.11.

A.M. 2909 or 2889. B.C. 1095 or 1115.

t Ex. 19. 21. Nu.4.5, 20. De.20.2,4. 24. Jos. 24.10. 2 Sa.6.7 Ps.131. 1 Co.10.18. Pr.11. 31. 1 Pe.4.17.

8 Perhaps seventy —fifty out of a thousand.

9 The literal translation of the Hebrew is as follows:—'And he smote the men of Bethshemesh because they looked into the ark of Jehovah; and he smote of the people seventy men, fifty thousand men.' The last words, 'fifty thousand men,' are wanting in some very ancient Hebrew manuscripts, and they are omitted by Josephus. This tends to leave the impression that the words are interpolated, and that seventy was the total number of those who perished.—*P.*

u 2 Sa.6.8,9. Mal. 3. 2. Ge.4.13. Lu.5.8

x Jos.9.17; 15.60; 18. 14. Je.7.12,14. Ps.78.60; 132. 6. ch.7.1,2. 2 Sa. 6. 2.

CHAP. VII.

B.C. 1075 or 1095.

a ch.6.21. Ju. 18. 12. Ps.132.6. 2 Sa.6.2,4.

1 Eleazar was sanctified; that is, appointed and dedicated to keep the ark; but the public services of feasts and solemnities were intermitted or suppressed during the ascendency of the Philistines.—*C.*

b 2 Sa.6.4. Ps.132.1–6.

c Je.3. 13, 22–25. Ju. 10.10,15.

2 After twenty years from the captivity of the ark a religious revival commenced in a universal lamentation after the Lord; that is, sorrow for past neglect of his service, and anxiety for a gracious outpouring of his Spirit, and restoration of his ordinances.—*C.*

d 1 Sa.12. 19. 1 Ki. 18. 21. 2 Ki.17.35.

e Jos. 24. 14, 23. Ge. 35. 2. Ju. 2. 13; 10. 6.

f Am.4.12. De.6. 13; 10.20. Mat.4.10. Lu. 4. 8. Is.3.10.

g Ju.10.15,16. Ho.14. 3. 8. Ge.35.4.

3 'And the children of Israel put away the Baals and Ashtaroths, and worshipped Jehovah alone.'—*P.*

h Ju.20.1. 2 Ki.25.30, not that Ge.31.49. Ju. 11.11

19 ¶ And he [t]smote the men of Beth-shemesh, because they had looked into the ark of the LORD, even he smote of the people [8]fifty thousand and threescore and ten [9]men. And the people lamented, because the LORD had smitten *many* of the people with a great slaughter.

20 And the men of Beth-shemesh said, [u]Who is able to stand before this holy LORD God? and to whom shall he go up from us?

21 ¶ And they sent messengers to the inhabitants of [x]Kirjath-jearim, saying, The Philistines have brought again the ark of the LORD; come ye down, *and* fetch it up to you.

CHAPTER VII.

1 *The men of Kirjath-jearim bring the ark into the house of Abinadab, and sanctify Eleazar his son to keep it.* 2 *After twenty years* 3 *the Israelites, by Samuel's means, solemnly repent at Mizpeh.* 9 *While Samuel prayeth and sacrificeth, the Lord discomfiteth the Philistines by thunder at Ebenezer.* 13 *The Philistines are subdued.* 15 *Samuel peaceably and religiously judgeth Israel.*

AND the men [a]of Kirjath-jearim came and fetched up the ark of the LORD, and brought it into the house of Abinadab in the hill, and sanctified Eleazar[1] his son to keep the ark of the LORD.

2 And it came to pass, while the ark abode in Kirjath-jearim, that the time was [b]long; for it was twenty years: and all the house of Israel [c]lamented after the LORD.[2]

3 ¶ And Samuel spake unto all the house of Israel, saying, If ye [d]do return unto the LORD with all your hearts, *then* [e]put away the strange gods and Ashtaroth from among you, and [f]prepare your hearts unto the LORD, and serve him only, and he will deliver you out of the hand of the Philistines.

4 Then the children of Israel [g]did put away Baalim and Ashtaroth, and served the LORD only.[3]

5 And Samuel said, Gather all Israel to [h]Mizpeh, and I will pray for you unto the LORD.

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of Bethshemesh, because they had looked into the ark; *and* he smote of the people 50,070 men: and the people lamented because the LORD had smitten of the people with a great slaughter.' Now the text says, God '*smote* the men of *Bethshemesh*, because *they* had looked into the ark,' but does not state how many. Then the text adds, that 'he smote of the people,' that is, not of the Bethshemites in particular, but of the Israelites generally (Bethshemites inclusive), 50,070 men, but does not state during what space of time the judgment continued. Now, what can be more natural than that, when the news of the return of the ark to Bethshemesh would be noised abroad, there should be a vast concourse of the people, day after day, to hear and to see. Would it not be considered an act of patriotism and religion combined, to go on a pilgrimage to visit the recovered centre of their holy services? Where then is the difficulty of comprehending how, in a few days, and for aught that is said it may have taken weeks or months, not merely 50,070, but five times 50,070, may have visited Bethshemesh? Then it is not said 50,070 died, but only that so many of the people were smitten, most probably by the Philistine epidemic and emerods. And when it is added, that 'the people lamented, because the Lord had smitten many of the people with a great slaughter,' it is not said how many of those who were smitten by the disease actually died in the slaughter, but only that it was great. And now, should any insist that the whole 50,070 must have died, and granting this to have actually been the case, let it only be remembered that these are not asserted to have been Bethshemites, but of the people, while the time of the judgment is not specified; and if 50,070 did perish in the epidemic contracted at Bethshemesh, and carried from Dan to Beersheba by the pilgrim visitants, the experience of all ages can exemplify greater ravages, although men may not have seen or acknowledged in them, as the sacred writers did, the immediate finger of God. *C.*]

REFLECTIONS.—To be deprived of God's ordinances, though it be only for a time, is very alarming; yet much more so to have them made a plague to us. By holding fast their sins men only prolong their sorrows. God can easily make the stoutest of his enemies to bow down to him, and even cause them to become, to his honour, lasting memorials of their own shame. But it is much happier to be warned by other men's experience than by our own. And when we have repented of our sins, we may hope for a removal of our miseries. Wicked men would fain shift their convictions, and ascribe their sufferings to any cause rather than to the hand of God. And God often patiently suffers himself to be tempted and put to the trial; but the issue shall tend to his own glory; and the very means which men had taken to confirm themselves in infidelity shall turn out to their more unanswerable conviction of the truth. He alone can deliver his church and restore his ordinances when all others lie by unconcerned.—And with great joy and thanksgiving, even to the interruption of the most urgent earthly concerns, ought his returns and revivals of religion to be welcomed. But what fear and reverence are due to him, and his ordinances, in the meetings of his saints! He is a holy Lord God! and it is dangerous to indulge a vain curiosity in our concerns with him; and infinitely destructive to come near to behold the broken law, but as fulfilled in Christ. How miserable is that nation in which no common care is taken about the ordinances of Christ: but one place yields them to another, and forfeits those blessings which God has connected with them! Let us learn properly to value the privileges which God graciously bestows; and so to improve them that they may not become a curse but a blessing to us.

CHAPTER VII. [Ver. 2. The meaning is not that the whole period of the residence of the ark at Kirjath-jearim was *only* 20 years. It was much more; for it continued there during the whole reign of Saul, and part of the reign of David, 2 Sa. vi. It is here affirmed that 20 years of deep anxiety, in consequence of the Lord's withdrawal from Israel, passed. During these long and painful years there was no manifestation of divine power on their behalf; but at the close of that period Samuel exhorted the people to put away the strange gods; they hearkened, and gained a signal victory over their enemies. *P.*]

KURYET-EL-ANAB—THE PLACE TO WHICH THE ARK WAS BROUGHT FROM BETH-SHEMESH. [I. SAMUEL, vii: 2.]—"And it came to pass, while the ark abode in Kirjath-jearim, that the time was long; for it was twenty years: and all the house of Israel lamented after the Lord." The name "Kirjath-jearim" signifies "the city of forests." In the book of Joshua the place is twice mentioned as a border city. It lay upon the ancient frontier of Judah and Benjamin. This place is on the road to Ramleh, about nine miles from Jerusalem, and not far from Gibeon. Here the people brought the ark from Beth-shemesh. The position of this place, according to Ritter, the highest authority on Palestine, corresponding as closely as it does with the Old Testament accounts, makes the identity of Kuryet-el-Anab and the ancient Kirjath-jearim in the highest degree probable, and at the same time we are enabled to learn where ran the former boundary between the territories of Judah and Benjamin.

6 And they gathered together to Mizpeh,[f] and [g]drew water, and poured *it* out before the LORD, and [h]fasted on that day, and said there, We[i] have sinned against the LORD. And Samuel [m]judged the children of Israel in Mizpeh.[4]

7 ¶ And when the Philistines [n]heard that the children of Israel were gathered together to Mizpeh, the lords of the Philistines went up against Israel: and when the children of Israel heard *it*, they were [o]afraid of the Philistines.

8 And the children of Israel said to Samuel, Cease[p] not to cry[5] unto the LORD our God for us, that he will save us out of the hand of the Philistines.

9 ¶ And Samuel [q]took a sucking lamb, and offered *it for* a burnt-offering wholly unto the LORD: and [r]Samuel cried unto the LORD for Israel; and the LORD heard[6] him.

10 And as Samuel was offering up the burnt-offering, the Philistines drew near to battle against Israel: but the LORD [s]thundered with a great thunder on that day upon the Philistines, and discomfited them; and they were smitten before Israel.

11 And the men of Israel went out of Mizpeh, and pursued the Philistines, and smote them, until *they came* under Beth-car.

12 Then Samuel [t]took a stone, and set *it* between Mizpeh and Shen, and called the name of it [u]Eben-ezer,[7] saying, [x]Hitherto hath the LORD helped us.[8]

13 ¶ So the Philistines were subdued, and they came no more into the coast of Israel: and the hand of the LORD was against the Philistines[9] all the days of Samuel.[1]

14 And the cities which the Philistines had taken from Israel were restored to Israel, from Ekron[y] even unto Gath; and the coasts thereof did Israel deliver out of the hands of the Philistines. And [z]there was peace between Israel and the Amorites.[2]

15 ¶ And Samuel [a]judged Israel all the days of his life.

16 And he [b]went from year to year in circuit[3] to [c]Beth-el, and Gilgal, and Mizpeh, and judged Israel in all those places.

17 And his return *was* to [d]Ramah; for there *was* his house: and there he judged Israel; and [e]there he built an altar unto the LORD.

CHAPTER VIII.

1 *By occasion of the ill government of Samuel's sons, the Israelites ask a king.* 6 *Samuel praying in grief, is comforted by God:* 10 *he telleth the manner of a king.* 19 *God directeth Samuel to yield unto the importunity of the people.*

AND it came to pass, when Samuel was old, that he [a]made his sons judges over Israel.

2 Now the name of his first-born was [b]Joel, and the name of his second Abiah: *they were* judges in [c]Beer-sheba.[1]

3 And[d] his sons walked not in his ways, but turned aside after lucre, and took bribes, and perverted judgment.

4 Then all the elders of Israel gathered themselves together, and came to Samuel unto [e]Ramah,

5 And said unto him, [f]Behold, thou art old, and thy sons walk not in thy ways: now [g]make us a king to judge us, like all the nations.

6 ¶ But the thing [h]displeased[2] Samuel, when they said, Give us a king to judge us. And Samuel [i]prayed unto the LORD.[3]

7 And the LORD said unto Samuel, [k]Hearken unto the voice of the people in all that they say unto thee: for [l]they have not rejected thee, but they have rejected me, that I should not reign over them.

8 According[m] to all the works which they

A.M. 2939 or 2909. B.C. 1075 or 1095.

[f] Ju.2.4,5.Ps.6.6;119. 136;42.3. Joh 16.20. Je. 9.1. La.2.11,18;3.49.

[g] 2 Ch.xx.Ezr.ix.x.; 8. 21. Ne. ix. Da. ix. Jonah iii. Pr.28.13.

[h] Ezr.9.5–10. Joh 40. 4;42.6. Ps.38.3–8.ch.12. 10. Je.31.19. Lu.15.18.

[m] Ju.2.16;3.10. Ne. 9.27. Eze 20.4.

[4] Mizpeh of Benjamin, where the people had assembled at the time of the war with Benjamin.—*P.*

[n] Am.7.10.

[o] Ex.14.10. ch. 13.6; 17.11. 2 Ch.20.3.

[p] ch.12.19. Is. 37.4; 62.7,6,7.

[5] Heb. *Be not silent from us from crying.*

[q] ch.6.14,15. Ju.21.4. 1 Ki.18.30–38.

[r] Ps.50.15; 99. 6. ch. 12.23. Je.15.1.

[6] Or, *answered.*

[s] ch.2.10. Jos.10. 10, 11. Ju.4.15;5.20. Zec.4. 6.

[t] Ge.28.18; 31.45; 35. 14. Is.19. 19. Jos. 7. 26. Ju.15.19.

[u] That is, *the stone of help*, ch.4.1;5.1.

7 Ebenezer signifies *the stone of help*; an appropriate memorial of human weakness and divine assistance. — *Note.* When men are silent to the ear, stones can speak to the memory and tell what God has mercifully and mightily wrought for his church, Lu.19. 40. —*C.*

[x] Ac.26.22. Ps.71.6, 15. Is.46.3,4;63.7–13.

8 For the site of Mizpeh see note on Ju. 20. 1. Bethcar lay west of Mizpeh, apparently on the eastern brow or declivity of the mountain range; but its exact position is unknown. Beneath it, probably on the border of the Philistine plain, was the spot where the stone was set up and called *Ebenezer.*—*P.*

9 During Samuel's government alone.

1 The great characteristic of Scripture is the universal acknowledgment of God, Pr.3.6. Neither the piety, nor the wisdom, nor the firmness, nor the military talents of Samuel, are once noticed, yet these were all his distinguished gifts; to the *hand of the Lord* all the deliverance of Israel is ascribed.—*C.*

[y] Jos.15.45,46. ch.5. 8.

A.M. 2939 or 2909. B.C. 1075 or 1095.

[z] Ps.106.34. Ju.4.17. De.7.2,16.

2 A historic type of the blood of the cross taking away the enmity, and so making peace between Jew and Gentile. See also Pr. 16. 7.—*C.*

[a] Ju.3.10,11.ch.25.1. Ac.13.21.

[b] Ps.75.2; 82.3,4; 45. 6,7.

3 Heb. *and he circuited.*

[c] Ge.12.8. Jos.8.9;5. 9;4.19. Ju.20.1.

[d] Jos. 18.25. Ju. 4. 5. ch.1.19; 8.4; 15. 34; 16. 1 Sa.19. 18;2.. 6;25.1. 1 Ki. 15.17. Je.31.15.

[e] Ju.21.4. ch.11,15. 2 Sa. 24. 25. 1 Ki. 18. 30–36. Ge.12.7,8; 33. 20;35. 7.

CHAP. VIII.

B.C. 1065 or 1095.

[a] Ju.8 23. 1 Ti. 5.22. Ne.7.2.

[b] Or, *Vashni*, 1 Ch. 6.28, 33.

[c] Ge.21.14,31.

1 They were deputy-judges in the southern district, most probably because that frontier was much exposed to Arab incursions, and required a stronger executive than the south-east and other parts where the Amorites were at peace.—*C.*

[d] Ec.2.19. Je.22. 15, 17. Ex.18.21. De.16.19. 1 Ti.6.10. Ps. 15. 5;26. 10. Is.33.15.

[e] ch.7.17.

[f] ver.1,3.

[g] Ho. 8. 4; 13. 10,11. Ac. 13. 21. De. 17. 14. Le.20.24. Ex.19.5,6.

[h] ch.12.17.

2 Heb. *was evil in the eyes of Samuel.*

[i] Ps.50.15;109.4. Pr. 3.5,6. Ja.1.5; 5.16. Phi. 4.6. Mat.7.7.

3 The true refuge of all God's people. When troubled or displeased, let them pray: in the closet with God trouble is healed and passion subdued.—*C.*

[k] Ps.81.12. Is. 66. 4. Ho.13.11. Nu.22.20.

[l] Ex.16.8. ch. 10. 19; 12. 17, 19. Jn. 13. 16. Mat. 10.24,25. Lu. 19. 14,27. Ho.13.10,11.

[m] Ex. xiv. xvii. xxxii. Nu. xi. xiv. xvi. xxv Ju.i.–iv.vi.x.xviii. xix. 2 Ti.3.13. Nu. 32. 14 I–14.

Ver. 4. [*Served the Lord only.* Samuel announces the very principle enforced by our Lord, Mat. 6. 24, 'no man can serve two masters;' and therefore requires, both as a test of sincerity and a means of reformation, the utter putting away of the idols *Baalim* and *Ashtaroth:* and a return to the sole worship of JEHOVAH. —*Note,* The same obstruction stands in the way of revival with Christians that stood in the way of Israel; *Baalim*—lordly passions, such as pride, ambition, false honour; *Ashtaroth*—fleshly affections, such as gluttony, drunkenness, licentiousness; all these must be cast out of the heart where the Spirit of God resides, 2 Co. 7. 1. *C.*]

Ver. 6. [*Drew water, and poured it out before the Lord.* According to some, *shed tears, and poured out,* that is, their hearts, in penitential sorrow, 'before the Lord;' others consider the pouring out of the water emblematic of penitence; but as there was no *ceremonial law* appointed for such drawing and outpouring of water, we are slow to admit an act of *will-worship* where a *Levitical rite* will account for what is done. Is it not, therefore, to be considered as the extempore adoption of the laver, an essential preparative for the sacrifice that Samuel was about to offer? comp. Ex. 30. 17–21 with 1 Sa. 7, 9. *C.*]

Ver. 8. [*Cry unto the Lord our God for us.* Observe here the spiritual use of temporal calamities. The service of God is forsaken for Baalim and Ashtaroth, till the oppression of the Philistines compels them to cry to JEHOVAH. *C.*]

Ver. 9. [*Samuel took a sucking lamb and offered it for a burnt-offering.* Samuel, as appears from ch. 1. 1, was not a priest, though a Levite; he could not therefore legally perform an act of sacrifice, nor is it necessary to suppose he did so in his own person; for according to the language of Scripture, see Le. 2. 1–14; 3. 1, 3, 7, 9, 12, he offers a sacrifice who furnishes it to the priest, which is all that Samuel, as a well-instructed Levite and prophet, would do. *C.*]

Ver. 17. [*There he built an altar unto the Lord.* Not as a second or rival to Shiloh, for that would have been illegal; but Shiloh having been deserted since the capture of the ark, Samuel, in virtue of his prophetic office, reinstitutes the tabernacle service at Ramah. *C.*]

REFLECTIONS.—God's ordinances will still find a place somewhere; and if priests neglect them, pious Levites or Israelites will take care of them. The church may continue long in a wilderness state; but when men begin to lament after a hiding God and departed ordinances, their deliverance is nigh. If we wish remarkable interposals of Providence for our relief, we must put away our idols, and apply ourselves to solemn repentance, fasting, and supplication. God saves men *from* their sins, not *in* them. But it is a great mercy to have a noted favourite of Heaven with us on critical occasions. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much. And a minister's other labours, without earnest prayers, seldom avail to the reformation of the world or the edification of souls. The first struggles for glory are often the hardest. Scarcely can men begin to repent, but hell and earth will be in arms against them. But the prayer of faith, fixed on Jesus' atoning sacrifice, will make things easier than could have been expected. Whatsoever we ask, believing, we shall receive; and when God arises, his enemies must be scattered. But let us remember that noted answers of prayer deserve memorials of gratitude: and while we gratefully acknowledge past help, we may depend on future protection. When a man's ways please the Lord, he makes his enemies to be at peace with him. Prayer and penitence can do more for a nation than the mightiest armies. And every blessing may be expected in that land where magistrates or ministers unite remarkable diligence, equity, and faithfulness, with exemplary holiness and ardent devotions.

CHAPTER VIII. [Ver. 3. *Took bribes, and perverted judgment.* Samuel, educated under the overmild *régime* of Eli, seems to have fallen into Eli's error in the management of his sons; and though their crimes were not identical with those of Hophni and Phinehas, which arose from sensuality, and were therefore more debasing to the man, yet the crimes of Joel and Abiah, arising from unprincipled covetousness, were equally degrading to the judges.—*Note,* The determined honesty with which the Scriptures relate these blots in the family of Samuel, affords another of the many similar evidences of the divine origin of the Scriptures. Nothing could have been more easy than the suppression of this statement; and had the subject been in the hands of a mere secular historian, the world had never heard of the guilt of his hero's sons. But the Scriptures have

have done since the day that I brought them up out of Egypt, even unto this day, wherewith they have forsaken me, and served other gods, so do they also unto thee.

9 Now therefore hearken[4] unto their voice: howbeit yet protest solemnly[5] unto them,[6] and show them the [n]manner of the king that shall reign over them.

10 ¶ And Samuel told all the words of the LORD unto the people that asked of him a king.

11 And he said, This will be the manner of the king[7] that shall reign over you: [o]He will take your sons, and appoint *them* for himself, for his chariots, and *to be* his horsemen; and *some* shall run before his chariots.

12 And he will appoint him captains over thousands and captains over fifties, and *will set them* to ear his ground, and to reap his harvest, and to make his instruments of war, and instruments of his chariots.

13 And he will take your daughters *to be* confectionaries, and *to be* cooks, and *to be* bakers.

14 And he [p]will take your fields, and your vineyards, and your oliveyards, *even* the best *of them*, and give *them* to his servants.

15 And he will take the tenth of your seed, and of your vineyards, and give to his officers,[8] and to his servants.

16 And he will take your men-servants, and your maid-servants, and your goodliest young men, and your asses, and put *them* to his work.

17 He will take the tenth of your sheep; and ye shall be his servants.

18 And ye shall [q]cry out in that day because of your king which ye shall have chosen you; and the LORD will not hear you in that day.

19 ¶ Nevertheless [r]the people refused to obey the voice of Samuel: and they said, Nay; but we will have a king over us;

20 That [s]we also may be like all the nations; and that our king may judge us, and go out before us, and fight our battles.

21 And Samuel heard all the words of the people, and he [t]rehearsed them in the ears of the LORD.

22 And the LORD said to Samuel, [u]Hearken unto their voice, and make them a king. And Samuel said unto the men of Israel, Go ye every man unto his city.[9]

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B.C. 1065 or 1095.

4 Or, *obey*

5 Or, *notwithstanding when thou hast solemnly protested against them, then thou shalt show*, &c.

6 Why grant the desire of the people, and yet protest against its propriety? Is there not contradiction or even duplicity in this procedure? Infidels have so asserted, yet is there neither. The protest is both a warning and a prophecy: the warning was despised; the prophecy to the letter fulfilled. The grant was what occurs every day in providence—a fulfilment of wishes employed to punish unreasonable petitioners.—*C.*

n ch.2.13; 12.13, but not lawful, De. 17.14-20. Eze.46.18; 45.7,8.

7 The description of the despotism to which an unthankful and godless people submitted, is well worthy of attention, as an accurate picture of human nature mistaking experiment for principle, and change for improvement. This description contains *eight* particulars, viz. (1) Military conscription, compelling men to war. (2) Agricultural and mechanical conscriptions for the king's demesne lands. (3) Domestic slavery enforced upon the Israelites. (4) Violent appropriation of lands to civil or military servants. (5) A *tenth part rent* upon all agricultural produce. (6) Conscription for public works. (7) *Tenth part rent* of the sheep, which probably, according to a common mode of Scripture expression, stands for all clean animals. (8) Unlimited vassalage. *C.*—Very different indeed were the exactions to be enforced by many of their kings, from the rules of kingly conduct that had been prescribed by Moses, De.17.15-20. This is not a statement of the *legitimate* rights of monarchs, but an account no less graphic than correct of the arbitrary and tyrannical *manner* of eastern despots.—*I.*

o ch.14.52. In these verses Samuel represents not the duty of kings, but the real conduct of Saul, &c.

p 1 Ki.21.7,ch.22.7.

8 Heb. *eunuchs*, whom they castrated to attend their ladies, &c.

q Is.8.21; 1.15. Pr.1. 26-28. Mi.3.4. Job 27.9.

r Ps. 81. 11. Is. 66.4. Je.7.13; 44.16. Eze.33. 31.

s ver.5. Ro.12.2. Phi. 3.19.

t 1 Co.4.2. 2 Co.5.19, 20. De.5.5.

u ver.7.

A.M. 2939 or 2909.
B.C. 1065 or 1095.

9 To allow him time for anointing whomsoever God might select.—*C.*

CHAP. IX.

a ch. 14. 51. 1 Ch. 8. 30-33; 9.36-39.

1 Or, *the son of a man of Jemini.*

2 Or, *substance.*

b Ge. 6. 2. ch. 10. 23; 16.7. 2 Sa. 14. 25. Je.9. 23.

c Job 1. 3. Ge. 32. 15. Ju. 5.10; 10.4. ver.16

3 This narrative presents a curious picture of the open state of the country, and seantiness of inhabitants, to which the most mountainous districts of Great Britain can furnish the only intelligible parallel.—*C.*

d Jos.17.15,18. Ju.17. 1:19.1.

e 2 Ki.4.42.

f Jn.3.23. Ge.33.18; 14.18.

4 *Shalisha* was the Beth-shalisha of 2 Ki. 4.42, 15 miles north of Lydda, and *Shalim* a place mentioned by Jerome as in the tribe of Dan; thus Saul's search extended as far as to the former place to the north, and the latter to the south.—*I.*

g ch.1.1.

5 In so imperfect a character as that of Saul, it is pleasing to observe this filial remembrance of his father.—*Note*, There is scarcely, perhaps never, any character so bad, as to be totally destitute of all good qualities—a merciful mixture of salt to preserve the mass from putrefaction.—*C.*

h ch. 2. 27. De. 33.1. Ju.13.6.1 Ki.13.1.

i 1 Th.2.10;5.13.

k ch. 3. 19, 20. Is. 44. 26. Zec.1.5,6.

l 1 Ki. 14. 3. 2 Ki. 4. 42; 8.8; 5.5. Ju.6.18; 13. 17.

6 No man, in eastern countries, ever approaches a superior without a present—it is a sample of the manners of the time and country, and not an evidence of covetousness in the prophet.—*C.*

7 Heb. *is gone out of*, &c.

8 Heb *is with us.*

9 Heb. *there is found in my hand.*

1 About seven pence.

2 Nothing can be more unjust or absurd than to charge or suspect Samuel of exercising his prophetic office for money, it merely proves the opinion entertained of him by two ignorant and inexperienced young men. What man would think it right to be judged by the opinion formed of him by ignorant men that did not know him? Would infidels so choose to be judged? No. Then let them not so judge Samuel.—*C.*

CHAPTER IX.

1 *Saul despairing to find his father's asses, 6 by the counsel of his servant, 11 and direction of young maidens, 15 according to God's revelation, 18 cometh to Samuel. 19 Samuel entertaineth Saul at the feast. 25 Samuel, after a private conversation, bringeth him on his way.*

NOW there was a man of Benjamin, whose name *was* [a]Kish, the son of Abiel, the son of Zeror, the son of Bechorath, the son of Aphiah, a Benjamite,[1] a mighty man of [2]power.

2 And he had a son, whose name *was* Saul, [b]a choice young man, and a goodly; and *there was* not among the children of Israel a goodlier person than he: from his shoulders and upward *he was* higher than any of the people.

3 And the [c]asses of Kish, Saul's father, were lost: and Kish said to Saul his son, Take now one of the servants with thee, and arise, go seek the asses.

4 And he passed [3]through [d]mount Ephraim, and passed through the land of [e]Shalisha, but they found *them* not: then they passed through the land of [f]Shalim,[4] and *there they were* not; and he passed through the land of the Benjamites, but they found *them* not.

5 *And* when they were come to the [g]land of Zuph, Saul said to his servant that *was* with him, Come, and let us return; lest my father leave *caring* for the asses, and take thought for us.[5]

6 And he said unto him, Behold now, *there is* in this city [h]a man of God, and *he is* an [i]honourable man; [k]all that he saith cometh surely to pass: now let us go thither; peradventure he can show us our way that we should go.

7 Then said Saul to his servant, But, behold, *if* we go, [l]what shall we bring the man?[6] for the bread is spent[7] in our vessels, and *there is* not a present to bring to the man of God: what have we?[8]

8 And the servant answered Saul again, and said, Behold, I have here at hand[9] the fourth part of a shekel of silver;[1] *that* will I give to the man of God, to tell us our way.[2]

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no heroes; they have no narrative but truth, the whole truth; and no end but the glory of God. *C.*]

Ver. 7. [*They have rejected me, that I should not reign over them.* Neither God nor Samuel his prophet found any fault with the people for seeking a king, that being provided for in the divine law, De. 17. 14-20. The displeasure of both arose, (1) From the total want of piety in not consulting God by his high-priest or prophet. (2) From the sight of the people's folly in seeking to model their government on the plan of the wicked and idolatrous nations around them. (3) From the virtual rejection of God, both as judge and king. See ver. 19, 20. *C.*]

REFLECTIONS.—We had need to be busy in our proper work while we are able; old age will quickly indispose us for it. Neither the piety of parents nor the best education can render a person gracious. All men transmit corruption to their posterity; no man his virtues or graces. Many children, awed by their parents' inspection, conceal the vices which afterwards appear when the restraint is taken off. Yea, many, after promising beginnings, turn out a disgrace to their parents and a plague to their country. The love of money is a prolific root of evil, a most dangerous plague to the soul, and renders the public administrations of church and state a public nuisance and pest. It is a common thing for people to be harmonious in casting off the government of God, discovering the vilest ingratitude to his faithful servants, and studying conformity to the world: but abusive vexation from men should drive us to our prayers for ourselves and for them. God will grant us direction and comfort when others contemn and abuse us. To punish men for their sin, God often grants them what they wish: and things good in themselves become a curse when they are obtained in a wrong way. But rejection of God, when we are at ease, assuredly issues in his rejection of us when we are in trouble. However great a curse unsanctified relations may be, most men are set on obtaining them. And no reproofs or warnings will restrain the obstinate sinner; but the kindest advice is frequently misrepresented, as selfish and designing.

CHAPTER IX. [Ver. 12. *There is a sacrifice of the people to-day in the high place.* Why the ark was permitted to remain in Kirjath-jearim does not appear; and that Shiloh had ceased to be the place of sacrifice is historically evident, though the fact is not recorded. The city where Samuel now was seems from ver. 6 to have been his ordinary residence, and that was Ramah, where, as God's prophet, he had localized the national worship. *C.*]

REFLECTIONS.—When nations provoke God to give them magistrates or ministers according to their

9 (Beforetime in Israel, when a man went to [m]inquire of God, thus he spake, Come, and let us go to the seer: for *he that is* now *called* a Prophet, was beforetime called [n]a Seer.)[2]

10 Then said Saul to his servant, [o]Well said,[3] come, let us go. So they went unto the city where the man of God *was.*

11 ¶ *And* as they went up the hill[4] to the city, they found young maidens [p]going out to draw water, and said unto them, Is the seer here?

12 And they answered them, and said, He is; behold, *he is* before you: make haste now, for he came to-day to the city; for *there is* a sacrifice[q] of the people to-day in the high place.

13 As soon as ye be come into the city, ye shall straightway find him, before he go up to the high place to eat: for the people will not eat until he come, because he doth [r]bless the sacrifice; *and* afterwards they eat that be bidden. Now therefore get you up; for about this time[5] ye shall find him.

14 And they went up into the city: *and* when they were come into the city, behold, Samuel came out against them, for to go up to the high place.[6]

15 ¶ Now[s] the LORD had [t]told Samuel in his ear [u]a day before Saul came, saying,

16 To-morrow about this time I will send thee a man out of the land of Benjamin, and thou shalt anoint him *to be* captain over my people Israel, that he may save my people out of the hand of the Philistines; for [x]I have looked upon my people, because their cry is come unto me.

17 And when Samuel saw Saul, [y]the LORD said unto him, Behold the man whom I spake to thee of! this same shall [z]reign over my people.

18 Then Saul drew near to Samuel in the gate, and said, Tell me, I pray thee, where the seer's house *is.*[7]

19 And Samuel answered Saul, and said, I *am* the seer: go up before me unto the high place; for ye shall eat with me to-day, and to-morrow I will let thee go, and will tell thee all that *is* in thine heart.

A.M. 2939 or 2909. B.C. 1065 or 1095.

m Ge.25.22. Ju.1.1. Probably Ezra inserted this whole verse.

n 2 Sa.24.11.2 Ki.17. 13. Am.7.12. Is.29.10; 30.10.

2 As seeing visions of God, as Moses; or of futurity, as all the prophets saw. *Beforetime* means, not always before this period, but some time formerly, that is, between the settlement under Joshua and the coronation of Saul. Such temporary changes take place in all titles and offices. Thus the followers of our Lord were first called disciples, then apostles, then were they called Christians first at Antioch, Mat. 10.24. Ac.6.1. Mat.10. 2. Ac. 11. 26. *C.*—This verse is most probably an explanatory interpolation inserted by some later prophet, to throw light on the archaic word *Seer.*—*P.*

o Job 31. 13. Ec.4.9, 10.

3 Heb. *Thy word is good.*

4 Heb. *in the ascent of the city.*

p Ge.24.11 Ju.5.11.

q Or, *feast*, ch.16.2. Le. 26. 30. 1 Ch. 16. 39. 1 Ki.3.2,5.

r De. 8. 10. Mat. 26. 26. Lu.24.30. 1 Ti.4.4. ch.1.4. Le.7.15,16.

5 Heb. *to-day.*

6 The object of this simple narrative is to exhibit the great purposes of Providence as dependent upon little things. Some straying animals, a vain search, an ignorant opinion of a prophet's duties, the casual meeting of a few water-drawers, all combine to bring Saul to Samuel; where a direct revelation from God selects him whom Providence had so mysteriously led.—*C.*

s ch.15.1. Ac.13.21.

t Heb. *revealed the ear of Samuel,* 2 Sa. 7. 27. Job 33. 16. Is. 22. 14. Am. 3. 7

u Ac 15. 18. Is.43.12; 44.7,15...17,20...10;48.6.

x Ge.29.32. Ex. 3. 7, 9. De.32.36. Ps.106.44.

y ver.15; ch.16.8,12. Pr.3.5,6.

z Heb. *restrain,* Ne.13.19,25. Ro. 13. 3, 4.

7 In addition to the object mentioned in the note on ver. 14, another intention of the narrative may have been to demonstrate to the dissatisfied party, that the choice of Saul was from God, and not from any previous knowledge and favouritism on the part of Samuel. This may have been the more necessary, as there were many discontented, probably because disappointed, ch. 10. 27.—*C.*

A.M. 2939 or 2909. B.C. 1065 or 1095.

8 Heb. *to-day three days.*

9 The office of king, being one of extreme difficulty, was not to Saul an object of desire or ambition; and Samuel therefore, by telling Saul his private thoughts, gives evidence that his wisdom came from God; and that Saul should obey him in undertaking the deliverance of the people.—*C.*

a ch.8.5,19;ver.2.

b Ps.68.27. Ju.20.46, 48;6.14,15.ch.15.17.

1 Heb. *according to this word.*

c Ge.43.33.

d ch.1.5. Ge.43.34.

e Le.7.32,33.

2 The shoulder was a distinguished part of some sacrifices, as Ex. 29. 27; it is also frequently mentioned in Scripture as an emblem of power, as Is. 9. 6; also in relation to slavery and deliverance, Ge. 49. 15. Is. 10. 27. These emblems of power and deliverance may have been in the eye of the prophet in the choice of food for his guest. 'That which was upon it,' some interpreters think it some appropriate sauce; is it not rather a cover for its protection from flies during the time it was kept?—*C.*

f Or, *reserved,* ver. 15.

3 The Hebrew is literally as follows:—'And the cook set up the shoulder and what was on it (perhaps part of the fat not used for sacrifice), and placed it before Saul, and said, Behold what was reserved for thee; place it before thee; eat, for on purpose it has been kept for thee, saying (or, since I said), I have called the people.' The speaker must, according to the rules of grammar, be the cook. Samuel is introduced arbitrarily. *P.*

g De.22.8,9 Sa.11.2 Mat. 10. 27. Je. 19. 13 Ac.10.9. Ne. 8. 16. Ju. 16.27.

4 Saul was already on the roof, the common sleeping place; Samuel therefore called him not *to* the roof, but called to him *on* the roof, inviting him to rise and be away.—*C.*

h Nu.23.3. Ju.3.20.

5 Heb. *to-day*

6 Heb. *cause to hear.*

CHAP. X.

a ch.16.13. 2 Ki.9.1, 3. Ac.13.21.

b Ge.41.40. Ps.2.12.

c ch.8.5,19.

d Ex.19.5,6. De. 32. 9;14.2;26.18. Ps.135.4.

20 And as for thine asses that were lost three days ago,[8] set not thy mind on them; for they are found.[9] And [a]on whom *is* all the desire of Israel? *is it* not on thee, and on all thy father's house?

21 And Saul answered and said, *Am* not I a [b]Benjamite, of the smallest of the tribes of Israel? and my family the least of all the families of the tribe of Benjamin? wherefore then speakest thou so[1] to me?

22 And Samuel took Saul and his servant, and brought them into the parlour, and [c]made them sit in the chiefest place among them that were bidden, which *were* about thirty persons.

23 And Samuel said unto the cook, Bring the [d]portion which I gave thee, of [e]which I said unto thee, Set it by thee.

24 And the cook took up the [e]shoulder,[2] and *that* which *was* upon it, and set *it* before Saul. And *Samuel* said, Behold that which is [f]left! set *it* before thee, *and* eat; for unto this time hath it been kept for thee since I said, I have invited the people.[3] So Saul did eat with Samuel that day.

25 ¶ And when they were come down from the high place into the city, *Samuel* communed with Saul [g]upon the top of the house.

26 And they arose early: and it came to pass about the spring of the day, that Samuel called Saul to the top of the house,[4] saying, Up, that I may send thee away. And [h]Saul arose, and they went out both of them, he and Samuel, abroad.

27 *And* as they were going down to the end of the city, Samuel said to Saul, Bid the servant pass on before us, (and he passed on,) but stand thou still a while,[5] that I may show[6] thee the word of God.

CHAPTER X.

1 Samuel anointeth Saul. 2 He confirmeth him by prediction of three signs. 9 Saul's heart is changed, and he prophesieth. 14 He concealeth the matter of the kingdom from his uncle. 17 Saul is chosen at Mizpeh by lot. 26 The different affections of his subjects.

THEN Samuel took [a]a vial of oil, and poured *it* upon his head, and [b]kissed him, and said, *Is it* not because the LORD hath anointed thee *to be* [c]captain over his [d]inheritance?

2 When thou art departed from me to-day,

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heart, they are like to have portly figures, but little piety or sense. If men have much of this world, they may lay their account with frequent losses. Persons may be affectionate children, and yet destitute of grace. How sadly many mistake the ministerial office and work, and look on the messengers of God as but cunning diviners that need to be hired; and are more solicitous about outward trifles than about their eternal salvation! But it is shameful when handmaids know more of Christ and his ministers than the sons of the great; and when men, like beasts, feast on their daily provision, and attend the ordinances of God, without first asking his blessing thereon! With what deep designs are the most fortuitous circumstances ordered by God; and the most trivial beginnings issue in the most important events! Humility is the most direct road to distinguished honour. And whom God honours we must respect for his sake; never envying those whom he is pleased to advance, though we ourselves should be eclipsed by them.

CHAPTER X. [Ver. 2. *When thou art departed from me to-day.* Were the office of king, as in the times of the peace and prosperity of a nation, an office of honour and ease, we might wonder at the pains taken by Samuel to convince Saul that he was divinely appointed. But such were the times, that as Moses was reluctant to undertake the deliverance out of Egypt, so was Saul reluctant to attempt a contest with the Philistines. Hence the necessity of such evidence of a divine call as would quite remove his scruples and encourage him in his office. *C.*——Rachel's sepulchre is still well known, and a place of pilgrimage for Jews, Christians, and Mohammedans. It is covered by a small white cupola. It is on the side of the road leading from Bethlehem to Jerusalem, about a mile from the former. Westward of the sepulchre, about half a mile distant, is the village of *Beit Jala,* which may probably be identical with the *Zelzah* here mentioned. As Saul was on his way homeward to Gibeah, Ramah of Samuel, from which he set out, must have been somewhere to the south or south-west of Rachel's sepulchre. *P.*]

Ver. 5. [*Hill of God, where is the garrison of the Philistines.* The precise place is not known; but the state of things alluded to is still common in the East; viz. a garrison of foreign troops in a citadel, to keep the native inhabitants in order or subjection. *C.*]

Ver. 22. [*Hid himself among the stuff.* The baggage of the people who had come to the great politico-religious assembly of the tribes. *C.*]

REFLECTIONS.—God should be always viewed as the author of all our promotions; and the tokens for good, which he gives in his providence, carefully ob-

then thou shalt find two men by [e]Rachel's sepulchre, in the border of Benjamin, at Zelzah; and they will say unto thee, The asses which thou wentest to seek are found: and, lo, thy father hath left the care[1] of the asses, and sorroweth for you, saying, What shall I do for my son?[2]

3 Then shalt thou go on forward from thence, and thou shalt come to the plain of Tabor,[3] and there shall meet thee three men going up [f]to God to Beth-el,[4] one[g] carrying three kids, and another carrying three loaves of bread, and another carrying a bottle of wine:

4 And they [h]will salute thee, and give thee two *loaves* of bread; which thou shalt receive of their hands.

5 After that thou shalt come to the [i]hill of God, where *is* the garrison of the Philistines: and it shall come to pass, when thou art come thither to the city, that thou shalt meet a [k]company of prophets coming down from the high place [l]with a psaltery, and a tabret, and a pipe, and a harp, before them; and they shall prophesy:

6 And the [m]Spirit of the LORD will come upon thee, and thou shalt prophesy with them, and shalt be turned into [n]another man.[5]

7 And let it be, when these signs are come unto thee, *that* thou do as [o]occasion shall serve thee; for [p]God *is* with thee.

8 And thou shalt [q]go down before me[6] to Gilgal; and, behold, I will come down unto thee, to offer burnt-offerings, *and* to sacrifice sacrifices of peace-offerings: seven days[7] shalt thou tarry, till I come to thee, and show thee what thou shalt do.

9 ¶ And it was *so*, that when he had turned his back[8] to go from Samuel, God gave[9] him another[r] heart: and all [s]those signs came to pass that day.

10 And when they came thither to the hill,[1] behold, a company of prophets met him; and the Spirit of God came upon him, and he prophesied among them.

11 And it came to pass, when all that knew him beforetime saw that, behold, he prophesied among the prophets, then the people said one to another,[2] What[t] *is* this *that* is come unto the son of Kish?[3] *is* Saul also among the prophets?

12 And one of the same place[4] answered and said, But [u]who *is* their father?[5] Therefore it became a proverb, *Is* Saul also among the prophets?

A.M. 2959 or 2909.
B.C. 1065 or 1095.

e Ge.35.19,20. Je.31.15.

1 Heb. *the business.*

2 The first evidence of the divine call is a message from home, fulfilling the words of Samuel. This is a twofold evidence in Samuel's former and present revelation; while it presents a beautiful picture of a father's heart merging the care of property in anxiety for his son.—*C.*

3 'The plain (or rather *the oaks*) of Tabor'—not the well-known mountain of that name, but some noted oak-grove between Rachel's sepulchre and Gibeah, and consequently not far from Jerusalem.—*P.*

f Ge.28.19,22;35.6,7. Jos.8.9. Where was a high place.

4 Not to sacrifice at Bethel, for that, as contrary to law, could not, even by implication, have been sanctioned by Samuel; but there may have been there 'a place where prayer was wont to be made,' or where some prophet dwelt and taught, as appears highly probable from ver.5.—*C.*

g Le.i. ii. Nu. 15.5-11.

h Heb. *ask thee of peace*, Ju.18.15.

i ver.10; ch.13.2,3,5. Here was another high place.

k ch.19.20. 2 Ki. 2.3, 5,15;4.38;6.1.

l They used these musical instruments to raise and compose their spirits, 2 Ki. 3. 15.

m Ju. 3. 10. Nu. 11. 25. Mat.7.22.

n ver.9, not Ju.3.3-5. Co.5.17. Ep.4.24.

5 New views, new feelings, new aspirings, no longer in heart a peasant, but a king. Another, but alas! it is to be feared, not a *new man.*—*C.*

o Ju.9.33.

p Ge.21.20. Ro.8.31.

q ch.12.15; 11. 14.15, with 13.7-14.

6 Perhaps this relates to the event about two years after.

7 On every occasion.

8 Heb. *shoulder.*

9 Heb. *turned.*

r ver. 6, not a new one, Eze. 36. 26. Jn. 3. 3,5.

s ver.2-6. Ju.6.21,36-40;7.11.18.38;7.8.

1 The Hebrew word here, and in ver. 5, translated 'hill,' is a proper name, *Gibeah*, and it is clear from what is stated in ver. 26 that it is Saul's own native city. There appears to have been a sanctuary in or beside it; and being a place of great natural strength, it was held by a garrison of the Philistines.—*P.*

2 Heb. *a man to his neighbour.*

t Mat.13.55; 21.9,10, 15. Jn.7.15. Ac.2.7,8;4. 13;9.21.ch.19.24.

3 From this interrogation it is evident that Saul was not hitherto a religious character, as has already appeared from his ignorance of the proper office of God's prophets, ch. 9. 10.—*C.*

4 Heb. *from thence.*

u Ps.8.2. Jn.3.8. Ac. 10.34;4.13. Ja.1.17. Is not God their inspiring instructor?

5 Some translate the words, 'Who is his father?' but this seems without meaning, as Kish has been already named. Is not this the meaning: If God send a father, an instructor to the prophets, why should we wonder if they instruct Saul likewise? *C.*—If the other prophets had not obtained the gift of prophecy by inheritance, as appears from the question, 'Who is their father?' but as a free gift of the Lord, it was equally possible for the Lord to communicate the same gift to Saul.—*P.*

6 The 'high place' which was in Gibeah. —*P.*

x Abner, ch. 14. 50, 51.

y Pr.29.11. Ex.4.18. ch.9.27.

7 He was silent either from modesty, or fear of exciting envy, or a prudent waiting for such opportunity and instruction as Samuel had promised. Whether his silence was right or wrong, we cannot easily decide, as that depended altogether on the motive. It is to be feared, want of faith predominated. —*C.*

z Ju. 20. 1, 3. ch.7.6. Jos.18.26, not that Ju. 10.17;11.11.

8 See note on Ju. 20.1.—*P.*

a Ju. 2. 1; 6.8; iii. iv. vii.xi. Ex.vii.–xiv. ch. vii.; 12.11. Ne.9.27,28. Eze.xx.

9 Not all the kingdoms of the world, but all the kingdoms that had oppressed the Israelites.—*C.*

b ch.8.6,7,19; 12. 17, 19.

c Jos.7.14. Nu. 17.2, 3,6. Mi.5.2.

d Jos. 7. 16,17. Ac.1. 26.ch.14.41,42.

e Ju.1.1; 20.18,23,28. Nu.27.21.

f ch.9.21; 15.17. Lu. 14.11.

g ch.9.2.

1 Bodily advantages, such as stature, proportion, gracefulness, strength, activity, beauty, are all gifts of God, and capable of being turned to good account in his service. Alas! that ever they should be found associated with an evil heart, and ministering to Satan and not to the Lord who gave them—*C.*

h ver.17.

i Heb. *Let the king live*, 1 Ki.1.25.

k Either a prediction of what their kings would be, ch.8. 10-18, or rather rules of government, De. 17. 14-17. Eze.45.9,10; 46.16. Ro.13.1-4. 1 Ti. 2.2. Zec.11.5.

l Jos.18.28. Ju.19.12-16;20.13. Is.10.29.

2 With religious respect to the choice of Samuel, as God's prophet, and with a conviction that God who had selected Saul, was, by him, able to deliver his country.—*Note*, Happy the king whose counsellors and guards are men 'whose hearts the Lord has touched.' But the need of such counsellors and friends is not confined to kings. Every man who has anything to govern, were it but his own family, yea, were it but his own heart, has equal need of such blessings.—*C.*

13 And when he had made an end of prophesying, he came to the high place.[6]

14 ¶ And Saul's [x]uncle said unto him, and to his servant, Whither went ye? And he said, To seek the asses; and when we saw that *they were* no where, we came to Samuel.

15 And Saul's uncle said, Tell me, I pray thee, what Samuel said unto you.

16 And Saul said unto his uncle, He told us plainly that the asses were found. But [y]of the matter of the kingdom, whereof Samuel spake, he told him not.[7]

17 ¶ And Samuel called the people together [z]unto the LORD to Mizpeh;[8]

18 And said unto the children of Israel, [a]Thus saith the LORD God of Israel, I brought up Israel out of Egypt, and delivered you out of the hand of the Egyptians, and out of the hand of all kingdoms,[9] *and* of them that oppressed you:

19 And ye have this day [b]rejected your God, who himself saved you out of all your adversities and your tribulations; and ye have said unto him, *Nay*, but set a king over us. Now therefore present yourselves before the LORD [c]by your tribes, and by your thousands.

20 And when Samuel [d]had caused all the tribes of Israel to come near, the tribe of Benjamin was taken.

21 When he had caused the tribe of Benjamin to come near by their families, the family of Matri was taken, and Saul the son of Kish was taken: and when they sought him, he could not be found.

22 Therefore they [e]inquired of the LORD further, if the man should yet come thither. And the LORD answered, Behold, he hath [f]hid himself among the stuff.

23 And they ran and fetched him thence: and when he stood among the people, he [g]was higher than any of the people from his shoulders and upward.

24 And Samuel said to all the people, See ye him whom the LORD hath chosen, that *there is* none like him among all the people?[1] And [h]all the people shouted, and said, [i]God save the king.

25 Then Samuel told the people [k]the manner of the kingdom, and wrote *it* in a book, and laid *it* up before the LORD. And Samuel sent all the people away, every man to his house.

26 ¶ And Saul also went home to [l]Gibeah; and there went with him a band of men, whose hearts God had touched.[2]

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served. He works many wonderful changes on the heart, as well as on the station. Sudden changes indeed are not always to be trusted. We may get a new tongue, new company, new stations, and new manners, and yet want the new heart. It is not prudent to be forward in proclaiming our own honours, or in rushing on great works; but to wait till the Lord, by his word and providence, clear up our way: thus will our path be secure and happy. It is not enough that we obtain the things which we desire; we should consider whether we get them in love or in wrath; whether in answer to the cravings of our lust, or in fulfilment of the gracious promises of God. In all elections to government, in church or state, God's direction should be earnestly consulted and attended to. If the Lord call to important work, no meanness of spirit or earthly consideration should ever make us to evade it. He who gives the call will give furniture for the work. Let the directions of God's word be our constant rule: and then neither weakness in ourselves, nor contempt in others, should dismay or provoke us in the way of duty. And let us always remember that patience and forbearance often heal those breaches which would otherwise have been irreparable.

CHAPTER XI. REFLECTIONS.—Inheritances hastily gotten at the beginning, are often marked with

27 But the [m]children of Belial said, How shall this man save us? And they despised him, and [n]brought him no presents: but he held his peace.[3]

CHAPTER XI.

1 *Nahash offereth them of Jabesh-gilead a reproachful condition.* 4 *They send messengers, and are delivered by Saul.* 12 *Saul thereby is confirmed, and his kingdom joyfully renewed.*

THEN Nahash[a] the Ammonite came up, and encamped against Jabesh-gilead: and all the men of Jabesh said unto Nahash, [b]Make a covenant with us, and we will serve thee.

2 And Nahash the Ammonite answered them, On this *condition* will I make *a covenant* with you, [c]that I may thrust out all your right eyes,[1] and lay it *for* a reproach upon all Israel.

3 And the elders of Jabesh said unto him, Give us seven days' respite,[2] that we may send messengers unto all the coasts of Israel: and then, if *there be* no man to save us, we will come out to thee.

4 ¶ Then [d]came the messengers to Gibeah of Saul, and told the tidings in the ears of the people: and all the people [e]lifted up their voices, and wept.[3]

5 And, behold, Saul came [f]after the herd out of the field; and Saul said, What *aileth* the people that they weep? And they told him the tidings of the men of Jabesh.

6 And the [g]Spirit of God came upon Saul when he heard those tidings, and his [h]anger[4] was kindled greatly.[5]

7 And he took a yoke of oxen, and [i]hewed them in pieces, and sent *them* throughout all the coasts of Israel by the hands of messengers, saying, Whosoever cometh not forth after Saul and after Samuel, so shall it be done unto his oxen.[6] And the fear of the LORD fell on the people, and they came out with one consent.[7]

8 And when he numbered them in [k]Bezek, the children of Israel [l]were three hundred thousand, and the men of Judah thirty thousand.

9 And they said unto the messengers that came, Thus shall ye say unto the men of Jabesh-gilead, To-morrow, by *that time* the sun be hot,[8] ye shall have help.[9] And the messengers came and showed *it* to the men of Jabesh; and they were glad.

10 Therefore the men of Jabesh said, [m]To-morrow we will come out unto you, and ye shall do with us all that seemeth good unto you.

11 And it was *so* on the morrow, that [n]Saul put the people in [o]three companies; and they came into the midst of the host in the [p]morning-watch, and slew the Ammonites until the heat of the day: and it came to pass, that they which remained were scattered, so that [q]two of them were not left together.

12 ¶ And the people said unto Samuel, [r]Who *is* he that said, Shall Saul reign over us? bring the men, that we may put them to death.[1]

13 And Saul said, [s]There shall not a man be put to death this day; for to-day the LORD hath wrought salvation in Israel.

14 ¶ Then said Samuel to the people, Come, and let us go to Gilgal, and [t]renew the kingdom there.[2]

15 And all the people went to Gilgal; and there they made Saul king before the LORD in Gilgal; and there [u]they sacrificed sacrifices of peace-offerings[3] before the LORD; and there Saul and all the men of Israel rejoiced greatly.

CHAPTER XII.

1 *Samuel testifieth his integrity.* 6 *He reproveth the people of ingratitude.* 18 *He terrifieth them with thunder in harvest-time.* 20 *He comforteth them in God's mercy.*

AND Samuel said unto all Israel, Behold, I have [a]hearkened unto your voice in all that ye said unto me, and have made a king over you.

2 And now, behold, the king [b]walketh before you: and [c]I am old and gray-headed; and, behold, my sons[1] *are* with you: and I have walked before you from my childhood unto this day.

3 Behold, here I *am:* witness against me before the LORD,[2] and before his anointed; [d]whose ox have I taken? or whose ass have I taken? or whom have I defrauded? whom have I oppressed? or [e]of whose hand have I received *any* bribe[3] to blind mine eyes therewith?[4] and I will restore it you.

4 And they said, [f]Thou hast not defrauded us, nor oppressed us, neither hast thou taken ought of any man's hand.

5 And he said unto them, [g]The LORD *is* witness against you, and [h]his anointed *is* witness this day, that ye have not found ought in my hand. And they answered, *He is* witness.

6 ¶ And Samuel said unto the people, *It is* the LORD [i]that advanced[5] Moses and [6]Aaron, and that brought your fathers up out of the land of Egypt.

7 Now therefore stand still, that I [k]may reason with you before the LORD of all the righteous acts[7] of the LORD, which he did to you, and to[8] your fathers.

8 When [l] Jacob was come into Egypt, and

A.M. 2939 or 2909. B.C. 1065 or 1095.

m De.13.13.ch.2.12; 11.12.
n 1 Ki. 10. 25. 2 Ch. 17.5.Mat.2.11.
8 Or, *he was as though he had been deaf.*

CHAP. XI.

a Ju. 10. 7; 11. 8–33, with 21.8,10.
b De.20.1,3;23.3.
c Pr. 12. 10. Da. 3. 6. Re.17. 17,Es.3.6.
1 When soldiers fought with sword and shield, the shield generally consisted of a metallic plate or other resisting material, and was carried on the left arm, consequently, when held up to defend the body, the left eye was covered, and so, if the right eye were put out, the soldier was totally unfitted either for attack or defence.—*Note,* An impressive emblem of Satan's great device, to promise peace on condition of the extinction or discontinuation of religious ordinances.—*C.*
2 Heb. *Forbear us.*
d ch.8.20; 10.26; 12. 17,14,16. Ju. 21.2.
e Ro.12.15. 1 Co.12. 26. He.10.33; 13.3. Ga. 6.2.
3 Let not these people be accused of childish timidity, but rather let them be honoured for brotherly sympathy.—*Note,* It is twice recorded that Jesus wept; should not Christians follow his example? Je.9.1.—*C.*
f ch. 9. 1. Ps. 78. 71. After his election he had retired to his private business.
g Ju.3.10; 13.25; 14. 19.ch.10.10;16.13.
h Ex.32.19. Nu.12.3. ver.2.
4 Anger is right or wrong according to the cause producing it. Christ was moved to anger by the hardness of men's hearts, Mar. 3. 5. God is angry with the wicked every day, Ps. 7. 11. And surely the cruelty of the Ammonites might well justify anger, if directed against their wickedness, and not arising from thirst for revenge.—*Note,* Passions are to be judged by the modifying feelings from which they arise, and the object at which they aim.—*C.*
5 It will be remembered that the Benjamites were closely related to the people of Jabesh-gilead. In fact a large portion of the tribe must have been descendants of those four hundred maidens who had been saved from the slaughter at Jabesh, Ju. 21. 12. This fact will account for the grief of the people of Gibeah, and the indignation of Saul.—*P.*
i Ju. 19. 29; 21. 8, 11. Ge. 35. 5.
See note on Ju.19. 29.—*C.*
7 Heb. *as one man.*
k Ju.1.4,5.
l ch. 15. 4. Ju. 20. 2. Nu.2.3,Ge.49.8–10.
8 That is, they would march all night, as is customary in warm climates, and arrive by noon. —*Note,* Let him that would help in any way do it speedily; and especially to brethren in the household of faith.'—*C.*
9 Or, *deliverance.*
m ver.3,9.
n ch.31.11–13.
o Ju.7.16;9.43.
p Ex.14.24. Jos.8.9. Ju.7.19. Ps.101.8.

A.M. 2939 or 2909. B.C. 1065 or 1095.

q Ex.14.30. Ja.2.13.
r ch.10.27. Lu.19.27.
1 Saul's success had a greater effect upon the people than his appointment by God or his anointing by Samuel. Flushed with victory and proud of their leader, they propose to murder in cold blood those who had not yet acknowledged him as king, but with no less prudence than piety he forbade the cruel deed.—*J.*
s 2 Sa.19.22.
t ch.10.24. 2 Sa. 5. 3. 1 Ch.12.38,39. Ho.8.4; 13.10,11.
2 Renew the national covenant with the king, acknowledging his appointment, defining his power, and securing the public liberties. See ch. 10. 25.—*C.*
u Ge.8.20;31.54. Ex. 18.12; 24.6. 1 Ch.29.21–24.
3 The restriction of sacrificing to one place, De.12.14, is not here violated or infringed—for this place the Lord did choose by his prophet for the occasion —an occasion when not one tribe was present, but the whole nation was assembled. So did Joshua at a similar national assembly, ch.8.30,31.—*C.*

CHAP. XII.

a ch.8.9,22; 10. 1,24; 11.14,15.
b Nu.27.16, 17. ch.8. 20.
c Ps.71.18.2 Pe.1.14. 2 Ti.4.6.
1 This seems to intimate that he had deprived them of all public employment, and reduced them to a level with the common people. But while as *a magistrate* he abandons them to justice, *as a father* he tacitly but tenderly pleads for them.—*J.*
2 This is one of the most splendid records of a statesman's retirement from office. He retires like the summer's sun with all his light around him. Others may, perhaps, have retired with as much honesty; but, alas! how few statesmen have lived or retired with his piety!—*C.*
d Nu.16.15. Re.14.5. 1 Th.2.10. Ac 23.1; 24. 16. 2 Co. 1. 12. 1 Th.2. 10.
e Ac. 20. 33. De. 16. 19. Is.33.15.ch.8.3.
3 Heb. *ransom.*
4 Or, *that I should hide mine eyes at him.*
f Da. 6.4. Ac.23.12. 3 Jn.12.
g 1 Th.2. 10. Ac. 24. 16. Ge.31.53;16.5.
h ver.1; ch. 10.1; 24. 6;26.9, 11, 16.
i Ex.iii.–xiv. Ne.ix. Ps. lxxvii. lxxviii. cv. cvi. cxxxv. cxxxvi. Eze.xx.
5 Or, *made.*
6 That is, the Lord that advanced Moses is witness between us; the God of mercy and of judgment.—*C.*
k Is. 1. 18; 63. 7–13. Mi. 6. 3, 4. De. 1.–xi. Eze.xx.
7 Heb. *righteousnesses* or *benefits.*
8 Heb. *with.*
l Ge. xlvi.Ex.i.–xiv. Nu. xxxii. Jos.iv.–xxi. Ps. lxxviii. cv cxxxv. cxiv. cxxxvi. Ne. 9.7–25.

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terrible vexations; and God remarkably displays his wrath against some cities or nations. What a plague is it to live beside bad neighbours! But inhuman barbarity often issues in men's own ruin. Kind sympathy with others in their trouble, and holy indignation against deeds of cruelty and wickedness, are highly commendable. Deep humility, a hearty concern for their subjects, zeal for the interests and honour of God, proper courage and authority, prudence, and confidence in God for success, attended with activity and despatch in business, are truly ornamental in magistrates: and the fear of God ought to influence subjects to their duty. Never ought men to be more forward in forgiving others, than when the Lord hath done great things for themselves. And with hearty thanksgivings to God, and increasing regard to his appointments, ought we to acknowledge the deliverances which he grants, or the honours which he confers.

CHAPTER XII. [Ver. 21. *And turn ye not aside.* There are certain erroneous and sinful contracts, that, when once entered into, cannot, without greater sin, be recalled or rescinded; and he that enters into such contract must bear the consequences—for the moral

AQUEDUCT AT GILGAL—WHERE SAUL WAS MADE KING. [I. SAMUEL, xi : 14, 15.]—"Then said Samuel to the people, Come, and let us go to Gilgal, and renew the kingdom there. And all the people went to Gilgal; and there they made Saul king before the Lord in Gilgal; and there they sacrificed sacrifices of peace offerings before the Lord; and there Saul and all the men of Israel rejoiced greatly." This beautiful aqueduct, now used for carrying the water from Elisha's fountain into Jericho, stands in the region of ancient Gilgal. This is an historic spot. In the fields and plains around this aqueduct we are told that one went to gather herbs to make pottage for the sons of the prophets, when he found a wild vine and gathered wild gourds from it to mix with the pottage. Elijah and Elisha passed this way from Jericho to Jordan. It is in the neighborhood of the city of palm trees.

your fathers cried unto the LORD, then the LORD sent Moses and Aaron, which brought forth your fathers out of Egypt, and made them dwell in this place.

9 And [m]when they forgat the LORD their God, he sold them into the hand of Sisera, captain of the host of Hazor, and into the hand of the Philistines, and into the hand of the king of Moab; and they fought against them.

10 And[n] they cried unto the LORD, and said, We have sinned, because we have forsaken the LORD, and have served Baalim and Ashtaroth: but now deliver us out of the hand of our enemies, and we will serve thee.

11 And the [o]LORD sent Jerubbaal, and Bedan,[9] and Jephthah, and Samuel, and delivered you out of the hand of your enemies on every side, and ye dwelled safe.

12 And [p]when ye saw that Nahash the king of the children of Ammon came against you, ye said unto me, Nay; but a king shall reign over us: when the LORD your God *was* [q]your king.[1]

13 Now therefore [r]behold the king whom ye have chosen, *and* whom ye have desired! and, behold, the LORD hath set a king over you.

14 If[s] ye will fear the LORD, and serve him, and obey his voice, and not rebel against the commandment[2] of the LORD, then shall both ye, and also the king that reigneth over you, continue following[3] the LORD your God.[4]

15 But [t]if ye will not obey the voice of the LORD, but rebel against the commandment of the LORD, then shall the hand of the LORD be against you, as *it was* against your fathers.

16 Now therefore stand and see this [u]great thing, which the LORD will do before your eyes.

17 *Is it* [x]not wheat harvest to-day?[5] I will call unto the LORD, and he shall send thunder and rain; that ye may perceive and see [y]that your wickedness *is* great, which ye have done in the sight of the LORD, in asking you a king.[6]

18 ¶ So Samuel called unto the LORD; and the LORD sent [z]thunder and rain that day: and all the people greatly [a]feared the LORD and Samuel.

19 And [b]all the people said unto Samuel, Pray for thy servants unto the LORD thy God, that we die not: for we have added unto all our sins *this* evil, to ask us a king.[7]

A.M. 2939 or 2909.
B.C. 1065 or 1095.

m Ju. iii. iv. x. xiii. De.32.15–25. Ne.9. 26–30. Is.63.10. Eze.20.28.

n Ju.3.9,14,3; 6, 6; 10. 10,15. ch. 7.2, 6. Ps 78. 34,35. Is. 26. 16. Ho. 5. 15.

o Ju. vi.–viii.; 10.3; xi. ch. vii.

9 No such name as Bedan occurs in Judges, therefore some have considered it a contraction for Ben-Dan, that is, the son of Dan—Samson. Some MSS. and translations, instead of Bedan read Barak; and some valuable early translations for Samuel read Samson. These changes are adopted by Houbigant; but we do not see sufficient authority for the adoption. *C.*—The Sept. Syriac, and Arabic versions have *Barak* instead of *Bedan*. The Hebrew scholar also knows that the two names closely resemble each other in the early Hebrew characters. I am therefore of opinion that *Bedan* is an error of a copyist.—*P.*

p ch.xi. viii. Ho. 13. 10,11;8.4. Ju.8.23.

q Nu.23.21. Ge.17.7. Ex.19.5,6. Is.33.22. Ps. 74.12. Ho.13.10.

1 The proper idea of government is—God by his Spirit and law reigning in the conscience; and were all consciences enlightened by his Spirit, and amenable to his law, government would be perfect. The sin of Israel lay, not merely in desiring to change their government without consulting God, nor merely in their foolish desire to imitate the surrounding nations; but in their being seduced to substitute the will of a man for the will of God, and acknowledging it their duty to obey that will, though in opposition to the will of God.—*C.*

r ch.10.24;11.15;8.7. Ho.13.11. Ac.13.21.

s Le.26.1–13. De.10. 12;28.1–14. Jos. 24. 14. Is.3.10;1.16–19. Ro.2.7–10.

2 Heb. *mouth.*

3 Heb. *as after.*

4 And be as safe following him as are the flock when they follow the shepherd, Jn.10.27.—*C.*

t Le. 26. 15–39. De. 28. 15–68. Is.3.11; 1.20. Ro.2.8,9. Ps. 81. 11,12. Eze.18.4,20–13.

u ver.18.

x Pr.26.1. Ps.99.6. Je. 15.1. Ja.5.16–18.

5 Jerome and modern travellers concur in testifying that thunder and rain in wheat-harvest, the end of June and beginning of July, are totally unknown in Palestine. In high latitudes, where weather is very variable, it is only from travellers that we can learn the wonderful regularity of the seasons in tropical climates, or those approaching the tropic, as Palestine.—*C.*

y ch. 8.7. Ho. 13.10, 11.

6 See note on ch. 8.7.—*C.*

z Ezr.10.9,10. Ex.9. 23.

a Ex.14.31; 4.31. Ps. 106.12,13.

b Ps.78.34,35. Ju.10. 10,15. Ex.9.28.

7 An ignorant and superstitious people

A.M. 2939 or 2909.
B.C. 1065 or 1095.

—nay, idolatrous, as Israel still were—are always easily terrified with unusual occurrences; but they as easily forget their fears, and return to their sins.—*Note*, The miracle here lay not in the thunder and rain, however unprecedented, but in the divine foresight and prophecy of their coming.—*C.*

c Je.3.12–14, 22. De. 6.5;10.12. Mat.22.37.

d De.32. 21. Je. 2. 5, 11; 10.8,15. Jonah.2. 8. Heb.2.18. 1 Co.8.4. Is. 44.9–19;45.20;46.1,2,7.

e Ex. 32. 12. Nu. 14. 13–19. Ps. 94. 14. Eze. 20.9. Jos.7.9.

f Ex.19.5,6. De.7.6–8;9.5; 14.2; 26. 18. Mat. 11. 26. Mal.1. 2. Ro. 5. 21.

g 1 Co.9.16. Ro. 1.9. 1 Th.3.10. Mat.5.44. 2 Ti.1.3.

8 Heb. *from ceasing.*

h Col.1.28. Ac.20.20, 27.

i Ec.12.10,13. Ps.34. 8–13. De.6.13;10.12.

k Ezr. 9. 13, 14. Ps. 105.1 45;xviii.

9 Heb. *what a great thing*, &c.

l Is.3.11. Le. 26. 14–39. De.28.15–68; 32 15–20. 1 4.26;8.19,20; 30. 17–19.

CHAP. XIII.

B.C. 1063 or 1093.

a ch.10.24;11.15.

1 Heb. *the son of one year in his reigning.*

2 He reigned one year but in name and private retirement (ch. 11. 5), and now in the second year he proceeds to organize a permanent military force, divided, in modern phrase, into three regiments of 1000, and judiciously posted in three separate garrisons—the first example on record of a standing army—as distinct from general militia service.—*C.*

b ch.8.11;25.23.

c ch.14. 5. Is. 10. 28. ver. 5, 11, 23. Ne. 7. 31; 11.31.

d Jos.18.28. Ju.19.12. Is.10.29.

e ch.10.5.

f Or, *the hill*, Jos. 18.24.

3 'Mount Bethel' appears to have been the mountain east of Bethel where Abraham encamped. Michmash lay below it, eastward, about two miles distant. Geba was only a mile and half south of Michmash, but between them lay a deep and rugged ravine. This ravine Jonathan crossed, and cut off the Philistine garrison in Geba.—*P.*

g Ju.3.27; 6.34. 2 Sa. 2.28;20.22.

4 Some interpret the word *Hebrews* not of the Israelites generally, but of 'the people beyond the river,' that is, east of Jordan. But why should the trumpet be blown 'throughout all the land' if the words only called two tribes and a half? The phrase must therefore be understood as a general name of the Israelites.—*C.*

h Heb. *did stink*, Ge.34.30;46.34.

i Jos 5.9,10;4.19. ch. 10.8;11.14,15.

5 Chariots of war and carts for baggage.

20 ¶ And Samuel said unto the people, Fear not: (ye have done all this wickedness, [c]yet turn not aside from following the LORD, but serve the LORD with all your heart;

21 And turn ye not aside: for *then should ye go* after [d]vain *things*, which cannot profit nor deliver; for they *are* vain:)

22 For the LORD will not forsake his people [e]for his great name's sake; because it hath pleased the LORD [f]to make you his people.

23 Moreover, as for me, [g]God forbid that I should sin against the LORD in ceasing[8] to pray for you: but I will [h]teach you the good and the right way.

24 Only[i] fear the LORD, and serve him in truth with all your heart: for [k]consider how great[9] *things* he hath done for you.

25 But[l] if ye shall still do wickedly, ye shall be consumed, both ye and your king.

CHAPTER XIII.

1 *Saul's select band.* 3 *He calleth the Hebrews to Gilgal against the Philistines, whose garrison Jonathan had smitten.* 5 *The Philistines' great host.* 6 *The distress of the Israelites.* 8 *Saul, weary of staying for Samuel, sacrificeth.* 11 *Samuel reproveth him.* 17 *The three spoiling bands of the Philistines.* 19 *The policy of the Philistines, in suffering no smith in Israel.*

SAUL reigned[a] one year;[1] and when he had reigned two years over Israel,[2]

2 Saul [b]chose him three thousand *men* of Israel; *whereof* two thousand were with Saul in [c]Michmash and in mount Beth-el, and a thousand were with Jonathan in [d]Gibeah of Benjamin: and the rest of the people he sent every man to his tent.

3 ¶ And Jonathan smote [e]the garrison of the Philistines that *was* in [f]Geba; and the Philistines heard *of it*.[3] And Saul [g]blew the trumpet throughout all the land, saying, Let the Hebrews hear.[4]

4 And all Israel heard say, *that* Saul had smitten a garrison of the Philistines, and *that* Israel also [h]was had in abomination with the Philistines. And the people were called together after Saul to [i]Gilgal.

5 ¶ And the Philistines gathered themselves together to fight with Israel, thirty thousand chariots,[5] and six thousand horsemen, and people [k]as the sand which *is* on the sea-shore in multitude: and they came up and pitched in Michmash, eastward from [l]Beth-aven.

6 ¶ When the men of Israel saw that they [m]were in a strait, (for the people were distressed,) then the people did hide themselves in

k Ge.22.17. Jos.11.4. Ju.7.12. 2 Ch.1.9. Je.15.8. Is.48.19. It seems the expelled Egyptian shepherds had joined them. *l* Jos.18.12;7.2. *m* Ex.14.10–12. Ju.10.9;6.2. ch.14.11.

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sanction may abide, binding to the contract, when the folly of the contract and the sin that led to it are clearly discovered. The Scripture rule then is—repent of the sin, but be faithful to the moral obligation. This principle may be exemplified in the promise of allegiance to an ill-arranged government, and in thoughtless contracts of marriage. *C.*]

REFLECTIONS.—To vindicate our character from calumny is a debt which we owe to God and to ourselves: and such as are conscious of their integrity will not fear the strictest scrutiny of their conduct. But it is the greatest comfort to have God the witness of our uprightness. To resign a station on account of age, with a conscience uncorrupted, and with a character which malice itself dares not to calumniate, is glorious indeed; yet good men scarcely ever leave either church or state in so good a condition as they would wish. Hence they are so earnest in God's work when he is taking it out of their hand: and it is honourable to die with a savoury testimony for God and his ways. But whatever changes take place on earth, it will always be well with the righteous and ill with the wicked. The careful remembrance of God's former mercies and judgments, and the observation of his awful providences, are both too little to make us active and constant in the service of God: and how terrible is the case of his enemies, who can arm all nature against them! How dangerous to have the prayers of his ministers turned against us! But for nations and churches to enjoy the fervent prayers and the faithful admonitions and encouragements of JEHOVAH'S favourites, is one of the greatest mercies, and will be much prized by such as are truly penitent. Nor must any

caves, and in thickets, and in rocks, and in high places, and in pits.

7 And [n]*some of* the Hebrews[6] went over Jordan to the land of [o]Gad and Gilead: as for Saul, he *was* yet in Gilgal, and [p]all the people followed him trembling.[7]

8 ¶ And[q] he tarried seven days, according to the set time that Samuel *had appointed:* but Samuel came not to Gilgal; and the people were scattered from him.

9 And Saul said, Bring hither a burnt-offering to me, and peace-offerings. And he [r]offered the burnt-offering.

10 And it came to pass, that [s]as soon as he had made an end of offering the burnt-offering, behold, Samuel came;[8] and Saul went out to meet him, that he might [t]salute him.

11 ¶ And Samuel said, [u]What hast thou done? And Saul said, Because I saw that the people were scattered from me, and *that* thou camest not within the days appointed, and *that* the Philistines gathered themselves together at Michmash;[x]

12 Therefore [y]said I, The Philistines will come down now upon me to Gilgal, and I have not made supplication[9] unto the LORD: [z]I forced myself therefore, and offered a burnt-offering.

13 And Samuel said to Saul, [a]Thou hast [1]done foolishly: thou hast not kept the commandment of the LORD thy God, which he commanded thee;[1] for now would the LORD have established thy kingdom upon Israel for ever.

14 But [b]now thy kingdom shall not continue: the LORD hath sought him a man after his own heart, and the LORD hath commanded him *to be* captain over his people, [c]because thou hast not kept *that* which the LORD commanded thee.

15 And Samuel arose, and gat him up from Gilgal unto Gibeah of Benjamin: and Saul numbered the people *that were* present[2] with him, [d]about six hundred men.

16 And Saul, and Jonathan his son, and the people *that were* present with them, abode in Gibeah[3] of Benjamin: but the Philistines encamped in Michmash.

A.M. 2941 or 2911.
B.C. 1063 or 1093.

n Le. 26. 17. De. 28. 25.

6 This would seem to favour the idea that *Hebrews* meant the trans-Jordanites; for the reason stated in the note on ver. 3, we even here consider it a name for the whole nation. Had it been otherwise, this verse should have read, for 'went,' 'returned;' and for 'Gad and Gilead,' into 'their own land.'—*C.*

o Nu.21.23–35;xxxii.

p Ju.7.3.

7 Heb. *trembled after him.*

q ch.10.8.

r De.12.6, ch.14. 18; 15.22. Is. 28.16. Pr.3.5, 6.1 Ki.3.4.

s Ps.37.7.Pr.20.22.

8 We see here a striking specimen of impatience and punctuality. Saul waits till the seventh day, but does not wait seven days; and just as that period is near completion, Samuel arrives, true to his appointment. Such little matters are often the best tests of character, and the turning-points of the greatest events.—*C.*

t Heb. *bless him,* Ru.2.4.Ps.129.8.

u Ge.3.13; 4.10. Jos. 7.19.2 Ki.5.25.

x ver.2, 5, 16, 23; ch. 14.5. Is.10.28.

y 1 Ki.12, 26. Ps. 14. 1.

9 Heb. *entreated the face.*

z Ja.1.14.Ro.2.1.

a Pr.19.3. De. 4. 6. 2 Sa.12.7,9. 1 Ki.18.18. 2 Ch.16.9; 19.2. Mat. 14. 3.

1 This does not refer to the appointment, ch. 10. 8, for that was given immediately after Saul was anointed, and this event occurred in the second year of his reign. The command here seems to refer to the ordinance of sacrifice, which none but priests could legally offer, and which Saul seems to have offered with his own hand.—*C.*

b ch.2. 30; 15. 26, 28. Ho.13.10, 11, with Ps. 89.19,20; 78.70; 1 Ki.3. ch. 16.1,12. Ac.13.22.

c Is.3.11; 59.1,2. La. 3.39. ch.12.25. Je.2.17, 19; 4.18; 5.25; 6.19. Pr.1. 31; 13. 21. Ps. 9. 15, 16; 140.11.

2 Heb. *found.*

d ver.2, 6, 7; ch.14.2.

3 The Hebrew is *Geba.* Samuel was at *Gibeah,* the native place of Saul; but Saul and Jonathan took up a position at *Geba,* from which Jonathan had driven the Philistine garrison. Geba is 3 miles north by east of Gibeah, and a mile and a half south of Michmash, where the vast army of the Philistines was now encamped. The two camps were in full view of each other, though separated by a deep and very rugged ravine.—*P.*

A.M. 2941 or 2911.
B.C. 1063 or 1093.

4 Foragers for the horses spoiling the grain, and plunderers of houses robbing the people.—*C.*

e Jos.18.23, not that Ju.6.11;8.27,32.

f Jos. 10. 10; 16. 3, 5; 18.13. 2 Ch.8.5. 1 Ch.7. 24.

g Ne.11.34.

5 Or, *serpents.*

6 The first company went northward, the second westward, and the third eastward. Saul and Jonathan were on the south watching them.—*P.*

h Ju.5.8;15.15. 2 Ki. 24.14,Je.24.1.ch.17.45.

7 This verse confirms decidedly our view of the word *Hebrews,* in ver. 3, 7, for it is equivalent to 'all the land of Israel,' and 'all the Israelites.'—*C.*

8 Not to sharpen, in the sense of whetting, for that could be done anywhere, but in the sense of welding and lengthening when worn out by use.—*C.*

9 Heb. *a file with mouths.*

1 Heb. *to set.*

2 This verse may be translated: 'And bluntness of the edges occurred to the edge-tools, and the ploughshares, and the forks, and the axes, and the setting of the goads.' This seems more in accordance with the scope of the passage, though the construction of the original is very obscure.—*P.*

i Ju.5.8. ch. 17. 47. 1 Co.1.27.Zec.4.6.

3 Or, *standing camp.*

k A narrow passage between two hills, ch.14.4,5.

4 'The passage (or pass) of Michmash' was the ravine which lay between the two camps. The object of this movement appears to have been to prevent a surprise. The Philistines had already experienced sharp proofs of Jonathan's daring, when he crossed the same pass from Michmash, and smote their garrison in Geba.—*P.*

CHAP. XIV.

1 Or, *there was a day.*

a Ju.3. 10; 13. 25. Is. 40.29,31.

b Ju.14.6. Ps. 112. 5. Mi.7.5.

c ch.13.15, 16. Is. 10. 28,29.

2 The pomegranate, though a beautiful fruit-tree, is of small size, and little calculated for a dwelling, either by its own shade, or by the admission of a tent under its boughs. The word translated *pomegranate* should more probably be retained as a proper name.—Rimmon, a rock previously mentioned, Ju.20.45.—*C.*

d Or, *Ahimelech,* ch.22.9,12;14.21.

e Ex.28.30.

17 ¶ And the spoilers[4] came out of the camp of the Philistines in three companies: one company turned unto the way *that leadeth to* [e]Ophrah, unto the land of Shual:

18 And another company turned the way *to* [f]Beth-horon: and another company turned *to* the way of the border that looketh to [g]the valley of Zeboim,[5] toward the wilderness.[6]

19 ¶ Now [h]there was no smith found throughout all the land of Israel: (for the Philistines said, Lest the Hebrews[7] make *them* swords or spears:)

20 But all the Israelites went down to the Philistines to sharpen[8] every man his share, and his coulter, and his axe, and his mattock.

21 Yet they had a file[9] for the mattocks, and for the coulters, and for the forks, and for the axes, and to sharpen[1] the goads.[2]

22 So it came to pass, in the day of battle, [i]that there was neither sword nor spear found in the hand of any of the people that *were* with Saul and Jonathan: but with Saul, and with Jonathan his son, was there found.

23 And the garrison[3] of the Philistines went out to the [k]passage of Michmash.[4]

CHAPTER XIV.

1 *Jonathan, without the knowledge of his father or any of the people, goeth and miraculously smiteth the Philistines' garrison.* 15 *A divine terror maketh them beat themselves.* 17 *Saul, not staying the priest's answer, setteth on them.* 21 *The captivated Hebrews, and the hidden Israelites, join against them.* 24 *Saul's unadvised adjuration hindereth the victory.* 32 *He restraineth the people from eating blood.* 35 *He buildeth an altar.* 38 *Jonathan, taken by lot, is saved by the people.* 49 *Saul's strength and family.*

NOW it came to pass upon a [1]day, [a]that Jonathan the son of Saul said unto the young man that bare his armour, Come, and let us go over to the Philistines' garrison, that *is* on the other side. But [b]he told not his father.

2 And Saul tarried [c]in the uttermost part of Gibeah, under a pomegranate tree[2] which *is* in Migron: and the people that *were* with him *were* about six hundred men,

3 And [d]Ahiah the son of Ahitub, I-chabod's brother, the son of Phinehas, the son of Eli, [e]the LORD's priest in Shiloh, wearing an ephod. And the people knew not that Jonathan was gone.

4 ¶ And between the passages, by which

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ill usage provoke them to give over; if they be faithful and compassionate to the death, whatever be their success, they have delivered their own soul. In kind affection God distributes his loving favours; and these, when enjoyed, should strongly animate us to faithfulness and constancy in his service. But no mercy in God, nor pleadings of his people, shall prevent the everlasting ruin of such as are obstinate in their wickedness.

CHAPTER XIII. [Ver. 1. The literal translation of this verse is as follows:—'The son of a year was Saul in his reigning; and two years reigned he over Israel.' The meaning is very obscure. The construction of the sentence is identical with 2 Ch. 24. 1, and many other passages in which the historian records the age of the monarch when he ascended the throne, and the number of years he reigned. This gives probability to the conjecture that the numbers have in some way been omitted by an early copyist. The passage, therefore, may be thus rendered: 'Saul was . . . years old when he began to reign, and he reigned . . . two years over Israel.' *P.*]

Ver. 5. [*Thirty thousand chariots.* In some versions the number of chariots is 3000 instead of 30,000, and this reading is supported by contrasting so many chariots with so few horsemen; and certainly a very slight change in a Hebrew word would produce the change of numbers. But even 3000 chariots is beyond all example in war. Pharaoh had 600; Jabin 900, Ju. 4. 3; David took 1000, 2 Sa. 8. 3; and, so far as profane history is to be regarded, the chariots in the greatest armies were comparatively few. The word translated *chariots,* however, is certainly sometimes taken for the men fighting in or with them, 2 Sa. 10. 18; 1 Ki. 20. 21; 1 Ch. 19. 18. Now, as we can neither tell how many men fought in the chariot, nor how many attended for its support, it is impossible for us to decide how many were called a chariot in these passages; allowing, however, barely three for the chariot itself, and adding body servants for the charioteers, and grooms and foragers for the horses, in eastern proportion—and adding to these a party of foot-soldiers, absolutely necessary for the support of the chariot—it would not be too much to allow 30 men to each chariot, and this would give merely 1000 chariots in all. *C.*]

REFLECTIONS. — God quickly renders men miserable in the enjoyment of their own inventions for safety: and leaves such as trust to their own understanding, to the most impolitic, if not treacherous conduct. It is easy for him to awaken the resentment of

ROAD IN THE HARBOR OF JOPPA—IN THE LAND OF THE PHILISTINES. [I. SAMUEL, xiii: 12.]—"Therefore said I, The Philistines will come down now upon me to Gilgal." Joppa was a town in the land of the Philistines. The Philistines, as a people, caused the Israelites more trouble than any other nation, except the Egyptians. Looked at from the deck of our ship, Joppa presented a most magnificent appearance. Standing upon a low, round hill, dipping into the Mediterranean, the view was beautiful beyond description. One is not so impressed with the town, however, after landing. It is said to be the dirtiest and most uncomfortable place in Palestine. In going up the long lane from the custom house toward our hotel, we met strings of camels and mules, bales of merchandise, and had our first view of the actual Holy Land. There are orange groves, palms and other Oriental trees, which unite to give a picturesque and Oriental view to the town.

Jonathan sought to go over unto the Philistines' garrison, *there was* a sharp rock[3] on the one side, and a sharp rock on the other side: and the name of the one *was* Bozez,[4] and the name of the other Seneh.[5]

5 The fore-front[6] of the one *was* situate northward over against Michmash, and the other southward over against Gibeah.[7]

6 And Jonathan said to the young man that bare his armour, [f]Come, and let us go over unto the garrison of these [g]uncircumcised; [h]it may be that the LORD will work for us: for *there is* no restraint to the LORD to save by many or by few.[8]

7 And his armour-bearer said unto him, Do all that *is* in thine heart: turn thee; behold, I *am* with thee according to thy heart.[9]

8 Then said Jonathan, Behold, we will pass over unto *these* men, and we will discover ourselves unto them.

9 If[i] they say thus unto us, Tarry[1] until we come to you; then we will stand still in our place, and will not go up unto them.

10 But if they say thus, Come up unto us; then we will go up: for the LORD hath delivered them into our hand; and this *shall be* a sign unto us.

11 And both of them discovered themselves unto the garrison of the Philistines: and the Philistines said, Behold, the Hebrews[2] come forth [k]out of the holes where they had hid themselves.

12 And the men of the garrison answered Jonathan and his armour-bearer, and said, Come[l] up to us, and we will show you a thing.[3] And Jonathan said unto his armour-bearer, Come up after me; for the LORD hath delivered them into the hand of Israel.

13 And Jonathan [m]climbed up upon his hands and upon his feet, and his armour-bearer after him: and they [n]fell before Jonathan;[4] and his armour-bearer slew after him.

14 And that first slaughter, which Jonathan and his armour-bearer made, was about twenty men, within as it were an half acre[5] of land, *which* a yoke *of oxen might plough*.[6]

15 ¶ And [o]there was trembling in the host, in the field, and among all the people: the [p]garrison, and the spoilers, they also trembled; and the earth quaked:[7] so it was [q]a very great trembling.

16 And the watchmen of Saul in Gibeah of Benjamin looked; and, behold, the multitude melted away, and they went on beating down *one another*.

17 ¶ Then said Saul unto the people that *were* with him, Number now, and see who is gone from us. And when they had numbered, behold, Jonathan and his armour-bearer *were* not *there*.

18 And Saul said unto Ahiah, [r]Bring hither the ark of God:[8] (for [s]the ark of God was at that time with the children of Israel.)

19 ¶ And it came to pass, while Saul talked unto the priest, that the noise[9] that *was* in the host of the Philistines went on and increased; and [t]Saul said unto the priest, Withdraw thine hand.[1]

20 And Saul and all the people that *were* with him assembled themselves,[2] and they came to the battle: and, behold, [u]every man's sword was against his fellow, *and there was* a very great discomfiture.

21 Moreover,[x] the Hebrews *that* were with the Philistines before that time, which went up with them into the camp *from the country* round about, even they also *turned* to be with the Israelites that *were* with Saul and Jonathan.

22 Likewise all the men of Israel which had [y]hid themselves in mount Ephraim, *when* they heard that the Philistines fled, even they also followed hard after them in the battle.

23 So the LORD [z]saved Israel that day:[3] and [a]the battle passed over unto Beth-aven.

24 ¶ And the men of Israel were distressed that day: for [b]Saul had adjured the people, saying, Cursed *be* the man that eateth *any* food until evening,[4] that I may be avenged on mine

A.M. 2941 or 2911.
B.C. 1063 or 1093.

3 'Tooth of a rock.' Whoever has examined a fragment of dog-tooth spar, and compared it with any good pictorial view of the mighty Himalayas, or smaller pointed rocks, will have no difficulty in perceiving the accuracy of the Hebrew description.—*C.*

4 'Mud,' hence derivatively, slippery—also, 'in him the flower.' The last is most probably the meaning, from the rock flowers by which it was adorned.—*C.*

5 'A bush.'—*C.*

6 Heb. *tooth.*

7 Hebrew, '*Geba*,' not Gibeah.—*P.*

f ver. 1. Ju. 13, 25; 3. 10.

g ch. 17. 36. Ep. 2. 11, 12. Ge. 17. 7–12.

h De. 32. 36. Ju. 7. 7. 2 Ch. 14. 11. Ps. 115. 3. Mat. 19. 26. Zec. 4. 6. Ro. 8. 31. He. 13. 5, 6. Is. 41. 10, 14–16. ch. 17. 47.

8 A pious reflection, and a literal truth, teaching a most important lesson, viz.—That no man should ever despair of doing good because he is nearly alone; for if God employ a man, he will surely do his work by him.—*C.*

9 The greatest works have usually been effected by two associates; for example:—Moses and Aaron, Jonathan and his armour-bearer, the seventy disciples, sent two and two—an historical and divine testimony to the value of friendship, whereby God ordinarily effects his purposes in churches and kingdoms.—*C.*

i Ge. 24. 13, 14; 15. 8. Ju. 6. 36, 37; 7. 10–15. Ex. 4. 2–8. 2 Sa. 5. 24. 2 Ki. 13. 16–19; 19. 29; 20. 9–11.

1 Heb. *be still.*

2 This recurrence of the word 'Hebrews,' as a general name for the Israelites, confirms the notes on ch. 13. 3, 7, 19.—*C.*

k ch. 13. 6; ver. 22. Ju 6. 2.

l Ju. 7. 14. ch. 17. 45.

3 An example among thousands of the danger of despising an enemy. 'Come up,' meaning it is impossible. 'We will show you a thing'—a sword—death.—*C.*

m Ps. 18. 29. He. 11. 34. ch. 17. 51, 52.

n Le. 26. 7, 8. Ro. 8. 31. 2 Ti. 1. 11.

4 When Jonathan drew near the foot of the almost perpendicular rock, the Philistines lost sight of him, so that he fell upon them unawares.—*C.*

A.M. 2941 or 2911.
B.C. 1063 or 1093.

5 Or, *half a furrow of an acre of land.*

6 The meaning of the original, and of any translation hitherto proposed, is very obscure. It is evidently intended to convey the idea of a narrow space on the top of the rock, inclosed perhaps as by a *yoke* from which they could not escape.—*C.*

o Jos. 2. 9; 23. 10. Ps. 27. 2; 48. 5, 6; 118. 10–12 Job 18. 11. 2 Ki. 7. 6. Ex. 15. 15, 16.

p ch. 13. 16–18, 23.

7 Not an earthquake; for such is the terror inspired by an earthquake, that armies have, at the first motion, by common consent instantly ceased to fight. The earth in this case seems to have quaked with the tumult.—*C.*

q Heb. *a trembling of God*, Ge. 35. 5. Le. 26. 36, 37. 2 Sa. 5. 25. Da. 5. 6. Ps. 48. 5, 6.

r Ex. 28. 30. Nu. 27. 21. Ju. 1. 1; 20. 18, 23, 28.

8 The ark had been brought to the camp from Kirjath-jearim, ch. 7. 1.—*C.*

s Not with the Philistines, as ch. 5. 1; nor lost, as in Ezra's time.

9 Or, *tumult.*

t Jos. 9. 14. ch. 13. 11; ver. 24. Ps. 106. 13.

1 An incidental characteristic of Saul's impatience. He will not now wait to consult the Lord, as formerly he would not wait for his prophet.—*C.*

2 Heb. *were cried together.*

u Ju. 7. 22. 2 Ch. 20. 23.

x ch. 29. 4.

y ch. 13. 6; ver. 11. Ju. 6. 2. ch 31 7

z Ju. 2. 18; 6. 14. 2 Ki. 14. 27. Ps. 44. 2. Ho. 1. 7.

3 National deliverances occur in the history of all countries, and are recorded by all people in their history, celebrated in their songs, and perpetuated—if men could perpetuate anything—in their monuments. But, alas! in all these how seldom is God acknowledged. In the Bible it is otherwise—though Saul and Jonathan are valiant, and all the people follow—the Lord saves Israel.—*C.*

a ch. 13. 5, with ver. 2. Jos. 7. 2.

b Ju. 11. 30; 21. 2, 5. ver. 27, 29, 30. Pr. 11. 9. Ga. 4. 18. Ro. 10. 2. 2 Sa. 21. 2.

4 Here again impatience and precipitancy characterize Saul—an overwhelming anxiety that defeats its own object.—*C.*

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nations, or to levy prodigious armies, when he hisses for them, and musters the host to the battle. And the greatest nations, and most flourishing churches, when God has deserted them, appear pitiful and contemptible! In perplexing straits, men often entangle themselves more and more by using sinful means of relief. Impatience to help ourselves, and unwillingness to leave our concerns in God's hands, serve only to involve us in new troubles. It is infinitely dangerous for the greatest to invade the ministerial office, and run when God has not sent them: it may cost them a kingdom, nay, their everlasting damnation. Disobedience against God's positive precepts can admit of no excuse. Every attempt to extenuate our guilt is a proof of an unhumbled spirit. The more we sin against conviction, the more aggravated is our transgression: and pretences to religion, whilst we act in opposition to God's commands, are but barefaced hypocrisy. Want of true sense always accompanies want of grace. Sins, which to us appear very little, have dangerous consequences; and plain and faithful rebukes become God's ministers. How unstable is earthly grandeur—to-day we may be enthroned, and to-morrow deposed! Miserable is a guilty, a defenceless nation—and much more they who are destitute of the whole armour of God.

CHAPTER XIV. [Ver. 1. *He told not his father.* This was not only a military but a filial fault in Jonathan, for which it is more than probable, from the whole history of Saul, that his conduct afforded his amiable and valiant son but too much excuse.—*Note*, If there be any one thing which, next to piety, it is important for parents to cultivate in their children, it is that of filial confidence in their wisdom, temper, and integrity. For want of this Saul nearly lost his son, and finally ruined his family and lost his kingdom. *C.*]

Ver. 2. [Saul had retreated some little distance southward from Geba, and encamped at Migron, on the border of the territory of Gibeah, probably in order to be nearer Samuel in case of an attack on the part of the Philistines. *P.*]

Ver. 16. [The details of this most remarkable adventure and victory, which are here recorded with great minuteness, may be thus summed up. The two armies were separated by the deep and almost impassable ravine then called 'the Pass of Michmash,' now Wady Suweinît, which runs down eastward to the Jordan. On the opposite banks of the ravine, facing each other, are precipitous cliffs rising up into jagged tooth-like points. Jonathan determined to cross the ravine, and by a sudden attack throw the camp into confusion. He and his armour-bearer descended the southern cliff undiscovered; they then clambered up the northern cliff until reaching a projecting crag they showed themselves to the Philistine sentinels. Encouraged by the words of the enemy, they climbed to the top on their hands and feet, made a sudden and bold attack and slew the sentinels. The outpost was thrown into confusion; the confusion spread to the camp; a panic seized the whole host; it was increased by the shock of an earthquake, and the Philistines fled in terror. The camp of Saul observed the commotion, consulted the high-priest, and dashed away in pursuit of the enemy, who were driven with great slaughter through the mountain passes down into the western plain. From that day till the fatal battle of Gilboa Israel was freed from the incursions of the Philistines. *P.*]

Ver. 26. [*No man put his hand to his mouth, for the people feared the oath.* This surprising self-denial out

enemies. So none of the people tasted *any* food.

25 And all *they of* the land came to a wood; and there was [c]honey upon the ground.

26 And when the people were come into the wood, behold, the honey dropped;[5] but no man put his hand to his mouth; for the people feared[d] the oath.

27 But Jonathan heard not when his father charged the people with the oath: wherefore he put forth the end of the rod that *was* in his hand, and dipped it in an honey-comb,[6] and put his hand to his mouth: and [e]his eyes were enlightened.[7]

28 Then answered one of the people, and said, Thy father straitly[8] charged the people with an oath, saying, Cursed *be* the man that eateth *any* food this day. And the people were faint.[9]

29 Then said Jonathan, My father hath troubled the land: see, I pray you, how mine eyes have been enlightened, because I tasted a little of this honey;

30 How much more, if haply the people had eaten freely to-day of the spoil of their enemies which they found? for had there not been now a much greater slaughter among the Philistines?[1]

31 ¶ And they smote the Philistines that day from Michmash to [f]Aijalon: and the people were very faint.

32 And the people flew upon the spoil, and took sheep, and oxen, and calves, and slew *them* on the ground: and the people [g]did eat *them* with the blood.[2]

33 ¶ Then they told Saul, saying, Behold, the people sin against the LORD, in that they eat with the blood. And he said, Ye have [h]transgressed: [i]roll a great stone unto me this day.

34 And Saul said, Disperse yourselves among the people, and say unto them, Bring me hither every man his ox, and every man his sheep, and slay *them* here, and eat; and sin not against the LORD in eating with the blood. And all the people brought every man his ox with him[3] that night, and slew *them* there.

35 ¶ And Saul [k]built an altar unto the LORD: the same was the first altar that he built unto the LORD.[4]

36 ¶ And Saul said, Let us go down after the Philistines by night, and spoil them until the morning light, and let us not leave a man of them. And they said, Do whatsoever seemeth good unto thee. Then said the priest, [l]Let us draw near hither unto God.[5]

A.M. 2941 or 2911.
B.C. 1063 or 1093.

[c] Ex. 3. 8. Mat. 3. 4. Nu. 13. 27.

[5] In warm countries where there is much uncultivated land, and where consequently flowers abound, honey is exceedingly plentiful: the bees fixing their combs in hollows of rocks and trees, and even in cavities in the ground. The collision of branches produced by the turmoil of the flight and pursuit may account for the dropping of the honey.—*C.*

[d] Ec. 9. 2.

[6] Or, *wood-honey.*

[e] ch. 30. 12.

[7] He had been near fainting, which is usually preceded by tingling of the ears and indistinctness and dimness of sight. And it is truly astonishing how little will sometimes revive the sinking powers—a few drops of water sprinkled or tasted, some pungent or aromatic smell, a mouthful of some simple food, or a few grains of common salt—being usually sufficient. So weak is man, so merciful is Providence.—*C.*

[8] Heb. *adjuring, adjured.*

[9] Or, *weary.*

[1] But now that the defeat of the Philistines is not great.

[f] Perhaps not that Jos. 10. 12; 19. 42, or Ju. 12. 12, but that 2 Ch. 11. 10, about 12 miles westward from Michmash.

[g] Ge. 9. 4. Le. 7. 26; 3. 17; 19. 26; 17. 10, 11, 14. De. 12. 16.

[2] They ate the raw flesh with the blood, which God had strictly forbidden, De. 12. 23. This was accordingly a direct sin against the law, another demonstration of the folly and rashness, nay, blasphemous, because vain and unnecessary adjuration of the hasty monarch.—*Note,* One man's sin may easily become the cause of the sin of another. No excuse for the man thus led or driven into guilt, but a terrible aggravation of the crime of him that so leads or drives him.—*C.*

[h] Or, *dealt treacherously,* Mat. 7. 5. Ro. 2. 1.

[i] ver. 34, 35.

[3] Heb. *in his hand.*

[k] Ju. 21. 4. ch. 7. 9, 17, with 11, 11. Ge. 8. 20; 12. 7, 8.

[4] A comparison of the conduct of Abraham and Saul, though Saul was placed in circumstances so much more favourable, would tell wonderfully to Saul's disadvantage. Almost every movement of Abraham is marked by an altar to God; Saul had never thought of erecting one till now.—*Note,* What shall we say of those fathers and mothers who have never yet established God's worship in their houses? They are yet worse than Saul, he at last built an altar to the Lord.—*C.*

[l] Ja. 4. 8. Nu. 27. 21. Ju. 1. 1; 20. 18. ver. 18, 19; ch. 23. 2, 4, 11, 12; 30. 7, 8.

[5] Saul's precipitancy appears even in his religion. He builds an altar, but before seeking God's direction at it, he resolves to pursue the Philistines, nor ever thinks of consulting God till recalled to his duty by the high-priest.—*Note,* It is always difficult to give advice to kings. Blessed are they who have faithful men to tell them of their faults and exhort them to seek the Lord.—*C.*

[m] ch. 28. 6 with ver. 18, 19, 24.

[n] Heb. *corners,* 2 Sa. 18. 3. Ju. 20. 2. Ps. 47. 9. Zec. 10. 4.

[o] Jos. 7. 1, 12–15. ch. 10. 19.

[6] Another melancholy example of Saul's impious precipitancy.—*Note,* Let every man be warned against rash and inconsiderate vows.—*C.*—This was quite in keeping with Saul's reckless character. He had formerly interrupted the priest when asking counsel of the Lord, ver. 19, and afterwards made a most senseless adjuration to the people to abstain from food; and now, before the lots are cast, he rashly swears to put the offender to death, were it his own son (who had under God obtained the victory), without waiting to know what the crime was, or whether it really deserved death, or might not be expiated by a sin-offering.—*I.*

[p] Or, *show the innocent,* Pr. 16. 33. Ac. 1. 24.—[There is no mention of a *lot* in the original, which Gesenius translates, 'Give truth,' *i.e.*, a true decision. Yet with all Saul's presumption, we can scarcely suppose him using language which savours of impious profanity. The marginal translation seems preferable: unless we rather adopt the clause added in the Greek and Latin versions: 'If this iniquity be in me or in Jonathan my son, *give urim;* or if this iniquity be in thy people, *give thummim,*' for the word translated 'perfect' is in the Heb. 'thummim.'—*I.*]

[7] Heb. *went forth.*

[q] ver. 27–30.

[r] Ru. 1. 17. ch. 17. 43; 25. 22. 2 Sa. 3. 9, 35; 19. 13.

[s] Ge. 38. 24. 2 Sa. 12. 5.

[8] Unhappy monarch! the bravest man, and the best of sons, is doomed to die by rashness and impiety. But was he not so doomed of the Lord? No. God makes the discovery of the act of Jonathan in taking the honey, and of the guilt of Saul in making the vow.—*I.*

[t] ver. 23.

[u] 2 Sa. 14. 11. Mat. 10. 30. Lu. 21. 18. Ac. 27. 34.

[x] Is. 13. 3. Re. 17. 14; 19. 14. 2 Co. 6. 1.

[y] ch. 13. 1. Da. 7. 27. 2 Ki. 14. 27.

[z] Ge. 19. 37, 38; xxxvi. Ex. 15. 14, 15. De. 2. 3–7. Ju. 3. 12–14; 10. 7, 11; xiii.–xvi. ch. iv. vii. xi.

[a] 2 Sa. 8. 3, 5, 12; 10. 6, 8.

[9] Or, *wrought mightily.*

[b] Ex. 17. 14, 16. De. 25. 19. ch. 15. 3, 7.

[c] ch. 31. 2; 18. 17–21. 1 Ch. 8. 33 [409. 39–44.

[d] ch. 17. 55; 20. 14, 15. 2 Sa. 2. 8.

A.M. 2941 or 2911.
B.C. 1063 or 1093.

37 And Saul asked counsel of God, Shall I go down after the Philistines? wilt thou deliver them into the hand of Israel? But [m]he answered him not that day.

38 ¶ And Saul said, Draw ye near hither all the [n]chief of the people; and [o]know and see wherein this sin hath been this day:

39 For *as* the LORD liveth, which saveth Israel, though it be in Jonathan my son, he shall surely die.[6] But *there was* not a man among all the people *that* answered him.

40 Then said he unto all Israel, Be ye on one side, and I and Jonathan my son will be on the other side. And the people said unto Saul, Do what seemeth good unto thee.

41 Therefore Saul said unto the LORD God of Israel, [p]Give a perfect *lot.* And Saul and Jonathan were taken; but the people [7]escaped.

42 And Saul said, Cast *lots* between me and Jonathan my son. And Jonathan was taken.

43 Then Saul said to Jonathan, Tell me what thou hast done. And Jonathan told him, and said, [q]I did but taste a little honey with the end of the rod that *was* in mine hand, *and,* lo, I must die.

44 And Saul answered, [r]God do so, and more also: for [s]thou shalt surely die, Jonathan.[8]

45 And the people said unto Saul, Shall Jonathan die, who hath [t]wrought this great salvation in Israel? God forbid: *as* the LORD liveth, [u]there shall not one hair of his head fall to the ground; for [x]he hath wrought with God this day. So the people rescued Jonathan, that he died not.

46 Then Saul went up from following the Philistines: and the Philistines went to their own place.

47 ¶ So Saul [y]took the kingdom over Israel, and fought against all his enemies on every side, against [z]Moab, and against the children of Ammon, and against Edom, and against the kings of [a]Zobah, and against the Philistines: and whithersoever he turned himself, he vexed *them.*

48 And he gathered[9] an host, and [b]smote the Amalekites, and delivered Israel out of the hands of them that spoiled them.

49 ¶ Now [c]the sons of Saul were Jonathan, and Ishui, and Melchi-shua: and the names of his two daughters *were these;* the name of the first-born Merab, and the name of the younger Michal:

50 And the name of Saul's wife *was* Ahinoam, the daughter of Ahimaaz; and [d]the name of the captain of his host *was* Abner the son of Ner, Saul's uncle:

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of regard to Saul's curse may, no doubt, be justly traced to superstition; for the *curse causeless* will not come: still, it is a superstition nearly akin to what is good, that solemn respect for an oath of which so many examples occur in the history of Israel. See Jos. 9. 19.—*Note,* Superstition is always better than infidelity; superstition is an erroneous addition to some good principle admitted; infidelity is the denial of every good principle, and the substitution either of nothing or of evil. *C.*]

REFLECTIONS. — Carnal men are often more anxious for the presence of God's ministers than for his own. But how seasonable are God's interpositions for the deliverance of his people! He makes the faith of his servants strong, and then delights to crown their strong faith with signal victories and honours. The proud derision of their enemies issues in terrible destruction. Yea, the mightiest armies, in the hand of

51 And [e]Kish *was* the father of Saul; and Ner the father of Abner *was* the son of Abiel.[1]

52 And there was sore war against the Philistines all the days of Saul: and [f]when Saul saw any strong man, or any valiant man, he took him unto him.

CHAPTER XV.

1 Saul is sent to destroy Amalek. 6 He favoureth the Kenites; 7 smiteth the Amalekites; but spareth Agag and the best of the spoil. 10 Samuel denounceth unto Saul, commending and excusing himself, God's rejection of him for his disobedience. 24 Saul's humiliation. 32 Samuel killeth Agag. 34 He and Saul part.

SAMUEL also said unto Saul, [a]The LORD sent me to anoint thee *to be* king over his people, over Israel: now therefore hearken thou unto the voice of the words of the LORD.

2 Thus saith the [b]LORD of hosts, [c]I remember *that* which Amalek did to Israel, how he laid *wait* for him in the way, when he came up from Egypt.

3 Now go and [d]smite Amalek, and utterly destroy all that they have, and spare them not; but slay both man and woman, [e]infant and suckling, [f]ox and sheep, camel and ass.[1]

4 And Saul gathered the people together, and numbered them in [g]Telaim, [h]two hundred thousand footmen, and ten thousand men of Judah.

5 And Saul came to a city of Amalek, and laid wait[2] in the valley.

6 ¶ And Saul said unto the [i]Kenites, Go, depart,[k] get you down from among the Amalekites, lest I destroy you with them: for ye showed[l] kindness to all the children of Israel when they came up out of Egypt. So the Kenites[3] departed from among the Amalekites.

7 ¶ And Saul [m]smote the Amalekites from Havilah *until* thou comest to [n]Shur, that *is* over against Egypt.

8 And he [o]took Agag the king of the Amalekites alive, and utterly destroyed [p]all the people with the edge of the sword.

9 But Saul and the people spared Agag, and the[q] best of the sheep, and of the oxen, and of the fatlings,[4] and the lambs, and all *that was* good, and would not utterly destroy them: but every thing *that was* vile and refuse, that they destroyed utterly.

10 ¶ Then came the word of the LORD unto Samuel, saying,

11 It [r]repenteth me that I have set up Saul *to be* king: for he [s]is turned back from following me, and hath not performed my commandments. And it [t]grieved Samuel; and he cried unto the LORD all night.

12 ¶ And when Samuel rose early to meet Saul in the morning, it was told Samuel, saying, Saul came to [u]Carmel, and, behold, he [x]set him up a [5]place,[6] and is gone about, and passed on, and gone down to Gilgal.

13 And Samuel came to Saul; and Saul said unto him, Blessed *be* thou of the LORD: [y]I have performed the commandment of the LORD.[7]

14 And Samuel said, What *meaneth* then this bleating of the sheep in mine ears, and the lowing of the oxen which I hear?

15 And Saul said, They have brought them from the Amalekites: for [z]the people spared the best of the sheep and of the oxen, [a]to sacrifice unto the LORD thy God;[8] and the rest we have utterly destroyed.

16 Then Samuel said unto Saul, Stay, and I will tell thee [b]what the LORD hath said to me this night. And he said unto him, Say on.

17 And Samuel said, When thou *wast* [c]little in thine own sight, *wast* thou not *made* the head of the tribes of Israel, and the LORD anointed thee king over Israel?

18 And the LORD sent thee on a journey, and said, Go and utterly destroy the [d]sinners the Amalekites, and fight against them until they be consumed.[9]

19 Wherefore then didst thou not obey the voice of the LORD, but didst [e]flee upon the spoil,[1] and didst evil in the sight of the LORD?

20 And Saul said unto Samuel, Yea, I have [f]obeyed the voice of the LORD, and have gone the way which the LORD sent me, and have brought Agag the king of Amalek, and have utterly destroyed the Amalekites.

21 But [g]the people took of the spoil, sheep and oxen, the chief of the things which should have been utterly destroyed, to sacrifice unto the LORD thy God in Gilgal.

22 And Samuel said, [h]Hath the LORD *as great* delight in burnt-offerings and sacrifices as in obeying the voice of the LORD? Behold, to obey *is* better than sacrifice, *and* to hearken than the fat of rams.

23 For[i] rebellion *is as* the sin of [k]witchcraft, and stubbornness *is as* iniquity and [2]idolatry:

A.M. 2941 or 2911. B.C. 1063 or 1093.

e ch.9.1. 1 Ch 8.33|9.39.

1 The word '*was*,' being in italic letter, tells the reader that it is not in the original Hebrew, but is supplied by the translators; and here its insertion has obscured or rather misrepresented the meaning, for it is the evident intention of the sacred historian to tell that both Kish and Ner were the sons of Abiel.—*C.*

f ch.8.11.

CHAP. XV.

B.C. cir. 1062.

a ch.9.16;10.1;11.14, 15|13.13.

b ch.1.11. 2 Sa.6.2|7. 26. Ps.24.10.

c Re. 18. 3. Ex.17.8–16. Nu.24.20. De.25.17–19.

d Ex. 17. 14. Nu. 24. 20. De.25.19. Re.18.8.

e Ex.20.5. Is.14.21.

f Ge. 3. 17, 18. Ro. 8. 20–22.

1 In many preceding notes the sentence of expulsion or extirpation pronounced against the nations of Canaan, as well as against Amalek, has been defended against the cavils and impious accusations of infidels. The sentence against adults was righteously pronounced for their sins of robbery, malicious waylaying with intent to kill, Ex. 17. 14, murder, manstealing, &c. &c. The sentence against the sheep, &c. &c., was intended for preventing war from becoming a trade, to gratify covetousness. But how shall we defend the sentence against the children? What need is there of any defence? Do not children die by infantile diseases in multitudes? Does Providence require any defence? Yet surely the God who employs disease in the one case, and the sword in the other, is the same? Unless, therefore, the infidel accuse Providence, he cannot accuse the Lord speaking by his prophet.—*C.*

g Jos.15.24.

h ch.11.8. 2 Sa.24.9.

2 Or, *fought*.

i Nu.24.21|10.29–32. Ju.1.16|4.11.

k Ge.19.12. Is.52.11. 2 Co.6.17. Re.18.4.

l Ex.18.9,10,19. Nu. 10.29,31.

3 These were the relatives of Jethro, the father-in-law of Moses, and the narrative affords a beautiful example of national gratitude, a rare private, still more a rare political, virtue; and, in a defective character, like that of Saul, a solitary virtue, claims additional attention.—*C.*

m Job 21. 30. Ec. 8. 13. Ro. 9. 22.

n Ge.16.7|25.18. ch. 27.8.

o 1 Ki.20.31–35. Nu. 24.7,20.

p With ch.27.8|30.1.

q ver.3,19. 1 Ti.6.10. Jos.7.21. Phi.2.2|3.19.

4 Or, *of the second sort*.

r Ge. 6. 6. ver. 35. Am.7.3.

A.M. cir. 2942. B.C. cir. 1062.

s He. 10. 38, with Nu.14.24. ch.13.13,14; ver.3.

t ver.35|ch.16.1. Ps. 35.13,14. Ex.14.15|17. 4|15.25|32.11. Nu.11.2|14.5|16.4|20.6|21.7. Jos. 7.6.

u Jos.15.55. ch.25.2.

x ch.7.12. Jos.4.8,9. 2 Sa.18.18.

5 Some extemporaneous monument of his victory—probably a great stone.—*C.*

6 Hebrew, 'a hand.' This is its literal meaning; but it came to signify a memorial or monument, because the hand calls attention to anything.—*P.*

y Lu.18.11. Pr.27.2|31.31.ver.9,11.

7 There is no small hypocrisy and falsehood in this statement: so soon does covetousness pervert every feeling of right.—*C.*

z Ge.3.12,13. Ex.32. 22,23.ver.9,21.

a Mat. 2.8. Ps. 12. 2. Ec.5.1|4.6.

8 This is evidently a fiction conjured up to serve as an excuse, and is thrown out as a *blanche* to the piety of Samuel. But he detects and denounces the sin.—*C.*

b ver.11.

c ch.9. 21; 10. 22. Ju. 6.15. 2 Sa.7.8|12. 7, 8. 1 Ki.14.7,16.2.

d ver.2,3. Ge. 13.13. Mat.9.10. Jn.9.24,31.

9 Heb. *they consume them*.

e Pr.15.27|23.5. Hab. 2.12. Je. 17. 11. 1 Ti.6. 10.

1 War has a great tendency to generate a love of plunder, consequently to foster a spirit of aggression and conquest, whilst the natural result is the destruction of all piety and morality; wherefore God thus pointedly condemns the disobedience arising from the covetousness of Saul and his army.—*C.*

f Mat.19.20. Lu. 18. 11|19.22.1 Ki.20.31–42

g Ge.3.10,13. Ex.32. 22,23.ver.15.

h Ps.50.8,9. Is. 1. 11, 13|66.2, 3. Je. 7. 22, 23. Pr.15.8|21.3,27. Ec. 5. 1. Ho.6.6. Mat.9.13.

i Jos.22.19. ch.12.15, 25.

k Heb. *divination*, Ex.22.18,20.

2 By making the words translated 'sin' and 'iniquity' adjectives, instead of substantives (which the Hebrew idiom allows), we obtain a clearer sense. 'Contumacy is as sinful as divination, and stubbornness is as iniquitous as idolatry.' And there a climax may be marked, perverse obstinacy being worse than simple contumacy, and the worship of idols being worse than magic. Saul had perhaps already begun his extirpation of necromancers, ch. 28. 3, and this would make the reproof more pointed.—*J.*

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such an angry God, make a most pitiful appearance. And it is easy for the weakest cowards to pursue those whom the Lord hath routed. In all our ways it is best to consult God's word. But how ready are wicked consulters, like Saul, to take their own way, without waiting for an answer! Yet rash expedients, to obtain carnal ends, are often the noted hindrances of these ends. And such as cast abroad curses, firebrands, and death, endanger themselves and families; and entangle their children, who are far better than themselves. When God refuses to answer, it is an evidence that he is angry; and it is time to think seriously in what we have offended him. Violent tempers are prone to sacrifice their nearest relations to their angry passions. In such a case we ought to resist them, kings not excepted; and to protect such as are not only innocent, but honoured of God. Wicked men's zeal often flames in trifling matters, while it languishes in things important; and rash cursing bids fair to end in profane perjury. The comforts and honours of royalty are dearly bought by the constant care, danger, and toil which attend them. And often men's earthly glory makes a blaze just before the dark night of ignominy and woe seizes upon them.

CHAPTER XV. [Ver. 5. 'To the city of Amalek,' *i.e.* the capital of the Amalekites; or 'to the city Amalek,' *i.e.* the city which bore the name of the people. Its position is not known. The Amalekites occupied the whole of the pastoral country from the southern border of Palestine to Egypt, and eastward as far as the valley of Arabah. *P.*]

Ver. 6. [It is recorded in Ju. 1. 16 that the Kenites who followed the Israelites to Palestine had settled in the wilderness of Judah, near Arad. One of their families went from thence northward to the mountains of Naphtali, Ju. 4. 11, the rest remained among the Amalekites, and were now warned away. *P.*]

Ver. 9. [*Saul and the people spared Agag.* Most likely for ransom; as avarice seems to have taken strong hold of their minds, and triumph does not appear, from history, to have become an object of national pride. *C.*]

because thou hast rejected the word of the LORD, he hath also rejected thee from *being* king.

24 ¶ And Saul said unto Samuel, [l]I have sinned: for I have transgressed the commandment of the LORD, and thy words; because I feared[m] the people, and obeyed their voice.[3]

25 Now therefore, I pray thee, [n]pardon my sin, and turn again with me, that I may worship the LORD.

26 And Samuel said unto Saul, [o]I will not return with thee: for thou hast rejected the word of the LORD, and the LORD [p]hath rejected thee from being king over Israel.

27 And as Samuel turned about to go away, he laid [q]hold upon the skirt of his mantle, and it rent.

28 And Samuel said unto him, The LORD hath[r] rent the kingdom of Israel from thee this day, and hath given it to a neighbour of thine, *that is* better than thou.

29 And also the [s]Strength of Israel [t]will not lie nor repent: for he *is* not a man, that he should repent.[4]

30 Then he said, [u]I have sinned; *yet* honour me now, I pray thee, before the elders of my people, and before Israel, and turn again with me, that I may worship the LORD thy God.

31 So Samuel turned again after Saul;[5] and Saul worshipped the LORD.

32 ¶ Then said Samuel, Bring ye hither to me [x]Agag the king of the Amalekites. And Agag came unto him delicately. [y]And Agag said, Surely the bitterness of death is past.

33 And Samuel said, [z]As thy sword hath made women childless, so shall thy mother be childless among women. And Samuel [a]hewed Agag in pieces before the LORD in Gilgal.

34 ¶ Then Samuel went to [b]Ramah; and Saul [c]went up to his house to Gibeah of Saul.

35 And Samuel [d]came no more to see Saul until the day of his death; nevertheless Samuel mourned for Saul:[6] and the LORD [e]repented that he had made Saul king over Israel.[7]

A.M. cir. 2942.
B.C. cir. 1062.

l Ex.9.27, Nu.22.34. Pr. 28. 13. Mat. 27. 4. ver.30.

m ver.9,15,21.Je.13. 23. Pr. 29. 25. Ge.3. 12, 13.Ex.32.22,23.

3 Alas, for poor human nature! when it yields to one temptation, and attempts to deny or excuse its guilt. In ver. 20 Saul affirms he had obeyed God's voice. Denounced by Samuel, he acknowledges his transgression, but in the very act of confessing, he adds to his guilt by attempting to charge it upon the people.—*C.*

n Ex.9.27. Ps.78.34. Is.26.16. Je.22.23.

o Ps.15.4.ver.31.

p ch.2.30;13.14;16.1. Ho.8.4;13.10,11.

q 1 Ki.11.30,31.

r ch. 13. 14; 28. 17. 1 Ki.11.31.Ho.13.10,11.

s Or, *eternity*, or *victory*, Ps.29.11.Zec. 10.12.

t Nu.23.19.2 Ti.2.13. Tit.1.2. He.6.18.

4 In this and ver. 11 the Lord has been said 'to speak after the manner of men;' and if this expression mean that God employs human language, it is true—for what other language, if other there be, could man comprehend? But if it mean that God, in any manner or degree, adapts or accommodates his language to what is not literal truth, then the sentiment is utterly to be rejected. See note on ver. 11.—*C.*

u ver.24,25. Jn.5.44. Hab.2.4. Ps.138.6.

5 Did not Samuel here either change his mind, or break his word, pledged not to return, in ver. 26? Neither. In ver. 26 he refused to return with him to worship; in ver. 31 he returns to do him honour before the people. And surely a man may refuse to do for one reason what he may assent to for another without any charge of fickleness, inconsistency, or falsehood.—*C.*

x ver.8,33. Nu.24. 7, 20.

y Je.48.44. 1 Th.5.3. Re.18.7.

z Ex.17. 11. Nu. 14. 45.Ge.9.6. Mat. 26. 52. Re.13.10;16.6.

a 1 Ki.18.40. 2 Ki. 1. 10,12. Nu.25.7. Is.34.6.

b ch.7.17.

c ch.11.4.

d ch. 19. 24. Ps. 119. 136,158. Je.9.1,2.

A.M. cir. 2942.
B.C. cir. 1062.

6 This is not surprising on two accounts, (1) Saul, with all his faults, possessed many fine qualities. (2) Nothing can more move the sorrow of a good man than to see a fellow-creature running, as Saul was, headlong to destruction.—*C.*

e ver.11.Ge.6.6.

7 See notes on ver. 11,29.—*C.*

CHAP. XVI.

a ch.15.11,26,35.

b ch.10.1.2 Ki.9.1,6.

c Ru. 4. 18–22. 1 Ch. 2.10–15.Ps.78.68,70,71. Ge.49.10. ch.13. 14; 15. 28.Ac.13.22.

d Lu.1.34. Ex.3. 11. Je.1.6. Ps. 122. 5. Mat. 10.16.

e ch. 9. 12. Je. 38. 27. He told nothing but the truth, though not the whole of it.

1 This was not duplicity, but prudence and mercy; as the declaration of the purpose to anoint a new king would have plunged a man of Saul's temper into deeper sin.—*C.*

2 Or, *feast.*

f ch.13.17; 21.1. Ho. 11.10.Ca.6.4. Pr.14. 19. Ps. 55.5.

3 Heb. *meeting.*

g 1 Ki.2.13.2 Ki.9.22.

4 Having been accustomed to meet Samuel as a judge of unbending integrity, they may, as inferior judges, have trembled at some consciousness of improper administration; or conscious of the irreligion of the place, so general in the days of Saul, they may have dreaded some message of wrath from God.—*C.*

h Jos.3.5; 7. 13. Ex. 19.10,14, 15. Le. 20. 7. Nu.11.18.Job 1.5. Joel 2.16.

5 By washing your clothes, as an emblem of the purifying nature of the true Sacrifice.—*C.*

i ch.17.13.1 Ch.2.13, or Elihu, 1 Ch.27.18.

k By secret inspiration, ch.9.17;ver.12.

l ch.9.2; 10. 23. 2 Sa. 14.25.

m Job 10.4. 1 Ch.28. 9. 2 Ch.6.30. Ps.7. 9;94. 11;139.2. Pr.15. 11; 16. 2. Je.11. 20; 17. 10; 20. 12. Eze.11.5. Lu.16.5. Ac. 1.24;15.8. He.4.13. Re. 2.23.

6 Heb. *eyes.*

7 The precipitance with which Samuel pronounced in favour of Eliab is employed to call forth one of the most important contrasts between the judgments of God and of men: 'The Lord looketh on the heart'—it is open to him, and bare before him.—*C.*

n ch.17.13.1Ch.2.13.

o Shimeah, 2 Sa.13. 3; 21. 21, or Shimma, 1 Ch.2.13.

CHAPTER XVI.

1 *Samuel sent by God, under pretence of a sacrifice, cometh to Bethlehem.* 6 *Jesse's seven sons pass before him, but are not approved by God.* 11 *David is sent for, approved, and anointed.* 14 *Saul sendeth for David to quiet his evil spirit.*

AND the LORD said unto Samuel, [a]How long wilt thou mourn for Saul, seeing I have rejected him from reigning over Israel? Fill thine [b]horn with oil, and go, I will send thee to [c]Jesse the Beth-lehemite: for I have provided me a king among his sons.

2 And Samuel said, [d]How can I go? if Saul hear *it*, he will kill me. And the LORD said, Take an heifer with thee, and say, [e]I am come to sacrifice to the LORD.[1]

3 And call Jesse to the sacrifice,[2] and I will show thee what thou shalt do: and thou shalt anoint unto me *him* whom I name unto thee.

4 And Samuel did that which the LORD spake, and came to Beth-lehem: and the elders of the town [f]trembled at his coming,[3] and said, [g]Comest thou peaceably?[4]

5 And he said, Peaceably: I am come to sacrifice unto the LORD; [h]sanctify [5]yourselves, and come with me to the sacrifice. And he sanctified Jesse and his sons, and called them to the sacrifice.

6 ¶ And it came to pass, when they were come, that he looked on [i]Eliab, and said, Surely the LORD's anointed *is* before him.

7 But the LORD [k]said unto Samuel, Look not on his [l]countenance, or on the height of his stature; because I have refused him: for *the* LORD [m]*seeth* not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance,[6] but the LORD looketh on the heart.[7]

8 Then Jesse called [n]Abinadab, and made him pass before Samuel. And he said, Neither hath the LORD chosen this.

9 Then Jesse made [o]Shammah to pass by.

Ver. 11. [*It repenteth me.* When God is said to 'repent,' it is not in any accommodation either to human weakness, human conceptions, or human language. To admit that God, at any time, ceases to speak plain, simple truth, is, in principle, to undermine the whole Scriptures. For if the ordinary rules of thought, facts, and language are twisted or violated in one place, why not in any other? And if, in any others, then, where? just wheresoever fancy pleases. But God gives no such dangerous scope to fancy. Repentance is a mere change of mind. Now when God, from regard to his courage, &c., raised Saul to the throne, he had first a mind to do so; and when, for his sins, he was determined to pull him down and set up another, he had also first a mind to do so; but, so far as Saul was concerned, this was a change of mind, while yet the Lord changeth not. But is it not said, 'He is not the son of man, that he should repent?' True. He does not repent as a son of man repents: that is, turning from sin. He repents as God repents —that is, changing the kind of his providence, as wisdom, justice, and mercy require, to suit different circumstances and persons. *C.*]

REFLECTIONS.—Injuries done to God's Israel will, sooner or later, be resented by him. He often bears long with sinners who fit themselves for destruction: but the longer judgments are forborne, they will only be the more severe when they come; and bloody instruments will be chosen for bloody work. How dangerous is it to live among the devoted enemies of God! But kindness to God's people often procures safety to men's offspring many ages afterward. A covetous and hypocritical heart makes men do the work of God by halves: and men's sins often make God change his methods of providence, though he never changes his mind or purpose. While the ruin of sinners is the grief of God's faithful ministers, the most deceitful men are most ready to boast of their exact obedience to his law: but hypocritical protestations of obedience are often contradicted by the most undeniable proofs. Such as are most forward to justify themselves, are ordinarily the readiest to condemn others; and throwing of the blame on our partners in or tempters to sin, is a shrewd evidence of an unhumbled heart. Those whom God hath highly exalted from low beginnings ought to remember it as an excitement to do great things for God their exalter. Ministers of Christ ought to deal faithfully with the greatest: and to hunt them out of all their lying refuges and ill-grounded excuses.—Next to Jesus' atonement, nothing is more pleasing to God than true holiness of heart and life. But to live in disobedience to the true God is as bad as to set up false gods, the devil not excepted: and those are unworthy to rule over men who are unwilling to be ruled by God. Fear of man causeth a snare. To confess the sins which we cannot conceal, and to be chiefly afraid of their shame, is no more than may be expected even from an unhumbled heart. But such repentance comes too late when God hath passed a sentence of rejection. So little are hardened sinners affected with God's threatenings, that honour before the people is dearer to their hypocritical hearts than reconcilement with him. But bloody murderers will at last be reckoned with by God. And never is the destruction of most sinners nearer than when they have no apprehension of it. Let us therefore withdraw from intimacy with such, but never neglect to mourn over their deplorable condition; for it is truly bitter to see those whom we love in the ways of death and hell.

CHAPTER XVI. REFLECTIONS.—God tenderly sympathizes with his people's griefs; and yet what fear of man remains in the most noble hearts! How awful are the faithful ministers of Christ to all around; and what need have we to prepare ourselves for God's noted favours by solemn repentance, application to Jesus' blood, and surrender of ourselves to his service! The choicest saints are apt to dote too much

MOSLEM OVENS, NAZARETH—WHERE A DESCENDANT OF DAVID, CHRIST THE SAVIOR OF THE WORLD, SPENT THIRTY YEARS. [I. SAMUEL, xvi: 13.]—"Then Samuel took the horn of oil, and anointed him (David) in the midst of his brethren: and the spirit of the Lord came upon David from that day forward." Christ was of the house and lineage of David, the account of whose anointing by Samuel we have given in the above verse, and we illustrate this Scripture by giving a picture of the Moslem ovens in Nazareth, where Christ grew up. In these ovens all the Moslems of the town have their bread baked. An authority says that "the ordinary tannut, or oven, is merely a hole in the ground about three feet deep and two feet in diameter, lined with cement, and smoothly polished. It is filled with thorn brushes, dry grass and weeds, or with any kind of fuel that will make a sudden and fierce blaze, and the heat is kept up by throwing in a fresh supply as occasion requires."

And he said, Neither hath the LORD chosen this.

10 Again, Jesse made [p]seven of his sons to pass before Samuel. And Samuel said unto Jesse, The LORD hath not chosen these.

11 ¶ And Samuel said unto Jesse, Are here all *thy* children? And he said, There remaineth yet the youngest, and, behold, [q]he keepeth the sheep. And Samuel said unto Jesse, Send and fetch him: for we will not sit down[8] till he come hither.

12 And he sent, and brought him in. Now he[r] *was* ruddy, *and* withal of a beautiful countenance,[9] and goodly to look to.[1] And the LORD said, [s]Arise, anoint him: for this *is* he.

13 Then Samuel took [t]the horn of oil, and anointed him in the midst of his brethren: and [u]the Spirit of the LORD[2] came upon David from that day forward. So Samuel rose up, and went to [x]Ramah.

14 ¶ But the [y]Spirit of the LORD departed from Saul, and an [z]evil spirit from the LORD troubled[3] him.[4]

15 And Saul's servants said unto him, Behold now, an evil spirit from God troubleth thee.

16 Let our lord now command thy servants *which are* before thee to seek out a man *who is* a cunning player on an harp: and it shall come to pass, when the evil spirit from God is upon thee, that [a]he shall play with his hand, and thou shalt be well.[5]

17 And Saul said unto his servants, Provide me now a man that can play well, and bring *him* to me.

18 Then answered one of the servants, and said, Behold, I have seen a son of Jesse the Beth-lehemite, *that is* cunning in playing, [b]and a mighty valiant man, and a man of war, and prudent in matters,[6] and a comely person, and the LORD *is* with him.

19 ¶ Wherefore Saul sent messengers unto Jesse, and said, Send me David thy son, which *is* [c]with the sheep.

20 And Jesse took an ass *laden* with bread, and a bottle of wine, and [d]a kid, and sent *them* by David his son unto Saul.

21 And David came to Saul, and [e]stood before him: and he [f]loved him greatly; and he became his armour-bearer.[7]

22 And Saul sent to Jesse, saying, Let David, I pray thee, [g]stand before me; for he hath found favour in my sight.

23 And it came to pass, when the *evil* spirit from God was upon Saul, that David took an harp, and played with his hand: so Saul [h]was refreshed, and was well, and the evil spirit departed from him.

A.M. cir. 2942.
B.C. cir. 1062.

[p] ch.17. 12, 13. 1 Ch. 2.13–16.

[q] 2 Sa.7. 8. Ps.78.70, 71. 1 Ch.17. 7. Am.1.1. Ex.3.1.

8 Heb. *round.*

[r] La. 4. 7. Ca. 5. 10. Jn.1.14.

9 Heb. *fair of eyes.*

1 Personal beauty, as in the case of Absalom, is no proof of moral worth. Nevertheless it is a gift of God of no slight importance, if joined with grace to counteract the pride that too often accompanies and disfigures it.—*C.*

[s] Ps.89. 19, 20; 2. 6. 2 Sa.2.4;5.2.

[t] ver.1,2. Assecretly as possible.

[u] Nu.27.18. Ju.3.10; 13. 25; 14.6. ch.10.6,10; ver.13.

2 The best and fullest account of the oncoming of the SPIRIT may be found, Is. 11. 2, &c. Lu. 4. 18, 19. Ga. 5.22, 23.—*C.*

[x] ch.7.17.

[y] ch.11. 6; 28. 19, 20. Mat.13.12. Ho.9.12.

[z] ch.18. 10; 19. 9, 10. Ju.9.23.1 Ki.22.23. Ac. 19. 15. Is.19.14. Ps. 81. 11,12.

3 Or, *terrified.*

4 Melancholy mania arising from diabolical agency and possession. Infidelity and scepticism call in question or ridicule the doctrine of Satanic existence or agency; a Christian will find little difficulty in deciding which he is to credit.—*C.*

[a] 2 Ki.3.15. ver.23.

5 If the malady of Saul arose from Satanic agency, how could the harp effect its temporary expulsion? If we knew more of the nature of invisible agents, we might be better able to answer this question. Meantime it may tend to cure the vanity of scepticism to ask, how music prevails to rouse, to irritate, or to soothe a human spirit And when it shall have solved that question, it will be time enough to deny its influence upon other spirits.—*C.*

[b] ch.17.32,37.49. Ps. 89.19–21. ver.12.

A.M. cir. 2942.
B.C. cir. 1062.

6 Or, *speech.*

[c] ver. 11; ch. 17. 15. Ps.113.7,8; 78.71. 2 Sa. 7.8.

[d] It was a common present, Ge.38.17. Ju. 15.1. Lu.15.29.

[e] De. 1. 38; 10.8. Pr. 22.29.

[f] Ps.62.9; 118. 9; 146. 3.

7 To carry his shield, spear, &c., a post of great honour and confidence.—*C.*

[g] Continue waiting upon my person, ver. 21.

[h] 2 Ki.3.15. Mat.12. 43–45.ch.28.10;19.9.

CHAP. XVII.

B.C. cir. 1060.

[a] Jos.15.35; 10. 10. 2 Ch.11.7.

[b] Or, *the coast of bloods,* 1 Ch.11.13.

1 About 10 miles west of Jerusalem. Dr. Richardson informs us that the place of the encampment of the two armies may be easily discovered from the description; and that the brook from which David selected the smooth stones is still pointed out to travellers.—*C.*

2 Heb. *ranged the battle.*

[c] 1 Ki.20.29. ver. 16. 2 Ch.13.3,4.

3 The valley of *Elah,* or of the 'terebinth, now called Wady *Musurr,* 'the valley of the Acacia,' runs among the western spurs of the mountains of Judah down into the plain of Philistia: The site of the combat and victory is easily identified by the ruins of Shochoh, and the general topography of the valley; it is about 15 miles S.W. of Jerusalem. The valley is a quarter of a mile wide, and is shut in by ridges rising on each side with an easy slope to an elevation of about 500 ft. On these the rival armies were encamped, opposite to each other, at the distance of about a mile. The bottom of the valley is flat and rich; through it winds a torrent-bed covered with rounded 'smooth stones.' The rival armies could see distinctly every movement of their champions, their final struggle, and the fall of Goliath.—*P.*

[d] A dueller or treader down, Jos.11. 21.ver.8–10. 1 Ch.20.5. Je.9.23. Zec.4.6.

CHAPTER XVII.

1 *The armies of the Israelites and Philistines being ready to battle,* 4 *Goliath cometh proudly forth to challenge a combat.* 12 *David, sent by his father to visit his brethren, heareth the challenge.* 28 *Eliab chideth him.* 30 *He is brought to Saul.* 32 *He showeth the reason of his confidence.* 38 *Without armour, armed by faith, he slayeth the giant.* 55 *Saul taketh notice of David.*

NOW the Philistines gathered together their armies to battle, and were gathered together at [a]Shochoh, which *belongeth* to Judah, and pitched between Shochoh and Azekah, in [b]Ephes-dammim.

2 And Saul and the men of Israel were gathered together, and pitched by the valley of Elah,[1] and set the battle in array[2] against the Philistines.

3 And [c]the Philistines stood on a mountain on the one side, and Israel stood on a mountain on the other side: and *there was* a valley between them.[3]

4 ¶ And there went out a [d]champion out of the camp of the Philistines, named Goliath,

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on external appearances, even after they have, to their grief, got proofs of its vanity. For God according to merit distributes his favours and honours: Yea, often to those who seem least likely to manage them aright. But where he sends on his work, he abundantly qualifies for the employ. How quickly the devil takes possession of those whom God has deserted! Yet, notwithstanding the numerous expedients which carnal men devise for the removal of their inward troubles, they will all at last prove only ruinous and deceitful.

CHAPTER XVII. [Ver. 8. Goliath was not a Philistine by genealogy, though he lived among them and was naturalized. He was descended from those Rephaim who in primeval times occupied the whole country, but were conquered by the Caphtorim or Philistines, De. 2. 21. A family of them remained in Gaza, and became the champions of the nation in the days of Saul and David, 2 Sa. 21. 22. *P.*]

Ver. 12. [The incidents and structure of this whole narrative require a few words of explanation. Many difficulties have been thrown around it by the conjectures of critics and expositors. These, I think, all disappear before the light of a sound interpretation. The object of the author of this book is to give an outline of national history in connection with biographical sketches of leading men. In carrying out this object he is obliged to bring forward at different times his different heroes—going back in the midst of the general narrative to explain the cause of each one's sudden appearance. Saul and David are now the most prominent men in Israel. The leading incidents of their lives are set forth in a series of graphic pictures, brought out as it were to the foreground of the national history. The first picture from the life of David is the anointing by Samuel, ch. 16. 1–13. The second is his brief residence at Saul's court, ch. 16. 14–23. The third is his appearance in the army, and encounter with Goliath. In all probability some years elapsed between the second and third. To explain the cause of his sudden appearance on the battle-field, and of the incidents which followed, ver. 12–31 are introduced, in accordance with the dramatic style of the book. After this the general history of the battle proceeds—David's victory; the flight of the Philistines; and the presentation of the giant's head to Saul. To have interrupted such a story in order to introduce Saul's question to Abner would have spoiled the dramatic effect. *P.*]

Ver. 17. [*Take now for thy brethren an ephah of this parched corn.* In all countries where standing armies were not organized, the military retainers were bound to provide their own subsistence, and to follow their chiefs or king to the field for a certain number of days, when called upon, but no longer. *C.*]

Ver. 50. [David and Goliath were not so unequally matched as is generally supposed. David was a shepherd, but not a shepherd of the modern type. From early youth he had kept his sheep amid the mountains of Judah. In glen, on cliff, on hill-side, his physical powers had been fully developed, and with the strength he had acquired all the energy and agility of the mountaineer. Warfare, too, was not new to him. The wilderness was infested with wild beasts. With these David had often to fight single-handed. It was also infested by robber bands; and the shepherds of Bethlehem were thus inured to sudden attack and determined resistance. Every shepherd was a trained warrior. David was fully conscious of his own prowess. With equal modesty and confidence he told Saul of his combats with lion and bear. A man so gifted with natural courage and strength, so inured to danger, so trained to every species of conflict, and animated besides with implicit faith in the God of battles, was no unworthy antagonist even for the giant Goliath. His skill and activity were more than a match for brute strength. The Lord was with him; his hand sustained him; but there was no miracle in the victory. Human skill and courage were by the divine blessing made to triumph. The sling was a favourite weapon with the shepherds of the mountains. David's trust in it, and the unerring accuracy of his aim, though strange to us, was nothing wonderful in those days, or in the region in which he was trained. We read that among the adjoining tribe of Benjamin were 700 men, 'every one of whom could sling stones at an hair and not miss,' Ju. 20. 16. David's sling gave him great advantage over the giant. *P.*]

Ver. 52. [*The men of Israel and of Judah arose.* In ver. 48, as well as in this, the mention of arising gives a curious internal evidence of the eastern origin of the Bible. The eastern Asiatics sit much more than the people of western Europe, many work sitting, who, at correspondent trades, stand in Europe; bargains are made sitting; and the walking for pleasure, in which

of Gath, whose height *was*[4] six cubits and a span.[5]

5 And *he had* an helmet of brass upon his head, and he *was* armed[6] with a coat of mail;[7] and the weight of the coat *was* five thousand shekels[8] of brass.

6 And *he had* greaves[9] of brass upon his legs, and a target[1] of brass between his shoulders.

7 And the staff of his spear *was* like a weaver's beam;[2] and his spear's head *weighed* six hundred shekels[3] of iron: and one bearing a shield went before him.

8 And he stood and cried unto the armies of Israel, and said unto them, Why are ye come out to set *your* battle in array?[4] *Am* not I a Philistine, and ye servants to Saul? choose you a man for you, and let him come down to me.

9 If he be able to fight with me, and to kill me, then will we be your servants: but if I prevail against him, and kill him, then shall ye be our servants, and serve us.

10 And the Philistine said, [c]I defy the armies of Israel this day: give me a man, that we may fight together.

11 When Saul and all Israel heard those words of the Philistine, they were dismayed, and greatly afraid.

12 ¶ Now David *was* [d]the son of that Ephrathite of Beth-lehem-judah,[5] whose name *was* Jesse; and he had eight sons: and the man went among men *for* an old man in the days of Saul.

13 And [e]the three eldest sons of Jesse went *and* followed Saul to the battle: and the names of his three sons that went to the battle *were* Eliab the first-born, and next unto him Abinadab; and the third [h]Shammah.

14 And David [i]*was* the youngest:[6] and the three eldest followed Saul.

15 But David went and returned[7] from[k] Saul to feed his father's sheep at Beth-lehem.

16 And the Philistine drew near morning and evening, and presented himself [l]forty days.

17 And Jesse said unto David his son, Take now for thy brethren an ephah of this parched *corn*, and these ten loaves, and run to the camp to thy brethren;

18 And carry these ten cheeses[8] unto the captain of *their* thousand,[9] and look how thy brethren fare, and take their pledge.[1]

19 Now Saul, and they, and all the men of Israel, *were* in the valley of Elah, fighting[2] with the Philistines.[3]

20 ¶ And David rose up early in the morning, and left the sheep with a keeper, and took, and went, as Jesse had commanded him; and he came to the [m]trench[4] as the host was going forth to the [n]fight, and shouted for the battle.

21 For Israel and the Philistines had put the battle in array, army against army.

22 And David left his carriage[5] in the hand of the keeper of the carriage, and ran into the army, and came and [o]saluted his brethren.

23 And as he talked with them, behold, there came up the champion (the Philistine of Gath, Goliath by name) out of the armies of the Philistines, and spake [p]according to the same words: and David heard *them*.

24 And all the men of Israel,[6] when they saw the man, fled [q]from him, and were sore [7]afraid.

25 And the men of Israel said, Have ye seen this man that is come up? surely to defy Israel is he come up: and [r]it shall be, *that* the man who killeth him, the king will enrich him with great riches, and will give him his daughter, and make his father's house free in Israel.[8]

26 And David spake to the men that stood by him, saying, What shall be done to the man that killeth this Philistine, and taketh away the [s]reproach from Israel? for who *is* this uncircumcised Philistine, that he should defy the armies of [t]the living God?[9]

27 And the people answered him after this manner, saying, So shall it be done to the man that killeth him.

28 ¶ And Eliab his eldest brother heard when he spake unto the men; and Eliab's [u]anger was kindled against David, and he said, Why camest thou down hither? and with whom hast thou left those few sheep in the wilderness?[1] [z]I know thy pride, and the naughtiness of thine heart; for thou art come down that thou mightest see the battle.

29 And David said, What have I now done? [y]*Is there* not a cause?[2]

30 ¶ And he turned from him toward another,[3] and spake after the same manner:[4] and the people answered him again after the former manner.

31 And when the words were heard which David spake, they [r]rehearsed *them* before Saul; and he sent for him.[5]

32 ¶ And David said to Saul, [z]Let no man's heart fail because of him; thy servant [a]will go and fight with this Philistine.

33 And Saul said to David, Thou art not able to go against this Philistine to fight with him; for thou *art but* a youth,[6] and he [b]a man of war from his youth.

34 And David said unto Saul, Thy servant

A.M. 2944. B.C. 1060.

4 About 11½ feet.

5 According to Cumberland, 11 feet 10 inches; but Parkhurst estimates his height at 9 feet 6 inches. Pliny, in his *Natural History* (b. vi. 16), mentions one Gabara, an Arabian, in the days of Claudius, who was 9 feet 9 inches in height. Josephus mentions a Jew named Eleazar, whom Vitellius sent to Rome, who was 10 feet 2 inches (*Ant.* b. xviii. c. 6); and Middleton of Hale, in Lancashire, was 9 feet 3 inches in height.—*C.*

6 Heb. *clothed.*

7 Mail is of various kinds, but chiefly what is called *chain* and *plate* mail. The one a garment, composed of small strong rings. The other, a succession of small plates overlapping at the edges, after the manner of the scales of a shark. This last is the mail of Goliath.—*C.*

8 156¼ lbs.

9 A species of boots without feet, for defence of the legs.—*C.*

1 Or, *gorget.*

2 Estimated by the other proportions at 26 feet.—*C.*

3 18¾ lbs.

4 Why should two whole armies engage, when the contest can as well be decided by two representatives? Such challenges and contests, either between one or more on each side, are frequent in the histories of all nations.—*C.*

c Nu.23.7,8. 2 Sa.21.21.Ne.2.19.

d Ru.4.18–22. Mat.1.6. Lu.3.31,32. ch.16.1, 10. Ge.35.19. Mi.5.2. 1 Ch. 2.13–15. Ps.132.6, with Mat.2.1,6.

5 The Vatican copy of the Septuagint does not contain this passage, and many Biblical critics of high name consider all from ver. 12 to 31 to be an interpolation; but all the most valuable Hebrew MSS. contain it as we find in our English version, and these it is much safer to follow than imaginary emendations resting on mere critical suggestion.—*C.*

e ch.16.6–9. 1 Ch. 2.13.

h Shimeah, 2 Sa.13.3;21.21. ch.16.9.

i ch.16.11,12. 1 Ch.2.15. Ge. 25.23. Mat.19.30.

6 His age cannot be exactly ascertained, and conjecture is useless; it is only obvious that he could not have been full grown.—*C.*

7 That is, David, after abiding some time with Saul as his chief musician, ch. 16. 23, had gone home, and returned to his duties as a shepherd.—*C.*

k ch.16.19,22.

l Lu.4.2. Mat.4.2.

8 Heb. *cheeses of milk.*

9 Heb. *captain of a thousand.*

1 Bring a token of their welfare.

2 Skirmishing.

3 Not fighting in general battle, but by outposts and skirmishers. Such is still the character of Bedouin warfare.—*C.*

A.M. 2944. B.C. 1060.

m Or, *place of the carriage*, ch.26.5.

4 The translation would suggest the idea of an intrenched camp; but the marginal reading, what is much more likely, an appointed place for the friends of the soldiery to deposit their rations.—*C.*

n Or, *battle array*: or, *place of fight*, Ec. 3.12. Ps. 46.1. Phi.4.4, 13. 2 Co.2.14.

5 *Load of provisions.*

o Heb. *asked his brethren of peace*, Ge. 37.14;41.16. Mat.10.12, 13. Lu.19.42.

p ver.8–10.

6 Not the whole army; for they retained the position where David found them; but the light troops and skirmishers that usually precede all armies. Saul, it will be recollected, was now an experienced leader, and would not go to battle without such advanced guards.—*C.*

q Heb. *from his face*, ch.13.6,7. De.32.30. Is.30.17.

7 It is a universal practice to this day in Arab warfare for one or two men of name and prowess to dash out to the front and challenge a champion among the enemy to single combat. In feudal times it was also a custom of European warfare.—*P.*

r Jos.15.16. ch.18.25. He.12.1,2. Re.2.7,17;3.5,12,21.

8 Free of taxes and other public services, such as are recounted by Samuel, ch. 8. 10–18.—*C.*

s 2 Ki.19.4. Nu.14.15–19. Jos.7.8,9.

t De. 5.26. 1 Th.1.9. Je.10.10. Ja.5.26. 1 Jn. 5.20.

9 The distinctive character of Jehovah is that he is the *living God*—God *living* in *personality* of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—by which character of *living* he is also distinguished from the idols of heathenism, and the mere First Cause of some systems of philosophy.—*C.*

u ch.11.14. Mar.3.21. Mat. 26. 22. Pr. 18. 19. Ec.4.4.

1 They could not have been many, as one keeper sufficed for their protection, ver. 20; and Eliab foolishly expresses the contempt of a soldier for the peaceful profession of a shepherd.—*Note*, Professional contempt for others is a sign of great ignorance of the relative use of all lawful professions, and of vanity and pride in him that foe's and expresses it.—*C.*

z ch. 16.7. 1 Ti. 6. 4, 5. Ps. 35.11. Jude 10.

y ver.17,32. Pr.15.1. 1 Pe.3.9.

2 A mild and rational answer to an unbrotherly insult; at all times the surest index of genuine courage.—*C.*

3 A proof of youthful wisdom! he turns away from an offended brother, to avoid new cause of irritation.—*Note*, If with all men we must 'give place unto wrath,' how much more with a brother, to whom we are bound by ties of nature or of grace?—*C.*

4 Heb. *word.*

5 Heb. *took him.*

z Is. 35. 3. Ro. 15.1. Ga.6.2. He.12.12.

a ch.14.6. Ex.4.16. 2 Co.5.7. Phi.4.13.

6 Unacquainted with war.

b Nu.13.31. Re.13.4.

Europeans delight, is almost totally unknown. Here the whole army seems to have continued sitting, to witness the encounter that was to decide for slavery or liberty. *C.*]

Ver. 55. [*When Saul saw David.* From ver. 54 to ver. 6 of the next chapter is rejected by Boothroyd and A. Clarke as an interpolation, on the ground of the improbability of the narrative. Such criticism is worse than dangerous. It sets an example that justifies every cavil of infidelity against the sacred history. Besides, there is not a circumstance narrated in the least degree improbable.—*Whose son is this youth?* Where is the improbability of any man forgetting a youth when near manhood, whom he had known when a boy, and whom, in the intermediate time, he had not seen? *C.*]

REFLECTIONS.—It was a great mercy that God suspended this invasion till Saul had recovered from his distraction, and David was prepared to encounter

PNYX FROM MARS HILL—A SCENE IN THE COUNTRY OF KING CODRUS, WHO REIGNED IN GREECE AT THE SAME TIME SAUL RULED OVER ISRAEL. [I. SAMUEL, xvii: 15.]—"But David went and returned from Saul to feed his father's sheep at Bethlehem." While Saul was reigning over the Jews Codrus was reigning over the Athenians as their last king. And it is remarkable that Saul being defeated by the Philistines put an end to his life, and that Codrus fell a voluntary sacrifice in battle against the Dorians. We give this view of the Pnyx from Mars Hill to illustrate a scene in Athens over which Codrus reigned at the very time that Saul ruled over the Israelites. The Pnyx is a huge artificial terrace or platform 395 feet long by 312 feet wide, the upper margin of which is cut out of the rock. It was upon this platform that the Athenians held their political assemblies. Here was the orator's stage, and here it is supposed Demosthenes delivered many of his great orations.

kept his father's sheep, and there came a lion and a bear,[7] and took a lamb[8] out of the flock;

35 And I went out after him, and smote him, and delivered *it* out of his mouth: and when he arose[9] against me, I caught *him* by his beard, [c]and smote him, and slew him.

36 Thy servant slew both the lion and the bear; and this uncircumcised Philistine shall be as one of them, seeing he hath defied the armies of the living God.

37 David said moreover, [d]The LORD that delivered me[1] out of the paw of the lion, and out of the paw of the bear, he will deliver me out of the hand of this Philistine. And Saul said unto David, Go, and the LORD be with thee.

38 ¶ And Saul armed[2] David with his armour, and he put an helmet of brass upon his head; also he armed him with a coat of mail.

39 And David girded his sword upon his armour, and he assayed to go; for he had not proved *it*. And David said unto Saul, I cannot go with these; for I have not proved *them*.[3] And David [e]put them off him.[4]

40 And he took his [f]staff in his hand, and chose him five smooth stones out of the brook,[5] and put them in a shepherd's bag[6] which he had, even in a scrip, and his sling *was* in his hand;[7] and he drew near to the Philistine.

41 And the Philistine came on, and drew near unto David; and the man that bare the shield *went* before him.

42 And when the Philistine looked about, and saw David, he [g]disdained him; for he was *but* a youth, and ruddy, and of a fair countenance.

43 And the Philistine said unto David, *Am* I a dog, that thou comest to me with staves? And the Philistine [h]cursed David by his gods.

44 And the Philistine said to David, Come to me, and I will give thy flesh unto the fowls of the air, and to the beasts of the field.

45 Then said David to the Philistine, Thou comest to me with a sword, and with a spear, and with a shield; but [i]I come to thee in the name of the LORD of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom thou hast defied.

46 This[k] day will the LORD deliver[8] thee into mine hand; and I will smite thee, and take thine head from thee; and I will give the carcasses of the host of the Philistines this day unto the fowls of the air, and to the wild beasts of the earth; that all the earth may know that there is a God in Israel.[9]

47 And all this assembly[1] shall know [l]that the LORD saveth not with sword and spear: for the battle *is* the LORD's, and he will give you into our hands.[2]

48 And it came to pass, when the Philistine arose, and came and drew nigh to meet David, that David hasted,[3] and ran toward the army to meet the Philistine.

49 And [m]David put his hand in his bag, and took thence a stone, and slang *it*, and smote the Philistine in his forehead, that the stone [4]sunk into his forehead; and he fell upon his face to the earth.[5]

50 So David prevailed over the Philistine with a sling and with a stone,[6] and smote the Philistine, and slew him; but *there was* no sword in the hand of David.

51 Therefore David ran, and stood upon the Philistine, and took his sword, and drew it out of the sheath thereof, and [n]slew him, and cut off his head therewith. And when the Philistines saw their champion was dead, they fled.

52 ¶ And[o] the men of Israel and of [7]Judah arose, and shouted, and pursued the Philistines, until thou [p]come to the valley, and to the gates of Ekron: and the wounded of the Philistines fell down by the way to Shaaraim, even unto Gath, and unto Ekron.[8]

53 And the children of Israel returned from chasing after the Philistines, and they spoiled their tents.

54 ¶ And David [q]took the head of the Philistine, and brought it to [r]Jerusalem; but he put his armour in [s]his tent.[9]

55 ¶ And when Saul saw David go forth against the Philistine, he said unto Abner, the captain of the host, Abner, whose son *is* this youth?[1] And Abner said, *As* thy soul liveth, O king, I cannot tell.

56 And the king said, Inquire thou whose son the stripling *is*.

57 And as David returned from the slaughter of the Philistine, Abner took him, and brought him before Saul, with the head of the Philistine in his hand.

58 And Saul said to him, Whose son *art* thou, *thou* young man? And David answered, [t]*I am* the son of thy servant Jesse the Bethlehemite.

CHAPTER XVIII.

1 *Jonathan loveth David.* 5 *Saul envieth his praise,* 10 *seeketh to kill him in his fury,* 12 *feareth him for his good success,* 17 *offereth him his daughter for a snare.* 22 *David, persuaded to be the king's son-in-law, giveth two hundred foreskins of the Philistines for Michal's dowry.* 28 *Saul's hatred, and David's glory increaseth.*

AND it came to pass, when he had made an end of speaking unto Saul,[1] that [a]the soul

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7 Each at a different time; for he does not say he smote *them*, but *him*.—*C.*

8 Or, *kid*.

9 The act of rising against him seems to refer to the bear, which stands up when it assails a man; in which attitude the bold peasant of the north of Europe assails him with a spear, the cross of which holds him at a distance, while the iron head pierces his breast.—*C.*

c Ju. 14. 6. 1 Jn. 3. 8. Col. 2. 14, 15. He. 2. 14.

d 2 Co. 1. 10. 2 Ti. 4. 17. Ps. 63. 7; 77. 11; 39. 10.

1 Here the piety of David forms the basis of his courage. He boasts not of his deed or prowess, but ascribes deliverance to God.—*C.*

2 Heb. *clothed David with his clothes*.

3 'I have not been accustomed to them;' a circumstance very intelligible; for even a new ordinary dress is found at first embarrassing to the wearer—how much more the heavy armour of a soldier of ancient times to one accustomed to the loose eastern garments, and the free movements of a shepherd.—*C.*

e Ho. 1. 7. Zec. 4. 6. 2 Co. 10. 4, 5.

4 An admirable lesson to all who are engaged in defence of the truth never to attempt the use of carnal weapons, such as anger, wrath, strife, hatred, evil speaking, but to hold fast by gentleness, meekness, and charity, the accustomed weapons of the *great shepherd*. 2 Co. 10. 4. Col. 3. 8. Ep. 4. 31. 2 Ti. 2. 25.—*C.*

f Ps. 23. 4. Ju. 20. 16; 3. 31; 7. 16. Ch. 14. 6. 1 Co. 1. 27. 2 Co. 10. 4, 5; 4. 7.

5 Or, *valley*.

6 Heb. *vessel*.

7 The sling was an ordinary part of a shepherd's furniture, for the purpose of driving off beasts or birds of prey.—*C.*

g ch. 14. 11, 12; 16. 12; ver. 33.

h 1 Ki. 19. 2. Ac. 23. 12.

i Ps. 20. 7; 33. 16; 3. 3; 118. 10–12. Pr. 18. 10. 2 Ch. 32. 8. Ge. 15. 1. Ro. 8. 31. Phi. 4. 13.

k Mat. 17. 20. Ro. 4. 19, 20. Re. 19. 17. De. 28. 26. Ps. 58. 11; 115. 3. Da. 2. 47; 6. 26. 2 Ki. 13. 5.

6 Heb. *shut up*.

9 The attention of different persons is fixed by different objects. A warlike and idolatrous nation, like the Philistines, must be taught the being and perfections of Jehovah in their own favourite school—war. So have nations that delight in war ever been taught—their lesson being derived from the indulgence and punishment of their own unhallowed propensities.—*C.*

1 Goliath and David evidently met and spoke within hearing of both armies—at least of their chiefs—and the noble and pious sentiment of David is a lesson of truth to all.—*C.*

l Ps. 44. 6; 33. 16, 17. Ho. 1. 7. 2 Ch. 20. 15. Zec. 4. 6. ch. 14. 6.

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2 This is the first example of David's exercise of the prophetic office, in which he was afterwards so eminent a preacher, as well as type of Christ.—*C.*

3 This carries the narrative back to ver. 41, detailing the additional circumstance, that, after the dialogue, David came nearer to his adversary, neither terrified by him nor the presence of the Philistine army.—*C.*

m Ju. 3. 31; 15. 15. Je. 9. 23. Zec. 4. 6. Mat. 19. 26, 1 Co. 1. 27.

4 Heb. *sunk as a stone in the water*.

5 The sling was a very powerful weapon. The stone might pierce the helmet, or pass through the hole left for sight, or Goliath might have lifted up the part of his helmet that covered his forehead (as he did when speaking), in contempt of David.—*J.*

6 Hence we learn that victory over the enemies of truth depends neither on the strength nor preparation of its advocates and champions, but upon the blessing of God upon the humblest and most unlikely means. Twelve men, comparatively unlearned, refuted all the philosophy of Greece, and overturned, without a sword, the gigantic empire of Rome.—*C.*

n Es. 7. 10. He. 2. 14. Da. 9. 24.

o ch. 14. 21, 22. 2 Sa. 23. 10.

7 Judah is distinguished as David's own tribe, who would, no doubt, show special zeal to follow their youthful hero.—*C.*

p Jos. 15. 33, 36, 45–47. ch. v. ; 6. 17.

8 They chased them about twenty-four miles.

q Ex. 16. 33. Jos. 4. 7–9. ch. 7. 12; 31. 9, with 2 Sa. 4. 7, 8; 1. 10.

r Jos. 10. 1; 15. 63.

s In God's tabernacle at Nob, ch. 21. 1, 9.

9 Having spoiled the tents of the Philistines, ver. 53, it is most probable that one was assigned to David; the armour, at least the sword, was subsequently placed in the tabernacle.—*C.*

1 Great men quickly forget their servants; and David, by further age, and his shepherd's dress, made a different appearance from what he had done before Saul.

t ch. 16. 1, 18, 19. Ru. 4. 18–22. 1 Ch. 2. 1, 3–15.

CHAP. XVIII.

1 The subject and length of the conversation does not appear; but the effect of it in winning the kindred spirit of Jonathan is not surprising. With similar piety towards God, with similar chivalry in war, with great disinterestedness of disposition, they mutually attracted each other; and, to the honour of both, no circumstance ever afterwards shook the union of their hearts.—*C.*

a Ge. 44. 30. ch. 20. 17. 2 Sa. 1. 26. Pr. 17. 17; 18. 24.

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this giant. And often, though unnoticed, God manifests peculiar mercy in the timing of our troubles. Pride naturally establishes itself upon bulk, bodily strength, and other weak endowments of human nature: and relying upon these, the enemies of God earnestly watch for advantages against his people. But when God leaves them to themselves, not only individuals but armies become mean-spirited and terrified on every approach of danger: their strength is turned into weakness, and their courage into shame. If we would be good soldiers of Jesus Christ, it is necessary that we endure hardness; and it bodes well when God endows us with a deep regard for his honour. Yet how often those whom God calls out to glorious exploits meet with much discouragement from a carnal world: particularly their own relations. But let them in patience possess their souls, and in meekness instruct those that oppose themselves. A soft answer turneth away wrath. And we must not be discouraged in well-doing because our good intentions are misrepresented and abused. What God has done for us ought to be improved, as an encouragement to do more and more for him at his call. They are well armed that go forth with a good conscience in a good cause. The righteous are bold

of Jonathan was knit with the soul of David, and Jonathan loved him as his own soul.

2 And Saul took him that day, and would let him go [b]no more home to his father's house.

3 Then Jonathan and David [c]made a covenant, because he loved him as his own soul.

4 And Jonathan [d]stripped himself of the robe that *was* upon him, and gave it to David, and his garments, even to his sword, and to his bow, and to his girdle.[2]

5 ¶ And David went out whithersoever Saul sent him, *and* [e]behaved himself[3] wisely: and Saul set him over the [f]men of war;[4] and he was accepted in the sight of all the people, and also in the sight of Saul's servants.

6 ¶ And it came to pass, as they came, when David was returned from the slaughter of the Philistine,[5] that the women came out of all the cities of Israel, [g]singing and dancing, to meet king Saul, with tabrets, with joy, and with instruments of music.[6]

7 And the women [h]answered *one another* as they played, and said, [i]Saul hath slain his thousands, and David his ten thousands.[7]

8 And Saul was very wroth, and the saying displeased[k] him; and he said, They have ascribed unto David ten thousands, and to me they have ascribed *but* thousands: and *what* can he have more [l]but the kingdom?

9 And Saul [m]eyed[8] David from that day and forward.

10 ¶ And it came to pass on the morrow, that the evil [n]spirit from God came upon Saul, and he prophesied[9] in the midst of the house; and David [o]played with his hand, as at other times: and *there was* a [p]javelin in Saul's hand.

11 And Saul [q]cast the javelin; for he said, I will smite David even to the wall *with it.* And David avoided out of his presence twice.

12 ¶ And Saul was [r]afraid of David, because the LORD was with him, and was departed from Saul.

13 Therefore Saul [s]removed him from him, and made him his captain over a thousand;[1] and he [t]went out and came in before the people.

14 And David [u]behaved himself[2] wisely in all his ways; and the LORD *was* with him.

15 Wherefore when Saul saw that he behaved himself very wisely, he was afraid of him.

16 But all Israel and Judah loved David, because he went out and came in before them.

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[b] ch.17.15;ver.5.

[c] Ge.21.27;26.28; 31. 44.ch.20.8–17;19.2.

[d] Ge.41.42.Es.6.8,9.

2 This mode of expressing friendship is still practised in the East, especially in Persia; and partially it has prevailed in Europe, chiefly confined to swords and rings.—*C.*

[e] Da. 6.5,6. Mat. 10. 16.Ep.5.15.Col.4.5. Is. 52.13.

3 Or, *prospered.*

[f] His guard, ch. 13. 2.

4 Whether as commander-in-chief over all the army, or only as chief of a select body, does not appear: most probably only over a select body, as the subsequent attachment of Abner to the family of Saul renders it very unlikely that he had been superseded.—*C.*

[g] Ex.15.20,21. Ju.11. 34.Re.19.1,3;18.20.

6 Heb. *three-stringed instruments.*

[h] Ex.15.21. Re. 7.9, 10,12.

[i] ch.21.11;29.5.

7 This is characteristic of the East. When an Arab tribe, or the inhabitants of a town or village, gain a victory, the women go out to meet the conquerors on their return, and celebrate the conquest, and often the achievements of the leaders, in extemporaneous stanzas, accompanying their recitations by shrill cries, clapping of hands, and beating tambourines.—*P.*

[k] Es. 3. 5. Pr. 13. 10. Ec.4.4.3 Ju.9,10.

[l] ch.13.14; 15.28; 16. 13.

[m] Ge.4.5,6. Job 24. 16. Ps. 10.8,9. Mat. 20. 15.

8 With observant jealousy—a great proof of his weakness of mind, as there was no connection between the extravagant praises of the women and any criminal design upon the part of David.—*C.*

[n] ch. 16. 14. 1 Ki.22. 22,23. Ac.16.16.

9 To 'prophesy,' does not necessarily signify to foretel, but sometimes to expound the word of God, or sing to his praises—this last seems the sense in which Saul prophesied.—*C.*

[o] ch.16.16,23.

[p] Spear, ch.22.6;26. 7.

[q] ch. 19. 9, 10; 20. 33. Pr.6.34.

[r] Ps.14.5;48.5,6. Es. 6.13.

[s] ver.17,25.Pr.12.10.

1 Such descents of office as David here appears to have experienced are, at this day, common in the East, and just because so common, they imply no disgrace.—*C.*

[t] Nu. 27. 16, 17. ver. 16.2 Sa. 5.2. Ps. 121.8.

[u] Ps.112.5. Ep.5.15. Mat.10.16.Da.6.5.Col. 4.5.ver.5.

2 Or, *prospered.*

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[x] Ps.140. 5; 12. 2; 55. 21. Lu.20.19,20. ch.14. 49.

3 Heb. *a son of valour.*

[y] ch.17.47;25.28. Ps. 12.2.

[z] 2 Sa. 11. 15; 12. 9.

4 Saul, unsuccessful in playing the part of the tyrant, tries that of the hypocrite, and talks to the man he would have murdered of 'fighting the Lord's battles;' and then, to quiet his conscience, he resolves not to kill David with his own hand, but commits murder in purpose by seeking to expose him to the Philistines.—*C.*

[a] 2 Sa.7.18; 9.8. Ru. 2. 10. Pr. 15. 33; 18. 12. Lu.14.11. Ps.138.6.

5 It appears evident from ver. 22, 23, &c., that this was not false modesty in David, but a real feeling of humility, and of the imprudence of unequal matches.—*C.*

[b] 2 Sa.21.8. Ju.7.22.

[c] ch.14.49; 19. 12–17; 25.44;ver.27.2 Sa.3.14, 15;6.20–23.

6 Heb. *was right in his eyes.*

7 Why, then, if this pleased him, did he neglect or refuse to give Merab? No one can account for the capricious changes of a half deranged tyrant! 'Everything by turns, and nothing long,' is his character.—*C.*

[d] Ps.7.16;9.15,16;38. 12. ver. 25, with ch.19. 11,12.

8 'In a second way (or, in another way) shalt thou become my son-in-law this day.'—*P.*

[e] Ps.36.1–3;55.21;12. 2.

[f] 2 Sa. 7. 18, 19. Nu. 16.9. Lu.14.11. ver.18, 23.

9 Heb. *According to these words.*

[g] Ge.29.18;34.12.Ex. 22.16,17.De.22.29.ver. 23.

1 In countries where a wife is really but the first domestic slave, it is not surprising a dowry should be paid for her as for any other slave, and not given with her to support her as an equal.—*C.*

2 'As a proof not only that thou hast slain a hundred men, but that they are of the *uncircumcised.*' Bruce says that a similar custom obtains among the Abyssinians.—*J.*

3 In the poems and romances of the East (as well as those of the West which relate to the times of chivalry), instances often occur of a father trying to get rid of an obnoxious suitor to his daughter by proposing some arduous enterprise, which he would either decline, or in which, if he accept the condition, he would probably perish.—*J.*

4 Heb. *was right in the eyes of.*

5 'Fulfilled,' i.e. the time for bringing in the foreskins.

6 Within which he must fulfil the terms or lose his promised wife.—*C.*

[h] 2 Sa. 3. 14. Ju. 14. 19.

7 The two nations being at war, this was no act of unprovoked aggression.—*C.*

[i] ver.19.

17 ¶ And [z]Saul said to David, Behold, my elder daughter Merab, her will I give thee to wife; only be thou valiant[3] for me, and fight the [y]LORD's battles: for Saul said, Let not mine hand be upon him, [z]but let the hand of the Philistines be upon him.[4]

18 And David said unto Saul, [a]Who *am* I? and what *is* my life, *or* my father's family in Israel, that I should be son-in-law to the [5]king?

19 But it came to pass, at the time when Merab, Saul's daughter, should have been given to David, that she was given unto [b]Adriel the Meholathite to wife.

20 ¶ And [c]Michal, Saul's daughter, loved David: and they told Saul, and the thing [6]pleased him.[7]

21 And Saul said, I will give him her, that she may be a [d]snare to him, and that the hand of the Philistines may be against him. Wherefore Saul said to David, Thou shalt this day be my son-in-law in *the one of* the twain.[8]

22 ¶ And Saul [e]commanded his servants, *saying,* Commune with David secretly, and say, Behold, the king hath delight in thee, and all his servants love thee: now therefore be the king's son-in-law.

23 And Saul's servants spake those words in the ears of David. And David said, [f]Seemeth it to you *a* light *thing* to be a king's son-in-law, seeing that I *am* a poor man, and lightly esteemed?

24 And the servants of Saul told him, saying, On this manner[9] spake David.

25 And Saul said, Thus shall ye say to David, The king desireth not any [g]dowry,[1] but an hundred foreskins[2] of the Philistines, to be avenged of the king's enemies. But Saul thought to make David fall by the hand of the Philistines.[3]

26 And when his servants told David these words, it pleased[4] David well to be the king's son-in-law: and the days were not[5] expired.[6]

27 Wherefore David arose and went, he and his men, [h]and slew of the Philistines two hundred men;[7] and David brought their foreskins, and they gave them in full tale to the king, that he might be the king's son-in-law. And Saul gave him [i]Michal his daughter to wife.

28 ¶ And Saul saw and knew that the LORD *was* with David, and *that* Michal, Saul's daughter, loved him.

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as a lion; but they need never be ashamed of an honest calling, however mean. Pride goes before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall. The curse that is causeless falls on the head of him that utters it; and the presumption of the proud destroys him. How vain is the arm of flesh against the power of God! the mightiest enemies are easily defeated when we go forth against them strong in the Lord and in the power of his might; while they who trust in man find their dependence at last but as a broken reed. It is not high birth, but deeds of high desert, that constitute true nobility. But of how little avail is the notice of earthly courts, where one may be so soon forgotten or so quickly hated.

CHAPTER XVIII. [Ver. 11. *Saul cast the javelin.* The javelin is a short spear, generally from three to four feet long. In preparing to throw it, the hand is opened, and the javelin, without being grasped, is balanced in the open between the thumb and forefinger. An apparently slight vibration backward and forward is given to the hand, and the javelin is projected to a great distance, and with a force that appears quite astonishing when compared with the slightness of the effort. Saul, as is common in unsettled countries, appears to have been constantly armed. *C.*]

REFLECTIONS.—Never let me envy the honour of others. If the Lord delight to honour even my inferiors, it becomes me heartily to join with him. Let me love the virtuous, though it should be at the expense of losing all that I have in the world for their sake: and let me count a faithful friend among the greatest of human blessings. If friendship be true, it will be con-

29 And Saul was yet [k]the more afraid of David; and Saul became David's enemy continually.

30 Then the princes of the Philistines went forth: and it came to pass, after they went forth, *that* David behaved himself [l]more wisely than all the servants of Saul; so that his name was much [m]set by.[8]

CHAPTER XIX.

1 Jonathan discloseth to David his father's purpose to kill him. 4 He persuadeth his father to a reconciliation. 8 By reason of David's good success in a new war, Saul's malicious rage breaketh out against him. 12 Michal deceiveth her father with an image in David's bed. 18 David cometh to Samuel to Naioth. 20 Saul's messengers sent to take David, 23 and Saul himself, prophesy.

AND Saul[a] spake to Jonathan his son, and to all his servants, that they should kill David.

2 But Jonathan, Saul's son, [b]delighted much in David; and Jonathan told David, saying, Saul my father seeketh to kill thee:[1] now therefore, I pray thee, take heed to thyself until the morning, and abide in a secret *place*, and hide thyself:

3 And I will go out and stand beside my father in the field[2] where thou *art*, and I will commune with my father of thee; and what I see, that I will tell thee.

4 ¶ And Jonathan [c]spake good of David unto Saul his father, and said unto him, Let not the king [d]sin against his servant, against David; because he hath not sinned against thee, and because [e]his works *have been* to thee-ward very good.

5 For he [f]did put his life in his hand, and slew the Philistine, and the LORD [g]wrought a great salvation for all Israel:[3] thou sawest *it*, and didst rejoice; wherefore then wilt thou sin against innocent blood, to slay David without a cause?

6 And Saul hearkened unto [h]the voice of Jonathan: and Saul sware, *As* the LORD liveth, he shall not be slain.[4]

7 And Jonathan called David, and Jonathan showed him all those things: and Jonathan brought David to Saul, and he was in his presence as in times past.[5]

8 ¶ And there was war again: and [i]David went out and fought with the Philistines, and slew them with a great slaughter; and they fled from him.[6]

9 And the [k]evil spirit from the LORD[7] was upon Saul as he sat in his house with his javelin in his hand; and David played with *his* hand.

10 And Saul [l]sought to smite David even to the wall with the javelin; but he slipped away out of Saul's presence, and he smote the javelin into the wall: and David fled, and [m]escaped that night.

11 ¶ Saul also [n]sent messengers unto David's house, to watch him, and to slay him in the morning: and [o]Michal, David's wife, told him, saying, If thou save not thy life to-night, to-morrow thou shalt be slain.

12 ¶ So Michal [p]let David down through a window; and he went, and fled, and escaped.

13 And Michal took [q]an image,[8] and laid *it* in the bed, and put a pillow of goats' *hair* for his bolster, and covered *it* with a cloth.

14 And when Saul sent messengers to take David, she [r]said, He *is* sick.[9]

15 And Saul sent the messengers *again* to see David, saying, Bring him up to me in the bed,[1] that I may slay him.

16 And when the messengers were come in, behold, *there was* an image in the bed, with a pillow of goats' *hair* for his bolster.

17 And Saul said unto Michal, Why hast thou [s]deceived me so, and sent away mine enemy, that he is escaped? And Michal answered Saul, He said unto me, Let me [t]go; why should I kill thee?[2]

18 ¶ So David fled, and escaped, and came [u]to Samuel to Ramah, and told him all that Saul had done to him: and he and Samuel went and dwelt in Naioth.

19 And it [x]was told Saul, saying, Behold, David *is* at Naioth in Ramah.

20 And Saul [y]sent messengers to take David: [z]and when they saw the [a]company of the prophets prophesying,[3] and Samuel standing *as* appointed over them, the Spirit of God was upon the messengers of Saul, and they also prophesied.

21 And when it was told Saul, he [b]sent other messengers, and they prophesied likewise. And Saul sent messengers again the third time, and they prophesied also.

22 Then went he also to Ramah, and came to a great well that *is* in Sechu: and he asked and said, Where *are* Samuel and David? And *one* said, Behold, *they be* at Naioth in Ramah.

23 ¶ And he went thither to Naioth in Ramah: and the [c]Spirit of God was upon him also, and he went on and prophesied until he came to Naioth in Ramah.

24 And he stripped off his [d]clothes also, and prophesied before Samuel in like manner, and

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k ver.12,15. Job 5.2, 12,13. Ec.4.4. Pr.6.34.
l Ps. 112. 5. Mat. 10. 16. Ep. 5.15.
m Heb. *precious*, ch.2.30.

8 The meaning is: The Philistine chiefs made war upon Israel ('went forth') and then David was successful in all his encounters with them. He proved himself a more valiant man and a more successful general than all the chosen warriors of Saul.—*P.*

CHAP. XIX.

B.C. 1059.

a ch.18.8,9. Pr.27.3, 4[10.23]12.10; 14.16, 17. 12. Je.9.3. 2 Ti.3.11.
b ch.18.1,3. A...23.12 -16. Pr.17.17; 18.24.

1 This was no breach of allegiance for no allegiance can bind a man to any immoral act.—*C.*

2 Some field where Saul commonly walked was pitched upon by Jonathan for this conference; that David, being there concealed, might have the fullest evidence of Jonathan's fidelity and affection, and all the information he could procure him.—*C.*

c Pr.31.9.ch.22.14.
d Ex.20.13. Ge.9.6. Ro.13.3. 1 Jn. 3.15. ch. 20.32.
e Mat.5.16. Pr.31.31; 17.13. Je.18.20.
f Ju.9.17; 12.3.ch.28. 21; 17. 50. Ps.119.109.
g ch.14.45; 17.50-53; 18.7. Ps.3.8.

3 In the note on ch. 18. 1, the similarity of David and Jonathan's piety was stated—here it appears both ascribe victory to God alone.—*C.*

h Mat. 27. 4. with ver.10;ch.14.44. Ps.15. 4. Je.4.2. Pr.26.25.

4 There seems little reason to doubt the sincerity of Saul in this oath, but his good purposes were short-lived. Jealousy and caprice, approaching to mania, seem to have been the most permanent features of his character.—*C.*

5 Heb. *yesterday*, or *the third day*.

i Ps.18.32-42; 27.2,3; 118.10-12.

6 Heb. *his face*.

k ch.16.14; 18.10, 11 Ki.22.22,23. Ac.19.16.

7 Permitted or commissioned to have power over him as a righteous punishment for his sins. *C.*—Saul perceived that David increased while he decreased in popularity; and he began again to view him with a jealous and malignant eye 'It is a sign that the Spirit of God is departed from men if they are peevish in resenting affronts, envious and suspicious of all about them, and ill-natured in their conduct.' *Henry.*—No sooner does Saul conceive malice against David than the evil spirit, that had formerly haunted him, seizes him again. Those who indulge in envy and uncharitableness give place to the devil, and prepare for the re-entry of the unclean spirit, with seven others more wicked. Where envy is, there is confusion.—*J.*

l ver.1; ch.18.11. Pr. 26. 25, with ver. 6. Ho. 6.4.

A.M. 2945. B.C. 1059.

m Jon 5.14,15. Pr.21. 30. Is. 40. 3,4; 43.1,2. 2 Co.1.10.
n Ps.34.19;59.title.
o ch.18.20,21.
p Jos.2.15. Ac.9. 24, 28. 2 Co.11.33. Is.54.17.
q Heb. *teraphim*, Ge.31.19. Ju.18.27.

8 What kind of image (teraphim) we know not, as the word may apply to other than idolatrous images. The mention of the pillow most probably suggests the idea, that, in health, the hardy soldier never used a pillow; but now, it is employed to suggest the idea of sickness And whoever has suffered with febrile pain in the head, will be well aware of the otherwise inconceivable comfort derived from a soft pillow. 'The cloth,' most likely similar to our muslin, seems to have been the ordinary means for guarding the sick or sleeping against the annoyance of flies.—*C.*

r Jos.2.5 (perhaps Ex.1.19). Ro.3.8. Zec. 8.16.

9 We may abhor the tyrant who tempts to duplicity, and we may pity the persecuted when driven to deception; but on no account can we ever approve any act whereby truth is compromised or falsehood asserted.—*C.*

1 The eastern bed being generally a mere mat, of materials more or less valuable, according to diversity of rank, it would have been easy for two or more persons to carry the bed and the patient to the king.—*Note.* This will explain how our Lord ordered the impotent man to 'take up his bed and walk,' and how the sick were frequently brought to him in their beds.—*C.*

s ch.22.17. Ex. 1.17. Mat. 2.16. Ac. 4.19; 5. 29.
t 2 Sa.2.22.

2 Having practised one deception, it was easy to practise another.—*Note.* Passionate parents are very frequently punished by disingenuous children; the one sin being generated to avoid the evils of the other.—*C.*

u Ps.116. 11. Mal. 2. 7. Ja.5. 16. ch.7.17; 15. 34. He fled to Samuel for advice, comfort, strengthening of faith, and for security from Saul.
x ch.22. 9, 10; 23. 19; 26.1. Ir..29.12.
y ver.22,23;ch.20.1.
z ver.11.
a ch. 10. 5, 10. Jn. 7. 45,46. Nu.11.25.

3 Engaged in the solemn service of God—the venerable Samuel standing, in ripened godliness, as head of the prophetic college, and the divine sympathy with which the military messengers of Saul are successively seized, present one of the most lively pictures of triumphant piety anywhere exhibited to the eye, while he that knows the heart ascribes the triumph directly to the Spirit of the Lord.—*C.*

b Je.13.23. Pr. 27.22. 2 Ki.1.9,11,13.
c Pr. 21. 1; 26. 9. Nu. xxi.-xxiv. Ge. 31. 24. Jn.11.51. Mat.7.22.
d Upper garments, 2 Sa.6.20. Mi.1.8. Is.20. 2.

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stant, and will not startle at giving the strongest assurances. But how difficult to act so, in a high station, as to procure honour without provoking envy! Even the due praises of merit are grating to the ears of the envious; and often their malignant eye betrays the rancour of their heart, while indulgence of their evil thoughts invites the devil to take possession of their souls. Jealousy is cruel as the grave, and thirsts for the precious life. But God guards his people from many a mortal blow secretly aimed at them. How base is it to devise hurt against those who dwell securely by us—to lay snares for our neighbour, under pretence of regard to him—and to cover hatred with lying lips! But if we are hated on earth, and snares laid for our life, let us behave with the more prudence, humility, and true bravery. Let us count it all joy when we fall into divers temptations, and through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God! God can overrule the most wicked designs of our enemies for our good, and to their confusion. And modest worth will shine with double lustre at last. God will confound the wise in their own craftiness; and, in spite of every danger, exalt the man whom he delights to honour.

CHAPTER XIX. [Ver. 24. *Is Saul also among the prophets?* This is the second time surprise has been expressed at Saul putting on any decided appearance

BAZAAR OF JOPPA—THE CITY OF SIMON, THE TANNER. [I. SAMUEL, xix:8.]—"And David went out, and fought with the Philistines, and slew them with a great slaughter; and they fled from him." Joppa is the oldest Philistine city known, and one of the oldest cities in the world. It was the only harbor possessed by the Jews during their national existence. The modern Joppa is said to be very prosperous. There is a soap factory here; the fruit trade of Joppa is considerable. Silk is also being cultivated not far from here. More boats are upset here and more lives are lost in the attempt to reach the shore than anywhere else on the Syrian coast. The streets are generally crowded. There are wild Arabs, busy citizens, foreign pilgrims, camels, mules, horses and donkeys, all moving hither and thither, making a striking picture indeed.

lay[4] down naked all that day and all that night. Wherefore they say, [e]*Is* Saul also among the prophets?[5]

CHAPTER XX.

1 David consulteth with Jonathan for his safety. 11 Jonathan and David renew their covenant by oath. 18 Jonathan's token to David. 24 Saul, missing David, seeketh to kill Jonathan. 41 Jonathan lovingly taketh his leave of David.

AND David [a]fled from Naioth in Ramah, and came and said before [b]Jonathan, What have I done? what *is* mine iniquity? and what *is* my sin before thy father, that he seeketh my life?

2 And he said unto him, [c]God forbid; thou shalt not die: behold, my father will do nothing, either great or small, but that he will show it me;[1] and why should my father hide this thing from me? it *is* not *so*.

3 And David [d]sware[2] moreover, and said, Thy father certainly knoweth that I have found grace in thine eyes; and he saith, Let not Jonathan know this, lest he be grieved: [e]but truly, *as* the LORD liveth, and *as* thy soul liveth, *there*[f] *is* but a step between me and death.

4 Then said Jonathan unto David, [g]Whatsoever thy soul desireth, I will even do *it* for thee.[3]

5 And David said unto Jonathan, Behold, to-morrow *is* [h]the new-moon,[4] and I should not fail to sit with the king at meat: but let me go, that [i]I may hide myself in the field unto the third *day* at even.

6 If thy father at all miss me, then say, David earnestly asked[5] *leave* of me that he might run to [k]Beth-lehem his city; for *there is* a yearly [l]sacrifice there for all the family.

7 If he say thus, *It is* well; thy servant shall have peace: but if he be very wroth, *then* be sure that evil is determined by him.

8 Therefore thou [m]shalt deal kindly with thy servant; for [n]thou hast brought thy servant into a covenant of the LORD with thee: notwithstanding, [o]if there be in me iniquity, slay me thyself; for why shouldest thou bring me to thy father?

9 And Jonathan said, Far be it from thee: for if I knew certainly that evil were determined by my father to come upon thee, then would not I tell it thee?

10 Then said David to Jonathan, Who shall tell me? or what *if* thy father answer thee roughly?

11 ¶ And Jonathan said unto David, Come, and let us go out into the field. And they went out both of them into the field.

12 And Jonathan said unto David, [p]O LORD God of Israel,[6] when I have [q]sounded my father about to-morrow any time, *or* the third *day*, and, behold, *if there be* good toward David, and I then send not unto thee, and show it thee;[7]

13 The [r]LORD do so and much more to Jonathan: but if it please my father *to do* thee evil, then I will show it thee, and send thee away, that thou mayest go in peace; and the [s]LORD be with thee, as he hath been with my father.[8]

14 And thou shalt not only, while yet I live, show me the kindness of the LORD, that I die not;

15 But *also* [t]thou shalt not cut off thy kindness from my house for ever: no, not when the LORD hath cut off the enemies of David[9] every one from the face of the earth.[1]

16 So Jonathan [u]made *a covenant* with the house of David, *saying*, [x]Let the LORD even require *it* at the hand of David's enemies.[2]

17 And Jonathan caused David to swear again, because he loved him: for [y]he loved him as he loved his own soul.

18 ¶ Then Jonathan said to David, [z]To-morrow *is* the new-moon; and thou shalt be missed, because thy seat will be empty.[3]

19 And *when* thou hast stayed three [4]days, *then* thou shalt go down quickly,[5] and come to the place where thou didst [a]hide thyself when the business[6] was *in hand*, and shalt remain by the stone Ezel.[7]

20 And I will shoot three arrows on the side *thereof*, as though I shot at a mark.

21 And, behold, I will send a lad, *saying*, Go, find out the arrows. If I expressly say unto the lad, Behold, the arrows *are* on this side of thee, take them; then come thou: for *there is* peace to thee, and no hurt,[8] *as* the LORD liveth.

22 But if I say thus unto the young man, Behold, the arrows *are* beyond thee; go thy way: for the LORD hath sent thee away.

23 And *as touching* [b]the matter which thou and I have spoken of, behold, the LORD *be* between[9] thee and me for ever.

24 ¶ So David [c]hid himself in the field: and when the new-moon was come, the king sat him down to eat meat.

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4 Heb. *fell.*

e ch.10.11.Ac.9.21.

5 This is a suggestive incident. Saul ought to have learned from what had occurred to his servants, that God had the hearts as well as the bodies of men in his power. But passion triumphed over judgment, and made him mad. He went himself to seize David. The Spirit of the Lord seized him, as he had done before, and brought him for the time under his almighty influence. This new occurrence occasioned a renewal of the proverb: 'Is Saul also among the prophets?'—*P.*

CHAP. XX.

a ch. 19. 23; 23. 26. 2 Pe.2.9. Is. 30. 15. Mat. 10.23.

b ch.12. 3. Ju. 11. 12. Pr.28.1,ver.32.

c Ge.44.7. Jos.22.29; 24.16.

1 Heb. *uncover mine ear.*

2 That is, solemnly appealed to the living God, as in the text. It was thus an act of worship in the prospect of death.—*C.*

e ch.xxv,xxvi.; 1.26; 2.15,21.2 Ki.2.2.

f De.28.66. 1 Co. 15. 30.Ps.116.3,11.ch.27.1.

g ch. 18. 3; 19. 2. Pr. 17.17;18.24.ver.17.

3 There is a beautiful and touching simplicity in the original: 'What says thy soul that I should do for thee?'—*J.*

h Nu. 10, 10; 28, 11. Ps.81.3.2 Ki.4.23.

4 The feast of the new-moon was celebrated with trumpets, Nu. 10. 10; with sacrifices, Nu. 28. 11, 12; by rest, Am. 8. 5; by attendance on the ministration of the word, 2 Ki. 4. 23; and, as appears from the text, with stated entertainments. *C.*—The months of the Hebrews were lunar months, and they reckoned from one new moon to another. At these new moons they offered sacrifices, and feasted together in families, for one or more days, ver. 27. On such occasions David was expected to be present, as the king's son-in-law. Compare ver.6,25.—*J.*

i ver.6,19,35. Pr. 22. 3;27.12.

5 From ver. 24 it appears that David did not go to Bethlehem, so that he instructs Jonathan to tell an untruth. This disingenuity is not to be defended, but condemned. But when infidels cavil against the word of God, because of the errors of his servants, let them recollect that here is an internal evidence of that word being from God, because, at any expense, it tells the truth.—*C.*

k ch.16.1.Jn.7.42.

l Or, *feast*, Ju.21.4.

m Ge. 24. 49; 47. 29. Jos.2.14. Pr.3.3;17. 17; 18.14.

n ch.18.3;23.18; ver. 16.

o Jos.22.22.Ps.7.4,5. ver.1.

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p Jos.22.22.Ru.1.17, ver.13.

6 That is, Hear, Lord God of Israel. In such abrupt apostrophes the evident feeling supplies the defect of language. Such forms of expression are common in all impassioned oratory; and never was the feeling of friendship more piously or more ardently uttered than by Jonathan.—*C.*

q Heb. *searched*, Pr.20.5;25.2,3.

7 Heb. *uncover thine ear.*

r ch. 3. 17; 14. 44; 25. 22. 2 Sa. 3. 35; 19. 13. 1 Ki.2.23;19.2;20.10.

s Phi.2.3. Mat. 7.12; 22.39.

8 That is, as in time past, to prosper him against all the enemies of Israel.—*C.*

t 2 Sa. ix.; 21. 7. Ge. 21.23.

9 It is evident that Jonathan, as a sincere believer in the word of the Lord by Samuel, was fully aware that David was to be king after his father, and his piety and friendship leave no room for envy, rivalry, or ambition.—*C.*

1 Ver. 14, 15 may be translated and interpreted as follows:—'*And wilt thou not, if I shall then be alive* (*i.e.* when thou comest to the kingdom)—*wilt thou not act in kindness with me, so that I may not die* (*i.e.* that I may not be put to death under pretence of preventing any attempt on my part to seize the crown). *And thou will not remove thy mercy from my house for ever—not even when the Lord shall have cut off all the enemies of David from the face of the earth.*' Jonathan foresaw not only that David would ascend the throne, but that his reign would be prosperous, because the Lord was with him. —*P.*

u Heb. *cut*, Ge. 15. 18.ch.18.3.

x ch.31.2; 25.22. Ge. 9.5,6. 2 Sa.4.7;21.8. Ps. 10.14; 94. 1. De.32.35. ver.23.

2 Let David's enemies punish Jonathan, if he ever prove false to David as a friend, or disloyal to him as a subject, when he comes to the crown; and let them avenge the breach of covenant on David if he prove unkind or cruel to Jonathan or his descendants.—*C.*

y ch. 18. 1, 3; 19. 2. 2 Sa. 1. 26. Pr. 17.17; 18. 24.

z ver.5.

3 Heb. *missed.*

4 Most probably—'when thou hast stayed three days at Bethlehem.'—*C.*

5 Or, *diligently.* Heb. *greatly.*

a ch.19.2.

6 Heb. *in the day of the business.*

7 Or, *that showeth the way.*

8 Heb. *not* any *thing.*

b ver.7–16,42.Ge.31. 50;16.5.

9 Witness or judge.

c ver.5. Pr.22.3; 27. 12.

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of religion.—*Note*, Popular prejudice cannot be right; but where there is no prejudice, popular opinion seldom errs in its estimate of public characters. Even children detect character with a perspicacity perfectly astonishing. Indeed there is no valley nor shadow of death where the workers of iniquity may hide themselves. *C.*]

REFLECTIONS.—What a mercy is a true and disinterested friend, who with heartiness and prudence espouses the cause of persecuted saints! Good advice, even from an inferior, deserves attention. But the oath of a common swearer, and the sudden change of a passionate man, are a bad security for one's life. It is good always to keep close to our duty, however ill men may reward us for it. But while we are on earth, something will ever allay the joys of our triumphs; and no kindness will cure the ranklings of inveterate malice. Happy are they who trust God with their protection and deliverance! He can make the very things intended for ensnaring us the means of our relief. Women justly cleave to their husbands rather than to their parents. But how dangerous is it to begin wandering out of God's way! One lie, or other act of sin, hardens the conscience for another. God can easily disarm the rage of the most furious, and turn persecutors into preachers and praisers. In danger let me therefore always cleave close to the Lord's faithful ministers and people: over all the glory shall be a defence. And let me take heed lest my spiritual gifts or experiences should, like Saul's, be merely occasional, intended for the good of others, not for my own.

CHAPTER XX. [Ver. 16. It appears to me that the first clause of this verse is closely connected logically

25 And the king sat upon his seat, as [d]at other times, *even* upon a seat by the wall; and Jonathan arose, and Abner sat by Saul's side, and David's place was empty.[1]

26 Nevertheless Saul spake not any thing that day: for he thought, Something hath befallen him, he [e]*is* not clean; surely he *is* not clean.[2]

27 And it came to pass on the morrow, *which was* the second *day* of the month,[3] that David's place was empty; and Saul said unto Jonathan his son, [f]Wherefore cometh not the son[g] of Jesse to meat, neither yesterday nor to-day?[4]

28 And Jonathan [h]answered Saul, David earnestly asked *leave* of me *to go* to Beth-lehem:

29 And he said, Let me go, I pray thee; for our family hath a sacrifice in the city, and my brother, he hath commanded me *to be there:* and now, if I have found favour in thine eyes, let me get away, I pray thee, and see my brethren: therefore he cometh not unto the king's table.

30 Then Saul's anger was kindled against Jonathan, and he said unto him, [i]Thou son of the perverse rebellious[5] *woman*,[6] do not I know that thou hast chosen the son of Jesse to thine own confusion, and unto the confusion of thy mother's nakedness?[7]

31 For as long as the son of Jesse liveth upon the ground, thou shalt not be established, nor thy kingdom: wherefore now send and fetch him unto me; for he shall surely die.[8]

32 And Jonathan answered Saul his father, and said unto him, [k]Wherefore shall he be slain? what hath he done?

33 And Saul [l]cast a javelin at him to smite him: whereby Jonathan knew that it was determined of his father to slay David.

34 So Jonathan arose from the table in fierce anger, and did eat no meat the second day of the month: for he was grieved for David,[9] because his father had done him shame.

35 ¶ And it came to pass in the morning, that Jonathan went out into the field, [m]at the time appointed with David, and a little lad with him.

36 And he said unto his lad, Run, find out now the arrows which I shoot. *And,* as the lad ran, he shot an arrow beyond him.[1]

37 And when the lad was come to the [2]place of the arrow which Jonathan had shot, Jonathan cried after the lad, and said, *Is* not the arrow beyond thee?

38 And Jonathan cried after the lad, Make speed, haste, stay not.[3] And Jonathan's lad gathered up the arrows, and came to his master.

39 But the lad knew not any thing; only Jonathan and David knew the matter.

40 And Jonathan gave his [4]artillery[5] unto his lad,[6] and said unto him, Go, carry *them* to the city.

41 ¶ *And* as soon as the lad was gone, David arose out of *a place* toward the south, and fell on his face to the ground, and bowed himself three times;[7] and[n] they kissed one another, and wept one with another, until David [o]exceeded.

42 And Jonathan said to David, Go [p]in peace, forasmuch as we have sworn both of us in the name of the LORD,[8] saying, The LORD be between me and thee, and between my seed and thy seed for ever. And[q] he arose and departed: and Jonathan went into the city.

CHAPTER XXI.

1 *David at Nob obtaineth of Ahimelech hallowed bread.* 7 *Doeg is present.* 8 *David taketh Goliath's sword.* 10 *He fleeth to Gath, where to save his life he feigneth himself mad.*

THEN came David to [a]Nob [b]to Ahimelech the priest: and Ahimelech [c]was afraid[1] at the meeting of David, and said unto him, Why *art* thou alone, and no man with thee?

2 And David [d]said unto Ahimelech the priest, The king hath commanded me a business, and hath said unto me, Let no man know any thing of the business whereabout I send thee, and what I have commanded thee: and I have appointed *my* servants to such and such a [2]place.

3 Now therefore what is under thine hand? give *me* five *loaves of* bread in mine hand, or what there is present.[3]

4 And the priest answered David, and said, *There is* no common bread under mine hand; but there is [e]hallowed bread, if the young men have kept themselves at least [f]from women.

5 And David answered the priest,[4] and said unto him, Of a truth women *have been* kept from us about these three days, since I came

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d Nu.24.1. Ju.16,20. Pr.4.17;23.6.

1 The allotment of special places for the king and royal guests marks the state of the court as one of considerable form and ceremony.—*C.*

e Le.17.24; 15.16,17, 19,21. Nu.19.16.

2 As by touching a dead body, or the like ceremonial defilement.—*C.*

3 Not the second day after the new-moon, but the day after the second new-moon, *i.e.* the second day of the second month. See ver. 34, and compare Ex. 19. 1, 'the third new-moon, *i.e.* the first day of the third month.'—*I.*

f ch. 18. 11; 19. 9, 15, 20,23. Pr.30.20.

g ch. 22. 7–9; 25. 10. Mat.13.55.

4 Most forms of uncleanness continued but till the evening, and therefore Saul expects David to be clean on the second day, Le. 11. 26–28.—*C.*

h ver. 6. Zec. 8. 16. Col.3.9. Ep.4.25.

i Heb. *Son of perverse rebellion,* Mat. 5.22. Ep.6.4.

5 Or, *Thou perverse rebel.*

6 As there is no word for *woman* in the Hebrew, some understand the phrase as in the margin. But the subsequent allusion to his mother shows that this does not exhaust the meaning. Among eastern nations it is the extremity of abuse to speak evil of any one's mother. Mungo Park relates the expression of an African, 'Strike me, but do not curse my mother.' Yet the intention is commonly not so much to stigmatize the mother as the son; for not only is she often unknown to the reviler, but a father will (like Saul) use such expressions to his own son, and one brother to another.—*I.*

7 An angry man always talks foolishly, and little regards the impropriety of his language. Saul, according to an eastern custom, upbraids the mother rather than the son, charging his kindness to David as a proof of illegitimacy.—*C.*

8 Heb. *is the son of death.*

k ver.17. Pr.31.9; 24. 11,12. Jn.7.25,51.

l ch.18.11; 19.10,11.

9 The words, 'and did eat no meat, for he was grieved for David,' are a parenthesis, and the anger is accounted for on the ground of the public insult to himself and his mother.—*C.*

m ver.19.

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1 Heb. *to pass over* him. By these tokens David was warned of his danger.

2 Michaelis and Dathe, by a slight change in the Hebrew, translate 'half-way to the place,' but that seems unnecessary.—*I.*

3 Though these words appear to be addressed to the lad, they were intended for David.—*I.*

4 Heb. *instruments.*

5 His bow and quiver with the arrows.—*C.*

6 Heb. *that* was *his.*

7 David, in extreme danger, first worships God, and then acknowledges the faithfulness of his friend.—*C.*

n Ru.1.9,14. Ge.31. 28,55;29.11.

o Ps.27.4; 42.1; 63.1; 84.1,2.

p Nu.6.26. Is. 26.12. Ho.2.18. Lu.2.14. Phi. 4.7.

8 Or, the LORD be witness of that *which we have sworn.*

q ch.23.18.

CHAP. XXI.

B.C. 1058.

a ch.22.9,19. Ne.11. 32. Is.10.32.

b Mar. 2. 26. 2Sa.8. 17.ch.22.10–13.

c ch.16.4. Mat.12.3.

1 It is most probable the antipathy of Saul to David was not unknown to Ahimelech, and that he anticipated the vengeance of Saul for any intercourse he might hold with him—a fear sadly realized within a brief period.—*C.*

d ch. 22. 22. Ps. 119. 29. Col. 3. 9. Ep. 4.25. Zec.8.16.

2 It is melancholy to read this second instance of David's disingenuity and falsehood. See note ch. 20. 6. These are some of the iniquities for which God afterwards afflicts him till he sees his sin, and turns to the Lord, not with divided affections, but with all his heart.—*C.*

3 Heb. *found.*

e Ex.25.30. Le.24.5. Mat.12.4. ver.6.

f Ex.19.15. Le.15.18. 1 Co.7.5.

4 The conduct of David in practising deception admits of no defence; and David, when more enlightened by the Spirit of God, and more dead to the world, would himself have been the last to attempt such defence. The record illustrates the sinfulness of man, and the weakness of David's faith, while the pardon of it displays the long-suffering and mercy of God. See note on ch. 20. 6.—*C.*

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with the first clause of ver. 15, and that the two may be thus joined: '*And thou will not remove thy mercy from my house. . . . And Jonathan will* (not) *remove* (his mercy) *from the house of David.*' The second clause appears to be a solemn invocation of Jonathan's that, in case David should deal thus generously, then the Lord would reward him by the overthrow of his enemies: 'And may the Lord require it from the hand (or, repay it upon) the enemies of David!" *P.*]

REFLECTIONS.—How great is the value and usefulness of a true friend, especially in a time of distress and danger! The greatest disinterestedness of affection is implied in cordial friendship—it extends to posterity, as well as to its immediate objects. When influenced by it, we cannot endure the shadow of what might produce a separation; and can more readily be abused ourselves, than have our friend ill-treated. Great patience, meekness, and prudence are necessary when we have to deal with foul-mouthed, malicious, and unreasonable men. And with what tender and solemn concern should friends part, in view of having their next meeting in eternity! But most necessary is a constant cleaving to Jesus Christ, and his everlasting promise, as all our salvation and all our desire.

CHAPTER XXI. [Ver. 1. The word *Nob* signifies 'a high place,' and we may conclude that it stood on a height. Its geographical position is incidentally indicated in this narrative. It lay south of Gibeah, for David was on his way to Philistia when he called at Nob. It was also close to Gibeah. From Is. 10. 32 we learn that it was within sight of Jerusalem, and not far from Anathoth. About a mile south of the site of Gibeah is a conical rocky hill, on whose summit and sides are traces of a small but very ancient town. It commands a wide view, including the top of Mount Zion. This appears to me to be the site of Nob. *P.*]

Ver. 4. [The latter part of this verse as here translated is unintelligible. The meaning of it appears to be this—'*The bodies of the young men are clean; and though the way* (*i.e.* the purpose or enterprise on which we go) *is common* (that is, not strictly ecclesiastical), *yet is it to-day sanctified through the instrument*' (*i.e.* through me as the appointed ambassador of the king). David pretended that he was upon a royal commission, and that he was thus justified in taking even holy bread. *P.*]

Ver. 10. [The site of Gath has long been a subject of difficulty and doubt among biblical geographers. Its exact position is not described in Scripture. From a careful study of incidental notices, and of the topography

out, and the [g]vessels of the young men are holy, and the bread is [h]in a manner common, yea, though it were sanctified this day in the vessel.

6 So the priest [i]gave him hallowed *bread:* for there was no bread there but the shewbread that was taken from before the LORD, to put [k]hot bread in the day when it was taken away.

7 Now a certain man of the servants of Saul *was* there that day, [l]detained before the LORD; and his name *was* [m]Doeg, an Edomite,[5] the chiefest of the herdmen that *belonged* to Saul.[6]

8 ¶ And David said unto Ahimelech, And is there not here under thine hand spear or sword? for I have neither brought my sword nor my weapons with me, because the king's business required haste.[7]

9 And the priest said, The [n]sword of Goliath the Philistine, whom thou slewest in the valley of Elah, behold, it *is here* wrapped in a cloth behind the ephod: if thou wilt take that, take *it;* for *there is* no other save that here. And David said, *There is* none like that; give it me.

10 ¶ And David arose, and [o]fled that day for fear of Saul, and went to Achish the king of Gath.

11 And the [p]servants of Achish said unto him, *Is* not this David the king of the land? did they not sing one to another of him in dances, saying, Saul hath slain his thousands, and David his ten thousands?

12 And David [q]laid up these words in his heart, and [r]was sore afraid of Achish the king of Gath.

13 And he [s]changed his behaviour before them, and feigned himself mad in their hands, and scrabbled[8] on the doors of the gate, and let his spittle fall down upon his beard.[9]

14 Then said Achish unto his servants, Lo, ye see the man is mad:[1] wherefore *then* have ye brought him to me?

15 Have I need of madmen, that ye have brought this *fellow* to play the madman in my presence? shall this *fellow* come into my house?[2]

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[g] Bodies, Ac. 9.15. 2 Co.4.7. 1 Th.4.3,4. 1 Pe.3.7. 2 Ti.2.21.

[h] Mat.12.3,4,7.

[i] Mar.2.25. Lu. 6.3. Mat.12.4.

[k] Le.24.8. Ex.25.30.

[l] Je.7.9,10. Is. 1. 15. Tit.1.16. Mat.15.8. He was detained at the tabernacle to be purified; but he had no love to God's ordinances.

[m] Ps. 52. title, 1–7; cxx.

5 Either an Edomite born, and a proselyte to the Jewish religion, or an Israelite born and educated in the land of Edom.—*C.*

6 The state of Israel admitting scarcely of any revenue for the support of the king's dignity, or defraying the unavoidable expense of the public service, the king must become a large proprietor of cattle, the staple of the country, and these required regular officers for their management, of whom Doeg was the chief.—*C.*

7 Another act of deception, and liable to the same condemnation as every such former act. See notes on ch.20.6;21.2.—*C.*

[n] ch.17.2–51,54.

[o] 1 Ki. 19. 3. Ps. 34. title. Mat.10.23. ch.27. 2;20.1.

[p] Ps.56. title. ch. 18. 7;29.5.

[q] Lu.2.19,51.

[r] Ge.26.7. Ps.34.4.

[s] Ps.34. title. Pr.29. 25.

8 Or, *made marks.*

9 In eastern countries the beard is an object of much attention, and to spit upon it, or even to threaten to spit upon it, is the most heinous insult. Achish therefore concludes that the man who spits upon his own beard must have lost his reason. Some commentators are of opinion that David was really affected by epilepsy, a disease that might produce the effects recorded; but it seems much more natural to consider it another act of wilful deception, less criminal indeed than his former acts of the same kind, but still to be condemned as the result of timidity and want of faith in God.—*C.*

1 Or, *playeth the madman.*

2 Among other qualities, David was an accomplished actor. Perfect coolness and fertility of resource, in circumstances of great danger, were prominent characteristics of his mind. Madmen were, and still are, privileged in the East. David's feigned madness saved his life, and embracing a favourable opportunity, he fled to the cave of Adullam. It was easy to escape when once he got outside the walls, for the wooded hills and secluded valleys adjoining the city afford a ready asylum to the fugitive. —*P.*

A.M. 2946. B.C. 1058.

CHAP. XXII.

[a] Ps.34. title,1,2; 56. 1.

[b] Jos.12.15. 2 Sa. 23. 13,14. Ps.142.title. He. 11.38.

1 The traditional cave of Adullam is situated in a wild ravine about four miles south-east of Bethlehem. It may not be the real cave, but the locality is unquestionably the same. It is in the wilderness of Judah, which was David's favourite haunt when danger threatened him. It was near his native town, too, where his brothers could easily reach him.—*P.*

[c] Ju. 11. 3. Mat. 11. 28.

[d] Heb. *had a creditor,* Mat.18.27.

[e] Heb. *bitter of soul,* Ps.38.8;55.8.

[f] ch.25.15,16. He. 2. 10. Ps. 72. 12–14. Mat. 11.28;18.11. Jn. 7. 48. 1 Co.1.26,27.

[g] Not ch. 7. 5, nor Ge.31.49.

[h] Ru.1.4,14.10,22.ch. 14,47.

2 Being of Moabitish descent, through Ruth, he would naturally expect protection for his relatives in Moab.—*C.*

[i] Ge.47.11,12. Ex.20. 12.

[k] 2 Sa.24.11.1Ch.21. 9;29.29.

[l] Phi.4. 8. Ps. 84. 10; 73.25. De.8.2.

[m] Or, *grove in a high place.* With ch. 7.17;19.18.

3 This is an evident contradiction, for Gibeah and Ramah were two different places. The contradiction, however, is not in the original, but in the translation. Ramah is here not a name of the place so called, but should be translated 'hill.' —*C.*

[n] ch.20.27,30; 25.10. 1 Ki.12.16.

[o] ch.18.3; 19.2; 20.7–17,41,42.

[p] Ps.52.title,1–4;120. 2–4; 140. 3, 11. Je.9.3. Ezc.22.9. Pr.29.12; 19. 5,9. ch.30.1–9.

4 Noldius thinks this means, 'who was standing among the servants,' but at ch. 21. 7 he is called the 'chiefest of the herdmen that belonged to Saul,' and the Septuagint intimates that he was over Saul's mules. Saul had probably by this time made large additions to his paternal property in flocks and herds, which constituted the chief wealth of that age. The person therefore who had the general oversight of the whole held an office of great importance. The swineherds and goatherds of Ulysses are represented by Homer as sitting at meat with princes in their master's house. —*I.*

CHAPTER XXII.

1 *Companies resort unto David at Adullam.* 3 *At Mizpeh he commendeth his parents to the protection of the king of Moab.* 5 *Admonished by Gad, he cometh to Hareth.* 6 *Saul going to pursue him, complaineth of his servants' unfaithfulness.* 9 *Doeg accuseth Ahimelech.* 11 *Saul commandeth to kill the priests.* 17 *The footmen refusing, Doeg executeth it.* 20 *Abiathar escaping, bringeth David the news.*

DAVID therefore [a]departed thence, and escaped to the [b]cave Adullam:[1] and when his brethren, and all his father's house, heard *it,* they went down thither to him.

2 And every one [c]*that was* in distress, and every one *that* [d]*was* in debt, and every one *that was* [e]discontented, gathered themselves unto him, and he became a [f]captain over them: and there were with him about four hundred men.

3 ¶ And David went thence to [g]Mizpeh of Moab: and he said unto the [h]king of [2]Moab, [i]Let my father and my mother, I pray thee, come forth, *and be* with you, till I know what God will do for me.

4 And he brought them before the king of Moab; and they dwelt with him all the while that David was in the hold.

5 ¶ And the [k]prophet Gad said unto David, Abide not in the hold; [l]depart, and get thee into the land of Judah. Then David departed, and came into the forest of Hareth.

6 ¶ When Saul heard that David was discovered, and the men that *were* with him, (now Saul abode in Gibeah under a [m]tree in Ramah,[3] having his spear in his hand, and all his servants *were* standing about him,)

7 Then Saul said unto his servants that stood about him, Hear now, ye Benjamites; will [n]the son of Jesse give every one of you fields and vineyards, *and* make you all captains of thousands, and captains of hundreds;

8 That all of you have conspired against me, and *there is* none that showeth me [o]that my son hath made a league with the son of Jesse; and *there is* none of you that is sorry for me, or showeth unto me that my son hath stirred up my servant against me, to lie in wait, as at this day?

9 ¶ Then [p]answered Doeg the Edomite, which was set over the servants[4] of Saul, and

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of the country, I have come to the conclusion that it stood upon the conical hill now called *Tell es-Sâfieh.* It is about 7 miles from Bethshemesh, and 6 miles north of Eleutheropolis. It stands close to the base of the mountains of Judah. The site is a most commanding one, and well suited to a royal city. Gath appears to have been in ruins in the time of Amos, ch. 6. 2; and with the exception of an incidental allusion to it in a proverb, Mi. 1. 10, we hear no more of it in history. It is not mentioned by the later prophets among the royal cities of Philistia. *P.*]

REFLECTIONS.—High stations are slippery places. Often a person is scarcely fixed in when he is driven from them. How weak are the best of men when left to themselves; and how unreasonable therefore to be secure or self-confident! We know not what temptations are before us, or how weak we are to resist them. God will have mercy and not sacrifice: and what we have devoted to his honour may become the means of our protection. But even in the house of God Satan has his spies, who come pretending to worship, but are sent by him for mischief. Oppression sometimes makes a wise man mad; and the fear of man causeth a snare. But in every trial God can open a way for our escape, and make even our enemies instruments of our deliverance. In distress let me flee to God's sanctuary, where I may have spiritual armour, comfort, and direction. However Providence alter my lot, let me always retain my Christian candour: and if my troubles be great, let strong faith and prudent circumspection attend me; not craftiness or dissimulation.

CHAPTER XXII. [Ver. 2. *There were with him about four hundred men.* David has been much censured by infidels on account of the character of his army. This censure is without reason. A man in distress is not necessarily a wicked man, nor has the original word any such unfavourable meaning. Neither is every man in debt necessarily a dishonest man—and the refugees in debt may have merely fled from slavery to which the law subjected them and their families. Nor is every discontented man necessarily a bad subject—indeed how any wise man could have been otherwise than discontented with the wicked government of Saul is a problem that infidels should solve before they accuse David of affording such men a refuge from Saul's misgovernment. *C.*]

REFLECTIONS.—What terrible disasters attend earthly promotions! But God will certainly take care that his persecuted people may always have some friends: and such as suffer with them shall be glorified together. Yea, God often puts the greatest honour upon the most unlikely objects. And Jesus will in no wise cast out any that come to him. How unsettled is the life of the saints on earth! and often their trials are reserved for old age, when there is least strength to endure them. But it bodes well when children prefer the safety of their parents to their own; and when in trials we expect good at the Lord's hand, and readily

said, I saw the son of Jesse coming to Nob, to Ahimelech the son of Ahitub.

10 And he [q]inquired of the LORD for him, and gave him victuals, and gave him the sword of Goliath the Philistine.

11 ¶ Then the king [r]sent to call Ahimelech the priest, the son of Ahitub, and all his father's house, the priests that *were* in Nob: and they came all of them to the king.

12 And Saul said, Hear now, thou son of Ahitub. And he answered, Here I[5] *am*, my lord.

13 And Saul said unto him, [s]Why have ye conspired against me,[6] thou and the [t]son of Jesse, in that thou hast given him bread, and a sword, and hast inquired of God for him, that he should rise against me, to lie in wait, as at this day?

14 Then Ahimelech answered the king, [u]and said, And who *is so* faithful among all thy servants as David, which is the king's son-in-law, and [z]goeth at thy bidding, and is honourable in thine house?

15 Did I then begin[7] to inquire of God for him? be it far from me. Let not the king impute *any* thing unto his servant, *nor* to all the house of my father; for thy servant knew nothing of all this, less or more.[8]

16 And the king said, [y]Thou shalt surely die, Ahimelech, thou, and [z]all thy father's house.[9]

17 ¶ And the king said unto the [1]footmen[2] that stood about him, Turn and slay the priests of the LORD; because their [a]hand also *is* with David, and because they knew when he fled, and did not show it to me. But the servants of the king [b]would not put forth their hand to fall upon the priests of the LORD.

18 And the king said to Doeg, Turn thou, and fall upon the priests. And [c]Doeg the Edomite[3] turned, and he fell upon the priests, and slew on that day fourscore and five persons that did [d]wear a linen ephod.

19 And [e]Nob, the city of the priests, smote he with the edge of the sword, [f]both men and women, children and sucklings, and oxen, and asses, and sheep, with the edge of the sword.[4]

20 ¶ And [g]one of the sons of Ahimelech the son of Ahitub, named [h]Abiathar, escaped, and fled after David.

21 And Abiathar showed David that Saul had slain the LORD's priests.

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q Nu.27. 21. Ju. 1. 1. ch.23.2,4,12;30.8.

r Ro.3.15. Ps. 5. 6,9. Is. 59,7. Pr.1.15, 16; 4. 16.

[5] Heb. *Behold me.*

s ver. 8–10. Ps. 119. 69.

[6] Saul, like other weak and wicked rulers, takes the guilt of Ahimelech for granted, and only questions him to give a show of justice to the cruel sentence already passed in his purpose.—*C.*

t ver. 7–9; ch. 20. 27, 30;25.10.

u Pr.31. 9; 24. 11, 12. Lu.23.41.

x ch.21.2.

[7] No, I have often done it when he was occupied in your service.

[8] Heb. *little or great.*

y Ex.1. 12, 13. Es. 3. 8,9. Mat.2.16. Ac.12.1, 2. Pr.28.15. Zep.3.3.

z ch.2.30–33;3.12,14. Ex.20.5.

[9] The wickedness of Saul, as a king, is but little still more apparent; for even had Ahimelech been guilty of connivance with David in a real, instead of an imaginary conspiracy, this proved no guilt against his father's whole house.—*C.*

[1] Or, *guard.*

[2] Heb. *runners.*

a ver.13. 1 Ki.21.10–15.

b Ex.1.17. Ac. 4. 19; 5.29. Ro.13.5.

c Ps.52.1–4; cxx. ch. 2.31,32.

[3] Though the Jewish rabbins are not willing to allow Doeg to have been an Edomite by descent, but an Israelite born in Edom, this difference of feeling and conduct between him and the footmen seems to prove him an absolute stranger to Israelitish feelings.—*C.*

d Ex.28.40.ch.2.28.

e ver.9; ch.21.1. Ne. 11.32. Is.10.32.

f ch 15.9. 2 Ki.15.16.

[4] This was one of the worst acts in Saul's life. His malice was implacable, and his wrath cruel; there is no motive of justice or policy by which such a barbarous massacre can be justified. It was well said by Justin Martyr, 'Let us pray that kings and rulers may be found having a sober mind.' Saul's unrighteous command fulfilled God's threatening against the house of Eli. 'By the massacre of the priests Saul weakened the power of those whom he had made his enemies, and obtained their possessions to bestow upon his followers. It was a most decided act of defiance to the Most High' (*Delaney*). —'Saul hereby for ever deprived himself of the protection and counsel of Jehovah. Abiathar fled with the ephod in which was the judgment of Urim: and David thereby received the fullest and plainest directions in circumstances of danger and difficulty' (*Chandler*).—*I.*

g ch.2.32, 33; 23. 6. 1 Ki.2.32.

h ver.21. 2; ch 23.6, 9;30.7. 2 Sa.8.17;20.25. 1 Ki. 1. 7; 2. 22, 26, 27. Mar 2.26.

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i Ps.44.22. ch. 21. 1–7.

[5] Thus terribly was the prediction, ch. 2. 30, brought nigh to fulfilment; Abiathar alone remains of the descendants of Eli, and is spared for a time, hereafter doomed to render the punishment of an unfaithful priesthood still more obvious, and to give warning to all formal churches to repent, lest the Lord remove their candlestick out of his place.—*C.*

[6] Heb. *soul.*

CHAP. XXIII.

a Jos.15.44.

1 Keilah, now called *Kela*, was situated 8 miles west of Hebron, near the borders of the plain of Philistia. The position is strong, and the site is now marked by the ruins of an old castle.—*P.*

b Nu.27.21. Ju.1.1, 1 Ch.14.10. Ezr.8.21. Je. 10.23. Pr.3.5,6. Ps.32.8.

2 We know not how he inquired, but probably it was through Abiathar, now lineal high-priest. *C.*——The adventure here mentioned was truly noble and patriotic. Had not David loved his country, and been above all motives of private and personal revenge, he would have rejoiced in this invasion of Judah, as producing a strong diversion in his favour, and embroiling his inveterate enemy. In most cases, a man with David's wrongs would have joined with the enemies of his country, and have avenged himself on the author of his calamities; but he thinks of nothing but of succouring Keilah, and using his power and influence in behalf of his brethren. This is a rare instance of disinterested heroism.—*Clarke.*

c ver.15,23,26.

d ver.2, Ju.6,39.2Sa. 5.19,23, with ch.30.8. By the Lord's readily answering David, and not Saul, he marked the one as his elected king, and the other as rejected.

e ch.22.20. Ex.28.30. Nu.27.21.

3 Which it seems had the Urim and Thummim.

f Ex. 15. 9; 14. 3. Ps. 71.11.

g Nu.27.21. ch. 30.7; ver.2,4.

4 The courage of David in saving Keilah seems very unlike his timidity before Achish, and his complete dependence in the reply of the Lord very different from the weakness, or rather want of faith formerly ascribed to him. Yet to what does all this amount? Not even to any ground of suspicion against the history, but merely to an evidence of the weakness and inconsistency of man. Let him who has never acted inconsistently with his better feelings or convictions, cast the first stone at David.—*C.*

h ch. 22. 10. Ps. 3. 6. Pr. 16. 14. Ps.44. 22. Jn. 10. 28, 29.

22 And David said unto Abiathar, I knew *it* that day, when Doeg the Edomite *was* there, that he would surely tell Saul: I have occasioned [i]*the death* of all the persons of thy father's house.[5]

23 Abide thou with me, fear not: for he that seeketh my life[6] seeketh thy life: but with me thou *shalt be* in safeguard.

CHAPTER XXIII.

1 *The Philistines fight against Keilah; David, inquiring of the Lord by Abiathar, smiteth them, and saveth Keilah.* 9 *God showing him the coming of Saul, and the treachery of the Keilites, he escapeth from Keilah.* 13 *In Ziph Jonathan cometh and comforteth him.* 19 *The Ziphites discover him to Saul.* 25 *At Maon he is rescued from Saul by the invasion of the Philistines.* 29 *He dwelleth at Engedi.*

THEN they told David, saying, Behold, the Philistines fight against [a]Keilah,[1] and they rob the thrashing-floors.

2 Therefore David [b]inquired of the [2]LORD, saying, Shall I go and smite these Philistines? And the LORD said unto David, Go and smite the Philistines, and save Keilah.

3 And David's men said unto him, Behold, [c]we be afraid here in Judah, how much more then if we come to Keilah against the armies of the Philistines?

4 Then David [d]inquired of the LORD yet again. And the LORD answered him, and said, Arise, go down to Keilah; for I will deliver the Philistines into thine hand.

5 So David and his men went to Keilah, and fought with the Philistines, and brought away their cattle, and smote them with a great slaughter. So David saved the inhabitants of Keilah.

6 And it came to pass, when Abiathar the son of Ahimelech [e]fled to David to Keilah, *that* he came down *with* an ephod[3] in his hand.

7 ¶ And it was told Saul that David was come to Keilah. And Saul said, [f]God hath delivered him into mine hand; for he is shut in, by entering into a town that hath gates and bars.

8 And Saul called all the people together to war, to go down to Keilah, to besiege David and his men.

9 ¶ And David knew that Saul secretly practised mischief against him, and he said to Abiathar the priest, [g]Bring hither the ephod.[4]

10 Then said David, O LORD God of Israel, thy servant hath certainly heard that Saul seeketh to come to Keilah, to [h]destroy the city for my sake.

11 Will the men of Keilah deliver me up

take the advice of his servants. How jealousy torments a man's self with its groundless suspicions! It represents the most faithful as seditious, and accuses them of meditating the worst designs. It is very unsafe to trust to wicked men: our most benevolent actions may by them be turned into the worst of crimes, and truth may be reported in a manner more malignant than gross calumny and falsehood. But generous is that mind which will not hurt the character of another, even when truth admits and safety requires it. What a terrible plague is a tyrannical king! What barbarous monsters do some render themselves! But it is painful to a good man to be in any wise the occasion of mischief to others. Here likewise let us observe that, even through this wickedness and rage of Saul, God exactly fulfils his threatenings against Eli; and destroys the remnant of his house. Let us wonder at the depth of his providence and the faithfulness of his word.

CHAPTER XXIII. REFLECTIONS.—No wonder that God's enemies invade his land when his people are persecuted in it. God wisely directs his favourite servants where he has work for them: and never are men so likely to prosper as when they consult the Lord in all their ways. If he direct us, no ill usage from the distressed, or discouragement from our friends, must make us withhold our help. The worst designs are often covered with fair pretexts, and the appearances of providence are imagined tokens of God's approbation; while even good men are hated for their most useful services, and evil-minded wretches are ready to betray their most cordial and noted benefactors. But God knows how

into his hand? will Saul come down, as thy servant hath heard? O LORD God of Israel, I beseech thee, tell thy servant. And [t]the LORD said, He will come down.[5]

12 Then said David, Will the men of Keilah deliver[6] me and my men into the hand of Saul? And the LORD said, They will deliver *thee* up.[7]

13 ¶ Then David and his men, [k]*which were* about six hundred, arose and departed out of Keilah, and went whithersoever they could go. And it was told Saul that David was escaped from Keilah; and he forbare to go forth.

14 And David abode in the wilderness in strong holds, and remained [l]in a mountain in the wilderness of Ziph:[8] and [m]Saul sought him every day; [n]but God delivered him not into his hand.[9]

15 And David saw that Saul was come out to seek his life: and David *was* in the wilderness of Ziph in a wood.

16 And Jonathan, Saul's son, arose, and went to David into the wood, and [o]strengthened his hand in God.[1]

17 And he said unto him, Fear not; for the hand of Saul my father [p]shall not find thee; and thou shalt be king over Israel, and I shall be next unto thee; and that also [q]Saul my father knoweth.

18 And [r]they two made a covenant before the LORD. And David abode in the wood, and Jonathan went to his house.

19 ¶ Then [s]came up the Ziphites to Saul to Gibeah, saying, Doth not David hide himself with us in strong holds in the wood, in the hill of Hachilah,[2] which *is* on the south[3] of [4]Jeshimon?[5]

20 Now therefore, O king, come down according to all the desire of thy soul to come down; and our part[6] *shall be* to deliver him into the king's hand.

21 And Saul said, [t]Blessed *be* ye of the LORD; for ye have compassion on me.

22 Go, I pray you, prepare yet, and know and see his place where his [u]haunt is, *and* who hath seen him there: for it is told me *that* he dealeth very subtilely.

23 See therefore, and take knowledge of all the lurking-places where he hideth himself, and come ye again to me with the certainty, and I will go with you: and it shall come to pass, if he be in the land, that I [w]will search him out throughout all the thousands[7] of Judah.

24 And they arose, and went to Ziph before Saul: but David and his men *were* in the [v]wilderness of Maon,[8] in the plain on the south of Jeshimon.

25 Saul also and his men went to seek *him.*

A.M. 2946. B.C. 1058.

i Mat.7.7. Ps. 50. 15, with ver.14.

5 Saul did not come to Keilah: was not the reply to David therefore, untrue? By no means. Every question and every answer must be explained, not merely by what is spoken, but by what is implied or understood. In this case, the thing implied is, 'If I abide here,' and the reply is given to *that*, as well as to the words spoken. This mode of speech is unavoidable, and consequently common to all languages.—*C.*

6 Heb. *shut up.*

7 See note on ver. 11.—*C.*

k ch.22.1,2,25.13;27. 2;30.9.

l Jos.15.21,55.Ps.11. 1.Ob.3.

8 Ziph was an ancient town, situated on a conical hill, about 4 miles south-east of Hebron. The country round it was called the 'wilderness (*i.e. midbar*, pastoral region) of Ziph.'—*P.*

m ch.27.1.Pr.1.16;4. 16.Is.59.7.

n Ro. 8. 31. Ps. 32.7. Pr. 21. 30. Is. 46.3, 4. 2 Co.1.10.

9 While David, no doubt, employed all the watchfulness of an experienced warrior, his safety is not from himself — God refuses to deliver him to his enemy. See Ps.cxxi.—*C.*

o ver.17. Ep. 6. 10. 2 Ti.2.1.He.12.12,13.

1 David's faith, as appears from several previous instances, required to be strengthened. The means employed for this purpose are the encouraging words of Jonathan, efficaciously applied by the Spirit. Pr.27.17.—*C.*

p Ps.46.1;xci.2 Co.1. 10.Is 40.4.

q Ac. 5. 39; 7.51. ch. 20.30,31;24.20.

r ch.20.16,17;18.3.

s ch.26.1. Ps.54. title, 3,4, with ch. 22.7. Mi. 7.5.

2 A hill in the south of Judah, fortified in the days of the Maccabees, but the fortifications were afterwards destroyed by the Romans.—*C.*

3 Heb. *on the right hand.*

4 Or, *the wilderness.*

5 A city in the tribe of Simeon.—*C.*

6 Heb. *it becometh us.*

t Mi.3.11.Is.66.5.ch. 22.8.

u Heb. *foot shall be*, Job 5.13.Is.8.9,10.

x Pr.1.16;4.16. Ro.3. 15,16.

7 That means the districts so called from the number of inhabitants they contained at the first settlement and census; like the word *hundred* in England. —*J.*

y Jos.15.55.ch.25.2.

8 Maon, a city of Judah, which gave name to a considerable tract of pasture-land, called the wilderness of Maon. The city stood on an eminence, and the hills in its vicinity are full of large caves, where David and his men hid themselves. *C.*——Maon is about 7 miles south-east of Hebron, and 3 miles beyond Ziph. It stood on the summit and sides of a conical hill, about 200 feet high. The hill is now strewn with ruins, among which are the remains of a square fortress. It still bears its ancient name.—*P.*

A.M. 2946. B.C. 1058.

z 2 Ch.20.12. 2 Co.1. 8.Ps.50.15;91.15.

a Ge. 22. 14. De. 32. 36. Re.12.16. Ps.116.3, 4.Lu.4.29,30.

9 Heb. *spread themselves upon*, &c.

1 Let no one ever despair of deliverance because he does not see the means—all means are in the hands of God; and if he will, one enemy shall deliver his servant from another.—*C.*

2 That is, *The rock of divisions.*

b Ge.14.7. 2 Ch.20.2. Ca. 1. 14. Jos. 15. 62. Eze.47.10.ch.24.1,2.

3 *Engedi* ('the fountain of the kid') stood about the middle of the western shore of the Dead Sea. The city was anciently called *Hazezon-tamar*, Ge. 14. 7, and was inhabited by Amorites in the days of Abraham. The fountain (still called *Ain-jidy*) from which the city took its name, bursts from the rugged mountain side, at an elevation of about 400 feet above the lake. Near it are the ruins of several buildings; but the site of the city was on the level ground on the shore, which is still strewn with ruins. The whole declivity from the fountain down to the city was terraced for vineyards. The site is now utterly desolate; the vines are all gone; and the palms for which it was once celebrated have almost disappeared. *The wilderness of Engedi* embraced the wild and rugged mountain regions extending from the ancient city up towards Hebron, Tekoa, and Bethlehem. It was, and still is, the home of the wild-goats; and in every ravine are immense caverns, in some of which David and his men lurked in former days, as robbers and outlaws do now.—*P.*

CHAP. XXIV.

a ch.23.7,19,28.Eze. 22.9.Ho.7.3.

1 Heb. *after.*

b ch.13.2; 22.8. 2 Sa. 27.1.Ps.38.12.

2 That is, mountaineers, accustomed to climb precipices, and explore caves.—*C.*

c Ju.3.24.

d Ps. lvii.; 142. title. ver.7.

3 That is, in the side caves branching from the main one. Such grottoes are found in every mountainous country, especially where limestone abounds.—*C.*

4 The cave of Khureitûn, in the upper part of the wilderness of Engedi, near Bethlehem, would contain upwards of 3000 men. I penetrated its dark and winding recesses to a distance of some 300 yards. One great hall in it measures 120 feet in length by 45 in breadth, with a lofty arched roof.—*P.*

e ch.26.8,23.

5 Heb. *the robe which was Saul's.*

f 2 Sa. 12. 9; 24. 10. 2 Ki.22.19.

6 Cutting off the skirt was in act of robbery, as well as of disrespect to his king, therefore his conscience smites him.—*Note*, No sin is small in the eye of an awakened conscience.—*C.*

g ch.26.9,11 Mat.5. 44.Ro.12.17-21. 1.

h ch.26.9-25.

7 Heb. *cut off.*

i Pr.16.28-17.9;25.23. Ps.101.5.1 Co.13.4.

And they told David: wherefore he came down into a rock, and abode in the wilderness of Maon; and when Saul heard *that*, he pursued after David in the wilderness of Maon.

26 And Saul went on this side of the mountain, and David and his men on that side of the mountain: and David made haste to get away for fear of Saul; for Saul and his men [z]compassed David and his men round about to take them.

27 ¶ But[a] there came a messenger unto Saul, saying, Haste thee, and come; for the Philistines have invaded[9] the land.[1]

28 Wherefore Saul returned from pursuing after David, and went against the Philistines: therefore they called that place Sela-hammah-lekoth.[2]

29 ¶ And David went up from thence, and dwelt in strong holds at [b]En-gedi.[3]

CHAPTER XXIV.

1 *David in a cave at Engedi, having cut off Saul's skirt, spareth his life.* 8 *He showeth thereby his innocency.* 16 *Saul, acknowledging his fault, taketh an oath of David, and departeth.*

AND it came to pass, when Saul was returned from [a]following[1] the Philistines, that it was told him, saying, Behold, David *is* in the wilderness of En-gedi.

2 Then Saul [b]took three thousand chosen men[2] out of all Israel, and went to seek David and his men upon the rocks of the wild goats.

3 And he came to the sheep-cotes by the way, where *was* a cave; and Saul [c]went in to cover his feet: and [d]David and his men remained in the sides[3] of the cave.[4]

4 And the men of David said unto him, [e]Behold the day of which the LORD said unto thee, Behold, I will deliver thine enemy into thine hand, that thou mayest do to him as it shall seem good unto thee. Then David arose, and cut off the skirt of Saul's robe[5] privily.

5 And it came to pass afterward, that [f]David's heart smote him, because he had cut off Saul's skirt.[6]

6 And he said unto his men, [g]The LORD forbid that I should do this thing unto my master, the LORD's anointed, to stretch forth mine hand against him, seeing he *is* the anointed of the LORD.

7 So David [h]stayed[7] his servants with these words, and suffered them not to rise against Saul. But Saul rose up out of the cave, and went on *his* way.

8 ¶ David also arose afterward, and went out of the cave, and cried after Saul, saying, My lord the king. And when Saul looked behind him, David stooped with his face to the earth, and bowed himself.

9 [i]And David said to Saul, Wherefore hearest

to deliver the godly out of temptation, and to disappoint the secret purposes of their enemies. And what a mercy is it to have a pious, self-denying, and constant friend to visit and comfort us in our distress! But what must Jesus be when Jonathan is so kind and faithful! And what must heaven be, where we shall meet with all the kind angels and kind spirits of just men made perfect; and with the infinitely kinder Father, Son and Holy Ghost! Let my spiritual

thou men's words, saying, Behold, David seeketh thy hurt?

10 Behold, this day thine eyes have seen how that the LORD had delivered thee to-day into mine hand in the cave: and [k]*some* bade *me* kill thee: but *mine eye* spared thee; and I said, I will not put forth mine hand against my lord; for he *is* the LORD's anointed.

11 Moreover, [l]my father, see; yea, see the skirt of thy robe in my hand: for in that I cut off the skirt of thy robe, and killed thee not, know thou and see that [m]*there is* neither evil nor transgression in mine hand, and I have not sinned against thee; yet thou [n]huntest my soul to take it.

12 The [o]LORD judge between me and thee, and the LORD avenge me of thee:[8] but mine hand shall not be upon thee.

13 As saith the proverb of the ancients, Wickedness[p] proceedeth from the wicked: but mine[q] hand shall not be upon thee.

14 After whom is [r]the king of Israel come out? after whom dost thou pursue? after [s]a dead dog, after a flea?[9]

15 The LORD therefore [t]be judge, and judge between me and thee, and see, and plead my cause, and deliver[1] me out of thine hand.

16 ¶ And it came to pass, when David had made an end of speaking these words unto Saul, that Saul said, [u]*Is* this thy voice,[2] my son David? And Saul lifted up his voice, and [x]wept.[3]

17 And he said to David, [y]Thou *art* more righteous than I; for thou hast rewarded me good, whereas I have rewarded thee evil.

18 And thou hast showed this day how that thou hast dealt well with me: forasmuch as when the LORD had delivered[4] me into thine hand, thou killedst me not.

19 For if a man find his enemy, will he let him go well away? wherefore the LORD reward thee good for that thou hast done unto me this day.

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k ver.4,6;ch 26.8.

l Pr.15.1. 2 Ti. 2. 25. Mat.11.29.

m ch.26.18. Ps.35.7. Ja.15.25.Pr.1.11.

n ch.26.20. Ge.10.9. ver.2.Pr.24.11,12.

o Ju. 11. 27. Ps. 35.1; 94.1. Ro. 12. 19. Re. 6. 10.Ge.16.5.ver.15.

8 This is not a prayer for injury to Saul, but an appeal to God for righteous judgment, if Saul should persevere in his wicked purposes. See ver. 15.—*C.*

p Ex.21.13. Ps.7.16; 9.15,16;10.2. Pr.5.22;11. 31.

q Job 5.8. Ro.12.19. ch.26.9.

r Pr.31.4;17.7.

s 2 Sa.3.8;9.8.ch.26. 20.

9 Similar phrases are still used in the East, when persons wish to express the lowliness of their condition. Compare 2 Sa. 9.8. Notwithstanding the value of the dog to man, its name has almost universally been employed to express not only debasement but detestation. It is a favourite term of abuse among the heroes of Homer. As for the flea, it is deemed equally contemptible and troublesome in the East and West. An Arabian writer thus describes it:—'A black, nimble, extenuated, hunch-backed animal, which being sensible when any one looks at it, jumps incessantly, now on one side, now on the other, till it gets out of sight.'—*J.*

t Ge.16.5.2Ch.24.22. Ps.43.1. Mi.7.9.

1 Heb. *judge.*

u ch.26.17. Pr.15.1.

2 An allusion most probably to the musical character of David's voice, which Saul well remembered since the day he came to play before him on his harp. Those who have long been separated from a friend are fully aware of the electrical effect of his voice falling unexpectedly upon the ear.—*C.*

x With De.8.15. Ps. 114.8.Ge.33.4.

3 Other and happier days were associated with David's voice—they return before Saul, and for a time his better nature prevails, and he weeps at their remembrance, and at the thought of his present jealousy and folly.—*C.*

y Mat. 5. 44. Ro. 12. 20. ch.26.21. Ps.37.6;7. 4.Mi.7.8,9.

4 Heb. *shut up.*

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z ch.20.30 31; 23.17, with ch.13.14;15.28.

a Ge.31.44–53;21.23. ch.20.14–17. He.6.16.

b Mat. 10. 16. Ep. 5. 15. Pr.22.3;27.12. Jn.2. 24.

5 David asked no oath from Saul, nor would he trust himself with him, well knowing from experience how little these transient appearances were to be trusted, ch.19.6.—*J.*

CHAP. XXV.

B.C. 1057.

a ch.28.3. Ge.50.11. Nu.20.29. De.34.8. Pr. 10.7.

1 The manner of the Scriptures in relating the death of the greatest characters is well worthy of remark. There is no ostentation, no fulsome panegyric; the bare event is related, and left to make its impression on the heart. *David arose.*—David and his band appear to have attended the funeral, Saul having privily acknowledged him as heir to the throne.—*C.*

b Ge.14.9;21.21. Nu. 13.3,21,26. Southward of Canaan.

c Ps.17.14;73.3,4;144. 13. Job 1.3;21.13. 2 Sa. 19.32;23.23. Ge.38.13.2 Ki.3.4.

2 Or, *business.*

d Not that Jos. 19. 26. 1 Ki.18.19, but ch. 15.12. Jos.15.55.

3 Carmel lay between Maon and Ziph (see note on ch. 23.24). It was of course an entirely different place from the mountain range which bears the same name. The ruins of the ancient town are extensive; they still bear the old name, and lie around the head and sides of a little vale which is shut in by rugged limestone rocks. Near it on the top of a ridge stands the castle, with walls ten feet thick. It is now entirely desolate. —*P.*

e Pr.31.10–13;14.1.

f Is.32.5,7. Ps.10.3.

g Nu.13.30; 14.24. 1 Ch.4.15–20.

4 *Caleb* signifies a *dog;* and the Septuagint and some other early translations render the passage as meaning that Nabal was a 'doggish man'—of a snarling irritable disposition. —*C.*

h Ge.38.12,13. 2 Sa. 13.23,24.

i Heb. *ask him in my name of peace,* Ge.43.23. Lu.10.5. ch. 13.10;ver.14.

20 And now, behold, [z]I know well that thou shalt surely be king, and that the kingdom of Israel shall be established in thine hand:

21 Swear[a] now therefore unto me by the LORD that thou wilt not cut off my seed after me, and that thou wilt not destroy my name out of my father's house.

22 And David sware unto Saul. And Saul went home; but David and his men gat them up [b]unto the hold.[5]

CHAPTER XXV.

1 *Samuel dieth.* 2 *David in Paran sendeth to Nabal.* 10 *Provoked by Nabal's churlishness, he mindeth to destroy him.* 14 *Abigail understanding thereof,* 18 *taketh a present,* 23 *and by her wisdom* 32 *pacifieth David.* 36 *Nabal, hearing thereof, dieth.* 39 *David taketh Abigail and Ahinoam to be his wives.* 44 *His wife Michal is given to Phalti.*

AND Samuel[a] died;[1] and all the Israelites were gathered together, and lamented him, and buried him in his house at Ramah. And David arose, and went down to the [b]wilderness of Paran.

2 ¶ And *there was* a man in Maon, [c]whose possessions[2] *were* in [d]Carmel;[3] and the man *was* very great, and he had three thousand sheep, and a thousand goats: and he was shearing his sheep in Carmel.

3 Now the name of the man *was* Nabal, and the name of his wife Abigail: and *she was* [e]a woman of good understanding, and of a beautiful countenance: but the man [f]*was* churlish, and evil in his doings; and he *was* of the house of [g]Caleb.[4]

4 ¶ And David heard in the wilderness that Nabal did [h]shear his sheep.

5 And David sent out ten young men; and David said unto the young men, Get you up to Carmel, and go to Nabal, and [i]greet him in my name.

6 And thus shall ye say to him that liveth *in prosperity,* Peace *be* both to thee, and peace *be* to thine house, and peace *be* unto all that thou hast.

7 And now I have heard that thou hast shearers: now, thy shepherds which were with

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friendship with these be renewed day by day! Behold how men's malice renders them miserable; and how ready brethren of the same tribe are to betray us! but God in his providence interposes for the relief of his people when their danger is at the greatest. Fear not then, my soul—only believe, and thou shalt see the glory of God.

CHAPTER XXIV. [Ver. 21. Saul's character is a most remarkable one. It is in part illustrated by the fierce, wayward, fitful nature of the tribe to which he belonged. 'To this we must add a taint of madness, which broke out in violent frenzy at times, leaving him with long lucid intervals. His affections were strong, but they were unequal to the wild accesses of religious zeal or insanity which ultimately led to his ruin.' He caught the prophetic inspiration in fitful gusts. 'Passionately he would enter into it for the time, as he came within the range of his better associations. But then he would be again the slave of his common pursuits. His religion was never blended with his moral nature. It broke out in wild ungovernable acts of zeal and superstition, and then left him more a prey than ever to his own savage disposition. In his better moments he never lost the strong affection which he had contracted for David. But then the paroxysm of rage and jealousy returns, and he pursues him over the hills of Judah. *P.*]

REFLECTIONS.—Restless is the malice of wicked men; but God can bring us very near to danger and yet keep us in perfect safety. And easily can he deliver up his enemies into the hand of the weakest of his people. How falsely rash men misinterpret the promises and providences of God! But we must not avenge our own quarrels, nor take all the advantages against our enemies which Providence puts in our hand; but rather seek to overcome them with patience and kindness. If temptations come to us in a pleasing form, we must flee from them; our conscience must start, not only at evident crimes, but at the most distant appearance of evil. It is honourable, when not only there is innocence, but Providence clearly manifests it; and that instead of ill designs alleged, there was nothing but the most cordial friendship. And observe—soft words are most effectual to break the bones and turn away strong wrath. What a plague to kings are flattering and deceitful courtiers! And how shameful and galling to find that through them we have been persecuting our principal friends! But there may be confession and remorse where there is no real repentance. Love to our enemies, and a mild and generous behaviour under great provocations, are glorious tokens of future greatness. But how mad is the malicious injuring of those at whose mercy we, and all that we have, may soon lie! and how prudent to keep on our guard against a known enemy! Fits of partial repentance will not last long.

CHAPTER XXV. REFLECTIONS.—Was not Samuel a figure of Jesus Christ, our great Priest, Prophet, Deliverer, and Judge! How earnestly desired, and how supernatural was his birth! Early was he devoted and called to, prepared for, and employed in, his Father's service. How extensive is his office! He is the illuminated Prophet that renders our dark earth a valley of vision. He is the unparalleled Priest who, by his once offering of himself, made peace between God and men. He is the great Deliverer, that makes us free indeed. He is the sovereign Judge of all, particularly the Israel of God. How wretched the case in which he finds his church and people when he appears for their help! His sacrifice and intercession

us we [k]hurt them not, neither was there ought missing unto them, all the while they were in Carmel.

8 Ask thy young men, and they will show thee: wherefore let the young men find favour in thine eyes; (for we come in [l]a good day;) give, I pray thee, whatsoever cometh to thine hand unto thy servants, and to thy son David.[5]

9 And when David's young men came, they spake to Nabal according to all those words in the name of David,[6] and ceased.[7]

10 ¶ And Nabal answered David's servants, and said, [m]Who *is* David? and who *is* the son of Jesse? There [n]be many servants now-a-days that break away every man from his master.

11 Shall I then take [o]my bread and my water, and my flesh[8] that I have killed for my shearers, [p]and give *it* unto men whom I know not whence they *be*?[9]

12 So David's young men [q]turned their way, and went again, and came and told him all those sayings.

13 And David said unto his men, [r]Gird ye on every man his sword. And they girded on every man his sword; and David also girded on his sword: [s]and there went up after David about four hundred men, and two hundred abode by the stuff.[1]

14 ¶ But one of the young men told Abigail, Nabal's wife, saying, Behold, David sent messengers out of the wilderness to salute our master; and he railed[2] on them:

15 But the men *were* [t]very good unto us, and we were not hurt,[3] neither missed we any thing, as long as we were conversant with them, when we were in the fields.

16 They were [u]a wall unto us both by night and day, all the while we were with them keeping the sheep.

17 Now therefore know and consider what thou wilt do; for evil is determined against our master, and against all his household: for he *is such* [x]a son of Belial, that *a man* cannot speak to him.

18 ¶ Then Abigail [y]made haste, and took two hundred loaves,[4] and two bottles[5] of wine, and five sheep ready dressed, and five measures of parched *corn*, and an hundred clusters[6] of raisins, and two hundred cakes of figs, and laid *them* on asses.

19 And she said unto her servants, Go on before me: behold, I come after you. But she [z]told not her husband Nabal.

20 And it was *so, as* she [a]rode on the ass, that she came down by the covert of the hill, and, behold, David and his men came down against her; and she met them.

21 (Now David had said, Surely in vain have I kept all that [b]this *fellow* hath in the wilderness, so that nothing was missed of all that *pertained* unto him; and he [c]hath requited me evil for good.

22 So[d] and more also do God unto the enemies of David, if I leave of all that *pertain* to him by the morning light[7] any that pisseth against the wall.)[8]

23 And when Abigail saw David, she hasted, [f]and lighted off the ass, and fell before David on her face, and bowed herself to the ground.

24 And [g]fell at his feet, and said, Upon me, my lord, upon me *let this* iniquity *be;* and let thine handmaid, I pray thee, speak in thine audience,[9] and hear the words of thine handmaid.

25 Let not my lord, I pray thee, regard[1] this man of Belial, *even* Nabal: for as his name *is*, so *is* he; [2]Nabal[3] *is* his name, and folly *is* with him: but I thine handmaid saw not the young men of my lord, whom thou didst send.

26 Now therefore, my lord, [i]*as* the LORD liveth, and *as* thy soul liveth, seeing the LORD hath withholden[4] thee from coming to *shed* blood, and from [k]avenging thyself with thine own hand, now [l]let thine enemies, and they that seek evil to my lord, be as Nabal.[5]

27 And now this [m]blessing, which thine handmaid hath brought unto my lord, let it even be given unto the young men that [n]follow my lord.

28 I pray thee, forgive the [o]trespass[6] of thine handmaid: for the LORD [p]will certainly make my lord a sure house; because my lord fighteth

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k Lu. 3. 14. 1 Pe. 3. 8. ver. 15, 21. Ro. 12. 17. Phi. 4. 8.

l Es. 9. 19. De. 12. 12, 18; 14. 26. Ne. 8. 10. *i.e.* the day of the sheep-shearing feast, Ge. 38. 12, 13. 2 Sa. 13. 23, 24.

5 David having protected the shepherds and flocks from the Arabs of the desert—at all times a predatory people—had a right to claim some compensation, which nevertheless he asks as a favour.—*C.*

6 It is a remarkable fact that black-mail, such as was here asked by the messengers of David, is to this day claimed by the great Arab chiefs of all, or almost all, the inhabitants of villages along the southern and eastern borders of Palestine and Syria. They claim it, too, upon the very grounds urged by David. In fact, there is no safety for either sheep or shepherds except by paying the sheikhs of the nomad tribes.—*P.*

7 Heb. *rested.*

m Ex. 5. 2. Ps. 73. 7, 8; 123. 3, 4. ch. 22. 9, 10; 20. 30.

n ch. 22. 2.

o Ju. 8. 6. De. 8. 17. Job 31. 17. Ge. 21. 25; 26. 16.

8 Heb. *slaughter.*

p Ec. 11. 1, 2. Ga. 6. 10.

9 This answer of Nabal, not merely conveying a refusal, but much unmerited and provoking reproach, seems fully to warrant the Septuagint translation of ver. 3. A melancholy illustration of the evils of an irritable temper and a provoking tongue, exposing its owner to extreme danger, and tempting another to extreme sin.—*C.*

q Mat. 7. 6. Is. 36. 21.

r ch. 24. 6; 26. 10. Ro. 12. 19.

s ch. 22. 1, 2; 23. 13; 27. 2; 30. 9, 10.

1 In modern phrase *—the baggage.—C.*

2 Heb. *flew upon them.*

t ver. 7, 12. Phi. 2. 15. Col. 4. 5. Mat. 5. 16.

3 Heb. *shamed.*

u Job 1. 10.

x De. 13. 13. Ju. 19. 22. ch. 2. 12. Job 31. 13.

y Mat. 5. 25. Pr. 18. 16; 21. 14. Lu. 8. 1.

4 'Loaves,' thin cakes.—*C.*

5 'Bottles,' skins so curiously formed into a kind of bag, as to retain liquids. They are still so made and used in some mountainous districts of the Basque, in Europe. —*C.*

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6 Or, *lumps.*

z Pr. 14. 16; 18. 2, 6; 31. 27.

a Ju. 5. 10; 10. 4. 2 Ki. 4. 22, 24. ver. 42.

b Job 30. 8.

c Pr. 17. 13. Ps. 109. 3, 4.

d Ru. 1. 17. ch. 14. 44; 20. 16.

7 David had been ungratefully treated, and sorely provoked by the reproaches of Nabal, most probably not diminished in the relation; still all this will neither excuse nor justify his rash and sinful purpose and oath: so far from it, that we soon find David himself acknowledge his sin, and thank God that held him from committing it. See ver. 33.—*C.*

8 Males, ver. 34. 1 Ki. 14. 10; 16. 11; 21. 21. 2 Ki. 9. 8.—[A phrase now indelicate, but which, in allusion either to Nabal's descent or character, in ver. 3 (see note), should, most probably, be translated, 'so much as a dog.' —*C.*]

f Jos. 15. 18. Ju. 1. 14.

g 2 Ki. 4. 27, 37. Es. 8. 3. Mat. 18. 29.

h 2 Sa. 14. 9, 12. Ge. 27. 13. ver. 28.

9 Heb. *ears.*

1 Heb. *lay it to his heart.*

2 *i.e.* folly.

3 The Hebrew names of persons were all significant; and here it is used to form an excuse for Nabal. Let not Abigail be accused of speaking disrespectfully of her husband, seeing she spoke truth, and used the only argument calculated to protect him.—*C.*

i ch. 20. 3. 2 Ki. 2. 2.

4 An argument drawn from restraining grace. Abigail well judged to be the most likely to prevail with David.—*Note,* Grace ought to be estimated, not merely by the duty to which it guides us, but the sins from which it holds us back.—*C.*

k Ro. 12. 19, 20. Ps. 94. 1.

l Ps. 83. 13–18. Je. 29. 22.

5 Such fools as Nabal, so that they may not be able to plan anything successful against you. —*C.*

m Or, *present,* 2 Ki. 5. 15. Ge. 33. 11.

n Heb. *walk at the feet of,* &c., Ju. 4. 10.

o ver. 24.

6 Holding David to be heir-apparent to the throne, the trespass lay in coming uninvited to his presence.—*C.*

p ch. 15. 28. 2 Sa. 7. 16.

procure lasting friendship with Heaven, and noted victories and mercies on earth. How marvellous his conquest of enemies, and restoration of the treacherously abandoned worship of God! Gracious are his instructions, sharp his reproofs, and certain his predictions! By him kings reign, and princes decree justice. Candid, upright, and generous, are his whole administrations! though wickedly, and to their lasting ruin, he and his Father were rejected by his brethren of Judah, who desired a temporal deliverer; and still are by carnal professors. But how distressed their condition, till they seek the Lord and David their king! But lo, the righteous are taken away from the evil to come! Nations have reason to mourn when those who stood in the gap, to prevent the Lord's wrath, are removed by death. Alas! how often the best of men are disgraced by their children, and the best of women by their husbands! There is little happiness in wealth enjoyed by fools; and as little comfort in marriage which is made for the sake of it. It becomes the poor to use entreaties. While we feast we should distribute our bread to the hungry. One good turn deserves and requires another; but a foul tongue is the sign of a wicked heart. Scurrilous invectives are too commonly the fare of God's precious saints in this world. They have puny, if not thievish hearts, who grudge to bestow their superfluities for the relief of such as are in want. How deadly dangerous and deeply sinful are violent passions! Some one provocation may quickly exasperate that mind which has calmly borne many such in other forms: but sensible and faithful servants are a great mercy to a family, and especially that one head of it hath sense and grace, when the other is destitute of both. Soft words turn away anger; and a gift in the bosom pacifies strong wrath. But what we do in passion will afterwards be a grief to us: and it is a far greater satisfaction to forgive an offence than to revenge it. Nor ought any to be more ready to forgive injuries than those whom the Lord has marvellously protected. What thanks they deserve who keep us back from sin! And great is the mercy of God, which prevents our sin when we are upon the very point of committing it. If we have sworn to commit wickedness, it is sinful to keep our oath, but our duty bitterly to repent the taking of it. Those who are churlish to God and his people are often abundantly liberal to the devil and his agents in drunkenness, costly apparel, or the like. Sinners lost in luxury and mirth are insensible of the wrath of God which hangs over their head; while beastly drunkards render themselves incapable of profiting either by advice or correction. But quickly will death turn their riotous joys into eternal sorrows, and tear the churl from his idolized portion of earth. Saints need not avenge their own wrongs; God will do it for them in a speedy and awful manner, and render them thankful that he kept them back from usurping his prerogative. Pacific prudence and sense are excellent means to pave our way to a more exalted station: and such as are content to suffer with the people of God, shall reign with them

the[q] battles of the LORD, and [r]evil hath not been found in thee *all* thy days.

29 Yet a man is risen to pursue thee, and to seek thy soul: but the soul of my lord shall be bound[s] in the bundle of life[7] with the LORD thy God; and the souls of thine enemies, them shall he [t]sling out, *as out* of the middle[8] of a sling.[9]

30 And it shall come to pass, when the LORD shall have done to my lord according to all the good that he hath spoken concerning thee, and shall have appointed thee ruler over Israel,

31 That this shall be [u]no grief unto thee, nor offence of heart unto my lord, either that thou hast shed blood causeless, or that my lord hath avenged himself: but when the LORD shall have dealt well with my lord, then [z]remember thine handmaid.

32 ¶ And David [y]said to Abigail, Blessed *be* the LORD God of Israel, which sent thee this day to meet me:

33 And blessed *be* thy advice, and blessed *be* thou, which hast kept me this day from coming to *shed* blood, and from avenging myself with mine own hand.

34 For in very deed, *as* the LORD God of Israel liveth, which hath kept me back from hurting thee,[1] except thou hadst hasted and come to meet me, surely there had not been left unto Nabal by the morning light any that pisseth against the wall.[2]

35 So David received of her hand *that* which she had brought him,[3] and said unto her, Go up in peace to thine house: see, I have hearkened to thy voice, and have accepted thy person.

36 ¶ And Abigail came to Nabal; and, behold, he held [z]a feast in his house, like the feast of a king; and Nabal's heart *was* merry within him, for he [a]*was* very drunken: wherefore she [b]told him nothing, less or more, until the morning light.

37 But it came to pass in the morning, when the wine was gone out of Nabal, and his wife had told him [c]these things, that [d]his heart died within him, and he became *as* a stone.[4]

38 And it came to pass, about ten days *after*, that the LORD smote Nabal, that he died.

39 ¶ And when David heard that Nabal was dead, he said, [e]Blessed *be* the LORD, that hath pleaded the cause of my reproach from the hand of Nabal, and hath kept his servant from evil: for [f]the LORD hath returned the wickedness of Nabal upon his own head. And David sent and communed with Abigail, [g]to take her to him to wife.[5]

A.M. 2947. B.C. 1057.

q ch.17.47;18.17.

r ch.24.6, 7, 17. Ac. 13.22.

s ch.2.9. Ps. 116. 15; 66.9. Mat.10.30. De.33. 3.

7 This is still a common mode of expression in the East. Its most evident origin is from the compact binding together of all the parts of a living body.—*C.*

t Je.10.18.

8 *In the midst of the bow of a sling.*

9 This verse ought rather to be translated as follows: 'And should any one rise up to pursue thee, and to seek thy soul, the soul of my lord will be bound up in the bundle of the living Jehovah thy God; but the soul of thine enemies will he sling away in the cup of the sling.' It is a beautiful and most insinuating speech, proving that Abigail was 'a woman of good understanding.'—*P.*

u Heb. *no staggering or stumbling.* Pr. 5.12. Mat.27.4. Ro.14. 21.2 Co.1.12.

x Ge.40.14.ver.40.

y 2 Sa. 12. 13; 24. 13. Ps.141.5. 2 Ki.5. 13, 14. Pr.25.12;28.23.

1 David acknowledges the hand of God in sending Abigail, ver. 32, and thereby keeping him back from sin.—*Note*, The privilege of the believer is to see the hand of God in every occurrence, and to acknowledge him as the giver of every good and perfect gift.—*C.*

2 See note on ver. 22.—*C.*

3 The account of the present made to David, ver. 18, coming from a 'very great' man, ver. 2, to a leader at the head of 600 soldiers, in all of which there is no money, or other precious articles, marks a very simple state of society, while it also demonstrates how moderate were David's expectations for all the efficient service he and his men had rendered, ver. 15,16.—*C.*

z 2 Sa 13.23. Lu.16. 19.De.32.14,15.Job 15. 27.

a ver.11. Pr.20.1;23. 29–35. Ec. 2. 2. Ro. 13. 13.1 Th.5.7.

b ver.19.Mat.7.6;10. 16.Ps.112.5. Ep.5.15.

c ver.10,11,21,34.

d De. 28. 28. Job 15. 21.

4 To become *petrified* with fear, is still a common expression, and the sudden effects of this passion upon the body are often most astonishing. Here it seems to have succeed, as it often does, such a sudden chill, that the body became cold as a stone, and such a rigidity of the muscles, that it became fixed as a statue.—*C.*

e Ps.58.10,11. Pr. 24. 17,18. Mi.7.9,10. Je.50. 34.

f 1 Ki.2.44. Ps. 52. 7. Ja.2.13. Es.7.10.

g Pr.31.10; 18.22; 19. 14.ver.31.

5 He had heard that Saul, in order to cut off all his pretensions to the throne, had shamefully given his wife, Michal, Saul's daughter, to Phalti, ver. 44; for the marriage tie was not then held so sacred as it ought to have been. David was carried away by the corrupt custom of the times; but 'from the beginning it was not so.'—*P.*

h Ru.2.10. Pr.15.33; 18.22.

6 To *wash the feet* was an act of hospitality, the full import of which can be comprehended only in warm climates, where the feet of the traveller are, either altogether, or nearly bare. It was also an act of servitude, indicating the grateful humility with which Abigail received the message of one whom she expected soon to be king in Israel.—*Note*, Are we willing, when called by the true David, to follow his example and obey his injunction, and in humility and love to 'wash one another's feet?' Jn.13.14.—*C.*

i Ge.24.61,67.ver.20, 23.

7 The whole transaction resembled the manner in which matrimonial alliances are generally contracted by princes in the East. 'The king of Abyssinia,' says Bruce, 'sends an officer to the house where the lady lives, who announces to her that it is the king's pleasure she should remove instantly to the palace.'—*P.*

8 Heb. *at her feet.*

k Jos.15. 56. 2 Sa. 3. 2.

l Ge.2.24. Mat.19.5, 8.

m 2 Sa 3.14,15, with ch.18.20.

n Is.10.30.

CHAP. XXVI.

a Jos. 15. 55. ch. 23. 19,20. Ps. 54. title. Ro. 3.15. Eze.22.9. Le.19. 16. Pr.18.8;26.20,22.

b ch.23. 25; 24. 17, 2. Ps.140.9;38.12;15.4.

1 The term 'wilderness,' when applied to districts in Palestine, means an uncultivated district.—*P.*

c Ps.112.5. Ep. 5. 15. Mat.10.16. Jos.2.1;8.1.

d ch.14.50;17.55.

e Or, *midst of his carriages*, ch.17.20.

2 'And Saul lay in the circle,' *i.e.* in the circle formed by the men who were with him. He was in the centre, and his men lay round him. To pass through the surrounding host, and penetrate to the spot where Saul slept, was therefore a work of no ordinary daring.—*P.*

f Ge.10.16;15.20.

g 1 Ch.2.16. 2 Sa. 2. 18;23.18;16.9;10.10.

h Ju.7.9–11. ch.14.6.

3 This proposal of David, for two to make their way through Saul's army, indicates a very low opinion of his military arrangements—an opinion verified by the event. Saul is found sleeping—the similitude of all wicked men, who, eagerly pursuing some evil course to the injury of others, cease to watch for their own souls—*C.*

i 1 Th. 5.2,3,7. ver. 12.

4 'Within the circle.'—*P.*

k Heb. *shut up*, ch. 24.4, with 2 Sa.23.18.

40 And when the servants of David were come to Abigail to Carmel, they spake unto her, saying, David sent us unto thee, to take thee to him to wife.

41 And she arose, and bowed herself on *her* face to the earth, and said, Behold, [h]*let* thine handmaid *be* a servant to wash the feet[6] of the servants of my lord.

42 And [i]Abigail hasted,[7] and arose, and rode upon an ass, with five damsels of her's that went after her;[8] and she went after the messengers of David, and became his wife.

43 David also took Ahinoam [k]of Jezreel; and they were also [l]both of them his wives.

44 ¶ But Saul had given [m]Michal his daughter, David's wife, to Phalti the son of Laish, which *was* of [n]Gallim.

CHAPTER XXVI.

1 *Saul, by the discovery of the Ziphites, cometh to Hachilah against David.* 5 *David coming into the trench stayeth Abishai from killing Saul, but taketh his spear and cruse.* 13 *David reproveth Abner's negligence,* 18 *and exhorteth Saul.* 21 *Saul acknowledgeth his sin, and returneth home.*

AND the [c]Ziphites came unto Saul to Gibeah, saying, Doth not David hide himself in the hill of Hachilah, *which is* before Jeshimon?

2 Then [b]Saul arose, and went down to the wilderness of Ziph, having three thousand chosen men of Israel with him, to seek David in the wilderness of Ziph.

3 And Saul pitched in the hill of Hachilah, which *is* before Jeshimon, by the way: but David abode in the wilderness; and he saw that Saul came after him into the wilderness.[1]

4 David therefore [c]sent out spies, and understood that Saul was come in very deed.

5 ¶ And David arose, and came to the place where Saul had pitched; and David beheld the place where Saul lay, [d]and Abner the son of Ner, the captain of his host: and Saul lay in the [e]trench,[2] and the people pitched round about him.

6 Then answered David, and said to [f]Ahimelech the Hittite, and to [g]Abishai the son of Zeruiah, brother to Joab, saying, Who will go [h]down with me to Saul to the camp?[3] And Abishai said, I will go down with thee.

7 So David and Abishai came to the people by night; and, behold, Saul lay [i]sleeping within the trench,[4] and his spear stuck in the ground at his bolster: but Abner and the people lay round about him.

8 Then said Abishai to David, God [k]hath delivered thine enemy into thine hand this day: now therefore let me smite him, I pray thee,

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at last. But they who sinfully multiply their wives must not expect to enjoy much of family pleasures.

CHAPTER XXVI. REFLECTIONS.—One sin usually involves men in another, lest they should suffer for the former; and none are more restless in promoting mischief than treacherous neighbours and unfaithful kinsmen. Unsanctified hearts soon lose the impression made by convictions of sin; and a little instigation will revive the old grudge where the reconciliation is not sincere: but God can easily disarm the mighty, and leave them a prey to the feeble. It is dangerous for a wicked heart to meet with an engaging temptation. But what an honour is it to resist strong temptations, and to neglect repeated opportunities of avenging ourselves! And it highly becomes the Christian thus to commit his cause into the hand of God, and to wait his time and way of advancing him to honour. But what malicious enemies are they who tempt us to apostatize from God by driving us from his worship and people! how severe a reckoning awaits those who shed innocent blood. And woe to the men against whom the people of God bring their just complaints! sin is the greatest folly, and will appear so at last to

with the spear even to the earth at once, and I will not *smite* him the second time.

9 And David said to Abishai, [l]Destroy him not: for who can stretch forth his hand against the LORD's anointed, and be guiltless?[5]

10 David said furthermore, *As* the LORD liveth, the LORD [m]shall smite him;[6] or [n]his day shall come to die; or [o]he shall descend into battle, and perish.

11 The [p]LORD forbid that I should stretch forth mine hand against the LORD's anointed; but, I pray thee, take thou now the spear that *is* at his bolster, and the cruse of water, and let us go.[7]

12 So David [q]took the spear and the cruse of water from Saul's bolster; and they gat them away, and no man saw *it*, nor knew *it*, neither awaked: for they *were* all asleep; because [r]a deep sleep from the LORD[8] was fallen upon them.

13 ¶ Then David went over to the other side, and stood on the top of an hill afar off; a great space *being* between them:

14 And David cried to the people, and to Abner the son of Ner, saying, Answerest thou not, Abner? Then Abner answered and said, Who *art* thou *that* criest to the king?

15 And David said to Abner, *Art* not thou a *valiant* man? and who *is* like to thee in Israel? wherefore then hast thou not kept thy lord the king? [s]for there came one of the people in to destroy the king thy lord.

16 This thing *is* not good that thou hast done. *As* the LORD liveth, ye *are* [t]worthy to die, because ye have not kept your master, the LORD's anointed. And now see where the king's spear *is*, and the cruse of water that *was* at his bolster.

17 And Saul knew David's voice, and said, *Is*[u] this thy voice, my son David? And David said, *It is* my voice, my lord, O king.

18 And he said, [x]Wherefore doth my lord thus pursue after his servant? for what have I done? or what evil *is* in mine hand?

19 Now therefore, I pray thee, let my lord the king hear the words of his servant. If the LORD have stirred thee up against me, let him [y]accept[9] an offering:[1] but if *they be* the children of men, [z]cursed *be* they before the LORD;[2] for they[a] have driven me out this day from abiding[3] in the inheritance of the LORD, saying, Go, serve other gods.[4]

20 Now therefore [b]let not my blood fall to the earth before the face of the LORD; for the king of Israel is come out to [c]seek a flea, as when one doth hunt a partridge in the mountains.[5]

21 ¶ Then [d]said Saul, I have sinned: return,[6] my son David; for I will no more do thee harm, because my soul was precious in thine eyes this day: behold, I have played the fool, and have erred exceedingly.

22 And David answered and said, Behold the king's spear! and let one of the young men come over and fetch it.

23 The[e] LORD render to every man his righteousness and his faithfulness: for the LORD delivered thee into *my* hand to-day, but [f]I would not stretch forth mine hand against the LORD's anointed.

24 And, behold, [g]as thy life was much set by this day in mine eyes, so let my life be much set by in the eyes of the LORD, and let him deliver me out of all tribulation.

25 Then Saul said to David, Blessed *be* thou, my son David; thou shalt both do great *things*, and also shalt still prevail. [h]So David went on his way, and Saul returned to his place.

CHAPTER XXVII.

1 *Saul hearing that David was fled to Gath, seeketh no more for him.* 5 *David beggeth Ziklag of Achish.* 8 *He, invading other countries, persuadeth Achish he fought against Judah.*

AND David [a]said in his heart, I shall now perish[1] one day by the hand of Saul: *there is* nothing better for me than that I should speedily escape into the land of the [2]Philistines; and Saul shall despair of me, to seek me any more in any coast of Israel: so shall I escape out of his hand.

2 And David arose, and [b]he passed over with the six hundred men that *were* with him unto Achish, the son of Maoch, king of Gath.

3 And David dwelt with Achish at Gath, he and his men, every man with his household, *even* David with [c]his two wives, Ahinoam the Jezreelitess, and Abigail the Carmelitess, Nabal's wife.[3]

4 And it was told Saul that David was fled to Gath; and [d]he sought no more again for him.

5 ¶ And David said unto Achish, If I have now found grace in thine eyes, let them give me a place in some town [e]in the country, that I may dwell there: for why should thy servant dwell in the royal city with thee?

6 Then Achish gave him [f]Ziklag that day: wherefore Ziklag pertaineth unto the kings of Judah unto this day.[4]

A.M. 2947. B.C. 1057.

l ch.24.6,7.2 Sa.1.14, 16.

5 Had David been ambitious of the crown, that evil passion would have blinded his eyes to the enormity of the crime proposed. He knew he was to be Saul's successor, yet he waits God's time, and, through grace, preserves his innocence.—*C.*

m ch. 25. 38, 39. Ps. 94.1. De. 32. 35. Lu. 18. 7. Re. 18.8.

6 Even as he already had sent an 'evil spirit' to afflict him for his sin, he knows that if he persevere God will again visit him with some remarkable judgment unfitting him to reign.—*C.*

n Job 7. 1; 14. 5. Ps. 37.10,13.

o De.32.35. ch.31.6. Ps.49.11.

p ch.24. 6, 7. 2 Sa. 1. 14,16.

7 In the East, during the summer months, nearly every man on going to sleep, whether in his house or on a journey, has a vessel of water placed within reach.—*P.*

q ch.24.4.

r Ge.2.21;15.12,with Es.6.1.

8 What men ascribe to causes merely natural, the Spirit ascribes directly to God, by whom all natural causes are overruled.—*C.*

s ver.8.

t Heb. *the sons of death*, ver.9,11; ch.24. 6.2 Sa.1.14.

u ch.24.16.Pr.26.25.

x ch. 24. 11, 12; 12. 3; 20. 1. Ps. 35. 7; 7. 3, 11. Ac.23.1;24.10.

y 2 Sa.16.11;24.1

9 Heb. *smell*, Le. iv.–vi.Ge.8.21.

1 Since the holy God would accept a sin-offering as an acknowledgment of guilt, and of faith in the great atonement which Christ was to make for sin, how much more therefore should Saul, a sinful fellow-creature, be pacified towards his unoffending servant.—*C.*

z Ge.5. 12. Pr.6. 16, 19.

2 David supposes two conceivable causes of Saul's hostility: (1) That God had stirred up Saul against him, *i.e.* that he had left unchecked the evil passions in Saul's own heart. In this case the anger of God ought to be appeased by a *mincha*, or bloodless offering, which is an emblem of a life devoted to God's service. (2) That men had stirred up Saul to pursue him, and in this case David pronounces upon them a curse.—*P.*

a Ps.42.1,2;84.2;120. 5. Ro.14.15. Jos.22.25, 27.

3 Heb. *cleaving.*

4 The law, De. xiii., condemned all enticers to idolatry—how much more must it condemn those who, by their false insinuations or charges, had forced David away from the tabernacle and the altar, and compelled him to live among the heathen!—*C.*

b ch.2.9;25.29.

A.M. 2947. B.C. 1057.

c ch.24.14.

5 The Arabs still continue to run down the partridge with dogs. *C.*—The Hebrew name of the partridge is *kore*, *i.e.* caller, from its peculiar note. Shaw says of the greater or red-legged partridge, 'The Arabs have another, though a more laborious method of catching these birds; for, observing that they become languid and fatigued after they have been hastily put up twice or thrice, they immediately run in upon them and knock them down with their *zerwatiya* or bludgeons.' 'Precisely in this manner,' says Harris, 'Saul hunted David, coming hastily upon him, *putting him up incessantly*, in hopes that at length his strength and resources would fail, and he would become an easy prey to his pursuers.'—*I.*

d Ex. 9.27. ch.24.17; 27.4. Mat.27.4.

6 To 'return' does not here mean to *return* to Saul's court (as appears from the sequel in ver. 25), but to return to his own followers.—*C.*

e Ne. 13. 14. Is.3.10, 11. Ps.7.8;18.20. Ro.2. 6–10.

f ch.24.6,7;ver.9,11.

g Ps 18.25. Ac.14.22. 2 Co 1.10. 1 Co. 10. 13. Is.46.3,4; 63.9; 41 10,13 –16.

h Pr.26.25. ch.24.22. Jn.2.24.

CHAP. XXVII.

B.C. cir. 1057.

a Ps. 116. 11. Pr. 13. 12. Mat.14.31. Mar.5. 36.2 Co.7.4.

1 Heb. *be consumed.*

2 David here manifests a culpable want of confidence in God's protection. Had he not promised that he should be king after Saul; why should he therefore have dreaded to perish by his hand?—*Note*, While we may not imitate any man in his want of faith, such records of its weakness or failure are of singular service, as they teach us not to be high-minded, but to fear.—*C.*

b ch.23.13; 25.13; 21. 10;22.1,2;30.9,10.

c ch.30.5;25.42,43.

3 When David first fled to Gath he was a solitary refugee. His relation to Saul was not known; and consequently he would naturally be regarded as a spy or secret enemy. Now he went to Gath at the head of a daring band—valuable as a friend, dangerous as a foe. Saul's hostility must have been known; his relentless persecution Achish must have heard of; and David would consequently be welcome to the Philistine king.—*P.*

d ch.26.21.

e Ps.120.5,2 Co.6.17.

f Jos. 15. 31; 19. 5. 1 Ch.12.1,20.ch.30.1.

4 The site of Ziklag has not been identified; but it must have been situated on the extreme southern border of Canaan, probably to the west or south-west of Beersheba.—*P.*

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the most hardened sinner, even though their convictions should never have any saving issue. God's dispensations do all concur to prove him a righteous judge. They who show mercy may hope to find mercy. And God will make his enemies to bow at the feet of his persecuted saints, and know that he hath loved them, and will promote them to honour.

CHAPTER XXVII. [Ver. 9. *Left neither man nor woman alive.* We are not here informed of the character and habits of these hordes—nor of any provocation they had given David; but there is no reason to conclude they were better than their ancestors whom Joshua, for their enormities in sinning, was commanded to expel or extirpate. Infidels, in accusing David, assume, without the shadow of evidence, that David had no cause for aggression; a conclusion which the recorded propensities and habits of these people, as well as David's previous and subsequent character, decidedly contradict. *C.*]

REFLECTIONS.—It is hard to withstand repeated and strong temptations to unbelief. It is prudent to withdraw from temptation, and especially for strangers to live as retired from courts as possible. And never shall we be losers by parting with earthly accommodations for the sake of God and our souls. But surely nothing can be more foolish, especially after warning

7 ¶ And the time[5] that David dwelt in the country of the Philistines was [g]a full year and four months.

8 ¶ And David and his men went up and invaded the [h]Geshurites, and the [i]Gezrites, and the [k]Amalekites: for those *nations were* of old the inhabitants of the land, as thou goest to Shur,[l] even unto the land of Egypt.

9 And David [m]smote the land, and left neither man nor woman alive, and took away the sheep, and the oxen, and the asses, and the camels, and the apparel, and returned, and came to Achish.

10 And Achish said, Whither have ye made a road[7] to-day? And David [n]said, Against the[o] south of Judah, and against the south of the Jerahmeelites, and against the south of the Kenites.[8]

11 And David saved neither man nor woman alive to bring *tidings* to Gath, saying, [p]Lest they should tell on us, saying, So did David, and so *will be* his manner all the while he dwelleth in the country of the Philistines.

12 And Achish believed David, saying, He hath made his people Israel utterly to abhor him;[9] therefore he shall be my servant for ever.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

1 *Achish putteth confidence in David.* 3 *Saul, having destroyed the workers with familiar spirits,* 4 *and now in his fear forsaken of God,* 7 *seeketh to a witch.* 9 *The witch, encouraged by Saul, raiseth up Samuel.* 15 *Saul, hearing his ruin, fainteth.* 21 *The woman, with his servants, refresh him with meat.*

AND it came to pass in those days, [a]that the Philistines gathered their armies together for warfare to fight with Israel. And Achish said unto David, Know thou[1] assuredly [b]that thou shalt go out with me to battle, thou and thy men.

2 And David said to Achish, [c]Surely thou shalt know what thy servant can do. And Achish said to David, Therefore will I make thee keeper of mine head for ever.

3 ¶ Now [d]Samuel was dead, and all Israel had lamented him, and buried him in Ramah, even in his own city: and Saul had put away those that had [e]familiar spirits, and the wizards,[2] out of the land.[3]

4 ¶ And the Philistines gathered themselves together, and came and [f]pitched in Shunem; and Saul gathered all Israel together, and they pitched [g]in Gilboa.[4]

5 And when Saul saw the host of the Philistines, he was [h]afraid, and his heart greatly trembled.

6 And when Saul [i]inquired of the LORD, the LORD answered him not, neither by [k]dreams, nor by Urim, nor by prophets.[5]

7 ¶ Then said Saul unto his servants, [l]Seek me a woman that hath a familiar spirit, that I may go to her, and inquire of her. And his servants said to him, Behold, *there is* a woman that hath a familiar spirit at En-dor.[6]

8 And Saul [m]disguised himself, and put on other raiment, and he went, and two men with him, and they came to the woman by night: and he said, I pray thee, divine unto me by the familiar spirit, and bring me *him* up whom I shall name unto thee.

9 And the woman said unto him, Behold, thou knowest what Saul hath done, how he hath cut off those that have familiar spirits, and the wizards, out of the land: wherefore then layest thou a snare for my life, to cause me to die?

10 And [n]Saul sware to her by the LORD, saying, *As* the LORD liveth, there shall no punishment happen to thee for this thing.[7]

11 Then said the woman, Whom shall I bring up unto thee? And he said, Bring me up Samuel.

12 And when the woman saw [o]Samuel, she cried with a loud voice: and the woman spake to Saul, saying, Why hast thou deceived me? for thou [p]*art* Saul.

13 And the king said unto her, Be not afraid: for what sawest thou? And the woman said unto Saul, I saw [q]gods ascending out of the earth.

14 And he said unto her, What form *is* he of?[8] And she said, An old man cometh up; and he *is* covered with a mantle. And Saul [r]perceived that it *was* Samuel, and he [s]stooped with *his* face to the ground, and bowed himself.

15 ¶ And[t] Samuel said to Saul, Why hast

A.M. cir. 2947.
B.C. cir. 1057.

5 Heb. *the number of days.*

[g] Heb. a year *of days,* ch. 29.9. Le.25. 29.2 Sa.1.1;22.1.

[h] Not Jos.12.5. De. 3.14.

[i] Or. *Gezrites,* Jos. 16.3.1 Ki.9.15.

[k] Ge.14.7.Nu.24.20. Ex.17.8.ch.15.3.

6 These obscure hordes seem to have been remnants of the Canaanites and Amalekites, who had never been expelled, or who had returned during the unsettled times of the Judges. —*C.*

[l] Ex.15.22. Ge.16.7; 25.18.

[m] ch. 15. 13. De.25. 17,19;7.2.

7 Or, *did you not make a road,* &c.

[n] Jos.2.16.2 Ki.5.25. Col.3.9. Ep. 4. 25. Ps. 119.29.

[o] Jos.15.21.1 Ch.2.9, 25-42. Ju.1.16. ch. 30. 29.

8 This answer of David was not false in words, for he had done what he said; but it was equivocal in words, and evidently was misunderstood by Achish. How then is David to be vindicated? He cannot be vindicated at all. He had sinned in despairing of God's protection — he had erred in joining himself with the enemies of his country, and now he sins again — a melancholy example of the weakness of man, when leaning on his own understanding, and for a moment ceasing to trust solely in God.—*Note,* The honesty of the Scriptures in recording the faults of their best characters is alone sufficient to convince infidels that they must have come from God.—*C.*

[p] De. 7. 2. Ps. 112.5. Ep.5.15.Mat.10.16.

9 Heb. *made himself to stink to his people Israel.*

CHAP. XXVIII.

B.C. cir. 1056.

[a] Le. 26. 25. De. 28. 25.Ju.3.2.ch.iv.vii.xiii. xiv.xvii.23.28.

1 Heb. *knowing, know.*

[b] ch.27.12;29.3–11.

[c] ch.27.10.Ro.12.9.

[d] ch.25.1.Is.57.1,2.

[e] Ex.22.18.De.18.11. Le.19.31;20.27.

2 This was according to the divine law (Ex. 22. 18. Le. 19. 31), wherein Saul evidenced how readily a man may engage in the external reformation of evils without the inward reformation of his own heart.—*C.*

3 This explanatory verse is inserted to prepare for a full understanding of all the incidents which follow regarding Saul and the 'witch of Endor.'—*P.*

A.M. cir. 2948.
B.C. cir. 1056.

[f] Jos.19.18.2 Ki.4.8.

[g] ch.31.1.2 Sa.1.21.

4 The position of the two armies was almost exactly the same as that occupied by Gideon and the Midianites. Shunem lay on the northern side of the valley of Jezreel, near the base of the hill of Moreh, while Saul took up a position on the side of Gilboa, east of Jezreel, and just over the fountain of Harod.—*P.*

[h] Job 15.21.Is.57.20; 7.2.

[i] Jn.9.31.1 Ch.10.14. Pr.1.28.ch.14.37. La.2. 9. Ja.4.3.

[k] Nu.12.6;27.21. Ex. 28.29.ch.22.5.

5 Saul looks in vain for a divine answer, because he neglects known duty, the recall of David.—*Note,* If we regard sin in our hearts, the Lord will not hear us.—*C.*

[l] Le.19.31. De.18.11. 2 Ki.1.2,3. Ac.16.16. Is. 8.19.

6 Endor lay on the north side of the hill Moreh, and consequently beyond the camp of the Philistines. Saul's night journey, therefore, was long — not less than nine miles — and dangerous; for he must have made a considerable detour to the east to avoid the camp of the enemy; and had his journey been discovered, he could easily have been cut off.—*P.*

[m] 1 Ki.14.2; 22.30. 1 Ch. 10. 13. Is. 8. 19, 20. Jn.3.19,20.Ep.5.11.

[n] Ex.20.7;22.28.De. 18.10, with Ac.23.12.

7 An answer and oath which Saul alone could give; and by which to the acute pretender to divination, he betrayed at once his name and dignity.—*C.*

[o] 2 Co. 11. 14, with Is. 57. 2. A devil in his likeness. Satan hath no power over the souls of the glorified saints. 'God would never give him any, to countenance consulting of devils. Samuel's soul had not to come out of the earth; nor would he have said, Saul should be with him to-morrow. It doth not even seem probable that the battle was fought on the morrow. The woman's having a familiar spirit, and her exposing herself to danger, manifest it to have been no mere juggle. —*Rev. J. Brown.*

[p] ver.3.Ex.22.28.

[q] 2 Co.11.14. Ex.32. 4.

8 Heb. *What is his form?*

[r] ch.15.27. 2 Ki.2.8, 13.

[s] Eze. 14. 4. 2 Th. 2. 10, 11. Is.66.4.

[t] Jn. 8. 44, with Re. 14.13.Is.57.2.

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given, than to expect safety out of the Lord's land, rather than in it. It is good to be always zealous against the Lord's devoted enemies. But we have need of grace, not only to make us do well, but to make us honestly stand to what we have done; otherwise strong temptation will involve us in the guilt of the basest equivocation.

CHAPTER XXVIII.—[Ver. 12. *And when the woman saw Samuel, she cried with a loud voice,* &c. Every interpretation of the venerable Brown is entitled to respect, and the marginal note is not merely the popular opinion, but is largely supported by most learned authorities. Nevertheless, regard to what we believe truth compels us to express a different opinion, on the following grounds:—(1) The possessors of familiar spirits, whether such possession be considered a reality or pretence, were utterly condemned by God. See note on ver. 3. (2) This woman tells practically a lie; for she pretends to be able to bring up any one from the dead, and that not the appearance, but the very person—a thing impossible, Ec. 12. 7; Re. 1. 18. (3) Saul had already discovered himself (see note on ver. 10), and she pretends not to know him. (4) The reasoning in ver. 12 is false; for even had Samuel come up, that did not prove the querist was Saul. (5) She tells another lie; for she not only reports that she saw 'gods ascending out of the earth,' but affirms Samuel came out of it also; now he was buried at Ramah, not at Endor. (6) Saul did not look at the pretended apparition, but bowed to the ground. (7) The pretended Samuel (for no doubt there was an accomplice of the Pythoness to represent him) admits her power to bring him up from the dead—another falsehood, seeing it contradicts the aforesaid scriptures, and ascribes to a condemned sinner the power of giving life—the prerogative of God alone. But if all were imposture why does the narrative speak of Samuel as if he were really raised? Because it records what occurred as matter of history, leaving the history to explain itself. But if the apparition were not Samuel, how could it foretell the death of Saul and his sons? Because the event was very probable, yet the answer equivocal; for whether Saul and his sons died or survived, the words 'thou shalt be with me' could have been pleaded as true; for Samuel, according to the Pythoness, was either dead or alive as might best suit her purpose. *C.*]

REFLECTIONS.—The enemies of the church craftily seize their opportunity when their principal opponents are out of the way. And when God has left a country, it is easy for enemies to penetrate into the very heart of it. How hard it is for saints to act honestly when they have wandered out of God's way!

thou disquieted me, to bring me up?[1] And Saul answered, I am [u]sore distressed; for the Philistines make war against me, and God is departed from me, and answereth me no more, neither by prophets,[2] nor by dreams: therefore I have called thee, that thou mayest make known unto me what I shall do.

16 Then said Samuel, Wherefore then dost thou ask of me, [w]seeing the LORD is departed from thee, and is become thine enemy?[3]

17 And the LORD hath done to [y]him [z]as he spake by me:[4] for the LORD hath rent the kingdom out of thine hand, and given it to thy neighbour, *even* to David;

18 Because thou [a]obeyedst not the voice of the LORD, nor executedst his fierce wrath upon Amalek, therefore hath the LORD done this thing unto thee this day.

19 Moreover, the LORD will also deliver Israel with thee into the hand of the Philistines; and [b]to-morrow *shalt* thou and thy sons *be* with me: [c]the LORD also shall deliver the host of Israel into the hand of the Philistines.

20 Then Saul fell straightway all along on the earth,[5] and [d]was sore afraid, because of the words of Samuel:[6] and there was no strength in him; for he had eaten no bread all the day, nor all the night.

21 ¶ And the woman came unto Saul, and saw that he was sore troubled, and said unto him, Behold, thine handmaid hath obeyed thy voice, and [e]I have put my life in my hand, and have hearkened unto thy words which thou spakest unto me:

22 Now therefore, I pray thee, hearken thou also unto the voice of thine handmaid, and let me set a morsel of bread before thee; and eat, that thou mayest have strength when thou goest on thy way.

23 But he refused, and said, [f]I will not eat. But his servants, together with the woman, compelled him; and he hearkened unto their voice: so he arose from the earth, and sat upon the bed.

24 And the woman had a fat calf[7] in the house; and she hasted and killed it, and took flour, and kneaded *it*, and did bake unleavened[8] bread thereof:

25 And she brought *it* before Saul, and before his servants; and they did eat. Then they rose up, and went away that night.

A.M. cir. 2948.
B.C. cir. 1056.

1 These expressions seem to have been used in accommodation to the general notions of mankind: and indeed the *local* habitation of departed spirits is unknown to us.—*J.*

[u] Is. 3.11. Pr. 5.11,12; 14.14.

2 Heb. *by the hand of prophets.*

[x] 2 Co. 11.14; 2.11. 2 Th. 2.10,11.

3 The Greek, Syr. and Arab. versions read, 'and is with thy neighbour or rival,' which is adopted by Dathe, Boothroyd, Hales, &c., and agrees with ver. 17, and also with ch. 15. 28.—*J.*

[y] Or, *for himself*, ch. 16.4.

[z] Not ch. 15. 28, but 2 Co. 11.14. Jn. 8.44

4 Heb. *mine hand.*

[a] ch. 15.3,23,26. 1 Ki. 20.42. Je. 48.10.

[b] Ex. 13.14. Mat. 6.34.

[c] ch. 12.25; xxxi.

5 Heb. *made haste and fell with the fulness of his stature.*

[d] ch. 25.37. Ps. 48.5,6; 50.21,22. Job 15.20–22, 24; 20.5.

6 Here was another proof of the reality of the appearance. The question as to the more immediate *agency* by which it was effected presents greater difficulties. That the woman seemed to arrogate the power to herself, ver. 21, proves nothing. Yet it might be conceded that diabolical agency was enabled and permitted to effect such a result in this particular instance, without its following that demons were vested with any such power at other times. But the simpler view is to suppose that before the woman had employed her usual incantations, the Almighty, for wise and important ends, sent back Samuel for a short season from the world of spirits. This was the belief of the ancient Jewish church. 'After his death he prophesied, and showed the king his end, and lift up his voice in prophecy to blot out the wickedness of the people,' Ecclus. 46.20. Various great purposes were served by the transaction, *e.g.* Saul's crime in 'asking counsel of Ob' was made the means of his punishment 1 Ch. 10. 13, 14; the superiority of the oracle of Jehovah to the real or imaginary oracles of Satan was clearly evinced; and the doctrines of a future state and a resurrection of the dead received an awfully solemn confirmation, which was very necessary in that age of darkness. —*J.*

[e] Ju. 9.17; 12.3, ch. 19. 5; ver. 9. Job 13.14.

[f] Pr. 25.20. 1 Ki. 20. 43; 21.4.

7 As in these hot countries flesh is soon tainted, they kill and dress their meat as it is required.—*J.*

8 The preparing of leavened bread would have taken some time, until the whole lump was leavened.—*J.*

A.M. 2948. B.C. 1056.

CHAP. XXIX.

[a] Jos. 19.18,30. 1 Ki. 20.30; ch. 28.4; 4.1.

1 There is one Aphek situated in Asher, near the Sidonian territory, about 8 miles from Tyre. A second was situated in Judah, 1 Sa. 4.1, and supposed to be the same as Aphekah, Jos. 15. 53. The Aphek in the text was a city of Issachar in the valley of Jezreel. A fourth city of the same name was situated in Syria, 1 Ki. 20.26. The word signifies a rapid stream, or strength; two meanings, either of which will fully account for the frequency of the name. —*C.*

2 This denotes the number of the companies, each with its own captain.—*J.*

[b] ch. 28.2.

3 Who was chosen general of the army.

4 The word thus rendered, had occurred twice in the former verse in the sense of 'passing on,' hence the Gr. Syr. and Arab. versions translate, 'Who are these passing on?'—*J.*

[c] ch. 27.7.

[d] Da. 6.4,5. Ro. 12. 17. Phi. 2.15. Col. 4.5. 1 Pe. 3.15,16.

[e] 1 Ch. 12. 19. ch. 14. 21.

5 No doubt he would have fought on the side of the Hebrews.

[f] ch. 18.7; 21.11.

[g] ch. 6.2; 20.10; 28.3.

6 How does Achish, a Philistine idolater, come thus to acknowledge the deity of Jehovah? Either because he was, to some extent, a convert to the truth, or because, like other heathens, he did not deny the deity of the gods of other people, but merely insisted on the absolute superiority or local government of his own. The total denial of deity to idols and false gods has ever been the point upon which has been founded the hatred of heathens against Judaism and Christianity.—*C.*

[h] Mat. 5. 16. 1 Pe. 3. 15. Ps. 121.8. ver. 9.

7 Heb. *thou* art *not good in the eyes of the lords.*

8 Heb. *do not evil in the eyes of the lords.*

[i] ch. 20. 8; 26. 18; 12. 3.

9 Heb. *before thee.*

[k] Ps. 34.13,14; 25. 21; 119.29. 2 Sa. 14.17. Col. 3.9. Ep. 4.25.

1 Whether David would, or would not, have fought against Saul does not appear; but as he had now, in modern phrase, renounced his allegiance, a course permitted by the laws of all nations, there was nothing but regard to his country to prevent him.—*C.*

[l] 2 Sa. 14. 17, 20; 19. 27.

CHAPTER XXIX.

1 *David marcheth with the Philistines: their princes are offended therewith.* 6 *Achish dismisseth him, with commendations of his fidelity.*

NOW the Philistines gathered together all their armies to [a]Aphek:[1] and the Israelites pitched by a fountain which *is* in Jezreel.

2 And the lords of the Philistines passed on by hundreds and by thousands:[2] but [b]David and his men passed on in the rere-ward with Achish.[3]

3 Then said the princes of the Philistines, What *do* these Hebrews[4] *here?* And Achish said unto the princes of the Philistines, *Is* not this David, the servant of Saul the king of Israel, which hath been with me [c]these days, or these years, and I have found [d]no fault in him since he fell *unto me* unto this day?

4 And the princes of the Philistines were wroth with him; and the princes of the Philistines said unto him, [e]Make this fellow return, that he may go again to his place which thou hast appointed him, and let him not go down with us to battle, lest in the battle he be an adversary to us: for wherewith should he reconcile himself[5] unto his master? *should it* not *be* with the heads of these men?

5 *Is* not this David, of whom they sang one to another in dances, saying, [f]Saul slew his thousands, and David his ten thousands?

6 ¶ Then Achish called David, and said unto him, Surely, *as* [g]the LORD [6]liveth, [h]thou hast been upright, and thy going out and thy coming in with me in the host *is* good in my sight; for I have not found evil in thee since the day of thy coming unto me unto this day: nevertheless the lords favour thee not.[7]

7 Wherefore now return, and go in peace, that thou displease not the lords[8] of the Philistines.

8 And David said unto Achish, [i]But what have I done? and what hast thou found in thy servant, so long as I have been with thee[9] unto this day, [k]that I may not go fight against the enemies of my lord the king?[1]

9 And Achish answered and said to David, I know that thou *art* good in my sight, [l]as an angel of God: notwithstanding the princes of the Philistines have said, He shall not go up with us to the battle.

10 Wherefore now rise up early in the morning with thy master's servants that are come

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Whether they take part with friends or foes they are apt to be ensnared. But dreadful is the case of men who are abandoned by God, and deprived of his prophets and ministers. And they who refuse to seek God while he may be found, will cry in vain when he refuses to answer, and have their troubles doubly aggravated by the terrors of an evil conscience. When men throw off their cloak of religion, they ordinarily abandon themselves to the very abominations against which they had professed much zeal. Works of darkness hate the light: and many who have cast off the fear of God are ashamed to appear so bad as they are before men. But it is shocking for persons, amidst gospel light, to enter into leagues or fellowship with devils;—absurd to profess hatred to Satan in others and yet indulge him in our heart; dangerous to flee to the devourer for relief when the God of grace hath cast us off;—and stupid to fear the laws of men and the wrath of a wicked king, more than the authority and eternal justice of almighty God. But God often gives up to strong and devilish delusions the men who have no pleasure in his truth: and those who undervalue the Lord's prophets, at last get devils in their stead. Cold comfort indeed will the devil administer to his servants, even in their greatest distress. But they have themselves only to blame for all the miseries to which they are reduced; for vain is their knocking when the door of mercy is once shut. Having departed from God they have forsaken their own mercies. A miserable life, and more miserable death, are all the portion they can expect. And when once a man is given up to despair, he rushes on to his own destruction as the horse rushes into the battle.

CHAPTER XXIX. REFLECTIONS.—Unbelieving fears often plunge the people of God at last into

FAMILY CONVEYANCE, SYRIA — A PICTURE TAKEN NEAR JEZREEL WHERE AHAB LIVED [I. SAMUEL, xxix: 1]—"Now the Philistines gathered together all their armies to Aphek: and the Israelites pitched by a fountain which is in Jezreel."

This picture was taken in May, 1894, near Jezreel. It illustrates for us the method of traveling in Palestine. There are very few roads over which a carriage or a buggy can pass in the Holy Land. In going from Jerusalem to Nazareth there is nothing but a path. Tourists even have in many places to ride in single file. So rocky is this single pathway that it often becomes necessary in going down steep hills to alight from the saddle and walk. The horses and mules are very sure footed, and appear to have learned from many generations of experience how to pick their way among the rocks, and to hold their footing even on the side of the steepest and roughest mountains. In the above conveyance the family of the man who leads the horse are balanced and packed away in the covered boxes you see strapped to the horse's back.

with thee; and as soon as ye be up early in the morning, and have light, depart.[2]

11 So David and his men rose up early to depart[m] in the morning, to return into the land of the Philistines. And the Philistines went up to Jezreel.

CHAPTER XXX.

1 *The Amalekites spoil Ziklag.* 3 *David asking counsel is encouraged by God to pursue them.* 11 *By the means of a revived Egyptian he is brought to the enemies, and recovereth all the spoil.* 22 *David's law to divide the spoil equally between them that fight and them that keep the stuff.* 26 *He sendeth presents to his friends.*

AND it came to pass, when David and his men [a]were come to Ziklag on the third day, that [b]the Amalekites had invaded the south, and Ziklag, and smitten Ziklag, and burnt it with fire;

2 And had taken the women captives that *were* therein: they [c]slew not any, either great or small,[1] but carried *them* away, and went on their way.

3 ¶ So David and his men came to the city, and, behold, [d]*it was* burnt with fire; and their wives, and their sons, and their daughters, were taken captives.

4 Then David and the people that *were* with him [e]lifted up their voice and wept, until they had no more power to weep.

5 And [f]David's two wives were taken captives, Ahinoam the Jezreelitess, and Abigail the wife of Nabal the Carmelite.

6 And David was [g]greatly distressed: for the people spake of [h]stoning him; because the soul of all the people was grieved,[2] every man for his sons and for his daughters: but David [i]encouraged himself in the LORD his God.[3]

7 And David said to Abiathar the priest, Ahimelech's son, I pray thee, [k]bring me hither the ephod. And Abiathar brought thither the ephod to David.

8 And David inquired at the LORD, saying, Shall I pursue after this troop? shall I overtake them? [l]And he answered him, Pursue; for thou shalt surely overtake *them*, and without fail recover *all*.

9 ¶ So David went, he and the [m]six hundred men that *were* with him, and came to the brook Besor,[4] where those that were left behind stayed.

10 But David pursued, he and four hundred men: (for two hundred abode behind, which were so faint that they could not go over the brook Besor.)

11 And they [n]found an Egyptian in the field, and brought him to David, and gave him bread, and he did eat; and they made him drink water;

12 And they gave him a piece of a cake of figs, and two clusters of raisins: and [o]when he had eaten, his spirit came again to him; for he had eaten no bread, nor drunk *any* water, three days and three nights.

13 And David said unto him, To whom *belongest* thou? and whence *art* thou? And he said, I *am* a young man of Egypt, servant to an Amalekite; and my master left [5]me, [p]because three days agone I fell sick.

14 We made an invasion *upon* [q]the south of the Cherethites,[6] and upon *the coast* which *belongeth* to Judah, and upon the south of Caleb;[7] and we burnt Ziklag with fire.

15 And David said to him, Canst thou bring me down to this company? And he said, [r]Swear unto me by God, that thou wilt neither kill me, nor deliver me into the hands of my master, and I will bring thee down to this company.

16 ¶ And when he had brought him down, behold, *they were* spread abroad upon all the earth, [s]eating, and drinking, and dancing,[8] because of all the great spoil that they had taken out of the land of the Philistines, and out of the land of Judah.

17 And David [t]smote them from the twilight even unto the evening of the next day:[9] and there escaped not a man of them, save four hundred young men, which rode upon camels, and fled.

18 And David [u]recovered all that the Amalekites had carried away: and David rescued his two wives.

19 And there was nothing lacking[1] to them, neither small nor great, neither sons nor daughters, neither spoil, nor any *thing* that they had taken to them: David recovered all.

20 And David took all the flocks and the herds, *which* they drave before those *other* cattle, and said, This *is* [z]David's spoil.

21 ¶ And David came to the [y]two hundred men, which were so faint that they could not

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A.M. 2948. B.C. 1056.

2 Thus God delivered him from the snare in which he had rashly entangled himself. — ['The princes reasoned wisely according to the common practice of mankind, and it was well ordered by Providence that they refused to let David go to this battle, in which he must have been either an enemy to his country or false to his trust. Had he fought for the Philistines he would have fought against God and his country; and had he in the battle gone over to the Israelites, he would have deceived and betrayed the hospitable Achish. God therefore delivered him from such disgrace, and by the same kind Providence he was sent back to rescue his wives, and the wives and children of his people.'—*Greenfield* and *Clarke*.]

m Ge.22.14.1 Co.10.13.1Ch.12.19,20.ch.30.1,2.Ps.37.23;40.1.

CHAP. XXX.

a ch.29.11.2 Sa.1.1.

b ch. 15, 7; 27, 8, 9. Eze. 25, 15. Ex. 17, 8. ver. 14.

c Is.10.5; 27.8. Hab. 3.2. Job 38.11.

1 They saved them, not from any feeling of mercy, but for the purposes of slavery and sale. Man-stealing was one of the sins of these times and nations, which God most severely condemned, and for which he commanded their expulsion or extirpation. When infidels accuse Joshua, nay, the very God of Israel, of cruelty, they should recollect what were the crimes which God sentenced, and Joshua punished.—*C.*

d Ps.34.19; 42.7. Ac. 14.22. Job 14.1.

e Nu.14.1,39. Ju.2.4; 20.23,26; 21. 2. ch.4.13. Ezr.10.1.

f ch.25.42,43; 27. 3. 2 Sa.3.2,3.

g Ps.6.1-4;42.7;69.1; 130.1.

h Ex.17.4. Nu.14.10. Jn.8.59, with ch. 27. 1. Ps.39.9;62.8.

2 Heb. *bitter*.

i Ps.56.3. Ro. 4. 18-20;8.37. Hab. 3. 17, 18. He.13.5,6.

3 The lamentation of the people and the distress of David form an affecting picture; his faith in God affords both instruction and encouragement. Instruction — for his faith, that had failed under lesser evils, now revives. Encouragement—for God, the covenant-God, is an unfailing resource in all emergencies.—*C.*

k ch.23.2, 9, 11. Nu. 27.21. Ju.1.1; 20. 18,23, 28.2 Sa.5.19,23.

l Ps. 50. 15; 22. 4, 5, with 28.6.

m ch.22. 1, 2; 23. 13; 25.13;27.2.

4 Supposed by good authorities to be the 'river of Egypt.' Jos. 15. 4, 47, the southern boundary of the promised land. It is also supposed to be that in which the Ethiopian was baptized, Ac. 8. 26, and though a brook in summer, in winter it is a considerable torrent, which prevented the weary soldiers from passing, while its cooling waters afforded them a favourable place for refreshment.—*C.*

n Ps.32.8. Pr. 3. 5, 6. Re.12.16. Ro.8.28.

o ch.14.27. Ju.15.19. Is.40.29-32.

5 Inhumanity is here signally self-punished. Had this poor slave been treated with humanity, he had not been here to lead David in pursuit of his unfeeling master.—*C.*

p Pr. 12. 10, with Zep.3.5.

q ver.16. Eze.25.15, 16. Jos.14.13;15.13.

6 This young Egyptian was evidently well acquainted with the geography of the district, he speaks so familiarly of the divisions. The Cherethites whom he mentions occur frequently in the history of David. Who they were, is not clear. Some think them a remnant of the aborigines of Crete.—*C.*

7 A district in the south of Judah, in which were the cities of Kirjath-arba or Hebron and Kirjath-sepher, belonging to the family of Caleb. —*I.*

r Ge.21.23; 24. 3; 25. 33; 26. 31; 31. 53; 47. 31. Jos.2.12. Ju.15. 12. ch. 19.6; 20. 3. 2 Sa. 19. 23. He.6.16.

s Lu.12.19,20;17.27-29; 21. 34, 35. 1 Th.5.3. Is. 22. 13. Da. 5. 1, 30. Re.11.10,13.

8 The revelry of the Amalekites had unfitted them for resistance, so they perish, while David loses not a single follower. —*Note*, Luxury, under the name of enjoyment, is the great cause of the ruin of individuals, families, armies, and nations. —*C.*

t Job 20. 5. Da. 5. 6. Lu.17.26-29.

9 Heb. *their morrow*.

u Ge. 14. 16. Mat. 6. 33. Ps. 34. 9, 10; 37.4,5. Job 1.10.

1 'The spoil was recovered and brought off; nothing was lost, but a great deal gotten. Providence had so ordered, that the Amalekites carefully preserved all that they had taken, concluding that they kept it for themselves, though really they preserved it for the right owners. There was 'nothing lacking;' so it proved when they concluded all was gone; so much better is God oftentimes to us than our own fears.'—*Henry*.

x ver. 26. Is. 53. 12. Re.19.17-19.

y ver.9,10.

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the most perplexing circumstances. David is now upon the point of either proving a murderer of the Israelites, whom God had anointed him to save, or a traitor to the Philistines, who had so kindly protected him. But God takes more care to preserve his people's integrity and honour than they do themselves; and often gives them a decent escape from the nets in which they had sinfully entangled themselves. That which is intended for our disgrace often proves a distinguishing mercy; and it is honourable if the messengers of our disgrace are able and ready to witness for our uprightness.

CHAPTER XXX. REFLECTIONS. — Saul's sparing of the Amalekites did but entail murder and ravage on his own subjects. When we go abroad, we know not what scenes of mourning may meet us at our return. And the more comfort we promise ourselves in the creature, the more bitter will be our disappointment. We had need to be always in the way of our duty, as it is only in that we can expect God's protection to ourselves and families. He can marvellously restrain the rage of the most barbarous, and save his people alive in their hands. How hard is it to bear heavy trials without fretting against the Lord, and raging against those who imprudently occasion them! But circumstances can never be so bad but there is ground for faith in the promises of God. To encourage ourselves in him as our God is the surest and shortest method of relief from our troubles: and they are generally great saints indeed who become such by means of great sufferings. If by neglecting to consult God we have formerly plunged ourselves into troubles, we ought the more earnestly to ask his direction, in order to get out of them. He can at once arrest the adversary, and conduct us to them. Even discouraging providences in our way should but excite and animate our faith to press forward. Cruelty, even to servants, entails misery on the guilty, while compassion and charity usually bring their own reward. We know not how much good or evil the weakest instruments may do us. Great events often depend on small and unexpected accidents. Carnal security is the great mean of a sinner's destruction. The dance and song often hand them forward into everlasting woe, when destruction cometh upon them suddenly in an instant. Such followers of Christ as are willing, but weak, ought to be comforted under their infirmities: but the heart of the covetous is hardened against the sufferings of the needy: and it is neither the best companions, nor the best instructions, that will change the hearts of men of Belial: but rulers must

follow David, whom they had made also to abide at the brook Besor; and they went forth to meet David, and to meet the people that *were* with him: and when [z]David came near to the people, he saluted them.[2]

22 ¶ Then answered all the wicked men and *men*[a] of Belial,[3] of those[4] that went with David, and said, Because they went not with us, we will not give them *ought* of the spoil that we have recovered, save to every man his wife and his children, that they may lead *them* away, and depart.

23 Then said David, Ye shall not do so, [b]my brethren, with that which the LORD hath given us, [c]who hath preserved us, and delivered the company that came against us into our hand.

24 For who will hearken unto you in this matter? but [d]as his part *is* that goeth down to the battle, so *shall* his part *be* that tarrieth by the stuff: they shall part alike.[5]

25 And it was *so* from that day forward,[6] that he made it a statute and an ordinance for Israel unto this day.

26 ¶ And when David came to Ziklag, he sent of the spoil unto the elders of Judah, *even* to[e] his friends, saying, Behold a [f]present for you of the spoil of the enemies of the LORD:[7]

27 To *them* which *were* in [g]Beth-el,[8] and to *them* which *were* in south Ramoth,[9] and to *them* which *were* in Jattir,[1]

28 And to *them* which *were* in [h]Aroer, and to *them* which *were* in Siphmoth, and to *them* which *were* in Eshtemoa,

29 And to *them* which *were* in Rachal, and to [i]*them* which *were* in the cities of the Jerahmeelites, and to *them* which *were* in the cities of the Kenites,

30 And to *them* which *were* in [k]Hormah, and to *them* which *were* in Chor-ashan, and to *them* which *were* in Athach,

31 And to *them* which *were* in [l]Hebron, and to all the places where David himself and his men were wont to haunt.[2]

CHAPTER XXXI.

1 Saul having lost his army, and his sons slain, he and his armour-bearer kill themselves. 7 The Philistines possess the forsaken towns of the Israelites. 8 They insult over the dead bodies of Saul and his sons. 11 The men of Jabesh-gilead, recovering the bodies by night, burn them, and bury their bones at Jabesh.

NOW the[a] Philistines fought against Israel; and the men of Israel fled from before the

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z Mat.7.12.He.13.1, 3.1 Pe.3.8.

2 Or, *asked them how they did.*

a De. 13.13. Ju. 19. 22.1 Ki.21.10. Pr.19.28. 2 Co.6.15.2 Ti.3.2-5.

3 One of Satan's chief temptations and means of mischief is covetousness. By it he seeks first to introduce injustice and then division into David's army. Let Christians, who are not ignorant of his devices, be watchful against this snare.—*C.*

4 Heb. *men.*

b Ge.19.7.Ju.19.23.

c Ps.44.2-5;115.1,3.

d Nu.31. 27. Jos. 22. 8. Ge. 45. 23, with Ps. 68.12.

5 This equitable adjudication of David exhibits great sagacity, a nice sense of propriety, and decided generosity, and no doubt laid the foundation, humanly speaking, of much of David's success as a general and influence as a monarch.—*C.*

6 Heb. *and forward.*

e Ps. 35. 27; 68. 18. 1 Ch.12.1. Pr.18.16.

f Heb. *blessing,* Ge. 33. 11. ch. 25. 27. 2 Ki.5.15.

7 Not the spoil of David's enemies, but the Lord's. Such the Amalekites literally were. But David calls them so, because he consulted and remembered God's glory, as sovereign in all events, rather than his own.—*C.*

g Ge. 12. 8. Jos.8.9; 19.8.15.48. Ju.1.23.

8 Probably not the Bethel so distinguished in Scripture history, but another in Simeon, Jos. 19. 4. —*C.*

9 So called to distinguish it from Ramoth-gilead on the other side Jordan.—*C.*

1 A city of the priests in the hill country of Judah, Jos. 15.48; 21.14. 1 Ch.6.42. Eusebius identifies it with Jetheira, a Christian village in the district of Daroma, 20 miles from Eleutheropolis.—*Winer*

h ch.22.3. Jos.13.16; 15.50.

i ch.27.10. Ju.1.16. 1 Ch.2.9,42.

k Nu.14.45;21.3. Jos. 19.4,17.

l Jos.10.3;15.54;21. 13;1 1.13,14. Nu. 13.22. Ge.23.2.2Sa.2.1;5.10.

2 There was much sound policy as well as generosity in this act of David. It is probable he sent the cattle taken from the Amalekites, which he had himself little means, if any, of keeping. Besides, had he brought them back, they might have produced war with the Philistines. He enriches his country while he impoverishes her enemies, and attaches his friends.—*C.*

CHAP. XXXI.

a ch.29.1;12.25.1Ch. 10.1-12. De.28.15. Le. 26.25,36.

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1 Heb. *thrust through.*

2 Still called Djebel-Gilbo. It is placed by Jerome about six miles west of Bethshan.—*C.*

b 2 Ki.23.27. Ec.9.1, 2. De.32.49-52. ch.14. 49.1 Ch.8.33;9.39;10.2.

c 2 Sa.1.4-10. Am.2. 14, Je.48.44.

3 Heb. *shooters, men with bows.*

4 Heb. *found him.*

d Ju.9.54.1 Ch.10.4.

e Or, *mock me,* Ju. 16.21;9.54.

5 The Jews say he was Doeg, and if so, both Saul and Doeg died by the sword with which Saul had ordered him, and Doeg wickedly obeyed, to slay the Lord's priests. Such remarkable retributions of Providence sometimes do occur even as Haman died on the gallows he had erected for Mordecai.—*C.*

f 1 Ch. 10. 4, 13, 14. ver.6. Mat. 27.4. 2 Sa. 17.23.

g Ro.6.23.1 Ch.10.6. Ec.9.1,2;12.7. He.9.27. Job 30. 23. ch. 12. 25. Ho.13.11. Ps.78.62.

h Ju.6.2.ch.13.6. Le. 26.32,36. De. 28. 33. 1 Ch.10.7.

6 They were now scattered as sheep without a shepherd, and not only forsook the open country, but even the strong cities, which were speedily occupied by the Philistines. But God, who punishes Israel for idolatry, and seeking a king without consulting him, is hereby preparing an occasion for developing the great qualities of David, whose prosperous reign so gloriously contrasts with the disastrous termination of that of Saul.—*C.*

i 1 Ch.10.8. 2 Ch.20. 25.

k ver.4; ch.17.51,54. 1 Ch.10.9. Ju.16.23,24. 2 Sa.1.20.

l 1 Ch.10.10. Ju.2.13; 1.27. 2 Sa.21.12.

7 The placing of such trophies in temples has been customary in all countries and ages. David himself had placed the sword of Goliath in the tabernacle, where he got it at the time of his flight from Saul. —*C.*

8 Bethshean lay down the valley of Jezreel, in sight of, and about 5 miles distant from, the field of battle. Jabesh-gilead was situated on the other side of Jordan, nearly opposite Bethshean, and about 15 miles distant.—*P.*

m ch. 11. 1-11. 2 Sa. 2.4-7. Ju.21.8-14.

9 Saul had done the Jabesh-gileadites signal service in delivering them from Nahash the Ammonite, ch. xi., and here they display a grateful, a courageous, and a pious generosity.—*C.*

1 Or, *concerning him.*

n Je.34. 5. 2 Ch. 16. 14. Am.6.10.

2 *Burning* the dead has been customary in many nations, of which fact there are many relics and evidences in many parts of western Europe.—*C.*

o 2 Sa. 2. 4, 5; 21. 12. Ge.35.8.

Philistines, and fell down slain[1] in mount Gilboa.[2]

2 And the Philistines followed hard upon Saul, and upon his sons; and the Philistines slew [b]Jonathan, and Abinadab, and Melchi-shua, Saul's sons.

3 And the [c]battle went sore against Saul, and the archers[3] hit him;[4] and he was sore wounded of the archers.

4 Then [d]said Saul unto his armour-bearer, Draw thy sword, and thrust me through therewith, lest these uncircumcised come and thrust me through, and [e]abuse me. But his armour-bearer would not;[5] for he was sore afraid: therefore Saul [f]took a sword, and fell upon it.

5 And when his armour-bearer saw that Saul was dead, he fell likewise upon his sword, and died with him.

6 So Saul [g]died, and his three sons, and his armour-bearer, and all his men, that same day together.

7 ¶ And when the men of Israel that *were* on the other side of the valley, and *they* that *were* on the other side Jordan, saw that the men of Israel fled, and that Saul and his sons were dead, [h]they forsook the cities, and [6]fled; and the Philistines came and dwelt in them.

8 ¶ And[i] it came to pass on the morrow, when the Philistines came to strip the slain, that they found Saul and his three sons fallen in mount Gilboa.

9 And [k]they cut off his head, and stripped off his armour, and sent into the land of the Philistines round about, to publish *it in* the house of their idols, and among the people.

10 And they put his armour in the house of [l]Ashtaroth;[7] and they fastened his body to the wall of Beth-shan.[8]

11 ¶ And when the inhabitants of [m]Jabesh-gilead[9] heard of that [1]which the Philistines had done to Saul,

12 All the valiant men arose, and went all night, and took the body of Saul, and the bodies of his sons, from the wall of Beth-shan, and came to Jabesh, and [n]burnt[2] them there.

13 And they took [o]their bones, and buried *them* under a tree at Jabesh, and fasted seven days.

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oblige such to comply with the ministrations of equity. Such as have shown us kindness deserve a recompense when God puts it in our power: nay, liberality in compliments is, on some occasions, great prudence, and an urgent letter of recommendation. But in a time of need it will require all engagements to constrain us to our duty.

CHAPTER XXXI. [Ver. 3. Saul's position at this fatal battle was badly chosen. He appears to have been enfeebled in mind as well as in body by the journey to Endor and the interview with the witch. On his return, instead of keeping his commanding position on the mountain side, he descended into the valley to the fountain, ch. 29. 1. The Philistines also changed their position, and took up a better one at Jezreel, from which they were able to fall upon the left flank of the Israelites. On the first assault the Israelites were driven back, and in attempting to climb the steep sides of Gilboa the thick flight of the enemies' arrows killed numbers. Saul himself was wounded. There, still in the agonies of death, the wandering Amalekite found him, and afterwards carried the lying message to David for which he paid with his life. *P.*]

REFLECTIONS. — In what fearful destruction Israel's desire of a king, and Saul's disobedience to God, issue at last! Dreadful is the case of professors when once the Lord has abandoned them. He turns our comforts into crosses; and the death of our children in our punishment may render our own doubly miserable. In what awful power God rules the righteous with the wicked! All things here come alike to all; but eternity will make the difference. God in righteous justice suffers them to be their own murderers who had murdered his priests, or attempted to murder the faithful. But horrid, indeed, is that pride which makes men rush into eternal misery, in order to escape a little infamy. In what shame, and disgrace, and misery do unsanctified honours terminate! And fearful is the fate of those who court the devil's friendship and direction. But gratitude, even to the wicked, must never be neglected.

THE SECOND BOOK OF

SAMUEL

Contains the history of forty years; exhibiting the troubles and triumphs of the man according to God's own heart; particularly, His concern for the death of Saul and Jonathan, i. His struggles against, and prevalence over, the house of Saul, ii.–iv. His instalment on the throne of Israel; bringing up the ark to Jerusalem, and resolution to build a temple for it, v.–vii. His kindness to Mephibosheth, ix. His conquests of the Philistines, Moabites, Edomites, Syrians, and Ammonites, v. viii. x. xii. xxi. His adultery with Bathsheba and murder of Uriah; with the punishment of it in the death of his adulterous child—in the incest and murder of Amnon—in the rebellion, incest, and death of Absalom—and in the revolt of Sheba, xi.–xx. His removal of the famine inflicted for Saul's murdering of the Gibeonites, xxi. His song of praise for his deliverances, xxii. His last words, and the list of his noted warriors, xxiii. And his stopping of the plague which he procured by his numbering of the people, xxiv.

CHAPTER I.

1 *The Amalekite, who brought tidings of the Israelites' defeat, and accused himself of Saul's death, is slain.* 11 *David and his men mourn thereat.* 17 *David's lamentation over Saul and Jonathan.*

NOW it came to pass after the death of Saul, [a]when David was returned from the slaughter of the Amalekites,[1] and David had [b]abode two days in Ziklag;

2 It came even to pass [c]on the third day, that, behold, a man came out of the camp from Saul, [d]with his clothes rent, and earth upon his head: and *so* it was, when he came to David, that he fell to the earth, and did obeisance.

3 And David said unto him, From whence comest thou? And he said unto him, Out of the camp of Israel am I escaped.

4 And David said unto him, [e]How[2] went the matter? I pray thee, tell me. And he answered, [f]That the people are fled from the battle, and many of the people also are fallen and dead; and Saul and Jonathan his son are dead also.

5 And David said unto the young man that told him, [g]How knowest thou that Saul and Jonathan his son be dead?

6 And the young man that told him said, As I happened[3] by chance[4] upon [h]mount Gilboa, behold, Saul leaned upon his spear; and, lo, the chariots and horsemen followed hard after him.

7 And when he looked behind him, he saw me, and called unto me: and I answered, Here *am* I.[5]

8 And he said unto me, Who *art* thou? And I answered him, I *am* an [i]Amalekite.

9 He said unto me again, Stand, I pray thee, upon me, and slay me; for anguish is come upon me,[6] because my life *is* yet whole in me.[7]

10 So I stood upon him, and [k]slew him, because I was sure that he could not live after that he was fallen: and I took the crown[8] that *was* upon his head, and the bracelet that *was* on his arm,[9] and have brought them hither unto my lord.

11 ¶ Then David took hold on his clothes, and [l]rent them,[1] and likewise all the men that *were* with him.

12 And they [m]mourned and wept, and fasted until even, for Saul, and for Jonathan his son, and for the people of the LORD, and for the house of Israel; because they were fallen by the sword.

13 ¶ And David said unto the young man that told him, Whence *art* thou? And he answered, I *am* the son of a stranger, an Amalekite.

14 And David said unto him, [n]How wast thou not afraid to stretch forth thine hand to destroy the LORD's anointed?

15 And David [o]called one of the young men, and said, Go near, *and* fall upon him. And he smote him that he died.[2]

16 And David said unto him, [p]Thy blood *be* upon thy head: for thy mouth hath testified against thee, saying, I have slain the LORD's anointed.

17 ¶ And David [q]lamented with this lamentation over Saul, and over Jonathan his son;

18 (Also he bade them [r]teach the children of Judah *the use of* the bow;[3] behold, *it is* written [s]in the book of Jasher;[4])

19 The[t] beauty of Israel is slain upon thy high places: [u]how are the mighty fallen!

20 Tell[x] *it* not in Gath, publish *it* not in the streets of Askelon; lest [y]the daughters of the Philistines rejoice, lest the daughters of the uncircumcised triumph.

21 Ye[z] mountains of Gilboa, *let there be* no

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CHAP. I.

a 1 Sa.30.17.Ps.9.18; 27.14.

1 It seems probable that the events related in the last two chapters of 1 Samuel did not take place in the order of time in which they are placed, and especially, that David's victory over the Amalekites was about the time of the battle of Gilboa, and his return subsequent. Such anachronisms are unavoidable in history.—*C.*

b 1 Sa.27.6. 1 Ch. 12. 1.

c Ge.22.4; 31.22.Ex. 19.11,15.Est.5.1.Ho.6. 2.Mat.16.21;20.19.

d Ge.37.29. Jos. 7. 6. 1 Sa.4.12.

e Ne.1.2,3.1 Sa.4.16, 17.

2 Heb. *What was*, &c.

f 1 Sa. 31. 1–6. 1 Ch. 10.1–6.

g Pr.14.15;25.2.

3 Heb. *meeting, I met.*

4 There is no such contradiction, as infidels have asserted, between this account of Saul's death and that contained in 1 Sam. xxxi. This narrative was a mere fiction of the Amalekite in order to ingratiate himself with David. It is not, however, uncommon for men to take to themselves the credit, if we may so speak, of wicked actions which they wanted either the courage or the opportunity of achieving.—*C.*

h 1 Sa. 31. 1–6. 1 Ch. 10.1–6.

5 Heb. *Behold me.*

i Ge.14.7. Ex. 17. 8–16. Nu.24.20. De. 25.17–19.1 Sa.15.3; 27. 8; 30. 17.

6 Or, *my coat of mail*, or *my embroidered coat hindereth me, that my*, &c.

7 Boothroyd, adopting a conjectural emendation, translates 'convulsion hath seized me, so that there is scarcely life in me.'—*I.*

k 1 Sa. 31. 4; 22. 18. Mat.7.2. Ju.9.54.

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8 Not the royal crown, which would not be fit for battle; but some distinctive ornament of his helmet, of which ancient sculptures afford variety.—*C.*

9 Bracelets set with diamonds of enormous value are still an emblem of royalty among the Persians; and bands of gold on the arm are mentioned by historians as constituting a part of the regalia of the ancient British kings.—*C.*

l ch.3.31; 13.31. Ge. 37.29.Jos.7.6.

1 He rent the loose outer garment, not all his raiment. It was an ancient token of mourning, the emblem of sorrow of heart, Joel 2.13.—*C.*

m Mat.5.44. 1 Pe.3. 8. Am. 6. 6. Ro. 12.15. Je.9.1. La.1.–v. Ps.35. 13,14.Pr.24.17,18.1 Co. 12.26. 2 Co.11.29. He. 13.1,3.

n Nu. 12. 8. Ps. 105. 14,15. 1 Sa.24.6;26.7,9, 10;10.1;31.4.

o ch.4.10,12. Ju.8.20. 1 Sa. 22.18. 1 Ki. 2. 25, 34,46.

2 David at the time could have no reason to doubt the truth of this statement; and, according to his own confession, the Amalekite, being a murderer, was justly put to death according to the divine law.—*C.*

p Le. 20. 9. Ju. 9.24. Ge.9.6. 1 Sa.26.9. Job 15.6.Pr.6.2. Lu.19.22.

q Ge.50.11. 2 Ch.35. 25.

r Ge.49.8. De.33.7.1 Sa.31.3.

3 The words *use of*, being supplied to make out the sense of the translators, some have supposed to be improperly inserted; and that the *bow* is the title of the elegy. But the sense of the translators seems the true one; for Saul having been wounded by the Philistine archers (see 1 Sa. 31. 3), and the whole battle having probably been gained by them, an ordinance for teaching the use of the bow seems naturally connected with such a national calamity.—*C.*

s Jos.10.13. An uninspired history of the Hebrews.

4 Or, *of the upright.*

t De.4.4,7,8.ver.23.1 Sa.31.8.

u ver.25,27. La.5.16. Is.1.31. Ps.78.62.

x Mi.1.10. Ju.16.23.1 Sa.31.9.

y 1 Sa. 18. 6. Ex. 15. 20,21.

z Ju.5.23. Job 3.3,4. Je.20.14. Mat.21.19.

CHAPTER I. [Ver. 18. *Book of Jasher.* The book of Jasher is by some supposed to have been an uninspired book, now lost. But it were strange indeed if an inspired writer referred to uninspired authority! The word *Jasher* signifying *perfect*, is it not much more likely that this was a mere Hebrew phrase of authentication, somewhat similar to the English phrase, 'witness my hand and seal?' *C.*——It is still customary in the East to give quaint or far-fetched titles to odes and

WOMAN RIDER. JAFFA—FROM WHERE JONAH EMBARKED TO TARSHISH. [II. SAMUEL, i : 20.]—"Tell it not in Gath, publish it not in the streets of Askelon; lest the daughters of the Philistines rejoice, lest the daughters of the uncircumcized triumph." The above is an illustration of a riding scene taken in Jaffa on April the 23d 1894. Jaffa is one of the ancient cities of the Philistines, and the woman and little girl we see on the donkey may be descendants, for all that we know, from this ancient people. We know at least that the woman is a Mahommedan by the fact that her head is covered. There is but one item in this scene that serves to distinguish it from like scenes, such as might have been witnessed in Jaffa from the days of the ancient Philistines down to the present time. That item is the umbrella. That is modern. In all other respects the picture illustrates thousands of years of history.

dew, neither *let there be* rain, upon you, nor fields of offerings: for there the shield of the mighty is vilely cast away, the shield of Saul, *as though he had* not *been* [a]anointed with oil.

22 From the blood of the slain, from the fat of the mighty, the bow of Jonathan turned not back, and the sword of Saul returned not empty.[3]

23 Saul and Jonathan *were* lovely and [b]pleasant in their lives, and in their death they were not divided: they were [c]swifter than eagles, they were stronger than lions.

24 Ye [d]daughters of Israel, weep over Saul, who clothed you in scarlet,[4] with *other* delights,[5] who put on ornaments[6] of gold upon your apparel.

25 How are the [e]mighty fallen in the midst of the battle! O Jonathan, *thou wast* slain in thine high places.

26 I am distressed [f]for thee, my brother Jonathan: very pleasant hast thou been unto me: thy love to me was wonderful, passing the love of women.

27 How are the mighty fallen, and [g]the weapons of war perished!

CHAPTER II.

1 David, by God's direction, with his company goeth up to Hebron, where he is made king over Judah. 5 He commendeth the men of Jabesh-gilead for their kindness to Saul. 8 Abner maketh Ishbosheth king of Israel. 12 A mortal skirmish between twelve of Abner's and twelve of Joab's men. 18 Asahel is slain. 25 At Abner's motion Joab soundeth a retreat. 32 Asahel's burial.

AND it came to pass after this, that David [a]inquired of the LORD,[1] saying, Shall I go up into any of the cities of Judah? And the LORD said unto him, Go up. And David said, Whither shall I go up? And he said, Unto Hebron.[b]

2 So David went up thither, and [c]his two wives also, Ahinoam the Jezreelitess, and Abigail, Nabal's wife, the Carmelite.

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a 1 Sa.10.1, or Is.21.5.

3 'The figure upon which this passage is founded is, that arrows drink the blood of the enemy, and a sword devours their flesh;' thus in De. 32.42, 'I will make mine arrows drunk with blood, and my sword shall devour flesh.'—*P.*

b Or, *sweet*, 1 Sa.9.1;18.1.

c ch.2.18;23.20.1 Ch.12.8. Is.5.26,29. Hab.1.8.

d 1 Pe.3.3. 1 Ti.2.9. Ps.68.12. Je.2.32, with Job 30.9. Re.11.10.

4 The favourite colour of the rich. It would seem that under Saul the country had acquired such wealth that a splendour of dress was attainable that was before unknown.—*I.*

5 'With delights,' *i.e.* he clothed you in purple in a way which gave delight and pleasure.—*P.*

6 Israel, through so many intestine divisions, foreign invasions, and oppressions—the righteous but heavy punishment of their sins—was, at the accession of Saul, in a very rude condition, and nearly deprived of both agriculture and arts. David here celebrates the economic improvements commenced under the government of Saul, as manifested in the dress of the people.—*Note*, All improvements in arts, and means of comfort, are blessings from God: ornaments of dress are not sinful, but pride is.—*C.*

e ver.19,27. La.5.16.

f 1 Sa.18.1–3; 19.2,4; 20.7–17;23.16–18.

g 2 Ki. 2, 12; 13, 14. La.5.16. Ps.89.42,43.

CHAP. II.

B.C. 1055.

a Nu.27.21. Ju.1.1,2; 20.18,23,27. ch.5.19,23. 1 Sa. 23. 2, 4, 9; 30.7, 8. Eze. 36, 37. Ezr.8.21.

1 He inquired by means of the high-priest.—*C.*

b Ge.23.2. Nu.13.22. Jos.10.36; 14.14,15. Lu. 1.39.1 Sa.30.31.

c 1 Sa.25.42,43; 30.5; 27.3. 2 Ti.2.12. Lu.22. 28,29.

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d 1 Ch.12.1, &c.1 Sa. 22.4;27.2;30.10.

2 A chief of banditti would have had a train unencumbered with families. David was not a bandit, he was the legally anointed successor of Saul, and his army a regular community with their wives and children.—*C.*

e Jos. 21, 11, 12, *i.e.* the suburbs or cities around.

f Ge.49.8–10. ch.19. 11,42.1 Sa.30.26–31.

g 1 Sa.31.11–13, with 11.1 11.1 Ch.10.11,12.

3 A town on the east of Jordan, in the half tribe of Manasseh.—*C.*

h Ru.1.8; 2.20; 3.10. Ge.24.31.

i Mat.5.7. 2 Ti.1.16–18.

k Phile. 18. Mat. 5. 44:10.16. Ps.112.5. Ep. 5.15

l ch.10.12. 1 Sa.4.9 1 Co.16.13. Ep.6.10.2 Ti. 2.1.

4 Heb. *the sons of valour.*

m 1 Sa.14. 50; 17.55; 26.14,15. ch.3.17.

5 Heb. *the host which was Saul's.*

n Esh-baal, 1 Ch.8. 33 ver.15.

o Ge. 32.2. Jos.21.38. ch.17.26,27.

6 A city situated on the Jabbok, east of Jordan. It was so called from Jacob's vision of the two angelic hosts, Ge. 32. 2. No trace of its ruins now remains, though it must have been a place of considerable strength, as it was the retreat of David, an accomplished warrior, during the rebellion of Absalom, 2 Sa.xvii.xviii.—*C.*

p Nu.21.24,35;xxxii. De. 3. 12–17. Jos.13.9–21.

q Ge. 25. 3. Ps. 83. 8. Eze.27.6.

7 All except the tribe of Judah.

8 The occasional distinction between Israel and Judah had begun long before this period.—*C.*

r Before the war, ver.12.

s ch.5.5. 1 Ki.2.11. 1 Ch.29.27;3.4.

9 Heb. *number of days.*

t To fight David's party.

u Jos.9.3; 10.12. ver. 24.

2 A city of Benjamin, situated on a hill about six miles north of Jerusalem.—*C.*

v 1 Ch.2.16. ver.16. 22,24; ch.3.29,30; 8.26; 20.23;viii.–xxiv. 1 Ki.1 7:2.5.8,29.

x Heb. *them together*, Je.41.12.

3 And [d]his men that *were* with him did David bring up, every man with his [2]household: and they dwelt [e]in the cities of Hebron.

4 And[f] the men of Judah came, and there they anointed David king over the house of Judah. And they told David, saying, *That* [g]the men of Jabesh-gilead *were they* that buried Saul.

5 ¶ And David sent messengers unto the men of Jabesh-gilead,[3] and said unto them, [h]Blessed *be* ye of the LORD, that ye have showed this kindness unto your lord, *even* unto Saul, and have buried him.

6 And [i]now the LORD show kindness and truth unto you: and [k]I also will requite you this kindness, because ye have done this thing.

7 Therefore [l]now let your hands be strengthened, and be ye valiant:[4] for your master Saul is dead, and also the house of Judah have anointed me king over them.

8 ¶ But [m]Abner the son of Ner, captain of Saul's host,[5] took [n]Ish-bosheth the son of Saul, and brought him over to [o]Mahanaim;[6]

9 And he made him king over [p]Gilead, and over the [q]Ashurites, and over Jezreel, and over Ephraim, and over Benjamin, and over [7]all Israel.[8]

10 Ish-bosheth, Saul's son, *was* forty years old when he began to reign over Israel, and reigned [r]two years: but the house of Judah followed David.

11 (And [s]the time[9] that David was king in Hebron over the house of Judah was seven years and six months.)

12 ¶ And Abner the son of Ner, and the servants of Ish-bosheth the son of Saul, went out[1] from Mahanaim to [t]Gibeon.[2]

13 And [u]Joab the son of Zeruiah, and the servants of David, went out, and met [x]together

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treatises. Many of the titles appear at first sight to have little connection with the subject-matter, and it often requires a lengthened explanation to show their significancy. I have no doubt that the title of this noble ode was *Kesheth*, 'The bow.' The reason for the title it is not difficult to perceive. The *bow* is mentioned in ver. 22; it is besides a martial ode, and the bow was one of the principal weapons used in the fatal battle of Gilboa—a weapon, too, in the use of which the Benjamites were especially skilled. Taken in this sense the words of David are appropriate and most expressive. 'Teach the children of Judah *Kesheth;* behold, it is written in the *Book of the Righteous.*' *P.*]

Ver. 19. [This is one of the finest odes of the Old Testament. For martial fire, mingled with lofty sentiment and deep pathos, it is scarcely surpassed in the whole compass of literature. The noblest qualities of David's mind appear in it. All his own sufferings and cruel wrongs are forgotten in the fervour of his love and the depth of his grief. Not one bitter or revengeful feeling, not one word of exultation, not one sentiment even suggestive of a fault, is permitted to cloud the glowing picture of the departed hero. He sings only of Saul the mighty warrior, the delight of his people, the father of his beloved friend Jonathan, the anointed of the Lord. He dwells only on the best qualities and brightest features of the monarch. *P.*]

Ver. 21. [The second clause of this verse ought rather to be translated: 'For there is the shield of the mighty defiled, the shield of Saul, not anointed with oil.' It is the *shield*, and not the king, that is spoken of. It was not cleansed or polished. *P.*]

Ver. 23. [*Saul and Jonathan were lovely and pleasant in their lives.* This seems inconsistent with Saul's attempt against the life of Jonathan, 1 Sa. 20. 30–34. But however deeply culpable, this was but a solitary act, and not any habitual disagreement. *C.*]

Ver. 25. [Jonathan was noted for daring exploits. A trained mountaineer, the widest cliffs were the scenes of his greatest feats of arms. Yet on Mount Gilboa he fell. This in the mind of the enthusiastic warrior-poet enhanced the humiliation of defeat: 'Jonathan slain on thy heights!' *P.*]

REFLECTIONS. — How glorious is it to be thoroughly mortified to all worldly advancements, even when a kingdom is promised! He that believeth does not make haste. But base minds readily measure others by themselves; who, for the sake of favour or gain, will blemish their character, if not endanger their life. How striking are the judgments of God! Saul spared the Amalekites, when God commanded him to kill them, and thereby forfeited his crown. An Amalekite now boasts that he had killed Saul, and brings his crown and bracelet to David. How often are men so fond of their marks of dignity, as thereby to endanger their life! But sad anguish seizes on departing sinners. And it is mad to flee to death as a relief, when hell follows after. It is proper to lament the death of our relations, however wicked some of them have been; and to punish murderers, whatever friendship they may pretend. Death should wipe out the injuries which have been done to us. And let us speak nothing but in commendation, unless when duty forces us to it. But let the triumphing of the wicked over the cause of God be always grievous to us. In fine, let this song teach us generosity towards our injurers, gratitude towards our steady friends, and a deep concern for the honour of our God and the welfare of our country.

CHAPTER II. REFLECTIONS.—It is proper to commence every important project with solemn prayer to God. Such as wait upon God for direction shall be led in the right way to their kingdom; but ordinarily their advancement is gradual. Such as shared with us in our sufferings should share with us in our honours. If we suffer with Christ, we shall also reign with him. Kindness to our friends, or even injurious predecessors in office, ought to be considered as an obligation conferred on ourselves. It is not enough to praise such as have well deserved; they should, if possible, be recompensed. And to have those for our friends whose fidelity to others have been tried is a valuable acquisition. Through great tribulation saints must arrive at their honours, and especially their heavenly throne! But how inhuman the heart to which murder and bloodshed are a sport! False notions of honour are part of the wiles which Satan uses for the destruction of mankind. And they who are forward to rush on bloodshed and war have ordinarily reason to repent their rashness before it is concluded. The qualifications that render us proud and wilful are commonly the means of our ruin. And often, when

by the pool of Gibeon: and they sat down, the one on the one side of the pool, and the other on the other side of the pool.

14 And Abner said to Joab, Let the young men now arise and [y]play before us.[3] And Joab said, Let them arise.

15 Then there arose and went over by number, twelve of Benjamin, which *pertained* to Ish-bosheth[z] the son of Saul, and twelve of the servants of David.

16 And they caught every one his fellow by the head,[4] and *thrust* his sword in his fellow's side; so they fell down together: wherefore that place was called Helkath-hazzurim,[5] which *is* in Gibeon.

17 And there was a very sore battle that day; and Abner was [a]beaten, and the men of Israel, before the servants of David.

18 ¶ And there were [b]three sons of Zeruiah there, Joab, and Abishai, and Asahel: and Asahel *was* [c]*as* light of foot as a wild [6]roe.[7]

19 And Asahel pursued after Abner; and in going he turned not to the right hand nor to the left [d]from following Abner.

20 Then Abner looked behind him, and said, *Art* thou Asahel? And he answered, I *am*.

21 And Abner said to him, Turn thee aside to thy right hand or to thy left, and lay thee hold on one of the young men, and take thee his [e]armour. But Asahel would not turn aside from following of him.

22 And Abner said again to Asahel, Turn thee aside from following me: wherefore should I[f] smite thee to the ground? how then should I hold up my face to Joab thy brother?[8]

23 Howbeit he refused to turn aside: wherefore Abner with the hinder end of the spear smote him [g]under the fifth *rib*, that the spear came out behind him; and he fell down there, and died in the same place: and it came to pass, *that* as many as came to the place where Asahel fell down and died stood still.

24 Joab also and Abishai pursued after Abner: and the sun went down when they were come to the hill of Ammah, that *lieth* before Giah, by the way of the wilderness of Gibeon.[h]

25 ¶ And the children of Benjamin gathered themselves together after Abner, and became one troop, and stood on the top of an hill.[9]

26 Then Abner called to Joab, and said, Shall the sword devour for ever? knowest thou not that it will be bitterness in the latter end? how long shall it be then ere thou bid the people return [i]from following their brethren?

27 And Joab said, *As* God liveth, [k]unless thou hadst spoken, surely then in the morning[1] the people had[2] gone up every one from [3]following his brother.[4]

28 So Joab blew a trumpet, and all the people stood still, and pursued after Israel no more, neither fought they any more.

29 And Abner and his men walked all that night[5] through the plain,[6] and passed over Jordan, and went through all [l]Bithron, and they came to [m]Mahanaim.

30 ¶ And Joab returned from following Abner: and when he had gathered all the people together, there lacked of David's servants nineteen men and Asahel.

31 But the servants of David [n]had smitten of Benjamin, and of Abner's men, *so that* three hundred and threescore men died.

32 ¶ And they [o]took up Asahel, and buried him in the sepulchre of his father, which *was in* Beth-lehem: and Joab and his men went [p]all night, and they came to Hebron at break of day.

CHAPTER III.

1 *During the war David still waxeth stronger.* 2 *Six sons were born to him in Hebron.* 6 *Abner, displeased with Ishbosheth,* 12 *revolteth to David.* 13 *David requireth a condition to bring him his wife Michal.* 17 *Abner, having communed with the Israelites, is feasted by David, and dismissed.* 22 *Joab, returning from battle, is displeased with the king, and killeth Abner.* 28 *David curseth Joab,* 31 *and mourneth for Abner.*

NOW there was [a]long war between the house of Saul and the house of David: but [b]David waxed stronger and stronger, and the house of Saul waxed weaker and weaker.

2 ¶ And unto David [c]were sons born in Hebron:[1] and his first-born was [d]Amnon, of Ahinoam the Jezreelitess;

3 And his second, [e]Chileab, of Abigail the wife of Nabal the Carmelite; and the third, [f]Absalom, the son of Maacah, the daughter of [g]Talmai king of [h]Geshur;[2]

4 And the fourth, [i]Adonijah, the son of Haggith; and the fifth, Shephatiah, the son of Abital;

5 And the sixth, Ithream, by Eglah, David's wife.[3] These were born to David in Hebron.

6 ¶ And it came to pass, while there was war between the house of Saul and the house of David, that Abner made [k]himself strong for the house of Saul.

A.M. cir. 2950. B.C. cir. 1054.

y ver.16,17,26. Pr.12. 10;10.23;26.18.

3 So it ever has been, since sin entered into the world, that the infliction of mutual injury or death has been matter of sport to the spectators. We wonder little at such a circumstance in the rude and unsettled times from which Israel was but emerging: we wonder little at it amongst the gladiators of heathen Rome: but that remnants of it should still linger in Christian lands, is both matter of wonder, sorrow, and deep humiliation. *C.*——The leaders, no doubt, met with hostile intent, but the men on each side felt they were countrymen, and were reluctant to fight. The two generals, therefore, thought of a device which has often been employed in the East and elsewhere, to excite them to battle, when relationship or other causes made them unwilling to engage. Twelve men were matched to fight against each other, and so well matched, that they all fell by each others' hand, which exasperated the opposing forces into a general action.—*I.*

z ver.8.1 Ch.8.33.ch. 3.8,14;iv.

4 Doubtless 'by the hair of the head, or the beard,' Plutarch in his *Apothegms* relates, that all things being ready for a battle, Alexander's generals asked him whether he had any further commands. 'Nothing,' said he, 'unless that the Macedonians shave their beards.' When Parmenio expressed surprise at this order, 'Dost thou not know,' said he, 'that in fight there is no better hold than the beard?'—*I.*

5 That is, *the field of strong men*, or rocks.

a ver.9. Ps.2.1–5. Ac. 5.40.

b 1 Ch.2.16.ch.3.30.

c ch.1.23. 1 Ch.12.8. Ec.9.11. Am.2.14.

6 Heb. *as one of the roes that* is *in the field.*

7 The gazelle or antelope.—*C.*

d Heb. *from after Abner*, Ec.6.10.

e *Garment* or *spoil*, Ju.14.19.

f Ec.6.9,10. Ge.4.23.

8 Asahel was young and brave, and the generous veteran has no wish to slay him. His reference to Joab does not seem the dictate of fear, but of respect for the brotherly feelings of a high-minded enemy. How merciful, that even amidst the horrors of war, there are kindly and noble feelings by which those horrors are often mitigated or counteracted.—*C.*

g ch.3.27,4.6;20.10.

h Jos. ix.; 10, 2,4,12; 18.25; 21.17.ver.13; ch. 20.8. Je.41.12.

9 The dispersed Benjamites were collected and re-formed in order of battle.—*C.*

A.M. cir. 2950. B.C. cir. 1054.

i ver.19. Ac.7.26.

k ver.14. Pr.17.14;15. 16.28.19.

1 Heb. *from the morning.*

2 Heb. *gone away.*

3 That is, from following his brother to death.—*Note*, Intestine or civil wars are generally the most inveterate. In which respect, the conduct of Joab and Abner affords a valuable lesson in such lamentable circumstances. The one offers, and the other accepts, terms of reconciliation, or at least of truce; then separate in peace.—Lord! when shall swords be beaten into pruning hooks! when shall we learn war no more!—*C.*

4 The meaning is, '*If thou hadst not spoken, i.e.* challenged to single combat at the pool of Gibeon, *the people would have gone away in the morning, every one from his brother.*' Joab throws the whole blame upon Abner, who was the first to give the challenge, and as that was not successful, the bloody battle followed.—*P.*

5 Not from any fear of an attack from Joab, but because, in warm climates, the night is the most common and most comfortable time for walking.—*C.*

6 'Through the *Arabah*,' *i.e.* the valley of the Jordan, crossing the river which flows down the centre of it in a deep winding channel.—*P.*

l Ca.2.17.

m Ge. 32. 2. Jos. 21. 38. ver. 8,12; ch. 17.24, 26,27.

n ch. 3.1. 1 Ki.20.11. Pr. 16. Is.5.12;26.11.

o 1 Sa.31. 2 Ch.16. 14; 21. 1. ch.3.32; 4.12; 21.14.

p 2 Ch. 15. 2. Ps.112. 5.Ec.9.10.Pr.22.29.

CHAP. III.

a 1 Ki. 14. 30; 15. 16. Ge.3.15.Ga.5.17.Ep.6. 12.

b Job 8.7; 17.9. Pr.4. 18,19. Da 2.34.Es.6.13.

c 1 Ch.3.1–4.

1 While David's history will hereafter present him as a valiant warrior for his country's deliverance, and a zealous agent in the reformation and extension of religion, he will often be seen in deep distress, mainly arising from his own family. And the visible cause may here be noted in its fountain-head—the number of his wives, which these times of ignorance had introduced, and the consequent want of sympathy, and opposition of interests among his children.—*C.*

d ch.xiii.Ge.49.3,4.

e Or, Daniel, 1 Ch. 3.1.

f ch. 13. 20–38; xiv.–xviii.

g ch.13.37.

h Jos.13.11,13.De.3. 14.1 Ch.3.2.

2 Some think he had become acquainted with, her on one of his incursions into that country, when he resided at Ziklag. Yet there was another Geshur to the north, and it is doubtful which of the two is intended here.—*I.*

i 1 Ki.1.5–53;2.13–25.1 Ch.3.2.

3 His first or best beloved wife.

k ver.7. Phi.2.21.Pr.21.30.Is.8.9,10.

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we seem ready to grasp the prize of happiness, death stops our career, and lays our big swollen hopes and honour in the dust. But even in war human blood should be spared as much as possible. Life, once lost, can never be recovered.

CHAPTER III. REFLECTIONS.—It is vain to struggle against the purpose and promise of God; for sure, though gradual, are the honours and triumphs which come from above. How often might men have had as many children, and much more comfort in them, in keeping close to God's ordinance of one wife. For those things frequently prove our greatest scourges in which we promised ourselves the greatest comfort. Wicked men's folly and sin are made subservient to the fulfilment of God's promises or purposes. But rash accusation seldom issues well; and proud men can as seldom bear a reproof from those whom they have greatly obliged. Weak kings are but slaves to their own servants. And there is but little dependence to be placed on those whose zeal for our service is but to gratify their own ambition. It reflects little honour upon us when humour, not conscience, reduces us to our duty. It is indeed our duty to undeceive those whom we have imposed upon. But wicked suppressors of the truth, fighters against their conscience, and traitors to those who have trusted them, have seldom either the grace or honour to be distinguished instruments in the great works of God. While wicked men are proud enough to overbear their superiors, they are often base enough to stoop to the most detestable treachery, in order to gratify their revenge or destroy their suspected rivals. How hard is it when kings can

THE JORDAN AT DAN—WHERE JEROBOAM SET UP THE GOLDEN CALF. [II. SAMUEL iii: 10.]—"To translate the kingdom from the house of Saul, and to set up the throne of David over Israel and over Judah, from Dan even to Beer-sheba." Dan is the most northern city of Canaan. It was originally called Leshem (Josh. xix: 47). The inhabitants were related to the Sidonians. They lived by trade and had no defense. Hence the place was easily conquered by the Danites and named Dan. It is now known as Tell el-Kadi, and is the western and smaller of the two sources of the Jordan. It is four miles from Cæsarea Philippi on the road to Tyre. There are many ruins here, all overgrown with rank weeds and poplar trees. This was the chief seat of Jeroboam's idolatry, where he set up a golden calf. A little more than a mile southwest of Tell el-Kadi is a ruined mound, called Daphne by Josephus, on which he said stood the idolatrous shrine which Jeroboam erected.

A.M. 2950. B.C. 1054.

7 And Saul had a concubine, whose name *was* [l]Rizpah, the daughter of Aiah: and *Ish-bosheth* said to Abner, Wherefore hast thou gone[m] in unto my father's concubine?[3]

8 Then was Abner [n]very wroth for the words of Ish-bosheth, and said, *Am* I a [o]dog's head, which against Judah do show kindness this day unto the house of Saul thy father, to his brethren, and to his friends, and have not delivered thee into the hand of David, that thou chargest me to-day with a fault concerning this woman?

9 So[p] do God to Abner, and more also, except, as the LORD hath [q]sworn to David, even so I do to him;

10 To translate the kingdom from the house of Saul, and to set up the throne of David over Israel and over Judah, [r]from Dan even to Beer-sheba.

11 And he could not answer Abner a word again, because he feared him.

12 ¶ And Abner sent messengers to David on his behalf, saying, [s]Whose *is* the land?[4] saying *also*, [t]Make thy league with me, and, behold, my hand *shall be* with thee, to bring about all Israel unto thee.

13 ¶ And he said, Well; I will make a league with thee: but one thing I require of thee, that is,[5] Thou[u] shalt not see my face, except thou first bring Michal,[6] Saul's daughter, when thou comest to see my face.

14 And David sent messengers to Ish-bosheth, Saul's son, saying, Deliver *me* [v]my wife Michal, which I espoused to me for an hundred foreskins of the Philistines.

15 And Ish-bosheth sent, and took her from *her* husband, *even* [w]from Phaltiel the son of Laish.

16 And her husband went with her along weeping[x] behind her to [a]Bahurim.[7] Then said Abner unto him, Go, return. And he returned.

17 ¶ And Abner had communication with the elders of Israel, saying, Ye sought for David in times past[8] *to be* king over you:

18 Now then do *it;* for the [b]LORD hath spoken of David, saying, [c]By the hand of my servant David I will save my people Israel out of the hand of the Philistines, and out of the hand of all their enemies.[9]

19 And Abner also spake in the ears of [d]Benjamin:[1] and Abner went also to speak in the ears of David in Hebron all that seemed good to Israel, and that seemed good to the whole house of Benjamin.[2]

20 So Abner came to David to Hebron, and twenty men with him: and [e]David made Abner, and the men that *were* with him, a feast.

21 And Abner said unto David, I will arise and go, and will gather [f]all Israel unto my lord the king, that they may make a league with thee, and that thou mayest reign over all that thine heart desireth. And David sent Abner away; and he went in peace.

22 ¶ And, behold, the servants of David and Joab came from *pursuing* a troop,[3] and brought in a great spoil with them: but Abner *was* not with David in Hebron; for he had sent him away, and he was gone in peace.

23 When Joab and all the host that *was* with him were come, they told Joab, saying, Abner the son of Ner came to the king, and he hath sent him away, and he is gone in peace.

24 Then Joab came to the king, and said, What hast thou done?[4] behold, Abner came unto thee; why *is* it *that* thou hast sent him away, and he is quite gone?[5]

25 Thou knowest Abner the son of Ner, that he came to [g]deceive thee, and to know thy [h]going out, and thy coming in, and to know all that thou doest.

26 And when Joab was come out from David, he sent messengers after Abner, which brought him again from the well of Sirah: but David knew *it* not.

27 And when Abner was returned to Hebron, [i]Joab took him aside in the gate to speak with him quietly,[6] and smote him there under the fifth *rib*, that he died, for the blood of Asahel his brother.

28 ¶ And afterward, when David heard *it*, he said, I and my kingdom *are* [k]guiltless before the LORD for ever from the [l]blood of Abner the son of Ner:

29 Let[m] it rest on the head of Joab, and on all his father's house; and let there not fail from the house of Joab one that hath an issue, or that is a leper, or that leaneth on a staff, or that falleth on the sword, or that lacketh bread.[7]

30 So Joab and Abishai his brother [n]slew Abner, because he had slain their brother Asahel at Gibeon in the battle.

31 ¶ And David said to Joab, and to all the people that *were* with him, [o]Rend your clothes, and gird you with sackcloth, and mourn before Abner. And king David *himself* followed the [p]bier.

32 And they buried Abner in Hebron: and the king lifted up his voice, and [q]wept at the grave of Abner; and all the people wept.

33 And the king lamented over Abner, and said, Died Abner as a fool dieth?[8]

34 Thy hands *were* not bound, nor thy feet put into fetters:[9] as a man falleth before wicked men,[1] *so* fellest thou.[2] And all the people [r]wept again over him.

A.M. 2955. B.C. 1049.

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l ch. 21. 10.

m ch. 16. 21. 1 Ki. 2 21, 22. This was considered as a step to usurp the throne.

3 Ishbosheth understood his taking of his father's concubine, not as an act in which there was any moral criminality, but as an evidence of his secret purpose to usurp the name, as he already held the real power, of king. *C.*—According to eastern usages, the concubines of a deceased sovereign became the property of his successor, in so peculiar a sense (see the cases of Absalom, ch. 20, 23; and Adonijah, 1 Ki. 2, 13-25), that the action of Abner might be justly interpreted as a design upon the crown; it was at least so insulting an encroachment on the rights of royalty, that it roused the jealousy even of the timid Ishbosheth.—*I.*

n Mar. 6. 19. 2 Ti. 4 3.

o De. 23. 18. ch. 9, 8; 16. 9. 1 Sa. 24. 14. 2 Ki. 8. 13.

p Ru. 1. 17. 1 Sa. 25 22. 1 Ki. 19. 2.

q 1 Sa. 16. 13. Ps. 89. 3, 4, 19, 20.

r Ju. 20. 1. ch. 17. 11; 24. 2. 1 Ki. 4. 24, *i.e.* over the whole of the Israelites.

s 1 Sa. 13. 14; 15. 28.

4 Abner sent messengers to David on his own behalf (literally, 'from under him'), saying, 'Whose is the land?' *i.e.* to whom does it belong but to thee?—*P.*

t Lu. 16. 5-8. Ps. 62. 9.

5 Heb. *saying.*

u Ge. 43. 3.

6 A token of affection and grateful remembrance of her kindness, on occasion of his flight from her father's court. And as she had not been divorced, but taken from him and compelled to marry another, there was no impropriety in demanding her freedom and restoration. Her restoration was also an act of sound policy, as it would strengthen David's interest with the tribe of Benjamin.—*C.*

v 1 Sa. 18. 20–28; 19. 11, 12.

w 1 Sa. 25. 44. Phalti.

x Heb. *going and weeping*, Pr. 9. 17; 20. 25.

a ch. 16. 5; 19. 16.

7 A place on the eastern declivity of the Mount of Olives, on the road from Jerusalem to Jericho. The exact site is unknown.—*P.*

8 Heb. *yesterday and the third day.*

b 1 Sa. 13. 14; 15. 28, with ch. 2, 8, 9.

c Nu. 24. 10. Ps. 89. 19–24. Ge. 49. 8–10. 1 Sa. 16. 1, 13.

9 We do not find this promise expressly recorded, but it is implied in all God's procedure towards David.—*I.*

d 1 Sa. 10. 20, 21. 1 Ch. 12. 29.

1 It was especially necessary to take some pains with this tribe, as they were devoted to the family of Saul, who had been one of them.—*I.*

2 That is, he detailed to him the conditions upon which they were disposed to acknowledge him as king. See ver. 21.—*C.*

e Ge. 26. 30; 31. 46, 54; 43. 16. Ex. 18. 12. 1 Sa. 25. 36.

f ch. 2. 9. Mat. 3. 5. Phi. 2. 21.

3 Of Ishbosheth's forces; or rather of Philistines, Arabians, Amalekites, &c.

4 Joab had in David a very different character from what Abner had in Ishbosheth. Yet both monarchs were overruled by their generals. Joab takes him to task, acts independently of him, commits a murder which David deplores and abhors; yet, by means of his military power and political influence, it is beyond David's power to punish him. *C.*—Joab and his brother Abishai, David's nephews, had been very faithful, and highly useful to him in his distresses; and from gratitude and natural affection he had inadvertently permitted them to assume almost as much ascendency over him as Abner had over the pusillanimous Ishbosheth. He trusted and feared them too much, and allowed them all the importance they claimed, which had emboldened them (especially Joab) to a high degree of presumption.—*I.*

6 Heb. *going gone.*

g Ju. 14. 15; 16. 5-17.

h Nu. 27. 17. De. 28. 6. Ps. 121. 8.

i 1 Ki. 2. 5. ch. 2. 23; 20. 9, 10. Ps. 55. 21; 12. 2. Pr. 5 3, 4.

6 Or, *peaceably.*

k Ge. 31, 53. Job 31. 2, 4. De. 21. 7. Ps. 7. 3, 4.

l Heb. *bloods*, Ge. 4. 9, 10.

m Ju. 9. 24. Re. 16. 6; 13, 10. 1 Sa. 2. 31, 36. 2 Ki. 5. 27. Ps. 109. 8–19; 140. 11; 55. 23.

7 This is not a passionate imprecation; it is a terrible prophetic utterance, against a powerful, ambitious, unprincipled, and revengeful man—foretelling that retribution with which a righteous Providence would continue to visit his sins, not merely upon himself, but upon that posterity for whose aggrandizement he sinned.—*C.*

n ch. 2. 23. Ge. 9. 6. Ex. 21. 12. Pr. 25. 5.

o Ge. 37. 29, 34. Jos. 7. 6. 2 Ki. 19. 1. ch. 1. 11. Ju. 11. 35.

p Heb. *bed*, Lu. 7. 14. In it dead bodies were carried to the grave.

q Job 31. 29. Pr. 24. 17. Ro. 12. 15. Ps. 35. 13, 14.

8 He died, not by his own cowardice, but by Joab's treachery.

9 The word rendered 'fool' should be translated *criminal*. The hands of malefactors were secured with cords and their feet with chains; but that had not been done to Abner, yet he suffered death like a criminal, though unconvicted of any crime. He fell by the hand of treachery, and not of justice.—*I.*

1 Heb. *children of iniquity.*

2 This brief funeral oration ought to have produced a deep impression upon the mind of Joab; but, his feeling of revenge for his brother Asahel, and his ambitious fears of a rival in Abner, seem to have seared his conscience. The people evidently thought with David, the army with Joab their favourite general.—*C.*

r Ge. 50. 10. Nu. 20. 29. De. 34. 8. 1 Sa. 25. 1. ch. 1. 12.

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only mourn over crimes committed, but dare not punish them, because of the power of the guilty! Long impunity makes sinners confident. But though murder may pass unpunished for a while, the justice due to it will come at last; and God will not suffer the transgressor to escape.

CHAPTER IV. REFLECTIONS.—Dreadful are the effects of war; numerous and great the perils of infancy; to have escaped them unhurt is a singular

35 And when all the people came to [s]cause David to eat meat while it was yet day, David sware, saying, [t]So do God to me, and more also, if I taste bread, or ought else, till the sun be down.

36 And all the people took notice *of it*, and it pleased them;[3] as whatsoever the king did pleased all the people.[4]

37 For all the people, and all Israel, understood that day, that it was not of the king to slay Abner the son of Ner.

38 And the king said unto his servants, Know ye not that there is a prince and a great man fallen this day in Israel?

39 And I *am* this day [u]weak, though anointed king; and these men the sons of Zeruiah *be* too hard for me:[5] the LORD [x]shall reward the doer of evil according to his wickedness.

CHAPTER IV.

1 *The Israelites being troubled at the death of Abner,* 2 *Baanah and Rechab slay Ishbosheth, and bring his head to Hebron.* 9 *David causeth them to be slain, and Ishbosheth's head to be buried.*

AND when Saul's son heard that Abner was dead in Hebron, [a]his hands were feeble, and all the Israelites were troubled.

2 ¶ And Saul's son had two men *that were* captains of [b]bands;[1] the name of the one *was* Baanah, and the name of the other[2] Rechab, the sons of Rimmon a Beerothite, of the children of Benjamin: (for [c]Beeroth also was reckoned to Benjamin:

3 And the Beerothites fled to [d]Gittaim,[3] and were sojourners there until this day:)

4 And Jonathan, Saul's son, had [e]a son *that was* lame of *his* feet. He was five years old when[f] the tidings came of Saul and Jonathan out of Jezreel, and his nurse took him up, and fled: and it came to pass, as she made haste to flee, that he fell, and became lame; and his name *was* [g]Mephibosheth.[4]

5 And the sons of Rimmon the Beerothite, Rechab and Baanah, [h]went, and came about the heat of the day[5] to the house of Ish-bosheth, who [i]lay on a bed at noon.

6 And they came thither into the midst of the house, *as though* they would have fetched wheat;[6] and they [k]smote him under the fifth *rib:* and Rechab and Baanah his brother escaped.

7 For when they came into the house, he lay on his bed in his bed-chamber, and they smote him, and slew him, and beheaded him, and

A.M. 2955. B.C. 1049.

s ch.12.17. Je.16.7.
t ver.9.ch.1.12.1 Sa. 3:1.13.

3 Heb. *was good in their eyes.*

4 There are always tides in the affairs of men either for good or evil. David was now in the very height of popularity; and God who gave it, enabled David to improve it in correcting the abuses of government and reorganizing the ordinances of religion.—*Note,* if any species of popular favour be employed to foster personal pride or vanity, it is evil; if turned to the advancement of public good, it is a blessing to be prized. —*C.*

u Ex.21.12. 2Ch.19. 6.Pr.25.5; 21.3. Ro.13. 4.Ge.9.6.ch.19.7.

5 If David's nephews, Joab and Abishai, were 'too hard for him,' why did he not depose them? Because of their power with the army. But if David publicly condemned their proceedings, why did not they depose him? Because of his favour with the people.—*C.*

x 1 Ki. 2. 5, 6, 33, 34. Ps.62.1; 101.8;75.2,10. Pr. 21. 3; 20.8; 1. 31; 13. 21. Is 3.11. Mat.7.2. Ju. 1. 7. Je.2.17, 19; 4.18; 5. 25;6.19. Ro.2.8,9.

CHAP. IV.

a ch.17.2. Ezr. 4. 4. Ne.9.6. Zep. 3. 16. Is. 13.7;17.2.Ps. 53.5.

b ch.3.22.2 Ki.6.23.

1 The Vulgate and Syriac have 'chiefs of banditti.' If they headed bands of marauders (retained by Ishbosheth to make sudden inroads across the frontier), they would be well qualified for their work of blood.—*I.*

2 Heb. *second.*

c Jos.18.25;9.17.

d Ne.11.33. Its inhabitants were called Gittites.

3 This was a city of Benjamin, but its precise situation is totally unknown, Ne. 11.33.—*C.*

e ch.9. 3;10. 2.6.

f 1 Sa.29. 1;31.1-9.

g Or, *Merib-baal,* 1 Ch.8.34;9.40.

4 It was his youth and lameness that emboldened these ruffians to murder his uncle, for he was the next heir and the avenger of blood.—*I.*

h 1 Ti.5.10. Jude 11. 2 Ch.24.25;25.27;33.24.

5 In warm climates it is customary for the inhabitants to retire to couches in the heat of the day, during which period the fields are deserted, and business ceases in towns. The traitors take advantage of this time of repose to effect their murderous purpose. *Note,* If wicked men are so careful to find the most suitable opportunity for sin, how watchful should God's children be to seize the most favourable opportunities for doing good!—*C.*

i Pr.24.33,34. ch.11. 2-4. Mat.24.50. 1 Th.5. 2,3.

6 To prepare it, by parching and grinding, for the use of the family.—*C.*

k ch.2.23;3.27;20.10.

A.M. 2955. B.C. 1049.

l 1 Sa.17.54;31.9. Job 18.5. Ps.1.4;37.2.

m ch.1.10.2 Ki.10.7. Mat.14.11.

n Ps. 12. 2; 55. 21. 1 Sa. 20. 1; 23. 15. Pr.29. 10. Mat.2.20.

7 How readily do these wicked men assume that God has directed what their unfaithfulness, malice, covetousness, and ambition prompted! David, however, ascribes their conduct to its true motive, and punishes them as their crime deserved. —*C.*

o Ge.48.16. Ps. 31. 5; 19.14;71.23.

p ch.1.1–16.

8 Heb. *he was in his own eyes as a bringer,* &c.

9 Or, *which* was *the reward I gave him for his tidings.*

q Ge.9.6. Ex. 21. 12. Nu.35.30, 31. Ps. 9. 12. Eze.3.18,20. Re.13.10; 16.6.

r Mat.7.2 Ps.55.23.

s De.21.23 ch.21.9.

1 The pool of Hebron still exists It is an immense tank 133 feet square and 21 feet deep. It is built of huge blocks of hewn stones, and the masonry is manifestly of remote antiquity There is another smaller tank at some distance, but it is not of such ancient date as the former.—*P.*

t ch.3.32.

CHAP. V.

B.C. 1048.

a ver.3.1 Ch.11.1–3; 12.23–40. Ps.97. 1. Re. 11.15.

1 Not all the people, who would have formed a most unwieldy assembly, but the heads or representatives of all the tribes.—*C.*

b ch.19.13. De.17.15. Is.58.7. Ju.9.2. He.2.11 –16. Ep.5.30.

c Nu.27. 17. 1 Sa. 18. 13.16. Is.55.4. He.2.10. Mi.2.13.

d 1 Sa.16.12, ch. 7.7. Ps.78.71,72. Ju.10.3, 4, 10. Is.40.11. Eze.34. 23; 37.24,25.

2 Since the people knew that God had appointed David to be king, why did they not sooner submit to him? (1) Because the ambition of Abner, who held the military command, would not allow them. (2) Because, like many others, they knew the will of God, yet followed their own. *C.*—They invited him to assume the government on the grounds (1) of his *military* claim, as one who had often led them to victory; and (2) of his *theocratical* claim, as one who had been expressly appointed by God. This is the first time that good rulers are spoken of under the emblem of 'shepherds.'—*I.*

e 1 Ch.11.3. 2 Ki.11. 17.1 Sa.11.15.

3 Settled the constitution or charter of government.—*C.*

f Ju. 11. 11. 1 Sa 23. 18.

g 1 Sa.16.13. ch. 2.4. Lu.1.35. Mat.3. 16;28. 18.

h Lu.3.22,23.

i ch.2.11. 1 Ki. 2. 11. 1 Ch.3.4;29.27.

t took his head, and gat them away through the plain all night.

8 And they [m]brought the head of Ish-bosheth unto David to Hebron, and said to the king, [n]Behold the head of Ish-bosheth the son of Saul, thine enemy, which sought thy life; and the LORD hath avenged[7] my lord the king this day of Saul, and of his seed.

9 ¶ And David answered Rechab and Baanah his brother, the sons of Rimmon the Beerothite, and said unto them, *As* the LORD liveth, who [o]hath redeemed my soul out of all adversity,

10 When[p] one told me, saying, Behold, Saul is dead, (thinking to have brought[8] good tidings,) I took hold of him, and slew him in Ziklag, who *thought* that I would have given him a reward for his tidings:[9]

11 How much more, when wicked men have slain a righteous person in his own house upon his bed? shall [q]I not therefore now require his blood of your hand, and take you away out of the earth?

12 And David commanded his young men, and they [r]slew them, and cut off their hands and their feet, and [s]hanged *them* up over the pool in Hebron:[1] but they took the head of Ish-bosheth, and buried *it* [t]in the sepulchre of Abner in Hebron.

CHAPTER V.

1 *The tribes come to Hebron to anoint David king over Israel.* 4 *David's age.* 6 *He taking Zion from the Jebusites, dwelleth in it.* 11 *Hiram sendeth to David.* 13 *Eleven sons are born to him in Jerusalem.* 17 *David, directed by God, smiteth the Philistines at Baal-perazim,* 22 *and again at the mulberry-trees.*

THEN [a]came all the tribes of Israel[1] to David unto Hebron, and spake, saying, Behold, we *are* thy [b]bone and thy flesh.

2 Also in time past, when Saul was king over us, thou wast he that [c]leddest out and broughtest in Israel: and the LORD [d]said to thee, Thou shalt feed my people Israel, and thou shalt be a captain over Israel.[2]

3 So all the elders of Israel came to the king to Hebron; and king David [e]made a [3]league with them in Hebron [f]before the LORD: and they [g]anointed David king over Israel.

4 ¶ David *was* [h]thirty years old when he began to reign, *and* he reigned forty years.

5 In[i] Hebron he reigned over Judah seven years and six months; and in Jerusalem he reigned thirty and three years over all Israel and Judah.

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mercy. God soon removes every obstacle to the fulfilment of his purpose and promise: and the most flourishing families are quickly reduced to the most weak and abject conditions. The higher men's station is the more dangerous it is: and when once they begin to fall, every pretended friend is ready to hasten forward their ruin, and make religion a pretext for their conduct. Very precarious is their life who have only wicked men for their guardians: but sinners' hands make the snares wherewith themselves are caught. And it is proper that magistrates should think the best of their opposers; and that they should punish treachery and murder, even when it seems calculated to promote their own interests.

CHAPTER V. [Ver. 6. *Except thou take away the blind and the lame, thou shalt not come in hither.* Who are 'the blind and the lame?' Some think certain invalids whom the Jebusites had placed upon their lofty walls to express their contempt of David's assault. Others consider them the images of their gods, whom the Hebrews contemptuously called 'lame and blind,' and whom, nevertheless, the Jebusites placed on the battlements as a protection; and this opinion is countenanced by the description, 'hated of David's soul:' words supposed inapplicable to anything but idolatrous images. But though images might justly be called 'blind,' they could not be called 'lame,' as it implies some capacity of walking. We feel, therefore, compelled to adopt the first interpretation. Coverdale translates part of ver. 6 thus:—'Thou shalt not come hither, but the blind and the lame shall drive thee away;' which seems the true rendering. The word 'gutter,' in ver. 8, signifies in the original a 'sewer,' or subterraneous passage for water; and the last clause may and should be rendered, 'Because the

6 ¶ And the king and his men [k]went to Jerusalem[l] unto the Jebusites, the inhabitants of the land; which spake unto David, saying, Except[m] thou take away the blind and the lame, thou shalt not come in hither: thinking, David cannot come in hither.

7 Nevertheless David took the strong hold of Zion: [n]the same *is* the city of David.

8 And David said on that day, [o]Whosoever getteth up to the gutter, and smiteth the Jebusites, and the lame and the blind, *that are* hated of David's soul, *he shall be chief and captain.* Wherefore they said, The blind and the lame shall not come into the house.[4]

9 So David dwelt in the fort, and called it, The city of David: and David built round about, from [p]Millo and inward.

10 And David [q]went on, and grew great; and the LORD God of hosts *was* [r]with him.

11 ¶ And [s]Hiram king of Tyre sent messengers to David, and cedar-trees, and carpenters, and masons;[5] and they built David an house.

12 And [t]David perceived that the LORD had established him king over Israel, and that he had exalted his kingdom [u]for his people Israel's sake.

13 ¶ And David [x]took *him* more concubines and wives out of Jerusalem, after he was come from Hebron:[6] and there were yet sons and daughters born to David.

14 And [y]these *be* the names of those that were born unto him in Jerusalem; [z]Shammuah, and Shobab, and Nathan, and Solomon,

15 Ibhar also, and [a]Elishua, and Nepheg, and Japhia,

16 And Elishama, and [b]Eliada, and Eliphalet.

17 ¶ But when the [c]Philistines heard that they had anointed David king over Israel, all the Philistines came up to seek David;[7] and David heard *of it,* and went down [d]to the hold.

18 The Philistines also came and spread themselves in the [e]valley of Rephaim.[8]

19 And David [f]inquired of the LORD, saying, Shall I go up to the Philistines? wilt thou deliver them into mine hand? And the LORD [g]said unto David, Go up; for I will doubtless deliver the Philistines into thine hand.[9]

20 And [h]David came to Baal-perazim, and David smote them there, and said, The LORD hath broken forth upon mine enemies before me, as the breach of waters. Therefore he called the name of that place Baal-perazim.[1]

21 And [i]there they left their images, and David and his men burnt them.[2]

22 ¶ And the Philistines came up [k]yet again, and spread themselves in the valley of [l]Rephaim.

23 And when David [m]inquired of the LORD, he said, Thou shalt not go up; *but* [n]fetch a compass behind them, and come upon them over against the mulberry-trees.

24 And let it be, when thou hearest the [o]sound of a going in the tops of the mulberry-trees, that then [p]thou shalt bestir thyself: for then shall the LORD go out before thee, to smite the host of the Philistines.

25 And [q]David did so, as the LORD had commanded him; and smote the Philistines from [r]Geba until thou come to Gazer.

CHAPTER VI.

1 David fetcheth the ark from Kirjath-jearim on a new cart. 6 Uzzah is smitten at Perez-uzzah. 9 God blesseth Obed-edom for the ark. 12 David bringing the ark into Zion with sacrifices, danceth before it, for which Michal despiseth him. 17 He placeth it in a tabernacle with sacrifices and feasting. 20 Michal reproving David for his religious joy is childless to her death.

AGAIN David [a]gathered together all *the* chosen *men* of Israel, thirty thousand.

2 And [b]David arose, and went with all the people that *were* with him from [c]Baale[1] of Judah, to bring up from thence the ark of God, [d]whose name is called by the name of The LORD of hosts, that [e]dwelleth *between* the cherubims.

3 And they [f]set the ark of God upon a new cart,[2] and brought it out of the house of Abinadab that *was* in Gibeah: and Uzzah and Ahio, the sons of Abinadab, drave the new cart.

4 And they brought it out of the house of Abinadab, which *was* at [g]Gibeah, accompanying

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A.M. 2956. B.C. 1048.

k 1 Ch.11.4-9; 12.24-40.

l Ju.1.8,21; 19.10,11. Jos.10.1,15-63;18.28.

m Je.37.10.

n ver.9. 1 Ki.2.10. 1 Ch.11.5,7,8.

o 1 Ch. 11. 6. Jos.15. 15, 17. 1 Sa. 18. 25; 17. 25.

4 Or, *because they had said, even the blind and the lame, He shall not come into the house.*

p 1 Ki. 9. 15, 24; 11. 27. 2 Ch.32.5, not Ju.9. 6,20,46.

q Heb. *went going and growing,* Job 17. 6. 2 Ch.1.1. Lu.2.52. Pr. 4.18.

r Ge 21.22. Ro.8.31. Is.41.10-16;46.3,4.

s 1 Ch.14.1. 1 Ki.5.1.

5 Some estimate of the low condition of Israel may be formed from the fact that they could not furnish masons or carpenters to build David a house; but God gave them in mercy a wise and mighty king, who raised them from ignorance, irreligion, and degradation. See ver.12.—*C.*

t 1 Ch.14.2; 17. 7, ch. 7. 16. Is. 1. 26. Ps.75.6; 127.1.

u Is.45.4;43.14.

x 1 Ch. 14. 3-7, with De.17.17. Ge.25.5,6. 2 Ch.11.18 21;13.21.

6 Whereby, instead of strengthening his interest in the kingdom, as most probably he expected, David multiplied those sources of domestic trouble by which his future life was unhappily distinguished. See Mat. 19.1-12.—*C.*

y 1 Ch.3.5-9;14.4-7.

z Shimea, 1 Ch.3.6.

a Elishama, 1 Ch.3.6.

b Beeliada, 1 Ch.14.7.

c 1 Ch.11.16; 14. 8,9. Ps.2.1-5. Re.11.15,18.

7 B.C. 1047.

d ver.9. 1 Ch.11.8.

e Ge. 14. 5. Is. 17. 5. Jos.15.8. ch.23.13;ver. 22.

8 The valley of Rephaim was the scene of a few stirring incidents in Jewish history. It lies south of Jerusalem, beginning immediately behind the low ridge which skirts the ravine of Hinnom, and extending southward along the road to Bethlehem for more than a mile. The plain is flat and fertile, but is shut in on all sides by rocky hill-tops and ridges.—*P.*

f Nu.27.21. Ju.1.1. 1 Sa.23.2,4,11;30.7.ch.2. 1. Ps.73.28. Pr.3.5,6. 1 Ch.14.10.

A.M. 2957. B.C. 1047.

g Pr. 3. 6. Ps. 37.5,6, with 1 Sa.28.6.

9 David will not fight against his enemies until he consults the Lord through his appointed oracle of Urim and Thummim. —*C.*

h 1 Ch.14.11. Is. 28. 21. Ps.44.3; 118.10-12; 27.2,3.

1 That is, *The lord of breaches.*

i 1 Ch.14.12. De.7.5, 25.

2 Or, took them away.

k 1 Ch.14.13. 1 Ki.20. 22. Is.26.11. Ex.14.8.

l Or, *giants,* ver.18.

m ver.19; ch. 2.1, 1 Sa.23.2,4,10-12.

n 1 Ch.14.14. Jos. 8. 2.

o 2 Ki.7.6. Ac.2.2.

p 1 Sa.14.9-12. Ju.4. 14;7.15.

q 1 Ch.14.15,16.

r Jos.18.24;16.10;21. 17,21. Ju.1.29. 1 Ki.9.15 -17.

CHAP. VI.

B.C. cir. 1045.

a ch.5.1. 1 Ch.13.1-14.

b 1 Ch.13.6. 1 Ki.8.1-4. Ps.132.1-6.

c Jos. 15. 9. 1 Sa.7.1. Ps.132.6.

1 The same as Kirjath-jearim. Compare Jos. 15. 9,60. 1 Sa.7.10. —*C.*

d Or, *at which the name,* even *the name of the LORD of hosts was called upon,* Le. 24.11.

e 1 Ki. 8.15. Ps.80.1. 1 Sa.4.4. Ex.25.22.

f With Nu.4.14; 7.9. De. 12. 8. Mat. 28. 20, with 1 Sa.6.7. 1 Ch.13. 7.

2 The manner of this procedure is contrary to the divine law, which required the ark to be carried on the shoulders of the Levites, by means of staves, and who were not, upon pain of death, even to touch any of the holy things, Nu.4.15. The Philistines had indeed conveyed the ark home upon a cart, but that should have formed no precedent for David. It forms a melancholy example either of ignorance, inattention, or neglect, even in a reformation commenced and carried on with zeal for the glory of God. And if David so erred, let us take heed lest we fall. —*C.*

g The hill of Kirjath-jearim, 1 Sa.7.1, 2.

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blind and the lame continued to say, He shall not come into this house.' *C.*]

Ver. 8. [This passage, which has given rise to so much difficulty and discussion, when translated literally and correctly, is easily understood:—and the Jebusite 'spake to David, saying, Thou shalt not come up hither, for the blind and the lame will drive you back; meaning (or saying) that David would not (that is, could not) go up thither. But David captured the stronghold of Zion, which is the city of David. Then David said on that day, Whosoever defeats the Jebusite, let him smite in the water-course the lame and the blind, hated of David's soul. Wherefore they say (it has become a proverb), The blind and the lame shall not enter the house.' The words may be thus explained:—It has always been customary in the East for the poor, the blind, and the lame to take up stations at the gates of towns and castles, so as to beg of the passers-by. The Jebusites, too confident in the strength of their fortress, placed the blind and lame beggars on the ramparts, and in bitter mockery said they would be sufficient to drive back David's warriors. But David having taken the city, attacked the citadel with fresh vigour, and his fiery spirit being stung by the taunts of the Jebusites, he spake the words recorded above. The walls were scaled by Joab and his men, the blind and the lame were smitten, and the fortress taken. In memory of this remarkable incident blind and lame persons were never afterwards permitted to enter the citadel of Zion. Hence the proverb. *P.*]

REFLECTIONS.—Though God's promise tarry long it is fully accomplished at last. He can produce unanimity in the largest societies whenever the ends of his glory require it. The duties of magistrates and subjects are reciprocal, the one being as much bound as the other. What victory, honour, and happiness attend the peculiar presence of God with men! and to him the glory of all our success ought to be ascribed. But alas! that God's favours should be used in the lustful addition of wives and concubines! If by one wife Adam and Noah peopled a world, what need for so many to furnish one throne! But what is sweet in the mouth will become bitter in the belly. Meanwhile, behold how the enemies of God assemble themselves to their own destruction! How little care false gods can take of themselves or their votaries! And how men prosper in war when they make God their director!

CHAPTER VI. REFLECTIONS.—Perpetual visibility and splendour are no marks of a true church. The ark, the most noted symbol of God's presence, continued long in obscurity. God can be graciously present with his people even when they want his solemn ordinances; and it is his presence that renders his ordinances truly glorious. Such as have high thoughts of him will reverence all his institutions. The greatest need think it no disparagement to join with the meanest before the great God, their common Maker and Saviour. Singing of psalms to his praise is always esteemed when God revives a spirit of religion. God's laws relative to the manner as well as to the matter of his worship ought to be exactly observed: and the authority of men, or bad precedents, should never weigh more with us than the express word of God. By rashness and intemperate zeal we are apt to give wrong touches to God's ark; and no good intention will atone for our irreverence or presumption. Men

EXTERIOR OF THE TOWER OF DAVID. [II. SAMUEL, v:9.]—"So David dwelt in the fort, and called it the city of David. And David built round about from Millo and inward." The Tower of David stands in that part of Jerusalem which he first captured, and where he lived. The present building we see is called the Hippicus of Herod, which was spared by Titus, as Josephus asserts, in order to remain as a perpetual testimony of the difficulties which the Roman conquerors overcame. It was erected by Herod and named in honor of his friend Hippicus. The present entrance is on the west side. The royal castle and palace of Herod was connected with this and other towers. The whole was very strongly fortified and fitted up with great splendor. Josephus speaks of its magnificent halls, gardens, and sculptures. Nothing is left but the base of the tower we see.

GENERAL VIEW OF THE MOSQUE EL-AKSA—A PLACE OF MOHAMMEDAN WORSHIP ON THE PREMISES, WHERE THE TEMPLE BUILT BY DAVID'S SON, SOLOMON, ONCE STOOD. [II. SAMUEL, vi: 17.]—"And they brought in the ark of the Lord, and set it in his place, in the midst of the tabernacle that David had pitched for it; and David offered burnt offerings and peace offerings before the Lord." The Mosque of el-Aksa stands upon a portion of the ground once occupied by the temple. Where the ark rested in Jerusalem before the temple was built we do not know. In all probability the tabernacle which David pitched in Jerusalem was upon the same ground upon which Solomon afterwards built the temple. This is very probable, because this part of Jerusalem, containing thirty-five acres of land, has, as far as we know, in all ages been reserved for purposes of worship. It seems very reasonable, then, to conclude that the tabernacle David pitched for the ark rested upon the same premises we now behold represented in this picture.

the ark of God; and Ahio went before the ark.

5 And [h]David, and all the house of Israel, played before the LORD on all manner of *instruments made of* fir-wood; even on harps, and on psalteries, and on timbrels, and on cornets, and on cymbals.

6 ¶ And [i]when they came to [k]Nachon's threshing-floor, Uzzah put forth *his hand* to the ark of God, and took hold of it; for the oxen shook[3] *it*.

7 And[l] the anger of the LORD was kindled against Uzzah; and God smote him there for *his* error;[4] and there he died by the ark of God.[5]

8 And David was [m]displeased,[6] because the LORD had made a breach[7] upon Uzzah: and he called the name of the place Perez-uzzah[8] to this day.

9 And David was [n]afraid of the LORD that day, and said, [o]How shall the ark of the LORD come to me?

10 So David would not remove the ark of the LORD unto him into the city of David; but David carried it aside into the house [p]of Obed-edom the Gittite.[9]

11 And the ark of the LORD continued in the house of Obed-edom the Gittite three months: and the LORD [q]blessed Obed-edom, and all his household.

12 ¶ And it was told king David, saying, The LORD hath blessed the house of Obed-edom, and all that *pertaineth* unto him, because of the ark of God. [r]So David went and brought up the ark of God from the house of Obed-edom, into the city of David with gladness.

13 And it was *so*, [s]that, when they that bare the ark[1] of the LORD had gone six paces, he sacrificed oxen and fatlings.[2]

14 And [t]David danced[3] before the LORD with all *his* might; and David *was* girded with [u]a linen ephod.

15 So[x] David and all the house of Israel brought up the ark of the LORD with shouting, and with the sound of the trumpet.

16 And as the ark of the LORD came into the city of David, [y]Michal, Saul's daughter, looked through a window, and saw king David leaping and dancing before the LORD; and she despised him in her heart.

A.M. cir. 2959.
B.C. cir. 1045.

h 1 Ch.13.8; 15.1-24. 2 Ki.3.15. Ps.47.5,6;68. 25-27.

i 1 Ch.13.9,10.

k Or, Chidon, 1 Ch. 13.9, *i.e.* destroying stroke.

3 Or, *stumbled.*

l 1 Ch.15.2,13. Nu.4. 15, with ver.3. Le.10.1. 1 Sa. 6. 19. 1 Co. 11. 30. Ps.50.16.

4 Or, *rashness.*

5 See note on ver.3. But why is not David punished, who presided in the removal, rather than Uzzah, who is a mere humble assistant? Uzzah, as a Levite, should have known and observed the law against touching the ark, with which it is not certain that David was at all acquainted.—*C.*

m Jonah 4. 1, 9. Je. 20.10-18. Job 3.1-26; 9. 2, 3;4.17.

6 Not *displeased* with God, but with his own and the Levites' neglect and breach of the divine law in relation to the manner of removing the ark.—*C.*

7 Heb. *broken.*

8 That is, *The breach of Uzzah.*

n Ps.119.120. 1 Sa.6. 2;21;5.10. Lu.5.8,9. Pr. 12.3.

o Job 25, 6. Ja. 1. 5. Mat.7.7. Pr.3.5,6.

p 1 Ch. 13. 13,14; 15. 18;26.4-8. Jos.21.24, or ch.4.3.

9 He was a Levite (1 Ch.xv.xvi.) and an inhabitant most probably of Gath-rimmon, a Levitical city.—*C.*

q Mat. 6. 33. Mal. 3. 10.Pr.3.9,10. 1 Ti.4.8. 2 Co.2.16. 1 Pe.2.6-8.Ep. 1.3. Ps.72.17.

r 1 Ch. 15. 1-25. Ps. 132.1-18; 24.7-10; 68.1-35; xcv.-c.cv. 1 Ch.xv. xvi.

s ver. 3, with 1 Ch. 15.2,15-26. Nu.7.9.

1 The mode of conveying the ark is now according to the law. Blessed are they who, having fallen into one error (see note on ver. 3), acknowledge their fault, and, through grace, avoid it in future.—*C.*

2 The meaning appears to be, that when the procession had started and gone six paces, the sacrifice was offered, namely, for the purpose of inaugurating the solemn procession.—*P.*

t Ex.15.20. Ju.11.34; 21 19,21.

3 That might not be a usual practice, but we are to bear in mind that this was no ordinary occasion. David exulted with holy joy at the prospect of the sacred symbol of Jehovah's presence being again enshrined in the midst of his people, and of the whole tabernacle service being again restored, after having been so long suspended.—*J.*

u 1 Ch.15.27. 1 Sa.2. 18;22.18.

x 1 Ch. 15. 16-25, 28. ver.12. Ps.68.24-27;47. 5,6;132.7-18.

y 1 Sa.18.20,27 ch.3. 14.1 Ch.15.29. Ac.2.13. 1 Co.2.14.

A.M. cir. 2959.
B.C. cir. 1045.

z 1 Ch. 15. 1; 16. 1. 2 Ch.1.4. Da.7.10,13,14. He.1.3;8.1.

4 Heb. *stretched.*

5 A temporary tabernacle prepared by David; for the former still remained at Gibeon. See 1 Ch.16. 39;21.29.2 Ch.1.3.—*C.*

a 1 Ch.16.2. Ac.3.26. Ep.1.3.

6 The pious act of the monarch in blessing the people furnishes an instructive lesson of the real duties of exalted office-bearers.—*C.*

b 1 Ch.16.3. Ps.68.18. Ep.4.8. Ac.20.35.

7 Instead of a *flagon*, it should more probably be translated a *sweet cake.*—*C.*

c ver. 18. Ge. 28. 19. Jos.24.15. Ps.101.2.

d ver. 16. Ps. 69.7, 9, 19,20. Mat.12.34.

e How base. Ec. 7. 16.Is.59.15;49.7; 52.14; 53.2-10. Zec.9.9;11.12, 13. Ps.22.6. Phi.2.7,8.

8 That is, threw off his royal robes, which Michal considered shameful and degrading.—*C.*

f ver.14,15. 1 Ch. 10, 31. 1 Sa. 13.14; 15.28;16.13. Ps.78,70-72.

g Ac.13.45, 46; 5. 41; 21.13. Phi.3.7-14. 1 Sa. 2.30. Ge.32.10. Job 40. 4, 5. Ti.1.15,1 Pe.5.6.

9 The essence of piety is—to be base in our own sight, unworthy of all the mercies by which we are pardoned, of the blessings by which we are sustained, and the inheritance with which in Christ we are endowed.—*C.*

h Is.3.11. Ho.9.14.

i Never, 1 Sa.15.35. Is.22.14.

CHAP. VII.

B.C. cir. 1042.

a 1 Ch.17.1-27.

b Jos. 21. 44; 23. 1. 1 Ki.5.4.2 Ch.14.6.

c Hag.1.4. Ex. 26.1-14;36.8-19. Nu.9.25,26. Ac.7.46. ch.5.11. 1 Ch. 14.1;16.1.2 Ch.1.4.

d 1 Co. 13. 9. 2 Ki. 4. 27.1 Sa.16.6.

1 Nathan spoke according to his own judgment. He drew his conclusion from David's divine call to the kingdom, the evident prosperity that God had bestowed upon him, and the goodness of the object proposed. But God, who judges not as man judges, directs the prophet to countermand his own order.—*Note,* It is not enough to mean well in what we propose for God's cause and honour, we must take care that the plan, the time, and the agency are such as God approves. But how may these be known, if there be no prophet to receive and deliver the mind of God? Search the Scriptures, pray for the Spirit, and wait upon Providence.—*C.*

e 1 Ch.17.3. Nu.12.6. Am.3.7. Ps.25.14. He. 1.1. Je.23.28.

17 ¶ And [z]they brought in the ark of the LORD, and set it in his place, in the midst of the tabernacle that David had [4]pitched [5]for it: and David offered burnt-offerings and peace-offerings before the LORD.

18 And [a]as soon as David had made an end of offering burnt-offerings and peace-offerings, he blessed[6] the people in the name of the LORD of hosts.

19 And he [b]dealt among all the people, *even* among the whole multitude of Israel, as well to the women as men, to every one a cake of bread, and a good piece *of flesh*, and a [7]flagon *of wine*. So all the people departed every one to his house.

20 ¶ Then David returned to [c]bless his household. And [d]Michal, the daughter of Saul, came out to meet David, and said, [e]How glorious was the king of Israel to-day, who uncovered[8] himself to-day in the eyes of the handmaids of his servants, as one of the vain fellows shamelessly uncovereth himself!

21 And David said unto Michal, *It was* [f]before the LORD, which chose me before thy father, and before all his house, to appoint me ruler over the people of the LORD, over Israel: therefore will I play before the LORD.

22 And I [g]will yet be more vile than thus, and will be base in mine own sight;[9] and of the maid-servants which thou hast spoken of, of them shall I be had in honour.

23 Therefore[h] Michal, the daughter of Saul, had no child [i]unto the day of her death.

CHAPTER VII.

1 *Nathan, first approving the purpose of David to build God an house, 4 afterward by the word of God forbiddeth it.* 12 *He promiseth him benefits and blessings in his seed.* 18 *David's prayer and thanksgiving.*

AND it came to pass, [a]when the king sat in his house, and [b]the LORD had given him rest round about from all his enemies,

2 That the king said unto Nathan the prophet, See now, [c]I dwell in an house of cedar, but the ark of God dwelleth within curtains.

3 And Nathan said to the king, [d]Go, do all that *is* in thine heart;[1] for the LORD *is* with thee.

4 ¶ And[e] it came to pass that night, that the word of the LORD came unto Nathan, saying,

5 Go and tell my servant David, Thus saith

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are never in greater danger of ruinous mistakes than in dealing with God. How apt are the best to be displeased with God's judgments rather than with their own sins which procured them! The awful strokes of Providence should move us to repentance and heedfulness, but never terrify us from our duty. None ever lost by their fidelity and kindness to God and his ordinances. It is a happiness to be in the family or place where God is duly respected. Duty may happily succeed at last, though our first attempts have been marred. Let us therefore search out and repent of our errors, apply Jesus' propitiatory sacrifice for remission of sins, feast on him as our provision, and set about it anew with proper circumspection. Only base minds reckon God's service mean or indecent; and ridicule, not reason, is the common weapon of the enemies of truth. But we must not be laughed out of our religious profession; but the more opposition we meet with the more resolutely persevere. If God knows our heart to be upright before him, the censures of others may lie light upon us. We can never sufficiently humble ourselves before him. And if in our service of him we have the regard of good men, we need not fear the contempt of the irreligious or the great. While God shall mark the despisers of his service with infamy and wrath, we shall be had in glory and honour.

But let me here think of that solemn joy and triumph wherewith Jesus, our great Ark of God's testament, was carried up into heaven, and set down at the right hand of God: and of that joy and triumph with which his name is carried through the world by the gospel, in the times of his love and days of his power! O then what harmony and peace in churches—what familiar feasting on his flesh and blood! And how dreadful their case who disdain to concur in that solemn work!

CHAPTER VII. REFLECTIONS.—Gracious souls are never weary of working for the Lord; nor can they with pleasure enjoy their own conveniences while his ordinances are in distress. It is good to strengthen the hands of such as have at heart to build up the church of God: but all our success depends on God's presence and assistance. Even prophets may

the LORD, [f]Shalt thou build me an house for me to dwell in?

6 Whereas[g] I have not dwelt in *any* house since the time that I brought up the children of Israel out of Egypt even to this day, but have walked in a tent and in a tabernacle.

7 In all *the places* wherein I have walked with all the children of Israel, spake I a word with [h]any of the tribes of Israel, whom I commanded to feed my people Israel, saying, Why build ye not me an house of cedar?

8 Now therefore so shalt thou say unto my servant David, Thus saith the LORD of hosts, I[i] took thee from the sheep-cote, from following the sheep, to be ruler over my people, over Israel:

9 And I [k]was with thee whithersoever thou wentest, and have cut off all thine enemies out of thy sight, and have made thee a great name, like unto the name of the great *men* that *are* in the earth.

10 (Moreover, [l]I will appoint[2] a place for my people Israel, and will plant them, that they may dwell in a place of their own, and move no more; neither shall the children of wickedness afflict them any more, as beforetime,

11 And as since the time that I commanded judges *to be* over my people Israel, and have caused thee to rest from all thine enemies.) Also the LORD telleth thee, that he [m]will make thee an house.

12 ¶ And [n]when thy days be fulfilled, and thou shalt sleep with thy fathers,[3] I will set up thy seed after thee, which shall proceed out of thy bowels, and I will establish his kingdom.

13 He[o] shall build an house for my name, and I will stablish the throne of his kingdom for ever.

14 I[p] will be his father, and he shall be my son. If[q] he commit iniquity,[4] I will chasten him with the rod of men, and with the stripes of the children of men:

15 But [r]my mercy shall not depart away from him, as I took *it* from Saul, whom I put away before thee.

16 And [s]thine house and thy kingdom shall be established for ever before thee: thy throne shall be established for ever.

17 According[t] to all these words, and according to all this vision, so did Nathan speak unto David.

18 ¶ Then went king David in, and sat before the LORD, and he said, [u]Who *am* I, O LORD God? and what *is* my house, that thou hast brought me hitherto?[5]

19 And [x]this was yet a small thing in thy sight, O LORD God; but thou hast spoken also of thy servant's house for a great while to come: and [y]*is* this the manner[6] of man, O LORD [7]God?

20 And what can David say more unto thee? for thou, LORD God, [z]knowest thy servant.

21 For[a] thy word's sake, and according to thine own heart, hast thou done all these great things, to make thy servant know *them.*

22 Wherefore [b]thou art great, O LORD God: for *there is* none like thee, neither *is there any* God besides thee, according to all that we have heard with our ears.

23 And [c]what one nation in the earth *is* like thy people, *even* like Israel, whom God [d]went to redeem for a people to himself, and to make him a name, and to do for you great things and terrible, for thy land, before thy people, which thou redeemedst to thee from Egypt, *from* the nations and their gods?

24 For [e]thou hast confirmed to thyself thy people Israel, *to be* a people unto thee for [8]ever; and thou, LORD, art become their God.

25 And now, O LORD God, the word that thou hast spoken concerning thy servant, and concerning his house, [f]establish *it* for ever, and do as thou hast said.

26 And [g]let thy name be magnified for ever, saying, The LORD of hosts *is* the God over Israel: and let the house of thy servant David [h]be established before thee.

27 For thou, O LORD of hosts, God of Israel, hast [i]revealed to thy servant, saying, I will build thee an house; therefore hath thy servant [k]found in his heart to pray this prayer unto thee.

28 And now, O LORD God, thou *art* that God, and [l]thy words be true, and thou hast promised this goodness unto thy servant:

29 Therefore now [m]let it please thee to [9]bless the house of thy servant, that it may continue for ever before thee: for thou, O LORD God, hast spoken *it;* and with thy blessing let the house of thy servant be blessed for ever.[1]

CHAPTER VIII.

1 *David subdueth the Philistines, and maketh the Moabites tributary.* 3 *He smiteth Hadadezer and the Syrians.* 9 *Toi sendeth his son with presents to bless him.* 11 *The presents and the spoil David dedicateth to God.* 14 *He putteth garrisons in Edom.* 16 *A list of his principal officers.*

AND after[a] this it came to pass, that David smote the Philistines, and subdued them:

A.M. cir. 2962. B.C. cir. 1042.

f 1 Ki.5.3. 1 Ch.17.4; 22.7,8; 28.3. 1 Pe.4.10.

g 1 Ch.17.5,6. Ex.xl. Jos. 18. 1. 1 Ki. 8. 16. 2 Ch.6.5.

h 1 Ch.17,6, any of the judges, Ju.iii.-xiv. 1 Sa.4.18;7.15.ch.5.2.

i 1 Sa. 16. 11. Ps. 78. 70,71; 113.7,8; 75. 5,6. 1 Ch.17.7. Da.2.21.

k 1 Ch. 17. 8. 1 Sa. xvi.-xxxi. ch.iii.-v.18. 13,14;22.28-49. Ps. 113. 8;18.27-48;118.10-12.

l 1 Ki.4.21,24,25.ch. viii. x., with Ju. iii. iv. vi.x.xiii. 1 Sa.iv. vii.vi. xiii. xvii. xxxi. Is. 9. 7. Je.25. 5, 6. Eze. 34. 25; 37.25,26. Ho.2.18.

2 This verse, as the words will bear, and the whole passage requires, should be translated not in the *future*, but in the *past* time. C.—Infidels, with a view to disprove the application of ver. 14 to the Messiah, allege that the prophet here speaks of the *future* prosperity of the Jews, as to be afterwards *fixed* and *no more afflicted*, which circumstances are totally repugnant to their fate, as hitherto connected with the coming of Christ. But Kennicott shows that this verse should run thus: 'I *have* appointed and *have* planted; neither *do* the children of wickedness afflict them as before,' &c.—*I.*

m Ex. 1. 21. 1 Ki. 2. 24. Ps.127.1;89.3,4.

n 1 Ki.8. 20. Ac. 13. 36. Job 5.26.

3 This is not merely a beautiful figure, but a literal and true description of death. In sleep the bodily senses are alone affected, the spirit is as wakeful as at other times. So in death, the dust sleeps, the spirit returns to God who gave it, Ec.12.7. 2 Co.5.1-11.—*C.*

o 1 Ki.5.5;6 12.1 Ch. 17.11; 22.10; 28.6.2 Ch. iii. 1. Ac. 7. 47. Mat. 16.18. Lu. 1. 32, 33. He. 1. 3. 1 Pe. 2. 5. Ps.45.6. Is.9.7 Da.2.44;7.14.

p 1 Ch.28.6,7. He. 1. 5. Ps.89.26,27. Jn.10.30.

q Ps. 89. 30-35. He. 12.6-10. Je.31.31. 1 Co. 11.32, with Is.53.5-12. 2 Co.5.21. 1 Pe.2.24; 3. 18.

4 How could this be Messiah, seeing it is admitted this son may commit iniquity? The passage should be translated thus:—'Even in his sufferings for iniquity I will chasten him with the rod of men (*i.e.* with the rod due to men), and with the stripes (due to) the children of Adam;' words that clearly point to him upon whom 'the Lord hath laid the iniquity of us all.'—*C.*

r Ps.89.28. Ac.13.34. Is.55.3.

s Ge.49.10. 1 Ki.9.5; 11.36. 2 Ki.19 34. Ps.45 6; 89. 36, 37; 132. 11, 12. Is. 9. 7. Da.2.44; 7. 14. Jn.12.34. Mat.16.18.

t Je.23.28. Eze.3.17. Mat.28.20. 1 Ch. 17.15. 1 Co.4.2. Ac.20.27.

u Ge.32.10. Ju. 6.15. Job 7. 17. 1 Sa. 18. 18. Ps.8.4;144.3,4. Ep.3.8.

A.M. cir. 2962. B.C. cir. 1042.

5 Dr. J. Pye Smith translates the passage thus:—'What am I, O Lord, Jehovah, and what my house, that thou hast brought me to this point (of exaltation)? And little (is) even this in thine eyes, O Lord, Jehovah; thou hast even spoken with respect to the house of thy servant, unto a vast extent. And this (is) the law of the Adam, O Lord, Jehovah.' This passage reveals the second Adam as David's son, with a spiritual house, and an everlasting kingdom. It cannot mean Solomon, for he was on the throne during David's life; but the 'seed' here promised, ver. 12, is set up after David's death, and his throne and kingdom (ver.13) are for ever.—*C.*

x ver. 8, 9, 11, 12, 16. 1 Ki. 3. 13. Ep. 3. 20. 1 Ch.17.17.

y Ps.33.10;36.7. Mi. 7.18. Zec.9.17. Is.55.8. Ep.2.7.

6 Heb. *law.*

7 And this is (or must be) the law of the Adam (the Messiah), O Lord Jehovah.—*C.*

z 1 Sa.16.7. Ps.132.1 -5. Mat.11. 26. Lu. 12. 32.

a 1 Ch.17. 19. Ep. 1. 11;4.32. Re.19.13. De. 9.5. Mat.11.26.

b De. 3. 24;4. 35; 32. 39. 1 Sa.2.2. Ps.86.8; 89. 6,8; 33. 10-15; 147.5. Ex.15.11; 18.11. Is. 45. 5,18,. 2. Job 11.7.

c 1 Ch.17.21. De.4.7; 33.29. Ps.147.20. Am.3. 2. Ro. 3.1,2,9.-2.

d Ex. 3. 7, 8; 19. 5, 6. Nu.14. 13-21. Is. 63. 7-14. De.4. 30-34. Je. 32. 20,21. Tit.2.14. Re.5.9, 10.

e 1 Ch.17.22. Ge. 17. 7,8. Ex.1.5,6;20 2. Lv. 26.12. 2 Co.6.16. Ge. 17.7; 24.27; 26.17,18, 28.9. Je. 31.33. Zec.13. 9. Is. 12.2. Ps.48.14.

8 Even in their dispersion the Jews are still God's people; he has literally fulfilled, or is fulfilling upon them all his threatenings, and he will as literally fulfil all his promises.—*C.*

f Eze. 36. 37. Is. 45. 11. Ge.32.12. Ps.119.49. Je.11.4,5.

g Mat.6.9. Ps.72.18, 19. Jn.12.28.

h ver.13,15,16.2 Ch. 7.18. Je.33.17,20,21,25, 26.

i Heb. *openeth the ear,* 1 Ch.17.25. Ru.4. 4.1 Sa.9.15.

k Ps.10.17;73.28. Ro. 8.26,27.

l Jn.17.17. He. 6. 18; 10.23; 11. 11. Nu.23.19. Tit.1.2. 1 Co.1.9. 1 Th. 5.24.

m 1 Ch. 17. 27. ver. 25. Nu.6.23-26. Ep.1.3. Ps.72.17. Is.45.17.

9 Heb. *be thou pleased and bless.*

1 The two leading petitions in this sublime and affecting prayer are, (1) That the crown might remain in David's family, and that none of his children might ever forfeit it by misconduct. (2) That his kingdom might have its chief perfection and its lasting perpetuity in Him who was 'David's Son and David's Sire,' at once his root and his offspring, the Messiah now again promised.—*I.*

CHAP. VIII.

B.C. 1040.

a 1 Ch.18.1-17.ch.7.

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be too rash: they are no further infallible than as inspired by the Holy Ghost. God may approve a work, and yet not the doing of it by a particular person. Nay, he may accept his purpose, and yet not allow him to execute it. All true honour and happiness come from God. Yet the good purposes of ministers, magistrates, and parents sometimes entail upon churches, nations, and families the most remarkable mercies. But how great things God hath laid up for them that fear him! how abundant, free, tender, and lasting are the blessings of his promise! Yea, pleasant, fervent, and successful are those supplications now, which are animated by and do reduplicate upon the promises of God impressed on our heart; particularly those respecting Jesus Christ and his grace. Let us then boldly ask what God hath promised. Let us never stagger at the greatness of the mercy, but pray in faith, nothing doubting. Let it be our constant desire that God in all things may be glorified. If we find in our hearts to pray, God will not fail to hear and answer.

CHAPTER VIII. [Ver. 1. It appears from a consideration of the passage that the word *Metheg-ammah* is not a proper name, but a descriptive epithet. It is not found in any part of the Bible, nor in any ancient writer. The parallel passage in 1 Ch. 17. 1 is, in He-

and David took [b]Metheg-ammah[1] out of the hand of the Philistines.

2 And he [c]smote Moab, and measured them with a line, casting them down to the ground; even[2] with two lines measured he to put to death, and with one full line to keep alive: and *so* the Moabites became David's servants, *and* brought gifts.

3 ¶ David[e] smote[2] also Hadadezer, the son of Rehob, king of Zobah, as he[4] went to recover his border at the river Euphrates.

4 And [f]David took from him a thousand *chariots*, and seven hundred[5] horsemen, and twenty thousand footmen: and David [g]houghed all the chariot-*horses*, but reserved of them *for* an hundred chariots.

5 And when the [h]Syrians[6] of Damascus [i]came to succour [k]Hadadezer king of Zobah, David slew of the Syrians two and twenty thousand men.

6 Then [l]David put garrisons in Syria of Damascus; and the Syrians became servants to David, *and* brought gifts. And the LORD preserved David whithersoever he went.

7 And David took [m]the shields of gold that were on the servants of Hadadezer, and brought them to Jerusalem.

8 And [n]from Betah, and from Berothai, cities of Hadadezer, king David took exceeding much brass.

9 ¶ When [o]Toi king of Hamath heard that David had smitten all the host of Hadadezer,

10 Then Toi sent [p]Joram his son unto king David to [q]salute him, and to bless him, because he had fought against Hadadezer, and smitten him: (for Hadadezer had wars[7] with Toi:) and *Joram* brought with him[8] vessels of silver, and vessels of gold, and vessels of brass;

11 Which[r] also king David did dedicate unto the LORD, with the silver and gold that he had dedicated of all nations which he subdued;

A.M. 2964. B.C. 1040.

b Or, *the bridle of Ammah*, a hill, ch.2. 24.

1 Supposed by some to be another name for Gath. Its name is very significant—'the bridle of bondage.' This victory of David forms a beautiful emblem of the deliverance of believers from the 'bondage of the law.' —*C.*

c Nu.24.17. ver.6,14. Ps.60.8;108.9.

d They had terribly provoked him; perhaps murdered his parents. 1 Sa.22.3.

e Ps. 60. title. 1 Ch. 18.3,12. ver.5,8,12; ch. 10. 6, 8, 16, 19. 1 Ki. 11. 23. Ge.15.18. Ex.23.31.

2 1038.

4 David.

f 1 Ch. 18.4. ch.10.18. Jos.11.6. Ps.20.7;33.16, 17. Pr.21.31.

3 In 1 Ch. 18. 4 David is said to have taken seven thousand horsemen, here only seven hundred; and as the Hebrew letters that stand for these numbers are very similar, the difference is generally ascribed to some error of a transcriber. There is, however, no necessity for a reconciliation where there is really no contradiction; both accounts may be correct, but referring to two different decisions. *C.* —The Hebrew is: 'And David took from him a thousand and seven hundred horsemen.' There is no word for 'chariots,' though it is found in the Septuagint and in the parallel passage in 1 Ch.18.4.—*P.*

g De.17.16. Jos.11.9.

h ch. 10. 6. 1 Ki. 11. 24, 15. 18–21; xx. xxii. 2 Ki.vi.–viii.xxii.;16.9.

6 The Hebrew word here and elsewhere rendered 'Syrians' is *Aram*, and ought to be *Aramæa*.—*P.*

i Is.8.9;31.3. Job 9.13.

k 1 Ch.18.6. ver.2,10–14. Ps. 18. 44–50; 20. 8. Pr.21.31. ch.22.45,51.

m 1 Ch.18.7. 1 Ki.10. 16;11.23.

n 1 Ch. 18. 8, *i.e.* Tibhath and Chun.

o 1 Ch. 18. 9. Nu. 13. 21. Am.6.2.

p Or, Hadoram, 1 Ch.18 10.

q Heb. *ask him of peace*, Ge.43.27. Is. 39. 1.

7 Heb. *was a man of war.*

8 Heb. *in his hand were.*

r 1 Ch. 18. 11; 29. 2. 1 Ki. 10. 21. Mi. 4. 13. Thus heathen gold was given to God, as an earnest of their persons being converted to him under the gospel.

A.M. 2966. B.C. 1030.

s ch.7.9. 1 Ch.18.12. Ps.60. title.

t 2 Ki.14.7.

u Ge.25.23;27.37,40. Nu. 24. 18. ver.2,6. Ps. 18.31–48.

9 B.C. 1037.

x Pr.14.34. Je.22.15. Ps.78.71,72; 45.6,7. Is. 9.6,7;11.2–4.

1 That is, established regular courts of law, in which justice was faithfully administered, David in council holding the final court of appeal. —*C.*

y ch.2.13;20.23,24;5. 8. 1 Ch.18.15;11.6. 1 Ki. 4.3.

2 In modern phrase, he was 'commander-in-chief,' sometimes also 'generalissimo.' —*C.*

3 Or, *remembrancer*, or, *writer of chronicles.*

4 The modern title would be 'historiographer.'—*C.*

z 1 Ch.18.16;24.3,6.1 Sa. 22. 20. ch.15.24,29, 35;20.25.

5 Why Abiathar, who was still living, ch. 15. 24; 20. 25, and who continued to enjoy the office of high-priest till the days of Solomon, 1 Ki.2.20, is not more particularly mentioned, does not appear. If there were authority from MSS. for reading it 'Abiathar the son of Ahimelech,' it would be more in accordance with the passages quoted. But such solutions, when merely conjectural, are not to be countenanced.—*C.*

6 Or, *secretary.*

a 1 Ch.18.17. ch. 15. 18; 20.7,23; 23.20–23; 4. 2.1 Ki.1.38,44.

7 Or, *princes.*

CHAP. IX.

B.C. 1037.

a 1 Sa.18.1–3; 20.14, 15. ch.1.26. Pr.27.10. 1 Pe.3.9.

1 This was a fulfilment of David's covenant with Jonathan, 1 Sa.20.15. The precise time of the inquiry is not mentioned; but it is not likely a man of David's warmth of affection would long overlook so important a duty. —*Note*, There is always danger of the heart being spoiled by prosperity; and then forgetting former engagements, or neglecting former acquaintances. The grace that keeps men humble in prosperity, can alone keep them faithful either to God or man.—*C.*

2 The kindness to which he was bound by the oath of God which Jonathan made him swear, 1 Sa.20.17.—*C.*

12 Of Syria, and of Moab, and of the children of Ammon, and of the Philistines, and of Amalek, and of the spoil of Hadadezer, son of Rehob, king of Zobah.

13 And David [s]gat *him* a name when he returned from smiting of the Syrians in the [t]valley of Salt, *being* eighteen thousand *men.*

14 ¶ And [u]he put garrisons in [9]Edom; throughout all Edom put he garrisons: and all they of Edom became David's servants. And the LORD preserved David whithersoever he went.

15 ¶ And David [x]reigned over all Israel; and David executed judgment and justice[1] unto all his people.

16 And [y]Joab the son of Zeruiah *was* over the host;[2] and Jehoshaphat the son of Ahilud *was* [3]recorder;[4]

17 And [z]Zadok the son of Ahitub, and Ahimelech the son of Abiathar,[5] *were* the priests; and Seraiah *was* the scribe;[6]

18 And[a] Benaiah the son of Jehoiada *was over* both the Cherethites and the Pelethites; and David's sons were chief rulers.[7]

CHAPTER IX.

1 *David by Ziba sendeth for Mephibosheth.* 7 *For Jonathan's sake he entertaineth him at his table, and restoreth him all that was Saul's.* 9 *He maketh Ziba his farmer.*

AND David said, Is there yet any that is left of the house of Saul, that I may show him kindness for [a]Jonathan's sake?[1]

2 And [b]*there was* of the house of Saul a servant, whose name *was* Ziba: and when they had called him unto David, the king said unto him, *Art* thou Ziba? And he said, Thy servant *is he.*

3 And the king said, *Is* there not yet any of the house of Saul, that I may show [c]the kindness of God[2] unto him? And Ziba said unto the king, Jonathan hath yet a son, *which is* [d]lame on *his* feet.

b Heb. *the house of Saul had a servant*, Ge.15.3;24.2.ch.16.1;19.17,18. 15.Lu.6.36.Mat.5.44.1 Pe.3.9. *c* 1 Sa.20.14. *d* 1 Ch.8.34–38;9.40–44.ch.4.4;19.24–30.

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brew, word for word as here, except that instead of *Metheg-ammah*, it has 'Gath and her daughters.' The word *metheg* signifies 'bridle,' and *ammah* 'mother,' which in eastern idiom is often applied to a metropolis. Hence the word *Metheg-ammah* may mean 'the bridle (*i.e.* the command or government) of the metropolis.' Thus interpreted the parallel passages are identical in meaning. Gath was the metropolis of Philistia. When David took 'Gath and her daughters,' he took the government of the metropolis of the Philistines. *P.*]

Ver. 2. [*With one full line to keep alive.* Some interpreters think, that according to an asserted oriental custom, David caused his prisoners to be cast on the ground; and, as a summary form of judgment, divided them by lines for life or death. Others conceive the passage to mean that he divided the territory of Moab by three geographical lines or marches—from two of which the inhabitants were to be extirpated, while within the other, called a *full line*, they were to be preserved. This sentence of David has been censured as severe; but that can be determined only by those who can prove the innocence of the convicts. A community of robbers, manstealers, murderers, or pirates —any community such as the *Thugs* of India, may as righteously be exterminated as one single individual, Ge. 9. 6. *C.*]

Ver. 3. [Zobah was one of the provinces of Aram; it embraced the country lying between the kingdom of Hamath on the north, Damascus on the south, and the Euphrates on the east. It seems to me probable that the city of Zobah stood upon the site of the classic *Emesa*, now Hums; and that during the reign of the Seleucidae the ancient name was forgotten. *P.*]

Ver. 13. [There appears to be a slight error in the Hebrew text here. The valley of Salt was in the Arabah, near the southern shore of the Dead Sea, where there is a remarkable range of salt hills. Syria or *Aram* was far distant, at the extreme north of Palestine. The parallel passage in 1 Ch. 18. 12 enables us to detect and correct the error: 'Moreover, Abishai slew of the *Edomites* in the valley of Salt eighteen thousand.' The words *Aram* and *Edom* closely resemble each other in Hebrew; and the context, as well as the parallel passage, shows that this verse should be:—'*when he returned from smiting Edom in the valley of Salt, eighteen thousand.*' *P.*]

Ver. 17. [A natural and easy solution of these names is, that Abiathar the high-priest, the son of Ahimelech, had also a son named Ahimelech, as it is by no means rare for grandfather and grandson to have the same name; and farther, that this Ahimelech performed the duties of high-priest in conjunction with his father, who was still living at the commencement of Solomon's reign. *P.*]

Ver. 18. [*Cherethites and the Pelethites.* The king's body-guard: but who were they? The title of *Cherethites* is applied to certain Philistines, 1 Sa. 30. 14; Eze. 25. 16; Zep. 2. 5; hence some conclude they were, by birth, Philistines, enlisted into David's army. Others consider them to be those Israelites who, having adhered to David when he sojourned in Philistia, took this distinctive title to mark their early and well-tried loyalty. The *Pelethites* some derive from Peleth, mentioned ch. 12. 2 as one of David's principal officers. The Jewish Targum calls them 'archers and slingers;' Gesenius 'headsmen' and 'couriers;' and these several explanations may all be true, as the duties assigned are not incompatible. *C.*]

REFLECTIONS.—Faithful is he who hath promised. Now, after many ages, he put Israel into the full enjoyment of all their promised territory, from the river of Egypt on the south-west to the Euphrates on the north-east. No mighty nations or powerful corruptions can withstand when God's time of humbling them arrives. The awful threatenings denounced against them take fast hold on them; and the more they have oppressed the people of God the worse fate may they expect. While the associated enemies of the church are broken in pieces, those armies are safe with whom the Lord goes out to the battle. In all wars the glory of God ought to be our principal end; and to him our whole success ought to be ascribed. Wars abroad ought never to hinder mildness, good order, and equity at home. And such as have been faithful

ROAD FROM BEYROUT TO DAMASCUS—IN KING DAVID'S DOMINIONS. [II. SAMUEL, viii : 8.]—"And from Betah, and from Berothai, cities of Hadadezer, King David took exceeding much brass." Dr. William M. Thompson thinks that the Berothai of II. Samuel, viii : 8, is possibly Beyrout. This he supposes because Hadadezer was either King of Damascus or in close alliance with it, and thus that Beyrout may have been the seaport of Damascus as it is to-day, and that after David had conquered Damascus he might have crossed over Lebanon to her seaport where he collected exceeding much brass. The view we give above is on the road between Beyrout and Damascus. We get a view of a little spur of the Lebanon mountains of which Isaiah speaks as follows: "Lebanon is ashamed and hewn down." "The high ones of stature shall be hewn down." "Lebanon shall fall by a mighty one." (Isaiah, xxxiii : 9; x : 33, 34.) And of which Ezekiel speaks as follows: "Upon the mountains and in all the valleys his branches are fallen." (Ezekiel, xxxi : 12.)

4 And the king said unto him, Where *is* he? And Ziba said unto the king, Behold, he *is* in the house of [c]Machir, the son of Ammiel, in Lo-debar.[3]

5 ¶ Then king David sent and [f]fetched him out of the house of Machir, the son of Ammiel, from Lo-debar.

6 Now when Mephibosheth, the son of Jonathan, the son of Saul, was come unto David, he [g]fell on his face,[4] and did reverence. And David said, Mephibosheth! And he answered, Behold thy servant!

7 ¶ And David said unto him, [h]Fear not; for I will surely show thee kindness for Jonathan thy father's sake, and will restore thee all the land of Saul thy father; and thou shalt [i]eat bread at my table continually.

8 And he [k]bowed himself, and said, What *is* thy servant, that thou shouldest look upon such a dead dog as I *am?*

9 ¶ Then the king called to Ziba, Saul's servant, and said unto him, [l]I have given unto thy master's son all that pertained to Saul, and to all his house.

10 Thou therefore, and thy sons, and thy servants, shall till the land for him, and thou shalt bring in *the fruits*, that thy master's son may have food to eat:[5] but Mephibosheth thy master's son shall eat bread alway at my table.[6] Now Ziba had fifteen sons and twenty servants.

11 Then said Ziba unto the king, [m]According to all that my lord the king hath commanded his servant, so shall thy servant do. As for Mephibosheth, *said the king*, he shall eat at my table, as one of the king's sons.

12 And [n]Mephibosheth had a young son, whose name *was* Micah: and all that dwelt in the house[7] of Ziba *were* [o]servants unto Mephibosheth.

13 So Mephibosheth dwelt in Jerusalem: for he did eat continually at the king's table; and was lame on both his feet.

CHAPTER X.

1 *David's messengers, sent to comfort Hanun the son of Nahash, are disgracefully entreated.* 6 *The Ammonites, strengthened by the Syrians, are overcome by Joab and Abishai.* 15 *Hadarezer sendeth a new army of Syrians under Shobach, which is defeated by David.*

AND it came to pass after this, that the king[a] of the children of Ammon died, and Hanun his son reigned in his stead.

2 Then said David, I will [b]show kindness unto Hanun the son of Nahash, as his father showed kindness unto me.[1] And David sent

A.M. 2967. B.C. 1037.

c ch 17.27.

3 Lodebar was a town of Gilead, not far distant from Mahanaim, and consequently near the banks of the Jabbok. Its site is now unknown. It is a remarkable fact that when David fled from Jerusalem, at the time of Absalom's rebellion, and settled at Mahanaim, Machir of Lodebar was among the first to supply the wants of the royal refugee.—*f.*

f Pr. 27. 10. Jn. 6. 37. Ps. 68. 22. Is. 7. 1, 5, 6, 8.

g Ge. 18. 2; 19. 1; 33. 3. Ru. 2. 10.

4 Still an eastern salutation, not merely to kings, but even to subordinate rulers. To most Europeans it appears abject in him that offers, and arrogant in those who receive it. But one country or era can badly judge of the customs of another. The Christian must, of all things not immoral, always judge charitably.—*C.*

h Ge. 50. 21. Is. 35. 3, 4. Ru. 3. 11, 12. Mat. 5. 7. 2 Ti. 1. 17, 18.

i Mat. 6. 11. Je. 52. 33, 34. Is. 33. 16.

k ver. 6. Ru. 2. 10. ch. 19. 28; 23. 8; 16. 9. 1 Sa. 24. 14; 25. 23.

l Is. 32. 8. ch. 16. 1–4; 19. 24–30. 1 Sa. 9. 1. Ac. 20. 35.

5 He gave Ziba and his family to be servants to Mephibosheth, who was to reside with David at court, while the rents of his land were to support his household.—*C.*

6 This eating at a king's table was of two kinds, the one public and ceremonious, the other private. Sir John Chardin understands these passages which speak of a right to eat at the royal table as meaning only a right to a seat there when the repast was *public* and *solemn*. Thus in a MS. note on 1 Ki. 2. 7 he tells us that it was to be understood of the *mejitis* (the term for an assembly of lords), and not of the daily and ordinary repast. Hence, though Mephibosheth was to eat at all public times at the king's table, yet he would require the produce of his own lands for food at other times.—*f.*

m ch. 16. 1–4; 19. 26, 27.

n 1 Ch. 8. 34–40; 9. 40–44.

7 Heb. *all the whole dwelling of the house.*

o Ps. 41. 9. Mi. 7. 5. Phi. 2. 22.

CHAP. X.

B.C. 1036.

a 1 Sa. 11. 1. 1 Ch. 19. 1–19. ch. 17. 27.

b De. 23. 6. 1 Sa. 22. 4. Pr. 27. 10, or 2 Ch. 19. 2.

1 There is no grace of the Spirit more lovely than gratitude for former favours; a grace that appears conspicuous in the character of David, and that animates him in his intercourse both with God and man.—*C.*

A.M. 2968. B.C. 1036.

2 Heb. *in thine eyes doth David.*

c 1 Co. 13. 7. 1 Ti. 6. 4. Ge. 42. 9–14. 1 Ch. 19. 3.

d Le. 19. 27. Is. 20. 4; 47. 2, 3. Ps. 109. 4. 2 Ch. 36. 16.

3 Amongst many of the Asiatic nations, the beard is not merely considered as the chief ornament of manhood, but also as a sign of liberty and authority—none but slaves having it shaved off. Amongst the Arabians, many of whose tribes were nearly akin to the Jews, cutting off the beard would (as we learn from *Niebuhr*, ch. vii.) be considered not merely as a punishment equal to public whipping and branding in Europe, but so utterly intolerable, that the Arab had rather suffer death than be so disgraced.—*C*

e Not that Jos. 6. 24. 1 Ki. 16. 34, but some village near to it.

4 The place where the city of Jericho stood, and which being now unthabited, according to the denunciation of Joshua, was an appropriate solitude for his envoys till the marks of the insult should be obliterated.—*C.*

f 1 Ch. 19. 6, 7. Ge. 34. 30. Ex. 5. 21. 1 Sa. 13. 4; 27. 12.

g Is. 8. 9, 10. ch. 8. 5. Ps. 83. 1–4, with Nu. 13. 21. Jos. 13. 11, 13.

5 Maacah was not the name of a man but a district; it should be the king of Maacah or Syria Maachah, as in 1 Ch. 19. 6, 7. It lay south of Damascus on the Jewish frontier.—*f.*

h 1 Ch. 19. 8. ch. 23. 8. Jos. 13. 11.

i 1 Ch. 19. 9–19.

k ch. 8. 3, 5. Nu. 13. 21. Ju. 11. 3. ver. 6.

6 It appears from 1 Ch. 19. 7 that this was at Medeba, a city upon the borders of the Ammonites, and in their possession. When Joab arrived, the army of the Ammonites was probably in the city, and their allies in the field, so that they almost surrounded the army of Israel.—*f.*

7 The Ammonites, who had sallied from the city, which Joab seems to have beleaguered, being before; and the Syrians behind, who had come to raise the siege.—*f.*

l He. 13. 1, 3. Ne. 4. 20. Ro. 15. 1. Ga. 6. 2. Lu. [illegible]

m 1 Sa. 14. 6, 12; 17. 32. 2 Ch. 15. 7. 2 Co. 16. 13. Ne. 4. 14. Ep. 6. [illegible] Ti. 2. 1.

n Ju. 10. 15. 1 Sa. 7. 8. ch. 16. 10, 11. Job 1. 21.

8 The noblest military address upon record; and, if Joab really felt as he spoke, indicating more of pious regard and resignation to the will of God than his previous character would lead us to expect. One fact it develops, as it shows that Joab's popularity with the army, which rendered him more a master than a servant to David, arose from the energy of his appropriate and sententious eloquence.—*C.*

to comfort him by the hand of his servants for his father. And David's servants came into the land of the children of Ammon.

3 And the princes of the children of Ammon said unto Hanun their lord, Thinkest thou that David[2] doth honour thy father, that he hath sent comforters unto thee? [c]hath not David *rather* sent his servants unto thee to search the city, and to spy it out, and to overthrow *it?*

4 Wherefore Hanun took David's servants, and [d]shaved off the one half of their [3]beards, and cut off their garments in the middle, *even* to their buttocks, and sent them away.

5 When they told *it* unto David, he sent to meet them, because the men were greatly ashamed: and the king said, Tarry at [e]Jericho[4] until your beards be grown, and *then* return.

6 ¶ And when the children of Ammon saw that they [f]stank before David, the children of Ammon [g]sent and hired the Syrians of Beth-rehob, and the Syrians of Zoba, twenty thousand footmen, and of king Maacah[5] a thousand men, and of Ish-tob twelve thousand men.

7 And [h]when David heard of *it*, he sent Joab, and all the host of the mighty men.

8 And [i] the children of Ammon came out, and put the battle in array at the entering in of the gate: and the [k]Syrians of Zoba, and of Rehob, and Ish-tob, and Maacah, *were* by themselves in the field.[6]

9 When Joab saw that the front of the battle was against him before and behind,[7] he chose of all the choice *men* of Israel, and put *them* in array against the Syrians:

10 And the rest of the people he delivered into the hand of Abishai his brother, that he might put *them* in array against the children of Ammon.

11 And he said, [l]If the Syrians be too strong for me, then thou shalt help me; but if the children of Ammon be too strong for thee, then I will come and help thee.

12 Be[m] of good courage, and let us play the men for our people, and for the cities of our God; and the LORD [n]do that which seemeth him good.[8]

13 And Joab drew nigh, and the people that *were* with him, unto the battle against the Syrians; and they fled before him.

14 And when the children of Ammon saw that the Syrians were fled, then fled they also before Abishai, and entered into the city. So

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friends in adversity deserve preferment in prosperity. But, lo! when God has a temple to build, how he brings under such as would incline to oppose it, and provides for its expense!

CHAPTER IX. REFLECTIONS.—How quickly sin nearly extirpates the most flourishing families! How often good men, amidst the hurry of business, are too long forgetful of their former friends! But we should not only be ready to do good to such as need, but even seek out opportunities, and inquire after proper objects. Yea, we should be peculiarly earnest in showing kindness to such as have injured us, or to such as have befriended us in our distress. Nor should our kindness die with our friends, but extend to their relations and posterity. Advancement to high stations should make us remember poor friends and poor objects with more readiness and tender care. Unexpected favours ought to be received with the warmest gratitude, and the most self-denying humility of mind and behaviour. Honours sit most gloriously on the most humble and modest. But how amazing is it that, for Jesus' sake, God should seek out us deformed sinners of mankind, restore to us our eternal inheritance, and appoint us to feast continually on, and with, Jesus at his table!

CHAPTER X. REFLECTIONS.—It is good to return a kindness even to the wicked, and to mourn with the afflicted. Wicked princes are ordinarily attended by wicked flatterers. Base minds are always the most suspicious: and evil suspicions hurry men into the most rash and ruinous conduct. It is exceedingly criminal to violate the person of an ambassador. But

Joab returned from the children of Ammon, and came to Jerusalem.

15 ¶ And when the Syrians saw that they were smitten before Israel, they [o]gathered themselves together.

16 And [p]Hadarezer sent, and brought out the Syrians that *were* beyond the river;[9] and they came to Helam: and Shobach, the captain of the host of Hadarezer, *went* before them.

17 And when it was told David, [q]he gathered all Israel together, and passed over Jordan,[1] and came to Helam: and the Syrians set themselves in array against David, and fought with him.

18 And[r] the Syrians fled before Israel; and David slew[2] *the men of* seven hundred chariots[3] of the Syrians, and forty thousand horsemen,[4] and smote Shobach, the captain of their host, who died there.

19 And when all the kings *that* [s]*were* servants to Hadarezer saw that they were smitten before Israel, they made peace with Israel, and served them. So the Syrians [t]feared to help the children of Ammon any more.

CHAPTER XI.

1 While Joab besieged Rabbah, 2 David committeth adultery with Bathsheba. 6 Uriah, sent for by David to cover the adultery, cometh to David, but refuseth to go down to his house. 14 He carrieth to Joab the letter of his death. 18 Joab sendeth the news thereof to David. 26 David taketh Bathsheba to wife.

AND it came to pass, [a]after the year was expired, at the time when kings go forth[1] *to battle*, that David sent Joab, and his servants with him, and all Israel; and they destroyed the children of Ammon, and besieged Rabbah: but David tarried still at Jerusalem.

2 ¶ And it came to pass in an evening-tide, that David [b]arose from off his bed, and walked upon[c] the roof of the king's house:[2] and from the roof he [d]saw a woman [e]washing herself; and the woman *was* very beautiful to [f]look upon.

3 And David sent and inquired after the woman. And *one* said, *Is* not this Bath-sheba, the daughter of [g]Eliam, the wife of Uriah the Hittite?

4 And David [h]sent messengers, and took[3] her: and she came in unto him, and he lay with her; (for she was [i]purified from her uncleanness;) and she returned unto her house.

5 ¶ And the woman conceived, and sent and told David, and said, [k]*I am* with child.

6 And David sent to Joab, *saying*, [l]Send me Uriah the Hittite.[4] And Joab sent Uriah to David.

7 And when Uriah was come unto him, David demanded *of him* how[5] Joab did, and how the people did, and how the war prospered.

8 And David said to Uriah, [m]Go down to thy house, and wash thy feet.[6] And Uriah departed out of the king's house, and [n]there followed him[7] a mess[8] *of meat* from the king.

9 But Uriah slept at the door of the king's house with all the servants of his lord, and went not down to his house.

10 And when they had told David, saying, Uriah went not down unto his house, David said unto Uriah, Camest thou not from *thy* journey? why *then* didst thou not go down unto thine house?

11 And Uriah said unto David, [o]The [9]ark, and Israel, and Judah, abide in tents; and [p]my lord Joab, and the servants of my lord, are encamped in the open fields; shall I then go into mine house, to eat and to drink, and to lie with my wife? *As* [q]thou livest, and *as* thy soul liveth, I will not do this thing.

12 And David said to Uriah, Tarry here today also, and to-morrow I will let thee depart. So Uriah abode in Jerusalem that day, and the morrow.

13 And when David had called him, he did eat and drink before him; and he [r]made him drunk: and at even he went out to lie on his bed with the servants of his lord, but went not down to his house.

14 ¶ And it came to pass in the morning, that David [s]wrote a letter to Joab, and sent *it* by the hand of Uriah.

15 And he wrote in the letter, saying, [t]Set ye Uriah in the forefront of the hottest[1] battle, and retire ye from him,[2] that he may be smitten, and die.[3]

A.M. 2968. B.C. 1036.

o Mi.4.11-13.Ps.2.1; 118.10-12; 27.2,3. Is.8. 9,10.

p 1 Ch.19. 16. Ps. 60. title. ch.8.3,5. 1 Ki. 11. 23.

9 The Euphrates, in Mesopotamia.

q 1 Ch.19.17.

1 To the eastward.

r 1 Ch.19.18. ch.8.4. Ps.18. 38; 33. 16. Is. 26. 11;31.2,3.

2 Heb. *smote dead.*

3 That is, ten men in a chariot, which make up the number of 7000.

4 The difference between the numbers in this passage and that in 1 Ch. 19. 18 is usually ascribed to some error of transcribers, and certainly the numeral marks for 700 and 7000 are sufficiently similar to render this statement plausible. For the difference, however, between footmen and horsemen, it will not account. But there is no need for those violent, because unauthorized attempts at reconciliation. Both accounts may be true. The horsemen might have been dismounted, the better to escape through rocky passes, and so slain as footmen—700 might have been destroyed in one battle, 7000 in the whole campaign.—*C.*

s Ge.14.4. Jos.11.10. Ju. 2. 7. 1 Ki.20.1. Da. 2.37.

t Ps. 48. 4-6. Re. 18. 10. Is.20.11.

CHAP. XI.

B.C. 1035.

a Heb *at the return of the year*, Ex. 12. 2. 1 Ki.20.22,26. 2 Ch.36. 10. 1 Ch.20.1. Lu. 3.1.

1 In spring, when the grass and springing grain would afford forage for their horses, and the military retainers were most free from domestic engagements. Alas! that man's sin should disfigure nature's fairest and most hopeful season! —*C.*

b ch.4.5,7. Pr. 24.33, 34;19.15.

c De.22.8. 1 Sa.9.27. Ne. 8. 16. Ju. 16. 27. Mat.10. 27. Ac. 10. 9. Je.19.13.

2 It will be held in remembrance that the oriental roofs are generally flat; and that where houses are situated on hills, as in Jerusalem, one roof would frequently overlook another. —*C.*

d Ge. 6. 2. Job 31.1. Ps.119. 37. Mat.5.28.

e Le.15.19. Pr.31.30. 1 Pe.3.2,3.

f Ja.1.14. Mat.5.28.

g 1 Ch.3.5. ch.23.34. Perhaps Ahithophel's son.

h Ge.39.7. Le.19.17. Ps.50.18. Job 31.9-11.

3 Here commences a most deplorable era in the life of David, but a remarkable example of that historical honesty which

A.M. 2969. B.C. 1035.

is to be found perfect in no book but the Holy Scriptures. —*C.*

i Le.15.19-28; 12. 2; 18.19.

k Which exposed her to death, Le. 20. 10. De.22.22. Pr.6. 34. Ju.8.4,5.

l Ps.51.title, 4,10,14. Job 20.12-14. Pr.9.17.

4 Here commences a practical illustration of the manner in which men, having forgotten God, try to hide their sins from the world, and in the attempt go on to commit new sins greater than the first. Even as Peter at first simply denied Christ, then went on to 'curse and to swear' to the falsehood.—*C.*

5 Heb. *of the peace of, &c.*

m Job 20. 12. Ps. 44. 21; 55.21. Pr.10.18; 26. 25.

6 *i.e.* 'Refresh thyself after thy journey.' David might be anxious for Bathsheba, who was in danger of death as an adulteress, but his chief anxiety was about himself. To screen the criminality of both, he endeavoured to prevail on Uriah to cohabit with his wife, that he might be considered the father of the child.—*C.*

n Ex.1.10. Pr.28.13. Ps.55.21;12.2. Is.28.20.

7 Heb. *went out after him.*

8 This is a custom still observed in many parts of Asia, and is looked upon not merely as an act of hospitality, but as one of the highest compliments.—*C.*

o 1 Sa.4.4;14.18.

9 Not as if the ark were with the army, as in the time of Eli, but that it was still in a tent at Jerusalem, as were the nation generally, who were not yet advanced so far in civilization as to have permanent houses.—*C.*

p Mat.10.24,25.

q 1 Sa.1.26;17.55;20. 3. ch.14.19.

r Hab. 2. 15. Re.17. 2. Ep.5.11.

s Ps.19.13. 1 Ki.21.8. Je.9.1-4. Ho.9.12. Mi. 7.3 5.

t Heb. *Bring Uriah over against the face of the strongest battle*, Ps.51.4,14. ch.12.9. Je. 10.23.

1 Heb. *strong.*

2 Heb. *from after him.*

3 Here was a complication of the basest and foulest crimes—lasciviousness, adultery, treachery, hypocrisy, murder. No excuse can be made for David, and he made none for himself. Lord! what is man? Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil! —*I.*

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little pleasure, profit, or honour must be expected from courting or complimenting the inveterate enemies of God and his people. Calumny often drives men into obscurity; but patience will gradually wear off the reproach. War had need to be made with good advice. No numbers will be found able to support those who fight against God. Nor is it unwieldy strength, but a prudent disposition and application of forces, that in battle usually prevails. Great dangers call for the greater fortitude. Love of God, and of their country, makes the bravest soldiers. Mutual assistance is a duty incumbent in every difficulty; and dependence upon God, in the use of the means, is the sure way to be crowned with success. What a mercy is it that inclement winters interrupt the grievous trade of war, and force the combatants to an unwilling rest! But sinners, by their obstinate opposition to Christ and his cause, often bring upon themselves redoubled destruction. It is happy if they submit before they are totally ruined. Meanwhile, let mankind beware of abusing Jesus' ministers and messages of grace; for the righteous judgment of Almighty God awaits such wickedness as its just reward.

CHAPTER XI. REFLECTIONS.—Lord, what is man when left to himself! On this side the grave no man is secure from presumptuous sin. The lusts of the flesh are most powerful and deceitful evils, and the last to be subdued; and such as make provision for the flesh, by sloth and sensuality, are prepared for every temptation. When we are out of God's way of duty, we cannot expect his protection. If our eyes be suffered to wander, our hearts and feet will soon follow. To indulge sinful lusts is but to increase its cravings. And a heart given up to lewdness will sacrifice honour, interest, friends, nay, God himself, to the idol of its hateful passions. Often it requires double care to conceal sin than what would have been necessary to prevent it. One sin ordinarily requires another to hide it. And such as have defiled their neighbour's bed will not stick to destroy his soul by drunkenness, or even his life by the sword. When sin has hardened the heart, the strongest warnings of providence are disregarded. When the devil has once got a soul before the wind of his temptations, he can drive it to the very brink of hell—to deliberate malice and murder. God, however highly displeased, may permit men for a time to prosper in their wickedness, till their particular branches of guilt have become almost innumerable. But stand still, my soul, and tremble to behold the man according to God's heart, the royal deputy of Heaven—negligent in business, indulgent of sloth, wandering in eye, and lustful in heart; in old age debauching a lady of good reputation, and the wife of a faithful hero; labouring to impose a spurious issue upon an injured friend; robbing his faithful servant of his senses by drink, to promote the base design; deliberately contriving murder, and making the intended victim the bearer of the murderous mandate; using Uriah's fidelity and valour as the means of his ruin.

16 And it came to pass, when Joab observed the city, that [u]he assigned Uriah unto a place where he knew that valiant men *were*.

17 And the men of the city went out and fought with Joab: and there fell *some* of the people of the servants of David; and Uriah the Hittite[4] died also.

18 ¶ Then Joab sent and told David all the things concerning the war;

19 And charged the messenger, saying, When thou hast made an end of telling[5] the matters of the war unto the king,

20 And if so be that the king's [x]wrath[6] arise, and he say unto thee, Wherefore approached ye so nigh unto the city when ye did fight? knew ye not that they would shoot from the wall?

21 Who smote [y]Abimelech the son of Jerubbesheth? did not a woman cast a piece of a millstone upon him from the wall, that he died in Thebez?[7] why went ye nigh the wall? then say thou, Thy servant Uriah the Hittite is dead also.

22 ¶ So the messenger went, and came and showed David all that Joab had sent him for.

23 And the messenger said unto David, Surely the men prevailed against us, and came out unto us into the field, and we were upon them even unto the entering of the gate.

24 And the shooters shot from off the wall upon thy servants; and *some* of the king's servants be dead, and thy servant[8] Uriah the Hittite is dead also.

25 Then David said unto the messenger, Thus shalt thou say unto Joab, Let not this thing displease[9] thee; for [z]the sword devoureth one as well as another: [a]make thy battle more strong against the city, and overthrow it; and encourage thou him.

26 ¶ And when the wife of Uriah heard that Uriah her husband was dead, she mourned[1] for her husband.

27 And when the mourning was past, David sent and [b]fetched her to his house, and she became his wife,[2] and bare him a son. But the thing that David had done [c]displeased the LORD.[3]

CHAPTER XII.

1 Nathan's parable of the ewe-lamb causeth David to be his own judge. 7 David, reproved by Nathan, confesseth his sin, and is pardoned. 15 The new-born child being stricken of God, David mourneth and prayeth for him while living. 24 Solomon is born, and named Jedidiah. 26 David taketh Rabbah, and tortureth the people thereof.

AND the LORD [c]sent Nathan unto David: and he came unto him, and [b]said unto him, There were two men in one city, the one rich, and the other poor.[1]

A.M. 2969. B.C. 1035.

u ver. 15, 17, 21. 1 Sa. 22.17. Ac. 5.29. Pr. 29. 12.

4 Uriah must of course have been a proselyte to the Jewish religion, else, as an Hittite, he could not have been employed in the service of David, or have had a Jewess to wife.—*C.*

5 Joab seems to have been at least comparatively illiterate, as he sends no written despatch, but merely a verbal message.—*C.*

x Pr. 19. 12; 16. 14. Ac. 12. 20.

6 Some suppose that by some rash attack on the enemy Joab had suffered loss about this time; and that he contrived to get rid of the odium by connecting the transaction with Uriah's death, which he knew would be so pleasing to the king. But the whole detail here seems rather to describe the stratagem Joab had laid for cutting Uriah off.—*I.*

y Ju. 9. 53; 7. 1. Beseth, *shame*, is put for Baal.

7 Amidst all the painful feelings excited by reading this chapter, it is one pleasing feature to find a military man so ready at quoting Scripture.—*I.*

8 The remembrance that Uriah was his servant should have awakened David's conscience; yet he receives the message with indifference, or more probably with satisfaction. Such is the blinding and hardening influence of sin!

z Ec. 9. 1, 2. 1 Sa. 6. 9.

a ch. 22. 26.

1 The mourning may have been sincere—it more probably was feigned.—*C.*

b Heb. *gathered her*, 1 Sa. [illegible] with ch. 4. 4; 5. 23; 16.

2 Not that God was displeased with David for making her his wife—for that was doing all he could to repair the injury—but the whole transaction in relation to Uriah was abominable both in the sight of God and man.—*C.*

c Heb. *was evil in the eyes of*, He. 13. 4. Ps. 5. 6. Mal. 3. 5.

3 The fall of David is one of the most instructive and alarming recorded in that most faithful and impartial of all histories—the Bible. The transgression of one idle and unguarded moment pierced him through with many sorrows, and embittered the remainder of his life.—*I.*

CHAP. XII.

B.C. 1034.

a Ps. li. title; 89. 35. ch. 14. 14. Is. 57. 17, 18.

b 1 Ki. 20. 35–41. ch. 14. 4–20. Ju. 9. 7–16. Is. 5. 1–6. Mat. xiii. Lu. xv &c.

1 This exquisitely beautiful parable has extorted universal admiration. It does not indeed carry out the comparison to the full extent, for David had not only seized the pet-lamb, but killed its owner. But Nathan was perhaps interrupted by the king's expression of anger against the oppressor, or a more exact resemblance might have defeated the prophet's purpose.—*I.*

A.M. [illegible] B.C. 1034.

c ch. 3. 2–5; 5. 13–16. David had many wives and children.

d ch. 11. 3. Mi. 7. 5. Pr. 5. 19. Uriah had but one wife.

1 All animals, more especially the domestic, are capable of a wonderful extent of education; and the prophet exaggerates nothing, but merely describes what frequently occurs in their history.—*C.*

e Job 1. 7. 1 Pe. 5. 8. Mat. 12. 43. Ja. 1. 14, *i.e.* the devil and fleshly lust.

f ch. 11. 3, 4.

2 In eastern countries, where there are no houses of public entertainment, every man, either of his own good-will, or out of the vanity of a good name, or as an act of religious merit, is hospitable, or may be required by authority to entertain travellers.—*C.*

g Ge. 38. 24. Ga. 4. 18. Ro. 10. 3.

h Or, *is worthy to die*, Ge. 20. 3; 38. 24.

3 Heb. *is a child of death.*

4 Is, according to the margin, *a child of death*, that is, is worthy to die, because of the peculiar enormity of his crime—but cannot, according to the letter of the law, be compelled to more than a fourfold restitution of the property purloined.—*C.*

i Ex. 22. 1. Lu. 19. 8. Pr. 6. 31.

k 1 Sa. 13. 13. Mat. 14. 4. Lu. 19. 26. Ro. 2. 1.

l Sa. 16. 13; xviii.–xxi. ch. ii. v. vii. Is. 5. 4.

5 Eastern kings counted the wives of their predecessors their property.

m ch. 11. 4, 14. Ex. 20. 13, 14. Ps. 51. 4, 14.

n Mat. 26. 52; 7. 2. Re. 13. 10; 16. 6. Ju. 1. 7. ch. xiii.–xxi.

o Am. 9. 9; 2. De. 28. 30. ch. xvi. xviii.; 16. 22. Mat. 1. 6. Ju. 1. 7. Ps. 9. 15, 16. Pr. 1. 31. Je. 2. 17, 19; 4. 18; 5. 30. 19.

6 The most grievous punishments that ever follow sin in this life, are such as arise from the influence of a man's neglect or evil example upon his own children. They smite as a double-edged sword, at once through the interests and the affections of men.—*C.*

p Ps. 51. title, 1–16. ch. 24. 10. Ac. 2. 37. Lu. 15. 21.

7 The brief sentence that records David's penitence is more emphatic than a more lengthened detail. It is 'godly sorrow,' for it laments the sin as rebellion against God.—*C.*

q 1 Co. 11. 32. Pr. 28. 13. Ps. 32. 1. Mi. 7. 18. Zec. 3. 4. Is. 44. 22; 38. 17. La. 3. 32, 33.

8 Heb. *caused to pass over.*

9 He deserved to die as an adulterer and murderer. And though men have not sinned 'after the similitude of David's transgression,' let them not be angry with God because 'he showeth mercy.' But—and if they will be angry—'let him that is without (any) sin,' and needeth no pardon, bring the first accusation.—*C.*

r Is. 52. 5. Eze. 36. 20, 23. Ro. 2. 24. Mat. 18. 7. 1 Ne. 5. 9.

2 The rich *man* had [e]exceeding many flocks and herds;

3 But the poor *man* had nothing, save [d]one little ewe-lamb,[1] which he had bought, and nourished up; and it grew up together with him, and with his children: it did eat of his own meat, and drank of his own cup, and lay in his bosom, and was unto him as a daughter.

4 And there came a [e]traveller unto the rich man; and he spared to take of his own flock, and of his own herd, to dress for the wayfaring man that was come unto him; but [f]took the poor man's lamb, and dressed it for the man that was come to him.[2]

5 And [g]David's anger was greatly kindled against the man: and he said to Nathan, *As* the LORD liveth, the man that hath done this *thing* [h]shall surely[3] die:[4]

6 And he shall [i]restore the lamb fourfold, because he did this thing, and because he had no pity.

7 ¶ And Nathan said to David, [k]Thou *art* the man. Thus saith the LORD God of Israel, [l]I anointed thee king over Israel, and I delivered thee out of the hand of Saul;

8 And I gave thee thy master's house, and thy master's wives[5] into thy bosom, and gave thee the house of Israel and of Judah; and if *that had been* too little, I would moreover have given unto thee such and such things.

9 Wherefore hast thou [m]despised the commandment of the LORD, to do evil in his sight? thou hast killed Uriah the Hittite with the sword, and hast taken his wife *to be* thy wife, and hast slain him with the sword of the children of Ammon.

10 Now therefore [n]the sword shall never depart from thine house; because thou hast despised me, and hast taken the wife of Uriah the Hittite to be thy wife.

11 Thus saith the LORD, Behold, [o]I will raise up evil against thee out of thine own house;[6] and I will take thy wives before thine eyes, and give *them* unto thy neighbour, and he shall lie with thy wives in the sight of this sun.

12 For thou didst *it* secretly: but I will do this thing before all Israel, and before the sun.

13 And David said unto Nathan, [p]I have sinned against the LORD.[7] And Nathan said unto David, [q]The LORD also hath put [s]away thy sin; thou shalt not die.[9]

14 Howbeit, because by this deed [r]thou hast given great occasion to the enemies of the LORD to blaspheme, the child also *that is* born unto thee shall surely die.

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involving Joab, and the deserters of their post, and the Ammonites, as partners in his guilt: and, in fine, charging his murder on the providence of God! Oh! what fearful depths of corruption must be in my heart! How astonishing is it that Jesus and his Spirit should dwell in so polluted a residence! How much am I indebted to God for his restraining grace! Let me then daily commit the keeping of my soul to God; and, if overtaken in a fault, immediately apply to Jesus Christ for repentance and forgiveness of my sins.

CHAPTER XII. Ver. 23. David's consolation could not arise from the idea that he should die too—a consideration unworthy of such a man; but from a firm persuasion that his child was gone to glory, and that he should meet him there: and so it affords us the surest consolation under the death of infants.

Ver. 30. [*King's crown from off his head, the weight*

15 ¶ And Nathan departed unto his house: and the LORD [a]struck the child that Uriah's wife bare unto David, and it was very sick.

16 David therefore [b]besought God for the child; and David fasted,[1] and went in and lay all night upon the earth.[2]

17 And the elders[3] of his house arose, *and went* to him, to raise him up from the earth: but he would not, neither did he eat bread with them.

18 And it came to pass on the seventh day, that the child died. And the servants of David feared to tell him that the child was dead; for they said, Behold, while the child was yet alive, we spake unto him, and he would not hearken unto our voice; how will he then vex[4] himself, if we tell him that the child is dead?

19 But when David saw that his servants whispered, David perceived that the child was dead: therefore David said unto his servants, Is the child dead? And they said, He is dead.

20 Then David [c]arose from the earth, and washed, and anointed *himself*, and changed his apparel, and came into the house of the LORD, and worshipped:[5] then he came to his own house; and, when he required, they set bread before him, and he did eat.

21 Then said his servants unto him, What thing *is* this that thou hast done? thou didst fast and weep for the child, *while it was* alive; but when the child was dead, thou didst rise and eat bread.

22 And he said, [d]While the child was yet alive, I fasted and wept: for I said, Who can tell *whether* God will be gracious to me, that the child may live?

23 But now he is dead, wherefore should I fast? can I bring him back again? I shall [e]go to him, but he shall not return to me.[6]

24 ¶ And David[7] comforted Bath-sheba his wife, and went in unto her, and lay with her: and [f]she bare a son, and he called his name[8] Solomon;[9] and the LORD loved him.

25 And he[1] sent by the hand of [a]Nathan the prophet; and he called his name [b]Jedidiah, because of the LORD.

A.M. 2970. B.C. 1034.

[a] Ge. 4. 7. Am. 3. 2. Ho. 12. 6. Lv. 20. 5. De. 5. 9.

[b] Je. 18. 8; 50. 4. Is. 26. 16. with ver. 22. ch. 14. 32. Zec. 12. 10, 11. 1 Pe. 5. 6.

1 Heb. *fasted a fast.*

2 Dathe translates 'went into his *bed-chamber*, and lay all night upon the ground.'—*I.*

3 The chief persons of his household or court. Whatever sustenance he might take until the child's death, was mean, scanty, and taken privately. He now penned Ps. li., in which, though assured of pardon, he greatly laments his sin. His fasting and lying on the bare floor were signs of sorrow for sin. True penitents will be most ashamed of sin when God is pacified towards them, Ezek. xvi. 61.—*I.*

4 Heb. *do hurt.*

[c] Ru. 3. 3. Job 2. 9, 12, 20. Ps. 39. 9; 119. 67, 71. Mi. 7. 9.

5 *Worshipped*, in the offering of sacrifices for his sin, and prayer. But, though hungry from his fast, he waits to worship before he eats.—*C.*

[d] Jonah 3. 6, 9; 7. 6. Joel 1. 14; 2. 12, 13. Is. 38. 1–3. Am. 5. 15. Ps. 30. 15. Je. 4. 9, 10.

[e] Ge. 3. 19. Job 30. 23; 7. 10; 14. 10–12. He. 9. 27.

6 He could not profit the child by his tears, but he might injure himself and neglect his duty. The child, released from sufferings, and gone to heaven, had no better world, was no loser. How different his conduct at the death of ungodly Absalom!—*I.*

7 1033.

[a] Mat. 1. 6. 1 Ch. 22. 9; 3. 5. Is. 9. 6, 7.

8 *i.e.* peaceableness and perfection.

9 The *peaceful* and the *perfect*—by which two names he was an eminent type of Christ. The Prince of peace by his cross—perfect God and perfect man in his person—a perfect example, a perfect Saviour.—*C.*

1 The LORD sent this consoling name by message, to David. *C.*

[a] ch. 7. 1, 2, 4; ver. 1–25. 1 Ki. 1. 10, 44.

[b] That is, *Beloved of the LORD*, Mat. 3. 17; 17. 5. Col. 1. 13. [The Latin, Syriac, and Arabic repeat the word 'loved,' which makes the sense much clearer: 'Jehovah loved him, and sent by Nathan the prophet, and called his name Jedidiah (beloved of Jehovah), because Jehovah loved him.'—*I.*]

A.M. 2971. B.C. 1033.

[c] ch. 11. 25. Ps. 127. 1, 2.

2 Perhaps in 1034.

3 A city, the ruins of which still remaining, testify its former greatness. It is situated east of Jordan, and was one of the cities of the Decapolis. It is now called Amân, and is situated on the banks of the Moiet, which rises in a pond on the south-west of the town. *C.*——*Rabbah*, or *Rabbath-Ammon*, called by the Greeks Philadelphia, stood on one of the upper tributaries of the Jabbok, about 26 miles east of the Jordan. It is now deserted. The ruins lie in a dreary valley, on both sides of a little stream which in winter becomes a torrent. The source of the stream is a short distance to the west, and the water flows eastward. Another valley comes in from the north, and on its eastern side, at the point of junction, stands an isolated steep hill, on the top of which is the citadel, a fortress of great extent and strength. Joab in his first attack took 'the city of the waters,' *i.e.* the lower town, which lay on the banks of the stream. But the citadel held out. Messengers were sent to David, who marched to the spot with a reinforcement, and captured the fortress.—*I.*

4 That part where the wells and cisterns were.

5 Houbigant translates it: 'I have cut off the waters from the city;'—by which means, where there were no other supplies, he could soon compel the garrison to surrender.—*C.*

6 Heb. *my name is called upon it.*

[d] 1 Ch. 2. ——

[e] Or, value, Pr. 13. [illegible] Daniel.

7 Heb. *very great.*

[f] Furnace of Moloch, 2 Ki. 16. 3; 23. 10, 11.

8 Perhaps he only made them saw wood and stones, dig iron mines, fell timber, and labour about furnaces.

CHAP. XIII.

B.C. 1032.

[a] ch. 3. 2, 3; xiv. 27; xviii.

[b] Ge. 6. 2; 30. 6. Pr. 31. 30.

[c] Ge. 34. 2, 3. Mat. 5. 28. Ps. 45. 14.

[d] 1 Ki. 21. 4. Job 5. 2.

1 He did not see by what means he could effect his wicked purpose.—*C.*

[e] Pr. 27. 6; 28. 23. Mi. 7. 5, with 1 Sa. 26. 9. 1 Ch. 21. 15.

[f] Ps. 58. 5. Je. 4. 22. Ge. 3. 1.

2 Heb. *thin.*

3 Heb. *morning by morning.*

[g] Is. 1. 9. Je. 23. 8. 1 Co. 15. 17.

26 ¶ And Joab [a]fought against Rabbah of the children of Ammon, and took the royal city.[2]

27 And Joab sent messengers to David, and said, I have fought against Rabbah,[3] and have taken the city of [d]waters.[5]

28 Now therefore gather the rest of the people together, and encamp against the city, and take it; lest I take the city, and it be called after my name.[6]

29 And David gathered all the people together, and went to Rabbah, and fought against it, and took it.

30 And he [d]took their king's crown from off his head, (the [e]weight whereof *was* a talent of gold with the precious stones,) and it was *set* on David's head: and he brought forth the spoil of the city in great abundance.[7]

31 And he brought forth the people that *were* therein, and put *them* under saws, and under harrows of iron, and under axes of iron, and made them pass through the [f]brick-kiln:[8] and thus did he unto all the cities of the children of Ammon. So David and all the people returned unto Jerusalem.

CHAPTER XIII.

1 Amnon loving Tamar, by Jonadab's counsel feigning himself sick, ravisheth her. 15 He hateth her, and shamefully turneth her out of his house. 19 Absalom entertaineth her, and concealeth his purpose. 23 At a sheep-shearing, among all the king's sons, he killeth Amnon. 30 David grieving at the news is comforted by Jonadab. 37 Absalom fleeth to Talmai at Geshur.

AND it came to pass after this, that [a]Absalom the son of David had [b]a fair sister, whose name *was* Tamar; and Amnon the son of David [c]loved her.

2 And Amnon was so [d]vexed, that he fell sick for his sister Tamar; for she *was* a virgin: and Amnon thought it hard for him to do any thing to her.[1]

3 But Amnon had [e]a friend, whose name *was* Jonadab, the son of Shimeah, David's brother: and Jonadab *was* a very [f]subtile man.

4 And he said unto him, Why *art* thou, *being* the king's son, lean[2] from day to [3]day? wilt thou not tell me? And Amnon said unto him, [g]I love Tamar, my brother Absalom's sister.

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whereof was a talent of gold. According to the common calculation of the talent, this would give 125 lbs., a weight that no man could bear. Whiston, however, calculates the talent here mentioned at 7 lbs., which would give a weight that might be borne. Others think that value and not weight is indicated; this would make the crown worth about £6000. Others suppose it to be the crown, not of 'their king,' but of the idol of the Ammonites, called Milcom. The most probable opinion is that the weight was according to the first calculation—for if not so remarkably great, why should it be so particularly noticed?—and that it was not worn on, but suspended over the head, of which fact ancient history furnishes many examples, and Sir W. Ouseley mentions it as still subsisting in Persia. *C.*]

Ver. 31. [*Put them under saws.* Not that he so cruelly punished as our translation conveys; but that he put them to work with saws, and harrows, and axes, and to make brick, as the original Hebrew will bear. The objection that may be urged against this sense, from the expression 'cut' in 1 Ch. 20. 3, has been clearly removed by Kennicott. *C.*——It ought not to be forgotten that in executing these punishments on the Ammonites, David was chastising them for their own horrid cruelties. According to 1 Sa. xi. their king would only make peace with the inhabitants of Jabesh on condition that their right eyes should be put out. And we read in Am. i. 13, that they 'ripped up the women with child of Gilead, that they might enlarge their border.' It is clear from these statements that the Ammonites had attempted by the most horrid cruelties to exterminate the Israelites. *P.*]

REFLECTIONS.—It is dreadful to behold noted saints continue long impenitent in their sins: and prudent reproof is always necessary, especially for great transgressors; and when wisely administered, it is doubly effectual. Every wife has a right to her husband's most endeared affection. Multiplying of wives never cures concupiscence, but inflames it. Great sinners are often most severe in their censures of others. Reprovers ought to deal plainly and closely with the consciences of sinners, and lay before them the aggravating circumstances of their guilt; for unbelief is the great source of all our wickedness. They must pay dear for their lusts who dare indulge them. The only way to escape the judgment which we have deserved, is by returning to God, through Jesus Christ, with humble acknowledgment of our guilt. Nothing causes more reproach to God, and his cause, than the scandalous falls of professors: especially of eminent saints, high stationed in church or state. And God will make those sins bitter to his people at last, in which they sought lasting pleasure, even though others should seem to escape unpunished. Yea, God sometimes quickly marks his people's sin in their punishment; and often children are afflicted in their parents' punishment. The sickness of our relations demands our earnest wrestlings with God on their behalf; and none more than that of distressed children, who cannot pray for themselves. We brought them into the world heirs of

PANORAMA OF JERUSALEM—AS SEEN FROM THE TOP OF THE MOUNT OF OLIVES. [II. SAMUEL, xii: 31.]—"So David and all the people returned unto Jerusalem." We are looking toward the Holy City now from the top of the Mount of Olives. Between where we stand and Jerusalem is the valley of Jehoshaphat. To the extreme left is a cluster of minarets with a small dome. This is the tomb of David on Mount Zion. To the north of it is Zion's Gate. Coming eastward nearer to our point of view, almost at the bottom of the valley, you see the pillar of Absalom. The road passing it leads to Bethany. On the hillside near the Jerusalem wall is the Moslem cemetery. To the west of the extreme right of the picture is the tower of David near the Jaffa Gate. No other city on earth has had a history so interesting. More pilgrimages are perhaps made to it to-day than in any former period. This is the city of David.

5 And Jonadab said unto him, [h]Lay thee down on thy bed, and make thyself sick:[4] and when thy father cometh to see thee, say unto him, I pray thee, let my sister Tamar come and give me meat, and dress the meat in my sight, that I may see *it*, and eat *it* at her hand.[5]

6 ¶ So Amnon lay down, and made himself sick: and when the king was come to see him, Amnon said unto the king, I pray thee, let Tamar my sister come and [i]make me a couple of cakes in my sight, that I may eat at her hand.

7 Then David sent home to Tamar, saying, Go now to thy brother Amnon's house, and dress him meat.

8 So Tamar went to her brother Amnon's house, and he was [k]laid down. And she took flour,[6] and kneaded *it*, and made cakes in his sight, and did bake the cakes.

9 And she took a pan, and poured *them* out before him; but he refused to eat. And Amnon said, [l]Have out all men from me.[7] And they went out every man from him.

10 And Amnon said unto Tamar, Bring the meat into the chamber, that I may eat of thine hand. And Tamar took the cakes which she had made, and brought *them* into the chamber to Amnon her brother.

11 And when she had brought *them* unto him to eat, he [m]took hold of her, and said unto her, Come lie with me, my sister.

12 And she answered him, Nay, my brother, do not force me;[8] for [n]no such thing ought to be [o]done [o]in Israel: do not thou this [p]folly.[1]

13 And I, whither shall I cause my [q]shame to go? and as for thee, thou shalt be as one of the fools in Israel. Now therefore, I pray thee, speak unto the king: for he will not withhold me from thee.[2]

14 Howbeit he [r]would not hearken unto her voice; but, being stronger than she, forced her, and lay with her.

15 ¶ Then Amnon [s]hated her[3] exceedingly;[4] so that the hatred wherewith he hated her *was* greater than the love wherewith he had loved her: and Amnon said unto her, Arise, be gone.[5]

16 And she said unto him, *There is* no

A.M. 2972. B.C. 1032.

[h] Ps.50.18. Pr.19.27. Je.9.2-6.

[4] Feign thyself sick, a deception in which travellers tell us many Asiatics are still such adepts, that it is often very difficult to detect them. —*C.*

[i] Ge. 18. 6. Mat. 13. 33. Le. 26. 26. Pr. 31. 13.

[k] ver 5

[6] Or, *paste.*

[l] Ps. 14. 1; 50. 20, 21. Ju. 3. 20. Je. 23. 23, 24. Job 24. 13-17. 34. 22.

[7] An order exceedingly natural in that peevish irritability that sickness so frequently introduces. —*C.*

[m] Ge 39. 12. Pr. 7. 13. Ro. 1. 27. Le. 18. 9; 20. 17. De. 27. 22.

[8] Heb. *humble me.*

[n] Le. 18. 9; 20. 17. Job 31. 1.

[9] Heb. *it ought not so to be done.*

[o] Ge. 34. 7. De. 22. 21. Ju. 19. 23, 24; 20. 6, 10. Ps. 93. 5.

[p] Ge. 34. 7. Pr. 7. 7.

[1] Folly is here 'wickedness,' and fools 'wicked men.' There is something exceedingly tender and affecting in her remonstrance, but Amnon was a mere brute, and it was all lost upon him. See how David began to be punished in his ungodly children! Adultery and murder had been his own sins, and these sins and his children form the beginning of his chastisement. He would feel it the more keenly, as no doubt his own example had encouraged them to such enormities. —*I.*

[2] Tamar evidently desired to get away under any pretext by any means. It must not be concluded from this statement that David would have sanctioned incest. —*P.*

[q] Pr. 18. 2. Ge. 34. 2. ch. 12. 10, 11.

[r] Ro. 6. 21. Je. 6. 15. Eze. 23. 17. He. 3. 13.

[3] Heb. *with great hatred, greatly.*

[4] An evil and tormented conscience, instead of leading to repentance, very frequently leads the guilty to turn that anger against others that should be turned against his own sin. —*C.*

[5] See what deceitful pleasures those of the flesh are! how soon they pass away and turn into loathing! Inordinate lust ever ends in satiety. Let none ever expect better treatment than Tamar from those who are capable of attempting their seduction. —*I.*

A.M. 2972. B.C. 1032.

[6] She had come—as is most probable both from her rank and the analogy of eastern customs—not on foot or unattended, but in some covered conveyance, with her servants. Now she is exposed to great indignity, in being sent away without conveyance or attendance. —*C.*

[s] Ge. 37. 3. Ju. 5. 30. Ps. 45. 14.

[t] Jos. 7. 6. Ge. 37. 29, 34. Je. 2. 37. 1 Sa. 4. 12. ch. 1. 2. Job 1. 20; 2. 12. Re. 18. 19.

[7] Heb. *Aminon*, so called in contempt.

[u] Ps. 39. 9. Ro. 12. 19.

[8] Heb. *set not thine heart.*

[9] Heb. *and desolate.*

[1] This awful picture of the evils of polygamy, of divided families, of personal lakeness, individual misery, and meditated revenge, forms no argument for the infidel against the Bible, but an illustration of the weakness and wickedness of human nature. In reality, that truth, the whole truth, which is to be found in the Bible alone, constitutes an evidence of its divine origin, that the infidel, if he studied the laws of moral evidence, could neither gainsay nor resist. —*C.*

[x] ch. 12. 10, with Le. 20. 17; 18. 9.

[y] Le. 19. 17. Mat. 18. 15.

[2] He that can hide his resentment is always the most dangerous. Silence is no proof of placidity—not even of placability. Amnon's sin was great: Absalom's meditated revenge was greater. —*C.*

[z] Le. 19. 17. Mat. 18. 15. 1 Jn. 3. 15.

[3] 1030.

[a] Ge. 38. 12, 13. 1 Sa 25. 2, 4, 36. 2 Ki. 3. 4.

[b] Ju. 7. 24; 17. 1; 19. 1, 18, or 2 Ch. 13. 19; 15. 8. Ju. 21. 54.

[4] Not the tribe of Ephraim, but a city so called in the tribe of Benjamin, 2 Ch. 13. 19, about twelve miles from Jerusalem. —*C.*

[c] Ps. 12. 2; 35. 20; 55. 21. Je. 41. 1, 2, 6, 7; 9. 3. Mi. 7. 5. Pr. 26. 24, 25.

[d] ch. 14. 22. Ru. 2. 4.

[e] Ps. 55. 21. Je. 41. 1, 6, 7. Pr. 26. 24, 25.

[5] David must have exercised an extraordinary surveillance over his family, when none of them dared leave the city without special permission. This is a state of things we can scarcely conceive—but it can be easily comprehended, by recollecting that such was the unsettled state of the surrounding countries, that the whole community was under a strict military discipline. Common safety required this vigilance. —*C.*

[f] Ex. 1. 17, 22. 1 Sa. 22. 17. Ja. 1. 14. Ac. 4. 19; 5. 29.

cause; this evil in sending me away[6] *is* greater than the other that thou didst unto me. But he would not hearken unto her.

17 Then he called his servant that ministered unto him, and said, Put now this *woman* out from me, and bolt the door after her.

18 And *she had* a [s]garment of divers colours upon her: for with such robes were the king's daughters *that were* virgins apparelled. Then his servant brought her out, and bolted the door after her.

19 ¶ And Tamar [t]put ashes on her head, and rent her garment of divers colours that *was* on her, and laid her hand on her head, and went on crying.

20 And Absalom her brother said unto her, Hath Amnon[7] thy brother been with thee? but [u]hold now thy peace, my sister, he *is* thy brother; regard[8] not this thing. So Tamar remained desolate[9] in her brother Absalom's house.[1]

21 ¶ But when king David heard of all these things, he [x]was very wroth.

22 And Absalom spake unto his brother Amnon neither [y]good nor bad:[2] for Absalom [z]hated Amnon, because he had forced his sister Tamar.

23 ¶ And it came to pass after two full years,[3] that Absalom had [a]sheep-shearers in Baal-hazor, which *is* beside [b]Ephraim:[4] and Absalom invited all the king's sons.

24 And Absalom came to the king, and said, Behold now, thy servant hath sheep-shearers: [c]let the king, I beseech thee, and his servants, go with thy servant.

25 And the king said to Absalom, Nay, my son, let us not all now go, lest we be chargeable unto thee. And he pressed him: howbeit he would not go, [d]but blessed him.

26 Then said Absalom, If not, I pray thee, let [e]my brother Amnon go with us. And the king said unto him, Why should he go with thee?

27 But Absalom pressed him, that he let Amnon and all the king's sons go with him.[5]

28 Now Absalom had [f]commanded his servants, saying, Mark ye now when Amnon's heart is merry with wine, and when I say unto

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wrath; let us labour to pluck them as brands out of the burning, and bring them to Jesus the Saviour. If we must part with them, let us do it as Christians; and let their death fill us with the most serious impressions of our own. At the same time, let us fortify our patience by the comforting consideration of this pious king: let us return them into the hand of God, assured that 'their angels do always behold the face of our Father which is in heaven,' and that 'of such is the kingdom of heaven:' and let it be our only concern that we meet them again in his presence.—Meanwhile, let us remember, that submission to God's strokes is the way to obtain the restoration of his comforts; and that he will not chide for ever, but will in wrath remember mercy.—Alas! that, while Joab was so zealous for David's honour, David, in his fondness for the heathen crown, and his severity to the prisoners, should have so little consulted the honour of his God! But when men lie hardened in their lust, what evil are they not capable of committing! — —

CHAPTER XIII. [Ver. 38. Geshur was a small kingdom on the north-eastern border of Palestine, beyond Jordan. It appears to have been in part at least identical with the present province of *Lejah*, formerly called Trachonitis. The Geshurites maintained friendly relations with the Israelites east of the Jordan; probably from community of interest, both being extensive cattle-owners. The community of occupation may have led to the alliance between David and the daughter of Talmai, king of Geshur. Absalom was the fruit of this marriage; and the wild acts of his life were doubtless to some extent the results of maternal training. *P.*]

REFLECTIONS.—Righteous, but awful, are the judgments of God; especially when he punishes sin with sin, and that remarkably similar! Children are apt to imitate their parents' sins without imitating their repentance. And near relatives should be cautious that their tender affection does not degenerate into lawless lust. How unbridled is lust when once indulged! the body often suffers through vile affections: and no station can render the man happy whose lusts rage within him. A wicked and subtile friend, who leads to or flatters in sin, is a dreadful curse. Such as harbour no ill designs themselves, are often made instruments of iniquity by the crafty sinner, as they are most unsuspicious. Deeds of filthiness seek for secrecy. It is therefore extremely dangerous for those who have youth and beauty to be alone with the wanton. But nothing can be more barbarous and foolish than, for a

you, Smite Amnon; then kill him, fear not: have not I commanded you?[6] be courageous, and be valiant.[7]

29 And the servants of Absalom did unto Amnon as Absalom had commanded: then all the king's sons arose, and every man gat[8] him up upon his [g]mule,[9] and fled.

30 ¶ And it came to pass, while they were in the way, that tidings came to David, saying, Absalom hath slain all the king's sons,[1] and there is not one of them left.

31 Then the king [h]arose, and tare his garments, and lay on the earth; and all his servants stood by with their clothes rent.

32 ¶ And [i]Jonadab, the son of Shimeah David's brother, answered and said, Let not my lord suppose *that* they have slain all the young men the king's sons; for Amnon only is dead: for by the appointment of Absalom this hath been [k]determined from the day that he forced his sister Tamar.[2]

33 Now therefore let not my lord the king take the thing to his heart, to think that all the king's sons are dead; for Amnon only is dead.

34 But [l]Absalom fled. And the young man that kept the watch lifted up his eyes and looked, and, behold, there came much people by the way of the hill-side behind him.

35 And Jonadab said unto the king, Behold, the king's sons come! as thy servant said,[3] so it is.

36 And it came to pass, as soon as he had made an end of speaking, that, behold, the king's sons came, and lifted up their voice and wept: and the king also and all his servants wept[4] very sore.[5]

37 ¶ But Absalom fled, and went to [m]Talmai, the son of Ammihud,[6] king of Geshur: and [n]*David* mourned for his son every day.

38 So Absalom fled, and went to [o]Geshur, and was there three years.

39 And *the soul of* king David longed to go forth unto Absalom: for he was [p]comforted concerning Amnon, seeing he was dead.

CHAPTER XIV.

1 *Joab, suborning a widow of Tekoah, by a parable to incline the king's heart to fetch home Absalom, bringeth him to Jerusalem.* 25 *Absalom's beauty, hair, and children.* 28 *After two years, Absalom by Joab is brought into the king's presence.*

NOW Joab[a] the son of Zeruiah perceived that the king's [b]heart *was* toward Absalom.

2 And Joab sent to [c]Tekoah,[1] and fetched

A.M. 2974. B.C. 1030.

6 Or, *will you not, since I have commanded you?*

7 Heb. *sons of valour.*

8 Heb. *rode.*

g Ge. 36. 24. 1 Ki. 1. 33. with Le. 19. 19.

9 The first time that *mules* are certainly mentioned in Scripture; for in Ge. 36. 24 the meaning is matter of dispute. Le. 19. 19 forbade the breeding of such animals—but the Jews did not consider this prohibition as forbidding their use.—*C.*

1 The very exaggerated form in which rumour still continues to deliver her reports. Passion always exaggerates, and is therefore to be dreaded, whether in historian or judge. —*C.*

h ver. 19; ch. 12. 16. Jos. 7. 6. Ge. 37. 29, 34. Jo 1. 20.

i ver. 3–5.

k Or, *settled*, Ge. 27. 41. Ps. 7. 14. Pr. 24. 11, 12; 17. 14.

2 Scott thinks it is not likely that Absalom would have made Jonadab his confidant because he had been Amnon's friend, ver. 3; but a man of his character could betray a friend without scruple, and lend himself to the designs of his enemy.—*I.*

l ver. 38. Am. 2. 14. Je. 48. 44.

3 Heb. *according to the word of thy servant.*

4 Heb. *with a great weeping, greatly.*

5 Both on account of the family sin, and that Amnon was the first-born. Whether the servants wept out of compassion or complimentary to David does not appear certain. Most probably it was sincere, and that both on account of the king whom they loved, and Amnon who was killed. Amnon was a bad man; but may, notwithstanding, have been a popular favourite.—*C.*

m ch. 3. 3; 15. 8. 1 Ch. 3. 2.

6 Or, *Ammihud.*

n Or, *was consumed*, ch. 14. 1.

o De. 3. 14. Jos. 13. 13. ver. 37.

p Ge. 37. 34; 38. 12. ch. 12. 23.

CHAP. XIV.

B.C. 1027.

a ch. 2. 18. 1 Ch. 2. 16.

b ch. 13. 39; 18. 33; 19. 4.

c 2 Ch. 11. 6. Ne. 3. 5, 27. Je. 6. 1.

1 A city of Judah, nine miles south of Jerusalem. It was situate on a hill, and considerable ruins are described by modern travellers as still remaining. Why did Joab send to Tekoah for a wise woman? (1) He must bring a petitioner from a distance, so that she may the less be suspected of collusion. (2) Tekoah was in Joab's own tribe, and he therefore culls his agent from his acquaintance. (3) He chooses her for her peculiar address and ready eloquence, which, when the words of Joab had been repeated, never forsakes her for a moment.—*C.*

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d Ge. 3. 1. ch. 13. 3. Ps. 58. 5. Je. 4. 22.

e Ru. 3. 3. Ps. 104. 15. Mat. 6. 17. Ec. 9. 8.

f Ex. 4. 15. Nu. 23. 5.

g 1 Sa. 28. 14. ch. 9. 6, 8. Ru. 2. 10. Ge. 19. 1; 33. 3; 18. 2.

h Heb. *Save*, Is. 1. 17. De. 27. 19.

i Job 29. 12–14. Je. 22. 16. Ps. 82. 3, 4.

k ch. 12. 1–4. Ju. 9. 8–15. 1 Ki. 20. 35–41. Is. 5. 1–6.

2 As Joab may have found a person whose circumstances bore some resemblance to what he wished to represent, it is possible that this woman's story may have been partly founded in truth, yet it is expressly said (ver. 2) that she '*feigned* herself a mourner.' Her melancholy tale, her widow's weeds, her aged person, her poetical and picturesque language, and her earnest eloquent manner, were all fitted to impress a mind like David's.—*I.*

l Ac. 7. 26. De. 17. 6; 19. 15; 22. 26.

m Nu. 35. 19. De. 19. 12.

n An evidence that not the law, but personal force or family combination, were as yet the chief means of redress for injuries. Happy is the land where individuals redress not their own wrongs, but where the law is accessible, its arm strong, and its decisions merciful and just —*C.*

n Ge. 27. 45. De. 25. 6–10. Ru. 4. 4, 5, 10. Is. 14. 21, 22. Job 18. 16, 17, 19.

4 A beautiful and still common figure in the East, and perhaps in all countries, for life and its extinction. We frequently speak of the spark of life, and call the soul 'vital spark.'—*C.*

o ver. 11; ch. 16. 4. Pr. 18. 13. Ac. 25. 26, 27.

p Mat. 27. 25. Ge. 27. 13. 1 Ki. 2. 44, 45.

q Ps. 119. 49; 103. 13. Ex. 34. 6. Nu. 35. 11, 12. Mat. 5. 44, 48.

r Nu. 35. 19, 27. Jos. 20. 3–6. De. 19. 4–10. Ex. 21. 13.

s 1 Sa. 14. 45. 1 Ki. 1. 52. Ac. 27. 34.

5 The judgment of the king was just—for the alleged quarrel implied not any premeditated design, but a casual controversy with a fatal termination.—*C.*

t ch. 12. 7. Ro. 13. 8. Le. 19. 35.

u ch. 13. 38, with ver. 6, 10, 21.

6 So far as the tact of pleading was concerned, she was certainly a wise woman. The moment she charges the king with a fault, a statement not likely to please an absolute king, she leads him away to his son, his *banished* son, with whom she knew his heart was.—*C.*

x He. 9. 27. Job 30. 23. Ps. 49. 7, 9, 10; 89. 47, 48. Ge. 3. 19. Ec. 12. 7.

y Job 34. 19. Ac. 10. 34. Ro. 2. 11. 2 Ch. 19. 7. Ga. 2. 6. Ep. 6. 9. Col. 3. 25. 1 Pe. 1. 17.

thence [d]a wise woman, and said unto her, I pray thee, feign thyself to be a mourner, and put on now mourning apparel, and [e]anoint not thyself with oil, but be as a woman that had a long time mourned for the dead;

3 And come to the king, and speak on this manner unto him. So Joab [f]put the words in her mouth.

4 ¶ And when the woman of Tekoah spake to the king, she [g]fell on her face to the ground, and did obeisance, and said, [h]Help, O king!

5 And the king [i]said unto her, What aileth thee? And she answered, [k]I *am* indeed a widow woman, and mine husband is dead.[2]

6 And thy handmaid had two sons, and they two strove together in the field, and *there was* [l]none to part them, but the one smote the other, and slew him.

7 And, behold, [m]the whole family[3] is risen against thine handmaid; and they said, Deliver him that smote his brother, that we may kill him, for the life of his brother whom he slew; and we will destroy the heir also: and so they shall [n]quench my coal[4] which is left, and shall not leave to my husband *neither* name nor remainder upon the earth.

8 And the king said unto the woman, Go to thine house, and [o]I will give charge concerning thee.

9 And the woman of Tekoah said unto the king, My lord, O king, [p]the iniquity *be* on me, and on my father's house; and the king and his throne *be* guiltless.

10 And the king said, Whosoever saith *ought* unto thee, bring him to me, and he shall not touch thee any more.

11 Then said she, I pray thee, let the king [q]remember the LORD thy God, that thou [r]wouldest not suffer the revengers of blood to destroy any more, lest they destroy my son. And he said, [s]*As* the LORD liveth, there shall not one hair of thy son fall to the earth.[5]

12 Then the woman said, Let thine handmaid, I pray thee, speak *one* word unto my lord the king. And he said, Say on.

13 And the woman said, [t]Wherefore then hast thou thought such a thing against the people of God? for the king doth speak this thing as one which is faulty, [u]in that the king doth not fetch home again his banished.[6]

14 For we [x]must needs die, and *are* as water spilt on the ground, which cannot be gathered up again; neither doth God [y]respect *any* person:

momentary gratification, to ruin a character, render a companion infamous and miserable, and rush into everlasting ruin. Yet where lust rages, men are insensible of fear or shame, and deaf to all the remonstrances of reason and religion; though the pleasures of lust are quickly turned into loathing and hatred; and nothing is reckoned too shameful or cruel to be done to the object of it. The neglect of magistrates to punish, infallibly occasions more if not worse crimes; and yet how hard for them to punish, in their children, crimes copied after their own! Revenge is often deep rooted, and masked with pretences of friendship; yea, the longer it is concealed, it often burns the more fiercely: and drunkenness remarkably exposes sinners to death, and ripens them for hell. None are more ready to imbrue their hands in our blood than our companions in luxury. What certain griefs, but uncertain comforts, are the children of the best and greatest! How kind is it to sympathize with the afflicted, and to comfort them the best way we can! and how strong is parental affection, which cannot be extinguished by the most horrid and unnatural crimes.

CHAPTER XIV. REFLECTIONS.—Most parents are incapable of continuing due severity towards their offending children. And crafty statesmen are disposed to humour their sovereign in his sinful indulg-

yet doth he [z]devise means,[6] that his banished be not expelled from him.

15 Now therefore that I am come to speak of this thing unto my lord the king, *it is* because the people have made me afraid:[7] and thy handmaid said, I will now speak unto the king; it may be that the king will perform the request of his handmaid.

16 For the king will hear, to deliver his handmaid out of the hand of the men *that would* destroy me and my son[8] together out of the inheritance of God.

17 Then thine handmaid said, The word of my lord the king shall now be comfortable:[9] for [c]as an angel of God,[1] so *is* my lord the king, to discern good and bad; therefore the LORD thy God will be with thee.

18 Then the king answered and said unto the woman, Hide not from me, I pray thee, the thing that I shall ask thee. And the woman said, Let my lord the king now speak.

19 And the king said, *Is not* the hand of Joab with thee in all this? And the woman answered and said, *As* thy soul liveth, my lord the king, none can turn to the right hand or to the left from ought that my lord the king hath spoken: for thy servant Joab, he bade me, and he put all these words in the mouth of thine handmaid:

20 To fetch about this form of speech hath thy servant Joab done this thing: and my lord *is* wise, according to the wisdom of an angel of God, to know all *things* that *are* in the earth.

21 ¶ And the king said unto Joab, Behold now, I have done this thing: go therefore, [d]bring the young man Absalom again.

22 And Joab [b]fell to the ground on his face, and bowed himself, and [c]thanked the king: and Joab said, To-day thy servant knoweth that [d]I have found grace in thy sight, my lord, O king, in that the king hath fulfilled the request of his servant.[2]

23 So Joab arose and went to [e]Geshur, and brought Absalom to Jerusalem.

24 And the king said, Let him turn to his own house, and let him not [f]see my face. So Absalom returned to his own house, and saw not the king's face.

25 ¶ But[g] in all Israel there was none to be so much praised as Absalom for his beauty: from[h] the sole of his foot even to the crown of his head there was no blemish in him.

26 And when he polled his head, (for it was at every year's end[3] that he polled *it:* because *the*[i] *hair* was heavy on him, therefore he polled it,) he weighed the hair of his head at [k]two hundred shekels,[4] after the king's weight.

A.M. 2977. B.C. 1027.

z Ex.21.13. Nu.35.15,Jos.xx De.19.1-10. Mat.18.32,33.

6 Or, *because God hath not taken away his life, he hath also devised means,* &c.

7 I fear they will sustain great loss, or they will be provoked to rebel against thee.

8 Some have hence supposed the woman of Tekoah had a real case to plead, and that Joab took advantage of it; but this seems totally inconsistent with ver. 2, 3, 19,20. She merely employs the words *my son* for her son in the parable, who had no other but a figurative existence. —*C.*

9 Heb. *for rest.*

a 1 Sa.29. 9. ver. 20; ch.19.27. Ac.12.22,23.

1 This may have been the language of flattery to soothe the king, but it is more likely she felt it and spoke it as truth; for David was a man of great natural and acquired acuteness, which, as truly as supernatural endowments, is the gift of God.—*C.*

b ver.4.

c Heb. *blessed,* ch. 13.25. Ru.2.4.

d Ge.6.8;19.19,33.10; 39.4,5,7,29; 50. 4. Ru.2. 1,2 Sa.20.3.

2 Joab had two reasons for his anxiety for Absalom. (1) He saw the king was anxious for a good excuse for recalling Absalom (2) To afford an additional example for the safety of a murderer, in which class he himself ranked, but was so great a favourite with the army that David could not punish him.—*Note,* David sinned through tender but mistaken lenity. According to the divine law, the deliberate and malicious murderer should die. But David's tenderness as a father soon punished his error as a judge.—*C.*

e ch.13.37,38. De.3. 14,Jos.12.5.

f Ge.43.3.ver.28.

g Heb: *And as Absalom, there was not a beautiful man in all Israel to praise greatly,* Pr.31.30.1 Sa. 16.7,9.2. Mat.23.27.

h Is.1.6.Pr.11.22.

3 Or, 'from time to time, *i.e.* occasionally, or, as the next clause explains it, when the hair became heavy on him, *or burdened him,* then he polled it;' and this may have been at longer intervals than a year. Being vain of the abundance and beauty of his hair (of which the people of the East are very proud), he wore it as long as he could without much inconvenience; and when at length he was compelled to part with it, he made it be weighed, in order that the fame of its quantity might compensate his vanity for the temporary loss. The circumstance is noticed here, with a view to explain and give point to the fact, that these fondly cherished locks proved the occasion of his death, ch.18.9.—*I.*

i ch.18.9.

k 6¼ lbs. avoirdupois, Ge.23.16. Le.19. 36.

4 If this were the common shekel, Absalom's hair would weigh about 72½ lbs. But there was another shekel mentioned by Epiphanius, weighing ¼ oz., which would give 4 lb. 2 oz. troy, or 3 lb. 2 oz. avoirdupois weight. And if we recollect what Josephus tells us, that the Jews powdered their heads with gold-dust, using various unguents, the wonderfulness of the production will remain, but the difficulty of accounting for such an enormous weight will be greatly diminished. The idea that it was estimated at value, and not by weight, does not seem admissible.—*C.*

l ch.18.18. Job 18.16 -19.15.14.22. Je.22.30.

m ver.24. Ge.43.3.

5 Heb. *near my place.*

n ch.13.28,29. Ju.15. 5. Pr.20.22.

6 Joab must have so managed the court, that David was totally inaccessible, except through himself. This caution may have been partly to guard against dangers, partly for state, but most probably it chiefly arose from Joab's own desire to monopolize all access to the royal ear. Blessed be the name of the Lord, however difficult access may be for petitioners to earthly potentates, the believer has no difficulty in seeing the King's face, He. 4.16.—*C.*

o Ge.3.12. Job 31.33. Pr 28.13. Je.8.12. 1 Sa. 15.13 20. Mat.25.44.

p ver.4,22.

q Ge.27,26;33.55;29. 11. Lu.15.20.

CHAP. XV.

B.C. 1024.

a ch.12.11. 1 Ki.1.5. Pr.11.2;16.18;18.12.

b Pr.4.16; 1.16. Mat. 27.1.

1 Heb. *to come.*

c Ps.12.5;36.1-4. Pr. 12. 2, 3. 2 Pe.2. 10. Re. 13.11.

d Or, *none will hear thee from the king* downwards, with ch.8.15.

e Ju. 9. 29, with Ex. 4.10 13. Pr.20.25,27.

f Pr.27.2.. Pe.2.19.

g Pr.26 25. Ps. 10. 9, 11;28;5,21.

h ver.37;20. Pr.11.9.

2 This narrative presents a beautiful, magnificent, painstaking, condescending, insinuating courtier; promising every man justice, that is, according to every suitor's opinion, a verdict in his favour. Alas! such are the arts by which hearts are won, a father defamed, a government overturned, and souls lost, which hypocrites lay for others, and in which themselves are finally ensnared.—*C.*

3 FOUR.

i From David's anointing, 1 Sa.16.13, or four years after his admission to court.

4 David reigned but forty years in all. This, therefore, cannot mean the fortieth of his reign. Several versions, and Josephus, read four instead of forty; but the Hebrew MSS. do not support the change The ordinary solution of the difficulty is therefore the supposed error of some transcriber. This is a usual, but a most violent, gratuitous, and dangerous proceeding. Why not date from the era of David's appointment in Saul's stead, to the attempt of Absalom to supplant David? This is an intelligible era. Now, David was anointed, according to Hales, one of the highest authorities in chronology, in A.M. 2301, and Absalom rebelled in 2341, which will exactly give the forty years in the text.—*C.*

27 ¶ And unto [l]Absalom there were born three sons, and one daughter, whose name *was* Tamar: she was a woman of a fair countenance.

28 ¶ So Absalom dwelt two full years in Jerusalem, and [m]saw not the king's face.

29 Therefore Absalom sent for Joab, to have sent him to the king; but he would not come to him: and when he sent again the second time, he would not come.

30 Therefore he said unto his servants, See, Joab's field is near mine,[5] and he hath barley there; [n]go and set it on fire. And Absalom's servants set the field on fire.

31 Then Joab arose, and came to Absalom unto *his* house, and said unto him, Wherefore have thy servants set my field on fire?

32 And Absalom answered Joab, Behold, I sent unto thee, saying, Come hither, that I may send thee to the king, to say, Wherefore am I come from Geshur? *it had been* good for me *to have been* there still: now therefore let me see the king's face;[6] and [o]if there be *any* iniquity in me, let him kill me.

33 So Joab came to the king, and told him: and when he had called for Absalom, he came to the king, and [p]bowed himself on his face to the ground before the king: and the king [q]kissed Absalom.

CHAPTER XV.

1 Absalom, by fair speeches and courtesies, stealeth the hearts of the men of Israel. 7 Under pretence of a vow he obtaineth leave to go to Hebron. 10 He maketh there a dangerous conspiracy. 13 David upon the news fleeth from Jerusalem. 19 Ittai would not leave him. 24 Zadok and Abiathar are sent back with the ark. 30 David and his company go up mount Olivet weeping. 31 He prayeth God to defeat Ahithophel's counsel. 32 Hushai is sent back with instructions.

AND it came to pass after this, that [a]Absalom prepared him chariots and horses, and fifty men to run before him.

2 And Absalom [b]rose up early, and stood beside the way of the gate: and it was *so,* that when any man that had a controversy came[1] to the king for judgment, then Absalom called unto him, and said, Of what city *art* thou? And he said, Thy servant *is* of one of the tribes of Israel.

3 And Absalom said unto him, See, [c]thy matters *are* good and right; but [d]*there is* no man *deputed* of the king to hear thee.

4 Absalom said moreover, Oh that I were [e]made judge in the land, that every man which hath any suit or cause might come unto me, and [f]I would do him justice!

5 And it was *so,* that when any man came nigh *to him* to do him obeisance, he put forth his hand, and [g]took him, and kissed him.

6 And on this manner did Absalom to all Israel that came to the king for judgment: so [h]Absalom stole the hearts of the men of [2]Israel.

7 ¶ And it came to pass[3] after [i]forty [4]years,

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ences; yea, with amazing dexterity, they can dress up falsehood, to bring about their own designs. Sometimes they will pretend the mercy of God as a pattern, and the safety of the sovereign from popular insurrections, or the near approaches of death, as reasons, without any real regard to either. The children of this world are wiser in their generation than the children of light. Truth never shames its author; and it is honourable to acknowledge our obligations. Handsome per-

PANORAMA OF JERUSALEM—THE HOLY CITY IN WHICH DAVID LIVED SEEN FROM THE EAST. [II. SAMUEL, xv: 14.]—"And David said unto all his servants which were with him at Jerusalem, Arise and let us flee; for we shall not else escape from Absalom." From our point of view we now move further northward, and again look across the valley of the Kedron from the Mount of Olives upon the Holy City. The swelling domes and towers and crosses of a new Russian church are at our feet. We see more tombs stretching along the eastward wall of the city to the extreme left. The Mosque of Omar, always the most conspicuous object in Jerusalem to-day, as the temple was in ancient times, stands with its enclosure of thirty-five acres of ground. There once stood the Jewish temple, and perhaps the tabernacle David pitched for the ark of the covenant before the temple was built. To the west and to the right of the mosque is the English Church. This is the city from which David fled to escape from Absalom.

that Absalom said unto the king, I pray thee, let me [k]go and pay my vow, which I have vowed unto the LORD, in Hebron.

8 For thy servant vowed a vow while I abode[l] at Geshur in Syria, saying, If the LORD shall bring me again indeed to Jerusalem, then I[m] will serve the LORD.

9 And the king said unto him, Go in peace. So he arose, and went to Hebron.

10 ¶ But Absalom sent [n]spies throughout all the tribes of Israel, saying, As soon as ye hear the sound of the trumpet,[5] then ye shall say, Absalom [o]reigneth in Hebron.[6]

11 And with Absalom went two hundred men out of Jerusalem, *that were* [p]called; and they went in [q]their simplicity, and they knew not any thing.

12 And Absalom sent for [r]Ahithophel the Gilonite, David's counsellor, from his city, *even* from Giloh,[7] while he [s]offered sacrifices: and the conspiracy was strong; for the people [t]increased continually with Absalom.

13 ¶ And there came a messenger to David, saying, [u]The hearts of the men of Israel are after Absalom.

14 And David said unto all his servants that *were* with him at Jerusalem, Arise, and let us flee; [x] for we shall not *else* escape from Absalom: make speed to depart, lest he overtake us suddenly, and bring[8] evil upon us, and smite the city with the edge of the sword.

15 And the king's [y]servants said unto the king, Behold, thy servants *are ready to do* whatsoever my lord the king shall appoint.[9]

16 And the king went forth, and all his household after him:[1] and the king left [z]ten women, *which were* concubines, to keep the house.

17 And the king [a]went forth, and all the people after him, and tarried in a place that was far off.

18 And all his servants passed on beside him; and all the [b]Cherethites, and all the Pelethites,[2] and all the Gittites,[3] six hundred men which came after him from Gath, passed on before the king.

19 ¶ Then said the king to [c]Ittai the Gittite,

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[k] Mat.2.8. 1 Th.2.5, 1 Pe. 2.16.

[l] Ch.13.37,38;14.23.

[m] Ge.28.20. Je. 9. 3, 7. 2 Ki. 5. 15. 2 Ch. 6. 6. 11.14.

[n] Ch.13.28;14.9. Pr. 29.12.

5 Up till this time the state of Israel, with a few brief intervals, was a state of alarm, invasion, and war. We are therefore not to be surprised that the use of trumpets, and their various *calls*, should be well known to all the tribes.—*C.*

[o] ch.19.10. Job 20.5. Ps. 7.16.

6 David being old, it might be thought Absalom would have been content to await his death, as he was (since Ammon and Chileab were removed) the eldest surviving son. But he might already suspect that he was to be passed over by the appointment of Solomon; and, indeed, the law of primogeniture had not yet been applied to the succession to the crown. Besides, in his present unnatural attempt he had but one rival, and that was his fondly attached father; whereas, had he waited for David's death, he might have had several formidable competitors in his brothers.—*J.*

[p] Ch.3.6; 19.1.

[q] Pr.14. 15; 22. 3; 27. 12. Mat.10.16

[r] ver. 31. ch. 16. 23. Ps. 55.12,14;41. 9. Mi. 7. 5. Jos.15.51.

7 A town in Judah, Jos. 15. 51, situated, as would appear from the narrative, not far from Hebron.—*C.*

[s] Nu.23.1, 14, 30. Is. 1.11; 66. 3.

[t] Ps. 3. 1; 43. 1, 2; 118. 10. 129. 1, 6.

[u] ver. 6. Ju.9. 3. Ps. 62.4; 64.5, 6.

[x] Ps. 3. title. Re.12. 6, 14. Mat.10.23.

8 Heb. *thrust.*

[y] Ex.23. 2. ch.19.38. Jn. 6. 66–69. Pr. 17. 17; 18.24; 27.10.

9 Heb. *choose.*

1 Heb. *at his feet.*

[z] ch.12.11;16.22.

[a] Ex.10.7. Ps.66.12.

[b] ch.8.18; 20.7, 23. 1 Ki.1. 38, 44, with 1 Sa. 27.5,6.

2 See note on ch. 8. 18.—*C.*

[c] ch. 8. 1; 18. 2. He was a native of Gath

8 Most probably Philistines of Gath, who had come to take military service with David on account of some religio-political persecution. That they were Philistines, and not Israelites who had been with David at Gath, appears from Ittai being called a stranger, ver. 19, and his troops

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his brethren, ver. 20. That they were politically persecuted appears from Ittai being called an exile, ver. 19. And that this political persecution had arisen from the Gittites favouring Jehovah-worship, probable from David's prayer, ver. 20, that *truth* and *mercy* might be with them.—*C.*

4 Heb. *make thee wander in going.*

[d] 1 Ti. 1.16, 17. Ps. 25. 6; 103. 17.

[e] 2 Ki. 2. 2, 4, 6; 4. 30. 1 Sa. 20. 3.

[f] Ru. 1. 16, 17. Pr. 17. 17; 18. 24. Ro. 8. 35. Jn. 6. 66–69.

5 The Arabs still go to war accompanied by their whole families.—*C.*

[g] 1 Ki. 2. 37; 18. 13. 2 Ki. 23. 4, 6, 12. 2 Ch. 29. 16; 30. 14. Jn. 18. 1.

[h] ch.16.2. Mat. 3. 1, 3. Re 12.14.

6 To the wilderness lying between Jerusalem and Jericho, and in the direction of the passes of Jordan. *C.*——'The way of the wilderness' is an ancient path which runs from the city across the Kidron, and straight over the summit of Olivet to the wilderness which lies between Olivet and the valley of the Jordan.—*P.*

[i] Nu.4.4. Jos 3.3,6 1 Ch 15.2,15.

7 Zadok and the Levites had *come down* to the valley of Jehoshaphat, and having passed the Kidron, set down the ark. But Abiathar stayed and *went up*, most probably to pray, until the exodus of the people was completed.—*C.*

[k] 1 Sa.iv.–vi. Ps. 3. 3, 5.

[l] The tent made for it, ch.6.17; 7. 2. Is. 38. 22.

[m] Ju. 10. 15. 1 Sa. 3. 18. Job 1.20. Ps. 39. 9. Ac. 21. 14.

8 A beautiful example of that resignation that acknowledges whatever God does to be good, Lu. 22.42.—*C.*

[n] 1 Sa.9.9. ch.24.11.

[o] ch 17.17.

[p] ver. 23; ch. 16. 2. Mat. 3. 1, 3.

[q] ver. 35, 36; ch. 17. 21.

[r] Zec. 14. 4. Mat. 21. 1; 24. 3; 26. 30. Lu. 21. 37. Ac. 1. 12.

9 Heb. *going up and weeping.*

[s] ch.19.4. Est. 6. 12. Je.14. 3, 4; 48. 5. Is. 20. 3, 4. Lu.19.41.

1 David wept, not from unmanly grief, but from paternal feeling. Covering the head was an eastern mode of mourning. A relic of the custom may still be seen in hat-scrapes and the peculiar head-dress often worn by widows.—*C.*

Wherefore goest thou also with us? return to thy place, and abide with the king: for thou *art* a stranger, and also an exile.

20 Whereas thou camest *but* yesterday, should I this day make thee go up and down[4] with us? Seeing I go whither I may, return thou, and take back thy brethren: [d]mercy and truth *be* with thee.

21 And Ittai answered the king, and said, [e]*As* the LORD liveth, and *as* my lord the king liveth, [f]surely in what place my lord the king shall be, whether in death or life, even there also will thy servant be.

22 And David said to Ittai, Go and pass over. And Ittai the Gittite passed over, and all his men, and all the little ones[5] that *were* with him.

23 And all the country wept with a loud voice, and all the people passed over: the king also himself passed over the [g]brook Kidron, and all the people passed over, toward the way of [h]the wilderness.[6]

24 ¶ And lo Zadok also, and all the Levites *were* with him, [i]bearing the ark of the covenant of God: and they set down the ark of God; and Abiathar went up,[7] until all the people had done passing out of the city.

25 And the king said unto Zadok, [k]Carry back the ark of God into the city: if I shall find favour in the eyes of the LORD, he will bring me again, and show me *both* it and [l]his habitation:

26 But if he thus say, I have no delight in thee; behold, [m]*here am* I, let him do to me as seemeth good unto him.[8]

27 The king said also unto Zadok the priest, *Art not* thou [n]a seer? return into the [o]city in peace, and your two sons with you, Ahimaaz thy son, and Jonathan the son of Abiathar.

28 See, I will tarry in the [p]plain of the wilderness, until there come [q]word from you to certify me.

29 Zadok therefore and Abiathar carried the ark of God again to Jerusalem: and they tarried there.

30 ¶ And David went up by the ascent of [r]*mount* Olivet, and wept as he went up,[9] and [s]had his head covered;[1] and he went barefoot:

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sons, and flourishing families, are to little purpose, while sin reigns in our heart, and the curse of God hovers over our head. But with what art and perseverance do wicked men pursue their carnal schemes! Often they obtain, by their insolence, what their betters could not do by their deserts, or by their earnest and modest requests.

CHAPTER XV. [Ver. 23. *Kidron.* This brook flows through a valley that lies to the east of Jerusalem, and between the city and the Mount of Olives. It is a considerable stream in winter, but mostly dry for nine months in the year. Its bed is narrow, but steep, and is crossed by a bridge of one arch. *C.*——The Kidron is generally termed in Scripture a 'brook;' but the Hebrew word thus translated is *nakhal*, and signifies a 'valley' or 'ravine,' either with or without water. The Kidron is a mountain ravine, in most places narrow, with precipitous banks; but here and there its banks have an easy slope, and along its bottom, especially north of the city, are strips of land capable of cultivation. It runs close past the east side of Jerusalem, between Mounts Moriah and Olivet. It contains the bed of a streamlet, but during the summer, and a great part of the winter, the bed is quite dry; in fact, no water flows in it except when heavy rains are falling in the mountains round Jerusalem. Below the city the Kidron runs in a winding course eastwards, through the wilderness of Judea, to the Dead Sea. *P.*]

Ver. 30. [*Mount Olivet.* So called from its olive-trees. It is situate east of Jerusalem, from which it is separated by the valley of Jehoshaphat and brook Kidron, and is distant, according to Ac. 1. 12, a Sabbath-day's journey, or something less than an English mile. *C.*]

REFLECTIONS.—Indulged children often become the plague, if not the murderers, of parents. Young fools are fond of making a pompous figure in the world. And they who are least fit to rule are ordinarily the most ambitious of it. Zeal for the public welfare, and care to redress grievances, are the ordinary cloaks of the vilest ambition and treachery. Nor is the most upright administration able to escape the malignant aspersions of a discontented faction. But none are more apt to play the tyrant, when they have obtained power, than those who have paved their way to it by the basest condescensions. Gracious parents easily credit their children's pretences to reformation and devotion. But the vilest designs are ordinarily masked with a cloak of pretended religion: and they never want carnal prudence who have the devil to be their director. Slippery and tottering are the exalted stations and honours of this world. Our fortified abodes may soon become too weak or too hot for us, whilst

and all the people that *was* with him covered every man his head, and they went up, weeping as they went up.

31 ¶ And *one* told David, saying, [t]Ahithophel *is* among the conspirators with Absalom. And David said, O LORD, I pray thee, [u]turn the counsel of Ahithophel into foolishness.

32 ¶ And it came to pass, that *when* David was come to the [x]top *of the mount*, where he worshipped[y] God,[2] behold, [z]Hushai the Archite[3] came to meet him with [a]his coat rent, and earth upon his head:

33 Unto whom David said, If thou passest on with me, then thou shalt be a burden unto me:

34 But if thou [b]return to the city, and say unto Absalom, I will be thy servant, O king; *as* I *have been* thy father's servant hitherto, so *will* I now also *be* thy servant: then mayest thou for me defeat the counsel of Ahithophel.

35 And *hast thou* not there with thee Zadok and Abiathar the priests? therefore it shall be, *that* what thing soever thou shalt hear out of the king's house, thou shalt tell *it* to Zadok and Abiathar the priests.

36 Behold, *they have* [c]there with them their two sons, Ahimaaz Zadok's *son*, and Jonathan Abiathar's *son;* and by them ye shall send unto me every thing that ye can hear.

37 So Hushai, David's [d]friend, came into the city, and Absalom came into Jerusalem.

CHAPTER XVI.

1 Ziba, by presents and false suggestions, obtaineth his master's inheritance. 5 At Bahurim Shimei curseth David. 9 David with patience abstaineth, and restraineth others, from revenge. 15 Hushai insinuateth himself into Absalom's counsels. 20 Ahithophel's counsel.

AND when David was a little past [a]the top *of the hill*, behold, [b]Ziba, the servant of Mephibosheth, met him, [c]with a couple of asses saddled, and upon them two hundred *loaves* of bread,[1] and an hundred bunches of raisins, and an hundred of summer-fruits,[2] and a bottle[3] of wine.

2 And the king said unto Ziba, What meanest thou by these? And Ziba said, The asses *be* for the king's household to [d]ride on; and the bread and summer-fruit for the [e]young men to eat; and the wine, that such as be faint in the wilderness may drink.

3 And the king said, And [f]where *is* thy master's son? And Ziba said unto the king, Behold, he abideth at Jerusalem: for [g]he said, To-day shall the house of Israel restore me the kingdom of my father.

4 Then said the king to Ziba, Behold, [h]thine *are* all that *pertained* unto [4]Mephibosheth. And Ziba said, I humbly[5] beseech thee *that* I may find grace in thy sight, my lord, O king.

5 ¶ And when king David came to [i]Bahurim,[6] behold, thence came out a man of the family of the house of Saul, whose name [k]*was* Shimei, the son of Gera: he came forth, and [l]cursed still as he came.[7]

6 And he cast stones at David, and at all the servants of king David: and all the people, and all the mighty men, *were* on his right hand and on his left.

7 And thus said Shimei when he cursed, Come out, come out, thou [m]bloody man,[8] and thou [n]man of Belial:[9]

8 The LORD hath [o]returned upon thee all the blood of the house of Saul, in whose stead thou hast reigned; and the LORD hath delivered the kingdom into the hand of Absalom thy son: and, behold, thou *art taken* in thy mischief,[1] because thou *art* a bloody man.[2]

9 ¶ Then said Abishai the son of Zeruiah unto the king, Why should this [p]dead dog curse my lord the king? [q]let me go over, I pray [3]thee, and take off his head.

10 And the king said, [r]What have I to do with you, ye sons of Zeruiah? [s]so let him curse, because the LORD hath said unto him,[4] Curse David. [t]Who shall then say, Wherefore hast thou done so?

11 And David said to Abishai, and to all his servants, Behold, my son, which came forth of my bowels, seeketh my life: how much more now *may this* Benjamite *do it?* Let him alone, and let him curse; for the LORD hath bidden him.[5]

12 It may be that the LORD will [u]look on

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t ver.12. Ps.41.9; 55.12-14. Mat.26.14,15.

u ch.16.23; 17.14,23. Job 12.17,20; 5.12,13.

x Lu.19.29. 1 Ki. 11.7. ver.30.

y 1 Ki.8.44. Job 1.20. Ps.iii.5,6; 5.7; 91.15.

[2] The Hebrew signifies, 'Where worship was paid to God.' The construction shows that there was some 'high place' or sanctuary on the summit of Olivet, and that David stopped there to pray. *P.*—There is a characteristic beauty in David's feelings and conduct. He prays not against Ahithophel personally, but to God to frustrate his malicious talent. He hastes not away from the pressing danger till he pauses on the summit of the mountain to worship God. —*C.*

z ch. 16. 16-19; 17.6-15. Jos.16.2.

[3] The gentile designation *Archite* is probably identical with that mentioned in Jos.16.2. The city of *Arech*, from which the name was derived, appears to have stood on the northern border of Benjamin between Bethel and Ataroth, and thus about seven miles north of Jerusalem.—*P.*

a ch.1.2; 13.19, Ge. 37.29,34.

b Ge.33.8. ch.14.24; ver.21. Mat.4.7, with Ac.7.30. ch.17.14-23. ver.27;ch.17.17;18. 19-29.

d Ru.1.26. Pr.17.17; 18.24.ch.16.16,17.

CHAP. XVI.

a ch.15.30,32.

b ch.9.2,9-11.

c Pr.18.16;29.4,5.

[1] The Jewish bread was formed into thin cakes,so that the two hundred would not with all the other parts of the present form an unmanageable load.—*C.*

[2] The Septuagint transfers the word 'dates.' The Targum, Grotius, &c., suppose it 'apples, plums,' &c. The quantity, 'an hundred,' forbids this conclusion. Clark's suggestion of pompions, large cucumbers, or water-melons, seems best to agree both with the quantity brought, besides they are very important articles of food in eastern countries.—*C.*

[3] It will be recollected that the eastern bottles were of skin, so that they could easily be carried. The use of them may still be found in Europe, in the mountains of Biscay.—*C.*

d ch.19.18,26. Ju. 5. 10;19.10.4.

e 1 Sa.25.27.

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f ch.ix.

g ch.19.24-30. Ps.15. 3. Pr.1.19;16.28;21.28.

h Ex.23.8. Pr.18.13, 16;17.8;19.6. De.16.19.

[4] David had therefore no dread of final deposition, but expected to be restored to Jerusalem and the throne so soon as the popular ferment was over.—*C.*

[5] Heb. *bow myself down.*

i ch.3.16;17.18;19.16.

[6] A city of Benjamin, evidently not far from Mount Olivet. The Targum considers it identical with Alemeth, 1 Ch. 6.60.—*C.*

k ch.19. 16-23. 1 Ki. 2.8,9,36-46.

l Mat.5.22. Jn 16.33. Ex.22.28. Ps.6.6;8.2; 137.4;64.3,4;140.3;120. 2,3;10.2,3.

[7] Or, *he still came forth and cursed.*

m Heb. *man of bloods*, ch. 3. 37; 4. 11, 12, with 22.9. Ps.5.6.

[8] 'Come out' from the guards 'on the right and left,' that I may smite thee—a charge of cowardice to provoke David to expose himself—or 'get out, get out' of the land.—*C.*

n De.13.13. 1 Sa. 2. 12;25.17.

[9] 'Out, out, thou man of blood, and worthless man.'—*P.*

o Ps.94.23. ch.Liv. Pr 1.18;11.18. Jn.9.24.

[1] Heb. *behold thee in thy evil.*

[2] Like the charges of passionate men in general, this of Shimei was false. The blood of the house of Saul was upon the Philistines, and not upon David. But false accusers and false witnesses may readily rise against David, for they afterwards rose against a greater—even Christ. —*C.*

p 1 Sa.24.14,15.ch.3. 8;9.8. Ki.8.13.

q 1 Sa.26.8,9.

[3] David was one of those who hold firm authority over their followers; even in his flight, his valiant friend does not move without asking permission.—*C.*

r ch.19.22,43;39. Lu. 9.55. Jn.2.4.

s 2 Ki. 18.25. Is. 3. 38. Ge.5.20. 1 Sa 3.18. Is.10.5. Ps.39.9;105.28. 1 Ki.22.22. Jn. 18.11.

[4] 'The Lord hath said'—not by command, which were to make him the author of sin, but by that providence which being employed to punish David affords him an occasion to shew his evil temper and language.—*C.*

t ch.19.21,22. Job 1. 21 with 1 Ki.2.9. Lu.3. 39.

[5] See note on ver. 10. As it was a sin, it was of Shimei's evil heart; as an affliction, it was of God—God leaving Shimei to follow his own evil inclinations. Ex.1.24.—*C.*

u De.30.3,4,33. Ex.2 24.25;3.8.

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our intimates, yea, almost all beside, go over to our enemy. Our severest strokes often come from hands which we least suspected: and fear of God's wrath, in our sufferings, sinks the spirits, and makes men cowards. In suffering times large families are great encumbrances: and, though terrible revolutions are great trials for young converts, yet strangers are often more faithful than our kindred and countrymen: and, the more distressful our case, they cleave to us the more resolutely. So let us, sinners of the Gentiles, cleave to David's Lord. Let neither the trials of life, nor the torments of death, separate us from him. The Lord's ministers ought to be patterns of fidelity, when others are inclined to rebel against their rightful sovereigns. It is hard for gracious persons to bear at once the stings of conscience, the base rebellion of children, and a want of the public ordinances of God: such, if any, require our deepest sympathy and fellowship in grief. Bitter grief for our sin, and resignation to God's afflicting hand, must be attended with the diligent use of proper means for our relief: but none that trust in the Lord shall perish. Often our friends, and especially our Jesus, help us most when unseen. It is not the craft of politicians, but the God of heaven, that governs the world. He can easily turn the counsels of the crafty into foolishness, and cause the traitors to be betrayed. Let us commit our way to God, and he will bring it to pass.

CHAPTER XVI. REFLECTIONS. — Many, like Ziba, affect to be very generous of what is not really their own. The lying tongues of servants, and the presents of knaves, are snares and plagues to all concerned: and carnal and selfish designs are often concealed under the most seasonable and useful presents. But listening to slander, and a rash bestowal of valuable grants, prepare work for an after-shame and bitter repentance: for surely nothing is so base as to use infirmity for an occasion of injury, or to insult and abuse the miserable. Bitter is the state when an awakened conscience, and a railing neighbour, upbraid us with our guilt, while an angry God fearfully corrects us for it. Wicked revilers are fond of interpreting God's righteous judgments as a patronizing of their malice: and innocence is no protection from a malicious and lying tongue. But no provocation can warrant our revenging ourselves, and returning evil for evil. The vilest reproaches should make us to search our ways, and condemn ourselves for our real faults. To see God's hand in every trial is the way to bear it aright. Patience under reproaches will issue in our full vindication at last. And happy are they who can thus withstand the strongest temptations to revenge, when they meet with the most insolent abuse. What an easy prey are proud men to every subtile flatterer! They take all those for friends whom they would wish to be such. It is hard for crafty politicians to confine themselves to untainted veracity and candour. Nay, such will often stick at nothing, however infamous or wicked, to secure their own purposes. But let us here observe how this most abominable conduct fulfils the righteous threatenings of God. He who murdered his friend to conceal his adultery, has now ten of his concubines

mine affliction, and that the LORD will [a]requite me good for his cursing this day.

13 And as David and his men went by the way, Shimei went along on the hill's side over against him, and cursed as he went, and threw stones at him, and [y]cast dust.[6]

14 And the king, and all the people that *were* with him, came weary,[7] and refreshed themselves [z]there.[8]

15 ¶ And Absalom, and all the people the men of Israel, came to Jerusalem, and Ahithophel with him.

16 And it came to pass, when Hushai the Archite, David's friend, was come unto Absalom, that Hushai said unto Absalom, God save the king, God save the king.[9]

17 And Absalom said to Hushai, *Is* this thy kindness to thy friend? why wentest thou not with [a]thy friend?

18 And Hushai said unto Absalom, Nay; but [b]whom the LORD, and this people, and all the men of Israel, choose, his will I be, and with him will I abide.

19 And again, whom should I serve? [c]*should I* not *serve* in the presence of his son? As I have served in thy father's presence, so will I be in thy presence.

20 ¶ Then said Absalom to Ahithophel, Give[d] counsel among you what we shall do.

21 And Ahithophel said unto Absalom, [e]Go in unto thy father's concubines,[1] which he hath left[f] to keep the house; and all Israel shall hear that thou art abhorred of thy father: then shall the hands of all that *are* with thee be strong.

22 So they spread Absalom a tent upon [g]the top of the house;[2] and Absalom went in unto his father's concubines in the sight of all Israel.

23 And the [h]counsel of Ahithophel, which he counselled in those days, *was* as if a man had inquired at the oracle[3] of God: so *was* all the counsel of Ahithophel both with David and with Absalom.

CHAPTER XVII.

1 *Ahithophel's counsel is overthrown by Hushai's, according to God's appointment.* 15 *Secret intelligence is sent unto David.* 23 *Ahithophel hangeth himself.* 25 *Amasa is made captain.* 27 *David at Mahanaim is furnished with provisions.*

MOREOVER Ahithophel said unto Absalom, Let me now choose out twelve thousand men,[1] and I will arise and pursue after David this[a] night:

A.M. 2983. B.C. 1021.

x De.23.5.Ro.8.28. 2 Co.4.17. Is.27.9. Jn.16. 33. Ps.119.65,67,71.

y Heb. *dusted him with dust,* Je.3.5.

6 A figurative form of condemning to death, derived from the first sentence upon sin, 'Dust thou art.'—*C.*

7 Rather to 'Aephim,' a place near Bahurim.—*C.*

z At Bahurim, ver 5.

8 The adverb of place 'there' seems to point back to the statement in the beginning of ver. 13, 'And David and his men went by the way.' 'The way' appears to be in or near the Jordan valley, from the fact of Shimei going along the hill side above them. Some suppose the Hebrew word *Ayephim*, translated 'weary,' to be a proper name; and that it was in it David rested.—*P.*

9 Heb. *Let the king live.*

a ver. 16; ch. 15. 37. Pr.17.17;18.24;27.10.

b 1 Sa.16.12,13.ch.5. 1-3.

c Ga. 2. 13, Ps.55.21. Ro.3.8. Ep.4.25. Col.3. 9.

d Ex.1.10. Ps.37.12-15.

e Ge.6.4;29.21,23,30; 38.16; 35.22. Le.20.11. 1 Co.5.1.

1 In eastern countries the successor in the government inherited the wives of his predecessor—but this particular counsel was doubly contrary to God's law, viz. to the fifth commandment, and to Le. 20. 11. *C.*——He advised this shameless measure as a means of establishing Absalom in the kingdom, and to preclude the possibility of a reconciliation with David; for the wives of a conquered king were the property of the conqueror, and in possessing them, he possessed a new and peculiar right to the kingdom. Smerdis, having seized on the Persian throne after the death of Cambyses, espoused all the wives of his predecessor.—*J.*

f ch.15.16.Ge.49.4.

g ch. 11. 2; 12. 11, 12. Is.3.9. Nu.25.6. Job 31. 9,10.

2 The scene of sin is often the scene of disgrace and punishment. From this roof David had seen Bathsheba, and here is fulfilled the terrible prophecy, ch. 12. 11, 12.—*C.*

h Eze.28.3. Ec.10.1.

3 Heb. *word.*

CHAP. XVII.

1 A number chosen as representatives of the tribes.—*C.*

a Pr.4.16;11.16.Is.59. 7.Ro.3.15.

A.M. 2983. B.C. 1021.

b De.25.18.ch.16.14; 4.1. Mat.4.2.

c Zec. 13.7. Mat. 21. 38. Jn.11.50.

2 'As the return of the whole is the man whom thou seekest'—the meaning appears to be that the return of those who had fled with David, and the pacification of the whole nation, depended upon David. If he could be captured or slain, they would all acknowledge Absalom. —*P.*

d 1 Th.5.3. Is.57.20, 21;48.22.

e 1 Sa.23.21. Es.5.14. Ro.1.32.

3 Heb. *was right in the eyes of.*

4 Mark the malicious cunning of Ahithophel in this counsel. He does not say, 'I will pursue after' *thy father*, but 'after David.' He does not say, 'I will smite' *thy father*, but 'the king only.' How depraved must Absalom have been, when the counsel and the promise 'pleased him well.' —*Note*, Ambition, indeed any bad passion, blinds the eye, and hardens the heart; being 'enmity against God,' it cannot work otherwise towards man.—*C.*

f ch.15.32–37; 16.16–19.

5 Heb. *is in his mouth.*

6 Heb. *word.*

7 Heb. *counselled.*

g Pr.31.8,9. Ec.3. 1–11.

8 Hushai, acting contrary to Ahithophel, always addresses Absalom with 'thy father,' and thus seeks to awaken every feeling of remorse or tenderness, if such there were—or at least of caution, from the recollection of his military prowess.—*C.*

h ch.15.12;23.8–39.

i Heb. *bitter of soul,* Ju.18.25.

k Ho.13.8. Pr.17.12; 28.15.2 Ki.2.24.

l 1 Sa. 22. 1; 23. 25. Jos.8.4. Ju.20.32.

m Jos.7.5;8.6. Ju.20. 32.

9 Ahithophel, or Absalom.

n Heb. *a son of valour,* ch.1.23;23.20.

o Jos.2.9,11; 5.1; 7.5. Is.13.7,8. Ps.48.4,5; 76. 5. Je.1.8.

p De. 32.30.2 Co. 3.5 He.11.34.

q Ju.20.1. ch.24.2. 1 Ki.4.25

r Ge.22.17;15.5. Jos. 11.4. ch.24.9. 1 Ch.21. 5,6.

s Heb. *that thy face* or *presence go,* &c. Ps.9.15,16;7.15,16.

1 An apt and beautiful emblem, descriptive of the sudden appearance and unexpected attack of a hostile army. The reader of history will recall the manner in which David Leslie surprised Montrose at Philiphaugh, and Napoleon the Austrians at Aosta, after crossing the Great St. Bernard. The dew in warm countries falls fast, sudden, and heavy. The Romans called their light-armed soldiers *roratii*, dew-beaters.—*J.*

t 1 Ki.20.10. Mat.24. 2.Ob.3.

2 And I will come upon him while he *is* [b]weary and weak-handed, and will make him afraid: and all the people that *are* with him shall flee; and [c]I will smite the king only:

3 And I will bring back all the people unto thee; the man whom thou seekest *is* as if all returned:[2] *so* all the people shall be [d]in peace.

4 And the saying [e]pleased[3] Absalom well, and all the elders of Israel.[4]

5 Then said Absalom, Call now [f]Hushai the Archite also, and let us hear likewise what he saith.[5]

6 And when Hushai was come to Absalom, Absalom spake unto him, saying, Ahithophel hath spoken after this manner: shall we do *after* his saying?[6] if not, speak thou.

7 And Hushai said unto Absalom, The counsel that Ahithophel hath given[7] *is* [g]not good at this time.

8 For, said Hushai, thou knowest thy [g]father and his men, that they *be* [h]mighty men, and they *be* chafed in their [i]minds, [k]as a bear robbed of her whelps in the field: and thy father *is* a man of war, and will not lodge with the people.

9 Behold, he [l]is hid now in some pit, or in some *other* place: and it will come to pass, [m]when some of them be overthrown at the first, that whosoever heareth it will say, There is a slaughter among the people that follow Absalom.

10 And he[9] also *that is* [n]valiant, whose heart *is* as the heart of a lion, shall [o]utterly melt: for all Israel knoweth that thy father *is* [p]a mighty man, and *they* which *be* with him *are* valiant men.

11 Therefore I counsel, that [q]all Israel be generally gathered unto thee, from Dan even to Beer-sheba, as [r]the sand that *is* by the sea for multitude, and [s]that thou go to battle in thine own person.

12 So shall we come upon him in some place where he shall be found, and we will light upon him as the dew[1] falleth on the ground: and of him, and of all the men that *are* with him, there shall not be left so much as one.

13 Moreover, if he be gotten into a city, then shall all Israel bring ropes to that city, and we will [t]draw it into the river, until there be not one small stone found there.

14 And Absalom and all the men of Israel said, The counsel of Hushai the Archite *is*

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publicly debauched by his own son on the top of the same house where he began his crime.

CHAPTER XVII. [Ver. 29. It is a remarkable fact that the fortress of Mahanaim, which had formerly sheltered the rival dynasty of Saul, now affords an asylum to David. 'Three potentates of that pastoral district come forward at once to his support. Shobi, the son of David's ancient friend, Nahash, king of Ammon, perhaps put by David in his brother Hanun's place; Machir, the son of Ammiel, the former protector of Mephibosheth; Barzillai, an aged chief of vast wealth and influence. They brought, with the profuse liberality of Arabs, the butter, cheese, &c., with which the forests and pastures of Gilead abounded.' *P.*]

REFLECTIONS.—Some men have large capacities for contriving or executing mischief, or for imposing on their neighbours: yea, when men are once involved in sin, they drive deeper and deeper, till the most horrid crimes become, as it were, necessary for their own safety. Dangerous is the case of those princes who have rebellious subjects and unnatural children: but vain is their counsel who aim at the ruin of God's church and people. By the most secret ways He can divert their blows, and make them unanimously to alter their mind, and applaud what is for his glory and their own ruin: and the weakest instruments in his hand can answer the greatest of purposes. Good intelligence in war is as necessary as good advice. In my spiritual warfare, let the all-knowing Jesus, whose despatches neither hell nor earth can stop, communicate to me my necessary informations. While we depend on God's protection, we must give all diligence to save ourselves. But not one follower of Jesus Christ shall be lost in the Jordan of trouble or death. The prayers of his saints are often indeed answered in a more awful manner

JOAB'S WELL, WHERE JONATHAN AND AHIMAAZ WAITED FOR NEWS ABOUT ABSALOM. [II. SAMUEL, xvii: 17.]—"Now Jonathan and Ahimaaz stayed by Enrogel; for they might not be seen to come into the city: and a wench went and told them; and they went and told King David." This well is situated in the valley of Kedron, near where it unites with the valley of Hinnom. Here David's servants waited for news from Hushai during Absalom's rebellion in order to gather and send unto their king. Here also Adonijah, David's son, assembled his friends when he aspired to be king in his father's place. The well is 125 feet deep. It is walled up with large rocks with an arch above of great antiquity There is a large chamber at a depth of 113 feet, from the bottom of which a shaft leads to a rock-hewn chamber below. The people of Siloam sell this water in Jerusalem.

better than the counsel of Ahithophel:[2] for the LORD had [u]appointed to [x]defeat the good counsel of Ahithophel, to the intent that the LORD might bring evil upon Absalom.[3]

15 ¶ Then said Hushai unto [y]Zadok and to Abiathar the priests, Thus and thus did Ahithophel counsel Absalom and the elders of Israel; and thus and thus have I counselled.

16 Now therefore send quickly, and tell David, saying, Lodge not this night in the plains of the wilderness,[4] but speedily pass over; lest the king be swallowed up, and all the people that *are* with him.

17 Now [z]Jonathan and Ahimaaz stayed by [a]En-rogel;[5] (for they might not be seen to come into the city:) and a wench went and told them; and they went and told king David.

18 Nevertheless a lad saw them, and told Absalom: but they went both of them away quickly, and came to a man's house in [b]Bahurim, which had a well in his court; whither they went down.

19 And the woman took and [c]spread a covering over the well's mouth, and spread ground corn thereon; and the thing was not known.

20 And when Absalom's servants came to the woman to the house, they said, Where *is* Ahimaaz and Jonathan? And the woman said unto them, [d]They be gone over the brook of water.[6] And when they had sought and could not find *them*, they returned to Jerusalem.

21 And it came to pass, after they were departed, that they came up out of the well, and went and told king David, and said unto David, Arise, and pass quickly over the water:[7] for [e]thus hath Ahithophel counselled against you.

22 Then [f]David arose, and all the people that *were* with him, and they passed over Jordan: by the morning light there lacked not one of them that was not gone over Jordan.

23 ¶ And when Ahithophel [g]saw that his counsel was not followed, he saddled *his* ass, and arose, and gat him home to his house, to his city, and [h]put his household in order,[8] and hanged[i] himself, and died, and was buried in the sepulchre of his father.

24 Then David came to [k]Mahanaim: and Absalom passed over Jordan, he and all the men of Israel with him.

25 ¶ And Absalom made [l]Amasa captain of the host instead of Joab: which Amasa *was* a man's son, whose name *was* Ithra an Israelite, that went in[9] to Abigail the daughter of Nahash,[1] sister to Zeruiah, Joab's mother.

26 So Israel and Absalom pitched in the [m]land of Gilead.

27 ¶ And it came to pass, when David was come to Mahanaim, that Shobi the son of [n]Nahash of Rabbah of the children of Ammon, and [o]Machir the son of Ammiel of [2]Lo-debar, and [p]Barzillai the Gileadite of Rogelim,

28 Brought[q] beds,[3] and [4]basons,[5] and earthen vessels, and wheat, and barley, and flour, and parched *corn*, and beans, and lentiles, and parched *pulse*,

29 And honey, and butter, and sheep, and cheese of kine, for [r]David, and for the people that *were* with him, to eat: for they said, [s]The people *is* hungry, and weary, and thirsty, in the wilderness.

CHAPTER XVIII.

1 David viewing the armies in their march giveth them charge of Absalom. 6 The men of Israel are sore smitten in the wood of Ephraim. 9 Absalom, hanging in an oak, is slain by Joab, and cast into a pit. 18 Absalom's place. 19 Ahimaaz and Cushi bring tidings to David. 33 David mourneth for Absalom.

AND David [a]numbered the people that *were* with him, and set captains[1] of thousands and captains of hundreds over them.

2 And David sent forth [b]a third part of the people under [c]the hand of Joab, and a third part under the hand of Abishai the son of Zeruiah, Joab's brother, and a third part under the hand of Ittai the Gittite: and the king said unto the people, [d]I will surely go forth with you myself also.

3 But the people answered, [e]Thou shalt not go forth: for if we flee away, they will not care for us;[2] neither if half of us die, will they care for us: but now *thou art* [f]worth ten thousand of us:[3] therefore now *it is* better that thou [g]succour us out of the city.

4 And the king said unto them, What seemeth you best I will do. And the king [h]stood by the gate-side, and all the people came out by hundreds and by thousands.[4]

5 And the king commanded Joab, and Abishai, and Ittai, saying, [i]*Deal* gently, for my sake, with the young man, *even* with Absalom. And all the people heard when the king gave all the captains charge concerning Absalom.

6 ¶ So the people went out into the field against Israel: and the battle was in the [k]wood of Ephraim;[5]

7 Where the people of Israel were slain

A.M. 2983. B.C. 1021.

2 The speech of Hushai is an astonishing specimen of simple eloquence. It is remarkable first for suggesting every topic of fear, and then for touching every spring of Absalom's vanity, while it carefully seems to consult for the general safety of his followers, and the certain success of his schemes.—*C.*

u Heb. *commanded.* Ps. 33. 9; 111. 9; 148. 5. Am. 6. 11; 9. 3. Na. 1. 14.

x ch. 15. 31, 34. Ps. 33. 10, 11; 82. 1; 111. 7. 1 Co. 1. 19, 20; 3. 19. Job 5. 12–13. Pr. 21. 30; 19. 21. Is. 8. 9, 10.

3 The counsel of Ahithophel was *good*, not in principle, but for the purpose to be accomplished. God, who works by means, and instruments, defeats it by a counsel, not in itself so well suited to the end, but better suited to the feelings and principles of the vain prince and his wicked conspirators and fellow-rebels.—*C.*

y ch. 15. 35.

4 'In the Arabah of the desert,' *i.e.* in that section of the Arabah or Jordan valley which adjoins the wilderness of Judah. He counselled him to pass over Jordan and take refuge in the mountains of Gilead. —*P.*

z ch. 15. 17, 27, 36.

a Jos. 15. 7; 18. 16. 1 Ki. 1. 9, *i.e.* the fuller's well.

5 *En-Rogel* is in the valley of the Kidron where it is joined by the ravine of Hinnom. It is only a few hundred yards outside the city.—*P.*

b ch. 3. 16; 16. 5; 19. 16, 17. 1 Ki. 2. 8.

c Jos. 2. 4, 5. Ex. 1. 19. Ro. 3. 8. Ep. 4. 25. Col. 3. 9. Zec. 8. 16.

6 The well may have been a subterraneous one—a thing very common, especially in limestone ranges—and therefore it is most probable the woman considered herself as literally speaking truth in one sense, though she expected or knew she would be understood in another. Every word that is, in the intended sense, untrue, is sin. The sacred writer, however, states the fact, not to approve, but record. For the quality of the fact we are left to the unchanging judgment of the divine law.—*C.*

7 That is, over the Jordan. The king appears to have intended to have spent the night on the west side of the river.—*P.*

e ver. 1–3.

f Pr. 27. 12. Mat. 10. 16. Ac. 27. 39–41. 2 Ch. 18. 6. Nu. 31. 49. Jn. 17. 12; 10. 27–29.

g Pr. 16. 18; 29. 3.

h Heb. *gave charge concerning his house*, ch. 15. 12. 2 Ki. 20. 1.

8 He deliberately made his will; his worldly wisdom remaining till the last. Thus Satan triumphs over Ahithophel through his ambition and the love of power, as he triumphed over Judas through avarice and the love of money.—*C.*

i Job 31. 3. Ps. 59. 12; 55. 23. Pr. 10. 28; 11. 7. Mat. 27. 5. 1 Sa. 31. 4, 5.

k ch. 2. 8. Ge. 32. 2.

l 1 Ch. 2. 16, 17; 12. 18. ch. 19. 13.

A.M. 2983. B.C. 1021.

9 Perhaps he had not married her.

1 A second name for Jesse the father of David. See 1 Ch. 2. 13, 16.—*C.*

m Nu. 32. 1, 40. Ju. 5. 16, 17; 10. 17; 11. 5, 29; 12. 7. De. 3. 10–15. Jos. 13. 25, 31.

n 1 Sa. 11. 1. ch. 10. 1; 12. 30.

o ch. 9. 4.

2 See note on ch. 9. 4.

p ch. 19. 31. 1 Ki. 2. 7. Ezr. 2. 61.

q Pr. 11. 25. Mat. 5. 7.

3 Skins, or carpets, or mats—the ordinary beds of the East.—*C.*

4 Or, *cups.*

r Ps. 22. 14. Ps. 34. 8–10; 84. 11. Is. 33. 16. De. 33. 26.

s Is. 21. 14; 58. 7. Ec. 11. 1, 2.

CHAP. XVIII.

a Ex. 17. 9. Ps. 37. 3, 5. 1 Sa. 8. 12.

1 In every department of human affairs success is, under Providence, largely the result of order. David therefore seizes the first moment, after his hurried and irregular flight, to arrange his followers in the most efficient form.—*C.*

b Ju. 7. 20; 9. 43.

c ch. 10. 9, 10; 15. 19.

d ch. 17. 11. Ps. 3. 6.

e ch. 21. 17; 17. 2. 1 Ki. 22. 31.

2 Heb. *set* their *heart on us.*

f Heb *as ten thousand of us*, La. 4. 20.

3 This was no flattering compliment. Their liberties—for David was a just king; their prosperity, for he was a wise one—all depended upon his success over an unprincipled young man, and an unnatural and wicked rebellion.—*C.*

g Ex. 17. 10–12. Ps. 3. 1–8; 50. 15; 91. 15.

h De. 32. 12. Ps. 3. 6–8.

4 In modern phrase he *reviewed* his troops at the gate.—*C.*

i De. 21. 20, 21. ch. 12. 10, 11. Lu. 23. 34. Ps. 103. 13.

k Ju. 12. 5, 8, near to which Jephthah slew the Ephraimites.

5 Rosenmüller, in his *Bibl. Geography*, Winer, in his *Bibl. Dictionary*, and other German writers, maintain that this was in the *tribe* of Ephraim, on this side Jordan; but English writers hold it to have been *beyond* Jordan, near Mahanaim. It is certain that Absalom and his army did cross the Jordan and enter into the land of Gileadich. 17. 26), and as there is no mention of that river having been recrossed either by them or by David's men previous to the battle, the inference is that it was fought *beyond* Jordan. If we suppose that the Ephraimites, who lived on the Jordan, were in the habit of sending their cattle over the river for pasture, that circumstance might give rise to the name.—*I.*

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than they could have wished. Disappointed pride produces self-murder to such as sought their life. But how much more terrible is their disappointment, who meet with everlasting shame and destruction by fleeing to death, as their refuge from present contempt or hazard! In the time of their greatest trouble God unexpectedly provides for his people. And it is very honourable to assist a sovereign or a saint when almost everybody is become his enemy.

CHAPTER XVIII. REFLECTIONS.—In dangerous times great care ought to be taken for the security and honour of princes: and good advice from inferiors ought to be readily complied with. No unduti-fulness can root out or obliterate strong parental affection. What then must be the affection of God to his children! How quickly, how easily, the enemies of God are overthrown, and that by means the most unexpected! Both the hopes and joys of the wicked soon issue in misery and shame: and they who flee from God's arm only rush into his net. Pride proves men's shame at last. A head trimmed at the expense of neglecting the soul is like to prove ruinous to both. Monuments of fame often serve only to perpetuate the disgrace of the erectors. Fearful is the guilt, and dreadful the end, of rebellious children. But success, whether in work or warfare, should be wholly ascribed to the Lord: and messages of evil cannot be too

TOMB OF ABSALOM. [II. SAMUEL, xviii: 18.]—"Now Absalom in his lifetime had taken and reared up for himself a pillar, which is in the king's dale; for he said, I have no son to keep my name in remembrance; and he called the pillar after his own name; and it is called unto this day Absalom's place." This tomb of Absalom is in the valley of Kedron. It is generally called the Pillar of Absalom. It is cut out of solid rock. Each side measures 22 feet. Over the columns is a dark frieze, and an Egyptian cornice above this. The height above the surface is 54 feet. It is not absolutely known that this is the pillar Absalom had reared for himself during his lifetime in the king's dale. It is a strange fact, however, that it answers to what is said in the 18th verse of the 18th chapter of II. Samuel, "And it is called unto this day, Absalom's place."

before the servants of David; and there was there a [l]great slaughter that day of twenty thousand *men*.

8 For the battle was there scattered over the face of all the country: and [m]the wood [n]devoured[6] more people that day than the sword devoured.

9 ¶ And Absalom met the servants of David. And Absalom rode upon a mule, and the mule went under the thick boughs of a great oak, and his [o]head caught hold of the oak, and he was taken up between the heaven and the earth; and the mule that *was* under him went away.

10 And a certain man saw *it*, and told Joab, and said, Behold, I saw Absalom hanged in an oak.[7]

11 And Joab said unto the man that told him, And, behold, thou sawest *him;* and why didst thou not smite him there to the ground? and I would have given thee ten *shekels* of silver,[8] and a girdle.

12 And the man said unto Joab, Though I should receive[9] a thousand *shekels* of silver[1] in mine hand, *yet* would I not put forth mine hand against the king's son: for in our hearing the king [p]charged thee, and Abishai, and Ittai, saying, Beware[2] that none *touch* the young man Absalom.

13 Otherwise I should have wrought falsehood [q]against mine own life: for there is no matter hid from the king, and thou thyself wouldest have set thyself against *me*.

14 Then said Joab, I may not tarry thus with thee.[3] And he took three darts[4] in his hand, and [r]thrust them through the heart of Absalom, while he *was* yet alive in the [s]midst of the oak.

15 And ten young men that bare Joab's armour compassed about and smote Absalom, and slew him.

16 And Joab [t]blew the trumpet, and the people returned from pursuing after Israel: for Joab held back the people.

17 And they took Absalom, and cast him into a great pit in the wood, and [u]laid a very great heap of stones[5] upon him: and all Israel fled every one to his tent.

18 ¶ Now Absalom in his lifetime had taken and reared up for himself a pillar, [w]which *is* in the king's dale: for he said, [v]I have no son to keep my name in remembrance: and he [x]called the pillar after his own name: and it is called unto this day, Absalom's Place.[6]

A.M. 2983. B.C. 1021.

l Pr.11.21;24.21,22.

m Ps.3.7;43.1. Ju.5.20,21.Ex.15.10.Jos.10.14.

n Heb. *multiplied to devour*, Ps.77.17.

6 From ignorance of the nature of the ground, we cannot tell how the wood *devoured* so many; but precipices, pits, morasses (see ver. 17), or even prickly shrubs and trees, many of which are sufficient to empale either man or beast, may well account for such destruction in a fleeing army. Some, however, attribute the 'devouring' to wild beasts, which may also be partly true.—*C.*

o ch.14.26;17.23.De.21.23. Job 18.9,10. Pr.30.17. Je.48.44.

7 The special notice formerly taken of Absalom's hair now receives its explanation. That ornament of which he was so vain, now occasions his ruin.—*C.*

8 About 23*s.*

9 Heb. *weigh upon mine hand.*

1 About £115.

p ver.5.

2 Heb. *beware whosoever* ye be *of*, &c.

q Ex.20.13;21.12,14. Ge.9.5,6.Nu.35.31,33.

3 Heb. *before thee.*

4 Three javelins, such as Saul usually carried when he assaulted David and Jonathan. Most probably he took the darts instead of a sword, that he might throw them from a distance, that so the evidence of his knowing Absalom might be rendered uncertain, should the king call him to account for his disobedience.—*C.*

r Ju. 5. 31. Ps. 45. 5, with ver.5.

s Heb. *heart*, De.4.11.Mat.12.40.

t ch.2.28;20.22.

u De. 21. 21–23. Je. 22.18,19. Jos.7.26;8.29; 10.27.

5 This mode of marking a grave has been practised in many nations. The Celtic cairns in Ireland and Scotland, and the barrows or *tumuli* in many parts of England, are of the same description.—*C.*

x Ge.14.17.

y ch.14.27, Job 18.17. Is.14.20,21. Je.22.30.

z Ps. 49. 11. 1 Sa.15. 12.

6 The words literally signify 'Absalom's hand;' and it is probable that it was so called from being surmounted by a hand. Niebuhr informs us, that the mosque of Ali, instead of the Turkish crescent, has at top a hand; and in European heraldry, a cloud, or hand and arm, armed or unarmed, may be seen as the crest of the armorial bearing of different families. Absalom's pillar was standing in the time of Josephus. A building known by that name is still shown in the valley of Jehoshaphat; and in all probability is either in part the ancient building, or a more modern structure raised upon its site.—*C.*

A.M. 2983. B.C. 1021.

a ch.15.36;17.17.

b Heb. *judged him from the hand*, &c. Ju.2.16. De. 32. 35, 40. Ps.9.4.

c Heb. *be a man of tidings*, ch.4.4.

d The Ethiopian, Je.13.23.Nu.12.1.

6 Heb. *be what* may.

7 He had continued with David since bringing tidings from Hushai, and was present in the battle, perhaps sounding one of the sacred trumpets. Having accompanied David for the express purpose of conveying to him information, he was anxious to be the first to communicate the tidings of the victory. But Joab was unwilling, out of regard both to David and Ahimaaz, to make so respectable a person the bearer of the intelligence of Absalom's death. With a delicacy we should scarcely have expected from his character, he felt that to carry those sad tidings would have been unsuitable to the young priest's pious and friendly design, and made them doubly unwelcome to the afflicted father. He therefore selects for the message a man whose name intimates that he was perhaps an Ethiopian and a slave.—*J.*

8 Or, *convenient?*

e ver.4.1 Sa.4.13.

9 Mahanaim was a walled city. The entrance was by an archway, with a gate at each end, between which the king sat, the whole surmounted by a flat-roofed tower, from which the watchman made his observations.—*C.*

f De.22.8.

1 David, as an experienced general, drew this conclusion correctly. The messenger, being *alone*, must either come with a demand for succour, ver. 3, or news of victory. Had there been a defeat, *many* would have been running.—*C.*

2 Heb. *I see the running.*

g 1 Ki. 1. 42. Ro. 10. 15.

3 Or, *Peace* be to thee.

4 Heb. *Peace.*

h ch.14.4,22.

i Heb. *shut up*, Ps. 44.3; 115.1. 1 Sa.24.18; 26.8.

5 Heb. Is there *peace to*, &c.

6 See note on ch. 17.26. Ahimaaz most probably tells truth about the tumult and his ignorance of its cause, and thereby evades David's question; but he conceals the unwelcome truth which he well knew, ver. 20, and thereby incurs the penalty of falsehood. The sacred historian, however, merely records, but does not reprove the suppression, that being sufficiently done by other portions of Scripture.—*C.*

7 Heb. *Tidings is brought.*

19 ¶ Then said [a]Ahimaaz the son of Zadok, Let me now run and bear the king tidings, how that the LORD hath [b]avenged him of his enemies.

20 And Joab said unto him, Thou shalt not [c]bear tidings this day, but thou shalt bear tidings another day: but this day thou shalt bear no tidings, because the king's son is dead.

21 Then said Joab to [d]Cushi, Go tell the king what thou hast seen. And Cushi bowed himself unto Joab, and ran.

22 Then said Ahimaaz the son of Zadok yet again to Joab, But, howsoever,[6] let me, I pray thee, also run after Cushi.[7] And Joab said, Wherefore wilt thou run, my son, seeing that thou hast no tidings ready?[8]

23 But howsoever, *said he*, let me run. And he said unto him, Run. Then Ahimaaz ran by the way of the plain, and over-ran Cushi.

24 ¶ And David sat [e]between the two [9]gates: and the watchman went up to the [f]roof over the gate unto the wall, and lifted up his eyes, and looked, and behold a man running alone.

25 And the watchman cried, and told the king. And the king said, If he *be* alone, *there is* tidings in his mouth.[1] And he came apace, and drew near.

26 And the watchman saw another man running: and the watchman called unto the porter, and said, Behold *another* man running alone. And the king said, He also bringeth tidings.

27 And the watchman said, Methinketh the running[2] of the foremost is like the running of Ahimaaz the son of Zadok. And the king said, [g]He *is* a good man, and cometh with good tidings.

28 And Ahimaaz called, and said unto the king, [3]All is well.[4] And he [h]fell down to the earth upon his face before the king, and said, Blessed *be* the LORD thy God, which hath [i]delivered up the men that lifted up their hand against my lord the king.

29 And the king said, Is the young man Absalom safe?[5] And Ahimaaz answered, When Joab sent the king's servant, and *me* thy servant, I saw a great tumult, but I knew not what *it was*.[6]

30 And the king said *unto him*, Turn aside, *and* stand here. And he turned aside, and stood still.

31 And, behold, Cushi came; and Cushi said, Tidings,[7] my lord the king: for the LORD

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tenderly delivered. Yet is it not astonishing to find so great and good a man neglecting to praise God for his wonderful salvation; quarrelling with his kind providence; opposing the justice of the nation; uttering things unadvisedly with his lips; and so immoderately bewailing a son abandoned of Heaven to everything vile and hateful!

CHAPTER XIX. REFLECTIONS.—The productions of unbridled passions are always unseasonable and dangerous. Few will risk their life for such as, after all, will look down upon them with neglect; and if we foolishly bring ourselves into danger, we shall justly be upbraided with it. Good counsel, though bluntly and even roughly given, should be thankfully received. And when we have done ill we cannot too soon seek to amend it: but when many are guilty, it is too common to cast the blame on their neighbours. Ministers ought to be principal promoters of loyalty. It is shameful when those who ought to be most forward in duty need instigation to it. Clemency is one of the noblest qualities of princes: and professions of deep sorrow for faults committed powerfully pacify the injured. But let us rejoice that Jesus will never condemn penitent sinners, though Satan stand at their right hand to accuse them. Our rash reception of evil reports concerning our friends turns to our shame when

hath [k]avenged thee this day of all them that rose up against thee.

32 And the king said unto Cushi, *Is* the young man Absalom safe? And Cushi answered, The enemies of my lord the king, and all that rise against thee to do *thee* hurt, be as *that* young man[8] *is*.

33 ¶ And the king was much moved, and went up to the chamber over the gate,[9] and wept; and as he went, thus he said, O my son Absalom! my son, my son Absalom! [l]would God I had died for thee, O Absalom, my son, my son![1]

CHAPTER XIX.

1 *Joab causeth the king to cease his mourning.* 9 *The Israelites are earnest to bring the king back.* 11 *David sendeth to the priests to incite the men of Judah.* 16 *Shimei is pardoned.* 24 *Mephibosheth excused.* 32 *Barzillai dismissed; Chimham his son is taken into the king's family.* 41 *The Israelites expostulate with Judah for bringing home the king without them.*

AND it was told Joab, Behold, the king weepeth and mourneth for Absalom.

2 And the [a]victory that day was [b]*turned* into mourning unto all the people: for the people heard say that day how the king was grieved for his son.

3 And the people gat them by stealth that day into the city, as people being ashamed steal away when they flee in battle.

4 But the king [c]covered his face, and the king cried with a loud voice, O my son Absalom! O Absalom, my son, my son![1]

5 And Joab came into the house to the king, and said, Thou hast [d]shamed this day the faces of all thy servants, which this day have saved thy life, and the lives of thy sons and of thy daughters, and the lives of thy wives, and the lives of thy concubines;

6 In that thou lovest[2] thine enemies, and hatest thy friends: for thou hast declared this day, that thou regardest neither princes nor servants:[3] for this day I perceive, that if Absalom had lived, and all we had died this day, [e]then it had pleased thee well.

7 Now therefore arise, go forth, and [f]speak comfortably unto thy servants: for I swear by the LORD, if thou go not forth, there [g]will not tarry one with thee this night;[4] and that will be worse unto thee than all the evil that befell thee from thy youth until now.

8 Then the king arose, and [h]sat in the gate. And they told unto all the people, saying, Behold, the king doth sit in the gate. And all the people came before the king; for [i]Israel had fled every man to his tent.

9 ¶ And all the people were at [k]strife throughout all the tribes of Israel,[5] saying, The king [l]saved us out of the hand of our enemies, and he delivered us out of the hand of the Philistines, and now he is fled out of the land for Absalom.

10 And Absalom, whom we [m]anointed over us, is dead in battle: now therefore why [n]speak ye not a word of bringing the king back?[5]

11 ¶ And king David sent to [o]Zadok and to Abiathar the priests,[6] saying, Speak unto the elders of Judah, saying, Why are ye the [p]last to bring the king back to his house? seeing the speech of all Israel is come to the king, *even* to his house.

12 Ye *are* [q]my brethren, ye *are* my bones and my flesh: wherefore then are ye the last to bring back the king?

13 And say ye [r]to Amasa, *Art* thou not of my bone, and of my flesh? [s]God do so to me, and more also, if thou be not captain of the host before me continually [t]in the room of Joab.

14 And he bowed the heart of all the men of Judah,[7] even [u]as *the heart of* one man; so that they sent *this word* unto the king, Return thou, and all thy servants.

15 So the king returned, and came to Jordan. And Judah came to [x]Gilgal, to go to meet the king, to conduct the king over Jordan.

16 ¶ And [y]Shimei the son of Gera, a Benjamite, which *was* of Bahurim, hasted, and came down with the men of Judah to meet king David.

17 And *there were* a thousand men of Benjamin with him, and [z]Ziba the servant of the house of Saul, and his fifteen sons and his twenty servants with him; and they went over Jordan before the king.

18 And there went over a ferry-boat[8] to carry over the king's household, and to do what he thought good.[9] And Shimei the son of Gera fell down before the king, as he was come over Jordan;

19 And said unto the king, Let not my lord impute iniquity unto me, neither do thou remember [a]that which thy servant did perversely the day that my lord the king went out of Jerusalem, that the king should take it to his heart.

20 For thy servant doth know that I have sinned: therefore, behold, I am come [b]the first this day of all the house of Joseph[1] to go down to meet my lord the king.

21 But Abishai the son of Zeruiah answered and said, [c]Shall not Shimei be put to death for this, because he cursed the LORD's anointed?

22 And David said, [d]What have I to do

A.M. 2983. B.C. 1021.

k ver. 19, 28. Ps. 55. 18; 27. 2, 3; 118. 10–12. De. 32. 36.

8 There was both discretion and delicacy in this announcement. Without mentioning Absalom's name, or the tragical manner of his death, Cushi with much address does not deny its having occurred, but dwells solely upon the fact of its being the death of an enemy and a rebel.—*J.*

9 Over the gate there was a tower, the principal apartment in which was used sometimes as a state-room, and sometimes as a private parlour. 'In most cases this room has a window towards the street; which in Egypt and Turkey projects forward, and is called a *kiosk*' (*Kitto*).—*J.*

l ch. 19. 4, with ch. 12. 10, 23. Pr. 10. 1; 17. 25.

1 A father only could have so lamented—a renewed spirit only could have so forgiven. Yet how low is our admiration of David weeping over his lovely son, when compared with Jesus weeping over his enemies, Lu. 19. 41.—*C.*

CHAP. XIX.

a Heb. *salvation* or *deliverance*. Ps. 3. 8; 18. 32–50; 118. 10–12.

b Pr. 16. 15; 19. 12. Ec. 3. 1, 4. Ne. 8. 9.

c ch. 15. 30; 1. 2; 18. 33. 1 Sa. 4. 12. Pr. 10. 1; 17. 25.

1 Why is the conduct of David, in the case of Bathsheba's child, ch. 12. 23, and in the case of Absalom, so different? There are two reasons for the difference. (1) Young children are less endeared to parents than they afterwards, by association, generally become. (2) David was lamenting Absalom, not merely as a rebel son, but a lost sinner; a thought, of all thoughts, the most grievous to a parent's heart.—*C.*

d ch. 18. 33.

2 Heb. *By loving*, &c.

3 Heb. *that princes or servants* are *nothing to thee.*

e Pr. 19. 9, 10. Job 34. 18.

f Heb. *to the heart of thy servants*, Ge 34. 3. Ho. 2. 14.

g Pr. 14. 28. 2 Ti. 1. 15.

4 The advice was wise, the manner cruel. David, who was willing to have headed his own army against Absalom, could not have felt as Joab alleges. He merely wished, what was perfectly practicable, to have his rebellious and wicked son spared, to afford him space for repentance.—*C.*

h Ru. 4. 1. ch. 18. 4, 24.

i 2 Ki. 14. 12. 1 Ki. 12. 16. ch. 18. 7.

k Ge. 3. 12, 13. Is. 8. 21. Ro. 6. 21.

5 They were divided into two great political parties, one anxious for the restoration of David, the other, in sullen silence, ver. 10, brooding over their discomfited rebellion.—*C.*

A.M. 2983. B.C. 1021.

l ch. v. viii. x. 1 Sa. xvii. xviii.

m ch. 15. 12, 13; 18. 14, 15. Ho. 3. 4; 13. 10.

n Heb. are *ye silent*, Ju. 18. 9. Ro. 12. 11.

5 'It might seem the obvious consequence of his victory, that David should repass the Jordan at the head of his conquering army, and resume his throne at Jerusalem. But the mass of the people had chosen another for their king, and by that act had virtually, to the extent of their power, deposed David; and it would appear that the civil principles of the constitution required that he should, in a certain sense, be re-elected to the crown.' —*Kitto.*

o ch. 8. 17; 15. 24, 29, 35. 1 Co. 5. 20.

6 David was still at Mahanaim, on the east of Jordan, Zadok and Abiathar in Jerusalem, on the west. But the presence of Amasa, ver. 13, whom Absalom had made general of his army, ch. 17. 25, prevented an expression of public opinion in the capital in favour of David's return. Amasa was nephew to David, by his sister Abigail, as Joab was by Zeruiah. Amasa's advancement was therefore well calculated to bring back the discontented of Judah.—*C.*

p Mat. 5. 26. 1 Co. 10. 11. Phi. 3. 17. 2 Th. 3. 9. 1 Pe. 2. 21.

q ch. 5. 1; ver. 13. Ge. 2. 23. Ju. 9. 2. Ep. 5. 29, 30.

r ch. 17. 25. 1 Ch. 2. 16, 17; 12. 18.

s Ru. 1. 17. 1 Ki. 19. 2. Ac. 23. 12.

t ver. 5, 6; ch. 3. 29, 39; 18. 14, with 8. 16; 20. 23.

7 That is, Amasa being brought over to David by the promise of being made commander-in-chief, brings over all his adherents to David's interest. David, as a wise and merciful king, does not attempt to return by aid of his army, but by peaceful negotiation.—*C.*

u Ju. 20. 1. Ac. 2. 46; 4. 32.

x Jos. 4. 19; 5. 9. 1 Sa. 11. 14, 15.

y ch. 16. 5–9. 1 Ki. 2. 8, 36–46. Job 2. 4. Mat. 5. 25.

z ch. 16. 1–4; 9. 2, 10, 11; ver. 26, 27.

8 Josephus says they prepared a bridge. The true meaning of the original is doubtful. Boothroyd translates it, 'And there went over and performed the service of bringing over the king's household' — which the rabbins understand of carrying them over.—*C.*

9 Heb. *the good in his eyes.*

a ch. 16. 5–9. Pr. 28. 13. Mat. 5. 25. Job 2. 4.

b Mat. 5. 25. Ho. 5. 15. Ps. 78. 34–37. Is. 7. 2. Je. 22. 2; 31. 9.

1 The house of Joseph were Ephraim and Manasseh —why then does not Shimei rather speak of Benjamin to which he belonged? The reference is most ingenious. He calls up to David's mind the tenderness of Joseph to his unkind and cruel brethren, and by his example inculcates forgiveness of his late offence.—*C.*

c Ex. 22. 17; 22. 28. 1 Ki. 21. 10, 11.

d ch. 16. 10; 3. 39.

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they manifest their innocence. Wicked servants do their masters inexpressible injuries: but good men like Mephibosheth make times of distress seasons of mourning and grief, and disregard their own interests in comparison of those of God's church and people. Riches are truly blessings when possessed by generous minds, and liberally ministered for the support of the indigent. Grateful hearts count themselves happy to have it in their power to recompense their friends: and noble minds count little of all the services they can do to their friends. But observe, courts, feasting, and mirth are poor preparations for death: and old men especially would do well often to decline all intercourse with them, that they may contemplate the more important concerns that now so closely press upon them, and cheerfully leave the more active employments for those whose age and capacities are more suitable to such a task. With what caution ought public affairs to be conducted! By pride cometh

with you, ye sons of Zeruiah, that ye should this day be adversaries unto me? [e]shall there any man be put to death this day in Israel? for do not I know that I *am* this day king over Israel?

23 Therefore the king said unto [f]Shimei, Thou shalt not die: and the king [g]sware unto him.

24 ¶ And [h]Mephibosheth the son of Saul came down to meet the king, and had neither dressed[i] his feet, nor trimmed his beard,[1] nor washed his clothes, from the day the king departed until the day he came *again* in peace.

25 And it came to pass, when he was come to Jerusalem to meet the king, that the king said unto him, Wherefore wentest not thou with me, Mephibosheth?

26 And he answered, My lord, O king, my servant deceived me: for thy servant said, I will saddle me an ass, that I may ride thereon, and go to the king; because thy servant *is* lame.

27 And [k]he hath slandered[2] thy servant unto my lord the king; but my lord the king *is* as an [l]angel of God: do therefore *what is* good in thine eyes.

28 For [m]all *of* my father's house were but dead men[3] before my lord the king; yet didst thou set thy servant among them that did eat at thine own table: what right therefore have I yet to cry any more unto the king?

29 And the king said unto him, Why speakest thou any more of thy matters? I have said, Thou[n] and Ziba divide the land.[4]

30 And Mephibosheth said unto the king, Yea,[o] let him take all, forasmuch as my lord the king is come again in peace unto his own house.

31 ¶ And [p]Barzillai the Gileadite came down from Rogelim, and went over Jordan with the king, to conduct him over Jordan.

32 Now Barzillai was a very aged man, *even* fourscore years old: and [q]he had provided the king of sustenance while he lay at Mahanaim; for he *was* a very great man.

33 And the king said unto Barzillai, [r]Come thou over with me, and I will feed thee with me in Jerusalem.

34 And Barzillai said unto the king, [s]How long have I to live, that I should go up with the king unto Jerusalem?

35 I *am* this day [t]fourscore years old: *and* can I discern between good and evil? [u]can thy servant taste what I eat or what I drink? can I hear any more the voice of singing-men and singing-women?[5] wherefore then should

A.M. 2983. B.C. 1021.

e 1 Sa.11.13.
f At this time, 1 Ki. 2.9,10.
g Ge.24.22.He.6.16. 1 Sa. 20.15.
h ch.4.4; ix.; 16. 3. 1 Ch.9.40 44.
i De. 21. 12. Ro. 12. 15.He.13.3.

1 The dressing of the feet, in a country where they were usually bare, was as common as washing the hands. The trimming of the beard may refer either to combing, clipping, or perfuming.—The déshabillé of Mephibosheth was emblematic of deep mourning.—*C.*

k ch.16.3.Ps.15.3.

2 As a proof of the sincerity of Mephibosheth's joy at the king's return, we are told (ver. 24) how he mourned for the king's banishment. He now complains of Ziba his servant, who should have been his friend, but had been his enemy. How much mischief is it in the power of a wicked servant to do to the best of masters, more especially in the way of defaming their characters! —*J.*

l ch. 14. 17, 20. 1 Sa. 29.9.
m Ge.32.10. ch. 9. 7, 8.Lu.17.10.

3 Heb. *men of death.*

n De.19.19. Ps.82.2; 101.5.Pr.20.4.

4 Some think the decision signifies—divide the land, as directed, ch. 9. 10, Mephibosheth (to speak in modern terms) holding as landlord, Ziba as tenant; others think both title and occupancy were divided between the parties. The former seems more consonant with justice, as Mephibosheth had committed no fault. But if so, why is Ziba continued in office? David had purposed not to give cause of sorrow on the day of his joyous restoration, ver. 22. Besides Ziba had been an active, though not the most faithful servant—he had also aided David in his difficulties; and to offend a man with such a family and connection would have been very imprudent.—*Note,* Extremity of deserved punishment is seldom wise; and where mercy can be exercised with safety, it is always the best policy.—*C.*

o 1 Sa.18. 1, 3. ch. 1. 2.
p ch.17. 27. 1 Ki.2.7. Ezr.2.61. Ne.7.63.
q ch.17.27, with Job 1. 3.
r With Mat. 25. 34, 35. Lu.22.28,30.
s Heb. *How many days* are *the years of my life?* Job 14. 14. Ps. 39. 5,6; 90.4; 89. 47, 48. 1 Co.7.29. Ja.4.14.
t Ps.90.10,12.
u Ec.12.1,3,4.

5 David being himself an adept in music, had rendered his court in Jerusalem celebrated for that accomplishment. He had, however, employed its attractions not for the banquet, or the revel of luxury, but for the service of God.—*Note,* Satan, the world, and the flesh have hitherto nearly monopolized music—John saw it otherwise in glory, Re.4.1,8;5.9. Hasten, Lord, the time when every heart shall be love and every voice praise!—*C.*

A.M. 2983. B.C. 1021.

x 1 Ki.2.7. Je.41.17. ver.38,40.

6 Heb. *choose.*

y Ge. 29. 11; 31. 55. Ru.1.14.
z ch.6.18; 13.25. Ge. 14.19.
a ver.12,14,15. Mat. 21.9. Ac.2.41,47;6.7.

7 Most probably those who had gathered around him before the battle in the wood, and since his victory; the other half were the adverse party who still adhered to the ruined cause of Absalom.—*C.*

b Ju.8.1;12.1. Ge.31. 26,27.

8 The whole of the ten tribes now coalesce, evidently offended at the exclusive claims of loyalty exhibited by Judah, and probably at some presuming arrogance of manner founded on their relation to the king.—*Note,* David is here more endangered by his friends than by his enemies—a point upon which all successful men need to be watchful and prayerful. Even in spiritual enjoyments we are often in more danger than in desertions. Lest Paul should be 'exalted,' God required in wisdom to allow a 'messenger of Satan to buffet him.'—*C.*

9 By comparing *men* in this verse with *people* in ver. 39, 40, it will be seen that they are equivalent terms for the same parties. —*C.*

c ver.12.1 Ch.2.3-17. Mat. 1. 3-6. Lu. 3. 31-33.

1 A bad reason—because a king should be a common father to all his subjects, and not the patron of a favourite few, claiming no merit but kindred origin.—*C.*

d ch. 5. 1. Mat.21.9, with 27.23. Ju.12.1. Pr. 13.10;15.1.

2 It therefore seems most probable that Benjamin, swayed by David's kindness to Mephibosheth, and mercy to Shimei (see ver. 16, 17), had not yet joined this movement, and that only ten tribes were originally concerned in the expostulation. Benjamin seems subsequently to have joined in the defection. See ch. 20.1,2,4. —*C.*

3 Heb. *set us at light.*

e Ju.8.1; 12.1,2. Ac. 15.39.

4 In which there was presumptive proof that the men of Judah were wrong—loudness and violence being proof of passion, not of reason.—*C.*

CHAP. XX.

a ch.12.10;19.41. Ps. 34.19.
b De.13.13. Ju.19.22. 1 Sa.2.12.ch.16.7.

1 Whenever the passions of men are in a ferment, it requires little to guide them. Here the counsel of one vain bad man produces the death of many, and goes near to dismember, and thereby weaken and barbarize the Jewish kingdom, which David had rescued from slavery, and advanced in religion, civilization, and power.—*C.*

c Ju.3.27;6.34.
d 1 Ki. 12. 16. Ac. 8. 21. Mat.22,5,6. Lu.19. 14.
e ch. 19. 41. 1 Ki. 12. 16. Pr.17.14. Jn.6.66. Phi.2.21.

thy servant be yet a burden unto my lord the king?

36 Thy servant will go a little way over Jordan with the king: and why should the king recompense it me with such a reward?

37 Let thy servant, I pray thee, turn back again, that I may die in mine own city, *and be buried* by the grave of my father and of my mother: but behold thy servant [x]Chimham; let him go over with my lord the king; and do to him what shall seem good unto thee.

38 And the king answered, Chimham shall go over with me, and I will do to him that which shall seem good unto thee: and whatsoever thou shalt require[6] of me, *that* will I do for thee.

39 And all the people went over Jordan. And when the king was come over, the king [y]kissed Barzillai, [z]and blessed him; and he returned unto his own place.

40 Then the king went on to Gilgal, and Chimham went on with him: and [a]all the people of Judah conducted the king, and also half the people of Israel.[7]

41 ¶ And, behold, [b]all the men of [8]Israel came to the king, and said unto the king, Why have our brethren the men of Judah[9] stolen thee away, and have brought the king and his household, and all David's men with him, over Jordan?

42 And all the men of Judah answered the men of Israel, [c]Because the king *is* near of kin to us:[1] wherefore then be ye angry for this matter? have we eaten at all of the king's *cost?* or hath he given us any gift?

43 And the men of Israel answered the men of Judah, and said, [d]We have ten parts[2] in the king, and we have also more *right* in David than ye: why then did ye despise us,[3] that our advice should not be first had in bringing back our king? And [e]the words of the men of Judah were fiercer than the words of the men of Israel.[4]

CHAPTER XX.

1 *By occasion of the quarrel, Sheba maketh a party in Israel.* 3 *David's ten concubines are shut up in perpetual prison.* 4 *Amasa, made captain over Judah, is slain by Joab.* 14 *Joab pursueth Sheba unto Abel.* 16 *A wise woman saveth the city by Sheba's head.* 23 *David's great officers.*

AND there [a]happened to be there a [b]man of Belial,[1] whose name *was* Sheba, the son of Bichri, a Benjamite; and he [c]blew a trumpet, and said, [d]We have no part in David, neither have we inheritance in the son of Jesse: every man to his tents, O Israel.

2 So [e]every man of Israel went up from after

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contention. A small evidence of respect might often prevent, not only angry altercations, but much murder and bloodshed. It is best to yield and to leave off strife before it be meddled with: for when men are once in a passion they are sure to speak wrong, even though they have truth on their side.

CHAPTER XX. [Ver. 7. Though there is no express statement of the fact, yet it is evident from what follows that Joab was either appointed by the king commander-in-chief, with Abishai as his lieutenant, or he took the command himself as a matter of course. Amasa in the meantime had assembled his men, came up with Joab at Gibeon, and then 'went before them;' *i.e.* took the command, but whether in the room of Joab or of Abishai does not appear. *P.*]

Ver. 10. [Joab had doubtless prearranged the whole. The short sword was so fastened in his girdle that as he stooped with oriental courtesy to salute Amasa, it

David, *and* followed Sheba the son of Bichri: but [f]the men of Judah clave unto their king, from Jordan even to Jerusalem.[2]

3 ¶ And David came to his house at Jerusalem; and the king took the [g]ten women *his* concubines, whom he had left to keep the house, and put them in [h]ward, and fed them, but [i]went not in unto them: so they were shut[3] up unto the day of their death, living in widowhood.[4]

4 ¶ Then said the king to [k]Amasa, Assemble me the men of Judah within three days, and be thou here present.

5 So Amasa went to assemble *the men of* Judah: but he [l]tarried longer than the set time which he had appointed him.[5]

6 And David said to [m]Abishai, Now shall Sheba the son of Bichri do us more harm than *did* Absalom: take thou thy [n]lord's servants, and pursue after him, lest he get him fenced cities, and escape us.[6]

7 And there went out after him Joab's men, and the [o]Cherethites, and the Pelethites, and all the mighty men: and they went out of Jerusalem, to pursue after Sheba the son of Bichri.

8 When they *were* at [p]the great stone which *is* in Gibeon, Amasa went before them: and Joab's garment that he had put on was girded unto him, and upon it a girdle *with* a sword fastened upon his loins in the sheath thereof; and as he went forth it fell out.[7]

9 And Joab said to Amasa, [q]*Art* thou in health, my brother? And Joab took Amasa by the beard with the right hand to kiss him.[8]

10 But Amasa took no heed to the sword that *was* in Joab's hand: so he [r]smote him therewith in the fifth *rib*, and shed out his bowels to the ground, and [s]struck him not again, and he died. So Joab and Abishai his brother pursued after Sheba the son of Bichri.

11 And one of Joab's men stood by him, and said, [t]He that favoureth Joab, and he that *is* for David, *let him go* after Joab.[9]

12 And Amasa [u]wallowed in blood in the midst of the highway: and when the man saw that all the people stood still, he removed Amasa out of the highway into the field, and cast a cloth upon him, when he saw that every one that came by him stood still.

13 When he was removed out of the highway, all the people went on after Joab, to pursue after Sheba the son of Bichri.

14 ¶ And [x]he went through all the tribes of Israel unto [y]Abel, and to Beth-maachah,[1] and all the Berites: and they were gathered together, and went also after him.

15 And they came and besieged him in Abel of Beth-maachah, and they [z]cast up a bank against the city, and [1]it stood in the [2]trench: and all the people that *were* with Joab battered the wall, to throw it down.[3]

16 ¶ Then cried a [a]wise woman out of the city, Hear, hear; say, I pray you, unto Joab, Come near hither, that I may speak with thee.

17 And when he was come near unto her, the woman said, *Art* thou Joab? And he answered, I *am he*. Then she said unto him, Hear the words of thine handmaid. And he answered, I do hear.

18 Then she spake, saying, [b]They were wont to speak in old time, saying, They shall surely ask *counsel* at Abel:[4] and so they ended *the matter*.

19 I [c]*am one of them that are* peaceable *and* faithful in Israel:[5] thou seekest to destroy a city and [d]a mother in Israel: why wilt thou [e]swallow up the inheritance of the LORD?

20 And Joab answered and said, Far be it, far be it from me, that I should swallow up or destroy.

21 The matter *is* not so: but [f]a man of mount Ephraim, (Sheba the son of Bichri by name,) hath lifted up his hand against the king, *even* against David: deliver him only, and I will depart from the city. And the woman said unto Joab, [g]Behold, his head shall be thrown to thee over the wall.

22 Then the woman went unto all the people [h]in her wisdom: and they cut off the head of Sheba the son of Bichri, and cast *it* out to Joab: and he [i]blew a trumpet, and they retired from the city, every man to his tent; and Joab returned to Jerusalem unto the king.

23 ¶ Now [k]Joab *was* over all the host of Israel: and Benaiah the son of Jehoiada *was* over the Cherethites, and over the Pelethites:[6]

24 And [l]Adoram *was* over the tribute: and Jehoshaphat the son of Ahilud *was* [7]recorder:[8]

25 And Sheva *was* scribe:[9] and [m]Zadok and Abiathar *were* the priests:

26 And [n]Ira also the Jairite was a chief ruler[1] about David.

CHAPTER XXI.

1 The three years' famine for the Gibeonites ceaseth by hanging seven of Saul's sons. 10 Rizpah's kindness unto the dead. 12 David burieth the bones of Saul and Jonathan in his father's sepulchre. 15 Four battles against the Philistines, wherein four mighty men of David slay four giants.

THEN there was a [a]famine in the days of David three years, year after year; and David [b]inquired of the LORD. And the LORD answered, [c]*It is* for Saul, and for *his* bloody house, because he slew the Gibeonites.[1]

2 And the king called the Gibeonites, and said unto them; (now the Gibeonites *were* not

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A.M. 2983. B.C. 1021.

f 1 Ki.12.17,20. Jn.6. 66–68.

2 That is, they conducted him from the place where he crossed the Jordan till he arrived in Jerusalem. This was all the more necessary as the road ran along the border of the warlike tribe of Benjamin, and an attack might easily have been made upon the monarch amid the wild defiles of the wilderness.—*P.*

g ch.15.16;16.22.

h Heb. *a house of ward*, Ge.40.3.

i Ge.6.4;38.26.

3 Heb. *bound.*

4 Heb. *in widowhood of life.*

k ch. 19.13, with Jn. 13.27. Ec.9.10. Ro 12. 11

l Ps.118.9;62.9.

5 We are not informed as to the cause of Amasa's delay: it however cost him his life, by giving occasion for the appointment of Abishai at the head of Joab's favourite troops. See ver. 7.—*C.*

m ch. 18. 2; 23. 18. 1 Ch.2.16.

n ch.11.11;15.18.

6 Heb. *deliver himself from our eyes.*

o ver.23; ch.8.18; 15. 18; 23. 8–39. 1 Ki.1. 38, 44.

p Jos.10.27.

7 Most probably such a short sword as is still found in Carthaginian and other ancient relics, and which might readily fall by what is called accident, or, as is more likely, be of purpose thrown out by Joab. *C.*——Or, 'he let it fall out,' for it was not by mere accident but it was part of Joab's murderous design, that he might have it in his hand when saluting Amasa; and, the farther to lull suspicion, it was in his left hand.—*I.*

q ch.3.27; 17.25. Ps. 12.2; 55.21. Mat.26.48, 49.Jn.7.3. Mi.7.2,6.Je. 9.4,5.

8 He held the sword in the *left hand*, which would prevent Amasa from attending to the circumstance. *C.*——Or rather 'it,' *i.e.* the beard, for it would be reckoned an affront to lay hold on it unless for that purpose. Among the Arabs, to kiss the beard is a mark of respect to an equal or superior.—*I.*

r ch.3.27; 2.23. 1 Ki. 2.5.

s Heb. *doubled not his* stroke, 1 Sa.26.8.

t 2 Ki.9.32, with De. 20.5.

9 This was his proclamation to the army, 'Joab is now again commander-in-chief, and has never, like Amasa, deserted David; let all David's friends then follow him.'—*I.*

u ch.17.25. Ps.55.23. Re.16.5,6.

x Sheba, ver.4.

y 2 Ki.15.29. 2 Ch.16. 4. 1 Ki.15.20. Jos.18.25, ver.15.

1 Sheba fled northward and took refuge in the city of Abel, which stood on a conical hill between the plains of Ijon and Dan. It is about five miles west of Dan, and consequently on the extreme northern border of Palestine. It was a strong city. There is still a village on the site bearing the ancient name. In going from Jerusalem to Abel it is truly said that Joab went 'through all the tribes of Israel.'—*P.*

A.M. 2983. B.C. 1021.

z 2 Ki. 19. 32. Je. 32. 24;33.4.

1 Or, *it stood against the utmost wall.*

2 They cast a bank against the city, *which stood opposite the outward wall.* So Boothroyd translates the passage, which renders it much more intelligible.—*C.*

3 Heb. *marred to throw down.*

a Ec.9.14–18. 1 Co.1. 27.

b Or, *They plainly spake in the beginning, saying, Surely they will ask of Abel, and so make an end*, De.20.11. Jos.9.14.

4 Proverbial expressions founded upon local circumstances or peculiarities must necessarily be more or less obscure. But does not the obscurity of the text arise principally from the insertion of the word 'counsel?' instead of the word 'questions?' Is not the object of the wise woman to excuse her questions by pleading the inquisitive character of her town? Her first question, ver. 17, is very artful, 'Art thou Joab?' As much as to insinuate—'The hero of whom we have heard so much?' Her second, ver. 19, 'Why wilt thou swallow up the inheritance of the Lord?' is an irresistible appeal to mercy, generosity, patriotism, and piety, and had Joab been a worse man than he was, we could not be surprised at its success.—*C.*

c Ge.18.23. Ro.13.4, 5.

5 She was probably the governess of the city, or the daughter or widow of a chief.—*C.*

d i.e. a chief city, Nu.21.25. Eze. 16. 46, 49.

e Nu.16.32. Ps.124.3. Ex.15.17. 1 Sa.26.19.

f ver.1,14.

g 2 Ki.10.7.

h Ec.9.14–18.

i ch. 2.28;18.16;15.10. Pr.24.21;25.8–10.

k ch. 8. 16, 18. 1 Ch. 18.15,17.

6 See note on ch. 8.18.—*C.*

l ch.8.16. 1 Ki.4.3,6; 12.18.

7 Or, *remembrancer.*

8 See note on ch. 8. 16.—*C.*

9 See note on ch. 8. 17.—*C.*

m ch.8.17. Nu.3.32. 1 Ch.18.16.

n ch.23.38. Ju.10.4.

1 Or, *a prince.*

CHAP. XXI.

B.C. 1018.

a Le.26.10. 1 Ki.18. 2;17.1.

b Heb. *sought the face*, &c. Nu.27.21. Ju. 1.1. 1 Sa.23.2,4, 11. ch. 5.19,23. Ps.50.15;91.15.

c Jos.7.1,2. 1 Sa. 22. 16. Re.6.10. Ex.20.5.

1 This slaughter of the Gibeonites, though not before expressly mentioned in Scripture, is nevertheless clearly implied in 1 Sa. 22. 19, where Saul is said to have destroyed the whole ecclesiastical city of Nob. Now the Gibeonites, as 'hewers of wood and drawers of water,' Jos. 9. 22, 23, for the 'house of God,' dwelt at Nob, and were cruelly and unjustly put to death in the general massacre of the city.—*C.*

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fell out; he stooped and lifted it as a matter of course, and without stopping to put it up rushed forward to embrace Amasa. Amasa was thus taken by surprise. He suspected nothing until Joab's ready sword was in his vitals. It was an act of cruel treachery. *P.*]

REFLECTIONS.—We must not expect to enjoy long peace on earth. Foolish and even trifling quarrels have often dangerous consequences; and all of a sudden our most zealous friends may become our bit-

SMYRNA THROUGH A BREACH IN THE CASTLE WALL—A MODERN CITY FILLED WITH THE DESCENDANTS OF GOD'S ANCIENT PEOPLE ISRAEL. [II. SAMUEL, xxi.]—About the time that the events recorded in this chapter were taking place in Palestine, away over on the coast of Asia Minor the city of Smyrna was being founded by the Aeolian, Ionian and Dorian colonies. Smyrna in after years was to be the seat of one of the seven churches of Asia. It was the home of Polycarp, and this picture was taken from near the martyr's grave the last of May, 1894. There are more Jews here in proportion to population perhaps than in any other city. Smyrna's relation to the people of God 1000 B. C. is not geographical but chronological. So we think it helps the mind to understand better the history of God's people to take a look occasionally into the lands around the great blue sea that washes the shores of Palestine. It is doubtless true that the history of Palestine was very much influenced by the ideas and movements of surrounding people.

of the children of Israel, but [d]of the remnant of the Amorites; and the children of Israel had sworn unto them: and Saul sought to slay them[2] in[e] his zeal to the children of Israel and Judah:)

3 Wherefore David said unto the Gibeonites, What shall I do for you? and wherewith shall I make the atonement, that ye may [f]bless the inheritance of the LORD?

4 And the Gibeonites said unto him, [g]We will have no silver nor gold of Saul, nor of his house; neither for us shalt thou kill any man in Israel. And he said, What ye shall say, *that* will I do for you.

5 And they answered the king, The man that consumed us, and that [h]devised against us, *that* we should be destroyed from remaining in any of the coasts of Israel,

6 Let [i]seven men of his sons be delivered unto us, and we will hang them up unto the LORD in Gibeah of Saul, [k]*whom* the LORD did choose.[3] And the king said, I will give *them*.[4]

7 But the king spared [l]Mephibosheth, the son of Jonathan, the son of Saul, because of the[m] LORD's oath that *was* between them, between David and Jonathan the son of Saul.

8 But the king took the two sons of [n]Rizpah the daughter of Aiah, whom she bare unto Saul, Armoni and Mephibosheth; and the five sons of [o]Michal[5] the daughter of Saul, whom she brought up[6] for Adriel, the son of Barzillai the Meholathite:

9 And he delivered them into the hands of the Gibeonites, and they hanged them [p]in the hill before the LORD: and they fell *all* seven together, and were put to death in the days of harvest, in the first *days*, [q]in the beginning of barley harvest.[7]

10 ¶ And [r]Rizpah the daughter of Aiah took sackcloth, and spread it for her[8] upon the rock, from the beginning of harvest until water dropped upon them[9] out of heaven, and suffered neither the birds of the air to rest on them by day, nor the beasts of the field by night.[1]

11 And it was told David what Rizpah the daughter of Aiah, the concubine of Saul, had done.

12 ¶ And David went and took the [s]bones of Saul, and the bones of Jonathan his son, from the men of Jabesh-gilead, which had stolen them from the street of Beth-shan, where the Philistines had hanged them, when the Philistines had slain Saul in Gilboa:

13 And he brought up from thence the bones of Saul, and the bones of Jonathan his son; and they gathered the bones of them that were hanged.

14 And [t]the bones of Saul and Jonathan his son buried they in the country of Benjamin in Zelah, [u]in the sepulchre of Kish his [2]father; and they performed all that the king commanded: and after that [x]God was entreated for the land.

15 ¶ Moreover the Philistines had yet war again with Israel; and David went down, and his servants with him, and fought against the Philistines: and David waxed faint.

16 And Ishbi-benob, which *was* of the sons of [y]the giant,[3] (the weight of whose [4]spear *weighed* three hundred[5] *shekels* of brass in weight,) he being girded with a new *sword*, thought to have slain David.

17 But Abishai the son of Zeruiah [z]succoured him, and smote the Philistine, and killed him. Then the men of David sware unto him, saying, [a]Thou shalt go no more out with us to battle, that thou [b]quench not the light[6] of Israel.

18 And[c] it came to pass after this, that there was again[7] a battle with the Philistines at [8]Gob: then Sibbechai the Hushathite slew Saph, which *was* of the sons of the giant.[9]

19 And there was again[1] a battle in Gob with the Philistines, where [d]Elhanan the son of Jaare-oregim, a Beth-lehemite, slew *the brother of* Goliath[2] the Gittite, the staff of whose spear *was* like a weaver's beam.

20 And [e]there was yet a battle in Gath, where was a man of *great* stature, that had on every hand six fingers, and on every foot six toes, four and twenty in number; and he also was born to the giant.

21 And when he defied[3] Israel, Jonathan the son of [f]Shimeah the brother of David, slew him.

22 These[g] four were born to the giant in Gath, and fell by the hand of David, and by the hand of his servants.

CHAPTER XXII.

A psalm of thanksgiving for God's mighty deliverances, and manifold blessings.

AND David [a]spake unto the LORD the words of this song[1] in the day *that* the [b]LORD had

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A.M. 2986. B.C. 1018.

d Jos. 9.3,16, 17. Ju. 11.35. Pr.20.25. He. 6. 16.

2 In violation of the national faith he sought to extirpate them, viz. to satisfy the hereditary and unappeasable prejudices and hatred of the people, thus offering a bloody sacrifice to popularity, not even under pretence of justice.—*C.*

e De.7.16.1 Sa.14.44, with 15.8. Ga.4.18.Ro. 10.2.

f Je.29.7. Ex. 20. 24, with De. 32. 9. Ps. 135. 4,14. Ex.19.5,6. Ge.17. 7.

g Or, it is *not silver nor gold that we have to do with Saul or his house, neither* pertains it to *us to kill*, &c Es. 9, 10,16. Nu.35.31-33.

h Or, *cut us off*. Mat.7.2. Pr.3. 29. Es. 9.24.

i Es.9.10. De.21. 22. Nu.25.4,5.Pr.21.3.

k 1 Sa.10.1; 9. 16, 17. Ac.13.21.

3 Heb. *the chosen of the LORD.*

4 Not as innocent persons to be an expiation, but as guilty encouragers and coadjutors of Saul in the violation of the national oath to the Gibeonites.—*C.*

l 1 Ch 8 34. ch. 4. 4; ix.;19.24 30.

m 1 Sa.18.3; 20.8,42; 23.18.

n ch.3.7.Ex.20.5.Is. 14.20,21.

o Or, *Michal's sister*, 1 Sa.18.19.

5 As Michal had no children of her own, ch. 6. 23, some consider her name an error of a transcriber, and some translations ascribe the children to Merab. Others think Michal merely educated the children of whom Merab was mother; while some consider the name of the one Michal, and of the other Michal Merab, and by abbreviation Michal. We adopt the latter view, which is perfectly consonant with Hebrew practice, inasmuch as the word translated *brought up* seems to us to signify *bare* as a mother.—*C.*

6 Heb. *bare to Adriel.*

p ch. 6.17. He did not thus extirpate Saul's family, and so kept his oath, 1 Sa. 24.21.

q Ru.1.17,22.

7 At the time of the passover, in the month of April.—*P.*

r ch.3.7. Being not properly malefactors, but a kind of expiation, there left hanging on the gibbets till the Lord marked his reconcilement, Nu.25.4,5. 1 Ki. 18.40,41.

8 'Made it a tent for her.' A beautiful instance of woman's constitutional courage, where tenderness forms its support.—*C.*

9 In countries approaching the tropics, the times of the periodical rains are very regular, and it is probable the sentence of the king was that the dead bodies should hang till the rain came.—*C.*

s 1 Sa.31.1,8–13. ch. 2.5–7.1 Ch.10.11,12.

1 Some have supposed she must have had assistants to effect this. It may have been so. But little wot they of the sleeplessness of affliction who doubt the possibility of one being able to effect the work described. A fire, occasionally revived, would itself become a sufficient night-watch against the beasts.—*C.*

t ch.2.5,6;3.3214.12.

u Jos.18.28. 1 Sa.10. 2.

2 Hence we see the probability that David may have removed the body of Absalom from the wood of Ephraim to the valley of Jehoshaphat, where his tomb is now shown. See note on ch.18.18. *C.*

——David showed by these funeral honours that he had not acted out of personal disrespect to Saul or his family, but solely with a view to fulfil the desire of the Gibeonites by God's command.—*P.*

x ch.24.25. Jos.7.26. Zec. 6. 8. Es. 8. 10. Jonah 1.15. Nu.25. 13. 1 Ki.18,40,41.

y Or, *Rapha*, Ge. 6.4.1 Sa.17.5.

3 'Who was of the sons of Rapha.' *Rapha* was the tribefather, the progenitor of the gigantic *Rephaim*, who formed part of the aboriginal inhabitants of Palestine. Only a few families of them remained in the days of Moses, and these appear to have settled among the Philistines.—*P.*

4 Heb. *the staff* or *the head.*

5 *i.e.* 9¾ pounds avoirdupois.

z Ge.22.14. Ps.46.1. ch.22.19.

a ch.18.3.

b ch.14.7.1 Ki.11.36; 15.4.Ps.132.17.

6 Heb. *candle* or *lamp.*

c 1 Ch.20.4;11.29.

7 B.C. 1019.

8 As also near Gezer.

9 Or, *Rapha.*

1 B.C. 1018.

d 1 Ch.20.5;11.26.

2 This warrior's specific name was Lahmi, 1 Ch.25.5, but Goliath was either an assumption of his dead brother's name, or a common family title.—*C.*

e 1 Ch.20.6,7.

3 Or, *reproached.*

f 1 Sa. 16. 9, Shammah or Shamma, 1 Ch.2.13.

g 1 Sa. 17. 50. 1 Ch. 20.4-8. Is.14.20,21. Je. 9. 23. Ec. 9. 11. 1 Co.1. 27. Ro.8.31,37.

CHAP. XXII.

B.C. 1017.

a Ps. 18. title; 50.14; 103. 1–6; 116. 1–18. Ex. 15.1–22.

1 There are two editions, so to speak, of this psalm, viz. here and Ps.xviii.;and there are two occasions correspondent: first, the deliverance from Saul; secondly, from all his enemies. Both are descriptive of the greater deliverance of Christ, David's great Son and Lord.—*C.*

b Ps.34.19.2 Ti.4.18. 2 Co.1.10. Is.46.4. Job 5.19,20.

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terest enemies.' Objects of unlawful pleasure are often turned into standing memorials of our grief and shame: and an obscure retirement is fittest for those who have made themselves publicly scandalous. Kings seldom find that rash changes of the commanders in their army turn out to their satisfaction. Hardened murderers cannot be restrained by law. Impunity in one act encourages them to another. But let them outbrave their sovereign, or cover their bloodshed, yet God will punish them at last. One daring sinner often involves many in his punishment. But what a mercy, amidst the ravages of war, is a fit mediator! The terms of peace may often be very easy, would the parties but once confer together and understand one another.

CHAPTER XXI. [Ver. 4. *What ye shall say, that will I do for you.* Clarke very thoughtlessly blames David for leaving the selection of the punishment to the Gibeonites. He should first have shown that God had not so directed. That God had done so is plain from his subsequent approval of the punishment upon Saul's 'bloody house.' *C.*]

Ver. 10. [Rain in harvest was regarded in Palestine as miraculous; rain during the summer months is unknown. It would appear that this faithful woman must have watched over the ghastly skeletons of her sons from April till the beginning of October—then when the rain fell it was a sign that the plague of drought which had afflicted the land was removed, and that the Lord's anger was appeased. *P.*]

REFLECTIONS.—The obligations of public oaths and covenants are lasting and solemn; and the breaches of them, be the pretexts what they will, are highly provoking to God. Wicked and murderous magistrates are a great plague to nations. God may long defer his judgments without averting them: but old

delivered him out of the hand of all his enemies, and out of the hand of Saul:

2 And he said, [c]The LORD *is* my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer;

3 The God of my rock; in him will I trust: *he is* my shield, and the horn of my salvation, my high tower, and my refuge, my saviour; thou savest me from violence.

4 I[d] will call on the LORD, *who is* worthy to be praised: so shall I be saved from mine enemies.

5 When[e] the waves[1] of death compassed me, the floods of ungodly[2] men made me afraid;

6 The [f]sorrows of hell[3] compassed me about; the snares of death prevented[4] me.

7 In[g] my distress I called upon the LORD, and cried to my God; and he did hear my voice out of his temple, and my cry *did enter* into his ears.

8 Then[h] the earth shook and trembled; the foundations of heaven moved and shook, because he was wroth.

9 There[i] went up a smoke out of his nostrils, and fire out of his mouth devoured: coals[5] were kindled by it.

10 He[k] bowed the heavens also, and came down; and darkness *was* under his feet.

11 And [l]he rode upon a cherub, and did fly: and he was seen upon the wings of the wind.

12 And he made [m]darkness pavilions round about him, dark[6] waters, *and* thick clouds of the skies.

13 Through the brightness before him were coals of fire kindled.

14 The [n]LORD thundered from heaven, and the most High uttered his voice.

15 And he [o]sent out arrows, and scattered them; lightning, and discomfited them.

16 And [p]the channels of the sea appeared, the foundations of the world were discovered,[7] at the rebuking of the LORD, at the blast of the breath of his nostrils.

17 He[q] sent from above, he took me; he drew me out of [r]many waters;

18 He[s] delivered me from my strong enemy, *and* from them that hated me; for they were too strong for me.

19 They[t] prevented me in the day of my calamity: but the LORD was my stay.

20 He [u]brought me forth also into a large place:[8] he delivered me, because he delighted in me.

21 The [x]LORD rewarded me according to my righteousness:[9] according to the cleanness of my hands hath he recompensed me.

22 For I have [y]kept the ways of the LORD, and have not wickedly departed from my God.

23 For all his [z]judgments *were* before me: and *as for* his statutes, I did not depart from them.

24 I [a]was also upright before[1] him, and have kept myself from mine iniquity.[2]

25 Therefore[b] the LORD hath recompensed me according to my righteousness; according to my cleanness in his eyesight.

26 With[c] the merciful thou wilt show thyself merciful, *and* with the upright man thou wilt show thyself upright.

27 With[d] the pure thou wilt show thyself pure; and with the froward thou wilt [e]show thyself unsavoury.

28 And [f]the afflicted people thou wilt save: but thine eyes *are* upon the haughty, *that* thou mayest bring *them* down.

29 For thou *art* my [g]lamp, O LORD: and the LORD will lighten my darkness.

30 For by thee I have [h]run through a troop: by my God have I leaped over a wall.

31 *As for* God, [i]his way *is* perfect: the word of the LORD *is* tried: he *is* a buckler to all them that trust in him.

32 For [k]who *is* God, save the LORD? and who *is* a rock, save our God?

33 God[l] *is* my strength *and* power; and he maketh my way perfect.[3]

34 He [m]maketh my feet like hinds' *feet*;[4] and setteth me upon my high places.

35 He[n] teacheth my hands to war; so that a bow of steel[5] is broken by mine arms.

36 Thou[o] hast also given me the shield of thy salvation: and thy gentleness hath [p]made me great.

37 Thou[q] hast enlarged my steps under me; so that my feet[6] did not slip.[7]

38 I[r] have pursued mine enemies, and destroyed them; and turned not again until I had consumed them.

39 And [s]I have consumed them, and wounded them, that they could not arise; yea, they are fallen under my feet.

40 For [t]thou hast girded me with strength to battle: them that rose up against me hast thou subdued[8] under me.

41 Thou [u]hast also given me the necks of mine enemies, that I might destroy them that hate me.

A.M. 2987. B.C. 1017.

c Ps. 18.2, &c.; 91.2; 3.3,8; 142.4,5; 144.2; 46.1,7,11; 32.7. Pr. 18.10. Ge. 15.1. Mat. 1.21; 28.11.

d Ps. 55.16; 116.4,13; 65.1,2. Ro. 10.13. 1 Pe. 1.17.

e Ps. 18.5; 22.16; 3.1; 142.3,4; 140.2–5; 118.10–12.

1 Or, *pangs*.

2 Heb. *Belial*.

f Or, *cords*, Ps. 116. 3; 18.5. 1 Sa. 18.21.

3 The Hebrew word *sheol*, like the Greek *hades*, both of which are generally translated 'hell' in the Bible, signifies simply 'the state of the dead,' without any reference or regard to locality. 'Hell,' therefore, according to our modern understanding of it, is a misinterpretation.—*P.*

4 Or, 'the cords of Hades entangled me; the snares of death stopped me'—both allusions being taken from the art of the fowler.—*J.*

g Ac. 12. 5. Jonah 2. 2. Ps. 34.6; 50.15; 91.15; 116.1–5; 102.17,19. Ho. 5.15; 6.1,2.

h Ju. 5.4. Job 26.11. Ac. 4.31. Ps. 18.7,17, 18; 99.1; 68.8; 114.7. Ex. 19. 18. Hab. 3.6–11.

i De. 4.24. He. 12.29. Ex. 24.17; 19.18. Ps. 18. 8; 50.3, 4; 97.3. 2 Th. 1.8.

5 Or, 'fiery flakes issued from it,' *i.e.* his mouth. The smoke represents the thunder cloud, the fire the lightning and the burning coals the thunderbolts.—*J.*

k Ps. 144.5; 97.2; 77. 16–19. Is. 64.1, 2. Ex. 19. 18; 20.19; 24.15. He. 12. 18.

l Ps. 18.10; 68.17; 103 20, 21; 104.3, 4. Ge. 3.24 He. 1.14.

m Ps. 97.2; 77.16–19; 18.11. 1 Ki. 8.12.

6 Heb. *binding of waters*.

n Ps. 29. 3–9; 77. 17, 18; 50.3. Job 37.2–5.

o Jos. 10.10, 11. Ju. 5. 20, 21. 1 Sa. 7. 10. Ps. 18. 15; 68 1, 2; 118.13. Hab. 3.5–13.

p Ex. 14, 21, 27; 15.8, 10. Jos. iii. Ps. 9.5; 104.7; 114.3, 5, 7; 74.15; 77. 16, 18. Hab. 3.6–13.

7 The thundercloud lowers, the tempest rushes from it in fury; the lightnings flash, the thunderbolts descend, the thunders roar; the waves rise mountain high.—*J.*

q Ju. 5.20. Ps. 103.21; 91.13. Heb. 1.14. Da. 6. 22. Ac. 12.7. Job 5. 19, 20. Is. 43.2; 46.4. 2 Co. 1. 10.

r Or, *great*, Ps. 69. 1, 2; 130.1. Re. 17.15.

s Ps. 56.9; 13.7. 2 Co. 1. 10. 2 Ti. 4. 17, 18.

t Ps. 118.5–13; 3.1–8; 4.1–3.

u Ps. 118.5; 116.7–9; 32.7; 71.20, 21; 18.19; 31. 15, 16.

8 He had been straitened in dens and caves, and was afraid to go abroad, but now he 'walked at liberty.' There may also be a reference to the extent of his dominions and the greatness of his prosperity, contrasted with his former poverty and difficulties.—*J.*

x Ps. 7. 3, 4, 8; 19. 11. Ec. 8.12. 1 Co. 15.58. Is. 3.10. Ro. 2.7, 10. Ep. 2. 10.

A.M. 2987. B.C. 1017.

9 That David is here, not describing himself, but the Christ, is obvious, when we compare these words with ch. 12.13.—*C.*

y Ps. 119.3, 8, 11. Lu. 1.6. Phi. 4.8. 2 Ti. 4.7, 8. Is. 38.3.

z Ps. 119.11, 60, 120; 1. 2; 16.8.

a Ge. 6.9. Ps. 51.6. Is. 38.3. Pr. 4.23. Ec. 5.1.

1 Heb. *to him*.

2 This is not intended as a vindication of every part of his conduct, but refers to that conscious integrity towards man which a believer feels, and may avow as an answer to unmerited reproach.—*J.*

b ver. 21. 1 Ti. 4.8. Ps. 1. 1–3. Is. 3.10. Ro. 2.7, 10. 1 Co. 15.58.

c Mat. 5.7. Ja. 2. 13. Ps. 25.8, 9; 11.7.

d Mat. 5.8. Ex. 15.6–10. Le. 26.24, 27. De. 28. 1–68. Ps. 125.5.

e Or, *wrestle*, Ps. 18.26. Ex. 18.11. Job 9. 4.

f Ps. 12.5; 138.6. Is. 63.9; 2.11. Job 40.11, 12. Ex. 18.11. Pr. 21.4.

g Or, *candle*, Ps. 27. 1; 37.6; 119.105; 112.4. Mi. 7.8, 9. Pr. 6.23.

h Or, *broken a troop*, Ps. 118. 10–12. Phi. 4.13. Ro. 8.37.

i De. 32. 4. Ps. 12. 6; 84.11; 25.8, 9; 18.30.

k De. 32.31, 39. Is. 45. 22; 42.8; 44.6, 8. Ps. 86.8, 10; 89.6, 8.

l Zec. 10. 12. Phi. 4. 13. Ps. 46.1; 48.14. ver. 2, 3.

3 Another description only applicable to Christ, who alone has set before us a perfect example that we should 'follow his steps.'—*C.*

m Heb. *equalleth*, ch. 1.23. Hab. 3.19. De. 32.13. Is. 33.16. Ps. 113. 7, 8. ch. 7. 8.

4 Not only is that animal proverbially swift, but it stands and leaps among high rocks and craggy precipices with ease and safety; and its hoofs are so hard that Virgil compares them to brass.—*J.*

n Ps. 32 8; 108.1; 118 10–12; 144.1. Ro. 8.31, 37. Phi. 4.13.

5 Rather of 'brass.' Some translate, 'and maketh my arms like a bow,' but as the ancient bow was not easily bent but with the feet (hence the phrase 'to tread the bow'), it was a great test of strength to be able not only to bend but to break it with the arms alone.—*J.*

o Ge. 15.1. Ps. 84. 11. Ep. 6.16.

p Heb. *multiplied me*, Ps. 115. 14. Ge. 22. 17.

q 1 Sa. 2.9. Ps. 18.36; 94.18; 121.3, 8.

6 Heb. *ankles*.

7 Frequently, alas! did the feet of David the son of Jesse slip; but the feet of Jesus the Son of David never did; he alone was holy, blameless, and upright.—*C.*

r Ps. 18.37. 1 Sa. xviii. xxvii. xxx. ch. viii. x. xviii. xx.

s Ps. 118. 10–13; 110. 1, 5, 6; 18.38. Mal. 4. 1, 3.

t 1 Sa. 17. 49–51; 18. 27; 23. 5, 27, 8, 9. ch. v. viii. x. xviii. xx.

8 Heb. *caused to bow*.

u Ge. 49.8. Ex. 23.27. Jos. 10.24.

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sins are not forgotten by him. The time of recompense will come at last; and may soon turn a fruitful land into barrenness. God's judgments should therefore make us search out and bewail our own and our fathers' iniquities. The sins of parents often entail misery on their posterity. And though the poor oppressed should have no power to relieve themselves, God will plead their cause: nor till satisfaction be made them can we hope for a blessing from God. Thus they who maliciously designed the ruin of others bring themselves and families to misery! and how unsearchable are the judgments of God in ruining the families of his wrath! Severe executions for the public good are sometimes necessary. Many parents are long spared to meet with sad scenes of anguish and grief: and often survivors, by taking pains to revive the memory of lost friends, prove their own self-tormentors. Fidelity to sovereigns in moments of danger is extremely honourable. Strength of body is of no use to resist God or withstand death. But let God's people be attacked as often as they may by their enemies, they will come off more than conquerors through him who loveth them.

CHAPTER XXII. REFLECTIONS.—Such as God has intended for great honour, or who follow Jesus into his kingdom, may be assured of meeting

STEAMERS AT SMYRNA—WHERE HOMER WAS BORN, WHO WROTE AT THE SAME TIME DAVID DID. [II. SAMUEL, xxii.]—The twenty-second chapter of Samuel contains a Psalm of David praising God for his powerful deliverance and manifold blessings. It is a sublime specimen of poetry, and about the same time that this was written, Homer lived who was born in Smyrna. Other cities claim to be the birth-place of Homer, but the inhabitants of Smyrna confirm the opinion that their city was the place of his birth by not only paying him divine honors but by showing the place which bore the poet's name. It is interesting to compare the writings of the two poets, David and Homer, living as they did in the same age about 1000 B. C. Such a comparison reveals the infinite difference between the rational conception which the Hebrews had of God and the mythological and puerile ideas of the divine held by the Greeks.

42 They [a]looked, but *there was* none to save; *even* unto the LORD, but he answered them not.

43 Then [y]did I beat them as small as the dust of the earth; I did stamp them as the mire of the street, *and* did spread them abroad.

44 Thou [z]also hast delivered me from the strivings of my people; thou hast kept me *to be* head[a] of the heathen: a people *which* I knew not shall serve me.

45 Strangers[9] shall [b]submit[1] themselves unto me: as soon as they hear, they shall be obedient unto me.

46 Strangers shall fade away, and they shall be [c]afraid out of their close places.

47 The [d]LORD liveth; and blessed *be* my rock; and exalted be the God of the rock of my salvation.

48 It *is* [e]God that avengeth me, and that bringeth[f] down the people under me,

49 And that bringeth me forth from mine enemies: [g]thou also hast lifted me up on high above them that rose up against me: thou hast delivered me from the violent man.

50 Therefore [h]I will give thanks unto thee, O LORD, among the heathen, and I will sing praises unto thy name.[2]

51 *He* [i]*is* the tower of salvation for his king; and showeth mercy to his anointed, unto David, and to his seed for evermore.

CHAPTER XXIII.

1 *David, in his last words, professeth his faith in God's promises to be beyond sense or experience, and the different state of the wicked.* 8 *A catalogue of David's mighty men.*

NOW these *be* [a]the last words[1] of David. David the son of Jesse said, and [b]the man *who was* raised up on high, the anointed of the God of Jacob, and the [c]sweet psalmist of Israel, said,

2 The [d]Spirit of the LORD spake[2] by me, and his word *was* in my tongue.

A.M. 2987. B.C. 1017.

x 1 Sa.28.6. Pr.1. 28. Mi.3.1,4.

y Ps. 118. 10–12. Da. 2. 35. Mal. 4.1. Is.41.2, 3,15,10. Mi.7.10.

z ch. iv. v. xviii. xx. Ps.18.43.

a ch.v.viii.x. Ps. 60. 8;2.8. Da.7.14.

9 Heb. *Sons of the stranger.*

b Or, *yield feigned obedience,* Ac.8.13,28.

1 Heb. *lie.*

c Heb. *arm themselves,* 1 Ki.20.11.

d De. 32. 39, 40. Ps. 144.1, 2. Lu. 1. 47. Job 19.25.

e Ps.94.1;143.1;35.1.

f 2 Co.1. 9, 10. ch. v. viii. x. xviii. xx. 1 Sa. xviii.–xxi.Ep.2.5,6.

g Ps.18. 48; 113. 7, 8; 43.1,2;140.1;3.7.1 Sa.2. 8.ch. 5.12;7.8,9.

h Ps.ciii.cxvi.cxviii. cxlvi. Ro.15. 9. Is. xii. xxv.xxvi.

2 Paul (Ro.15.9) applies this passage distinctly to Jesus the Messiah. And while ver. 51 speaks of David, let it be recollected that David in the Hebrew signifies *beloved,* so 'beloved' is one of the titles of Christ ascribed to him both on earth and from heaven. See Mat. 3. 17.Ep.1.6.—*C.*

i Pr. 18. 10. ver. 2, 3. Ps.18.50; 3. 3; 91. 2; 89. 28,29. ch.7.12. Je.30.9. Ro.1.3.

CHAP. XXIII.

B.C. 1015.

a Ge.49.1, 2. De. 33. 1, &c. Jos.23.1. 2 Pe.1. 13. Ps. 7.....

1 Not the last words uttered in life, but the last delivered upon the subject discussed.—*C.*

b 1 Sa.16. 13. ch.5.1, 3.Ps.78.70–72;89.20.

c Am.6.5. 1 Ch.16.4, 5.Ps.1.—cl.

d 2 Pe.1.21. He. 4. 1. Ac.4.25.

2 The Spirit that *spake* must be a person; and this Spirit, this person, must be God, the God of Israel.—*C.*

A.M. 2989. B.C. 1015.

e Ex.20.2;19.5,6. De. 32.43,30.ch.22.2,3.1 Co. 10.4.

f Ps.82.3,4;45.6,7;72. 2. Ro.13.1–4. Mi.5.1,2. Is.11.4,5;32.1.

8 'He shall be a just (*man* or *one*) ruling over men in the fear of God'—a clear prophecy of Messiah; without which interpretation, the whole psalm degenerates into egotistical bombast; but with which the whole becomes natural, simple, and intelligible.—*C.*

g Ju. 5. 31. Pr. 4. 18 Ps.72.6;110.3. Lu.1.68. Mal.4.2. Jn.1.7,9.

h Is.11.1;4.2. Je. 23. 5. Zec.3.8.

i ver.3,4;ch.7.18.

4 'For shall not my house be so with God?'—that is, so rising, shining, prospering.—*C.*

k ch.7. 12–17. Je. 33. 21. Is. 9. 7. Ps. 89. 3, 4, 29, 35. Mat. 16. 1 Ki. 8.4,10.

l Ps.16.5,6; 73.25,26; 142. 5. 1 Co.2. 2. Ga. 6. 14. Phi.3.8.

m Is.4.2; 7.14; 9.6,7; 11.1.

5 'For *he* is all my salvation and all my desire, though I...sprang not up speedily,' that is, David 'saw Christ's day afar off, and was glad.'—*C.*

n De.13. 13. 1 Sa. 2. 12. Lu.10.14, 27. Is.... 1 Ps. 1. 2 1 Ch. 9. 1. 2 Ch. 13. 7. 25.6;59.2,7;9;52. 9; 57.17,20,18.

o Or, *Joshebbasshebet the Tachmonite, head of the three.* 1 Ch. 11. 11. These worthies were typical of the apostles, evangelists, and teachers.

6 Kennicott has shown how the text here has been corrupted, and must be corrected from 1 Ch. 11. 11. The words 'sat in the seat,' should be the proper name *Jashobeam;* and 'Adino the Eznite,' should be 'lift up his spear.'—*I.*

p 1 Ch.11.11–25.

q Ju.5.12,18.1 Sa.17. 8–10.

r With Mar. 14. 50. Is.63.3,5; 32.2,3; 53.12. Ps.68.28.

s 1 Ch. 11. 27, 13, 14. Or, Shammoth.

3 The [e]God of Israel said, the Rock of Israel spake to me, [f]He that ruleth over men *must be* just, ruling in the fear of God:[3]

4 And [g]*he shall be* as the light of the morning *when* the sun riseth, *even* a morning without clouds; *as* [h]the tender grass *springing* out of the earth by clear shining after rain.

5 Although my house *be* [i]not so with [4]God; yet he hath [k]made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all *things,* and sure: for [l]*this is* all my salvation and all *my* desire, although [m]he make *it* not to grow.[5]

6 But *the* [n]*sons* of Belial *shall be* all of them as thorns thrust away, because they cannot be taken with hands:

7 But the man *that* shall touch them must be fenced with iron and the staff of a spear; and they shall be utterly burned with fire in the *same* place.

8 ¶ These *be* the names of the mighty men whom David had: [o]The Tachmonite that sat in the seat,[6] chief among the captains; (the same *was* Adino the Eznite;) *he lifted up his spear* against eight hundred, whom he slew at one time.

9 And after him *was* [p]Eleazar the son of Dodo the Ahohite, *one* of the three mighty men with David, when [q]they defied the Philistines *that* were there gathered together to battle, and the men of Israel were gone away:

10 He[r] arose, and smote the Philistines until his hand was weary, and his hand clave unto the sword: and the LORD wrought a great victory that day; and the people returned after him only to spoil.

11 And after him *was* [s]Shammah the son of Agee the Hararite. And the Philistines were gathered together into a troop, where was a piece of ground full of lentiles: and the people fled from the Philistines.

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with many enemies by the way. But what was in the promise the object of our faith, will in the fulfilment become the matter of our praise. Behold what God is to his people! Everything they can need; everything they can enjoy. Happy those who can claim this infinite ALL, in every form, as their own. To awaken their importunity, and to magnify God's love and power in their deliverances, God's people are often reduced to the deepest distresses: and those whom he most delights in have the severest exercises of their faith and patience. But the sharper our trials let us call the more earnestly upon God. Perseverance in prayer will assuredly be crowned with deliverance—amazing deliverance! What a mercy is it to receive grace to watch and wrestle against the sins which do so easily beset us—to have the testimony of a good conscience—and to have God freely rewarding his own grace in us! Great is the advancement of God's people. And it is reasonable that God should have the glory of all that strength, success, or honour with which he hath blessed us: yea, the more God has done for us, the more good we may expect at his hands. And the more confidently should all our faith, our thanksgiving, and our joy centre in Jesus Christ our Lord.

CHAPTER XXIII. [Ver. 1. 'The psalm of thanksgiving in which David praised the Lord for all the deliverances and benefits he had experienced throughout the whole of his life, is followed by the prophetic will and testament of the great king, unfolding the importance of his rule in relation to the sacred history of the future. And whilst the psalm may be regarded as a great hallelujah, with which David passed away from the stage of life, these 'last words' contain the divine seal of all that he has sung and prophesied concerning the eternal dominion of his seed, on the strength of the divine promise which he received through the prophet Nathan—that his throne should be established for ever. These words are not merely a lyrical expansion of that promise, but a prophetic declaration uttered by David at the close of his life, and by divine inspiration, concerning the true King of the kingdom of God' (*Delitzsch*). *P.*]

Ver. 4. [*He shall be as the light of the morning when the sun riseth.* A very valuable MS. collated by Kennicott reads, 'And as the light of the morning shall Jehovah arise, a sun.' Such a change of reading, however, is not to be adopted on such slight authority, nor is it necessary to explain the passage. The whole difficulty vanishes when we rectify the translation of ver. 3 as in marginal note. *C.*]

Ver. 5. [The meaning of this verse is:—Does not my house stand in such relation to God that the Righteous Ruler—the Messiah—will spring from it? The reason is given in the next clause: 'For he hath made an everlasting covenant with me, ordered in all things, and steadfast.' Upon this David founded his confidence that God would cause to spring forth from it all the salvation promised to him and his house, and all the good pleasure of God expressed in the covenant:—'For all my salvation, and all good pleasure, shall he not cause it to spring forth?' *P.*]

Ver. 7. [*Fenced with iron.* The translators, not seeing Messiah in the passage, evidently consider these words as referring to a man attempting to gather the thorns, and requiring to be fenced against injury. But instead of *fenced* we should translate the word *filled,* and then it becomes a prophecy of Christ which was literally fulfilled. *C.*]

Ver. 8. [*Eight hundred, whom he slew at one time.* There is a seeming discrepancy between this passage and 1 Ch. 11. 11, though they seem to be spoken of the same person. The passages may easily be reconciled thus:—(1) Though 1 Chronicles be placed after 2 Samuel, Chronicles may have been first written. (2) The Tachmonite may have assailed 300 at one time, 500 at another. (3) What the leader began, and his troops completed, may, according to all common usage, be ascribed to the leader. *C.*——This list of heroes is also given in 1 Ch. 11. 10–47, with the addition of sixteen names not here mentioned. The author of Chronicles has attached the list to his account of the capture of Zion, to show that they had aided David materially in the settlement of the kingdom. The names in the two lists are sometimes slightly different; but this is easily explained, for in the East names are differently spelled

THE ALTAR OF THE CHURCH OF THE NATIVITY—OVER THE PLACE WHERE CHRIST WAS BORN. [II. SAMUEL, xxiii : 16.]—"And the three mighty men brake through the host of the Philistines, and drew water out of the well of Bethlehem, that was by the gate, and took it, and brought it to David: nevertheless he would not drink thereof, but poured it out unto the Lord." Bethlehem is celebrated because of its relation to Boaz and Ruth, and because it was the birthplace of David; but most of all it holds its place in the affections of the human race because here was the advent of the Savior. Here the angels announced his birth to the shepherds as they minded their flocks by night. The Church of the Nativity stands over the Inn where our Savior was born. The traditional well of David from which the men drew water at the peril of their lives, is in a yard through a narrow passage on the left as we enter Bethlehem.

12 But he stood in the midst of the ground, and defended it,[6] and slew the Philistines: and the[t] LORD wrought a great victory.

13 And three of the thirty chief[7] went down, and came to David in the harvest time unto the[u] cave of Adullam: and the troop of the Philistines pitched in the valley of [x]Rephaim.

14 And David *was* then [y]in an hold, and the garrison of the Philistines *was* then *in* Bethlehem.

15 And David longed,[8] and said, Oh that one would give me drink of the [z]water of the well of Beth-lehem, which *is* by the gate!

16 And the three mighty men brake through the host of the Philistines, and drew water out of the well of Beth-lehem, that *was* by the gate, and took *it*, and brought *it* to David: nevertheless he would not drink thereof, but poured [a]it out unto the LORD:

17 And he said, Be it far from me, O LORD, that I should do this: *is not this* the blood of the men that went in jeopardy of their lives? therefore he would not drink it. These things did these three mighty men.

18 And [b]Abishai, the brother of Joab, the son of Zeruiah, was chief among three:[9] and he lifted up his spear against three hundred, *and* slew[1] *them*, and had the name among three.

19 Was he not most honourable of three? therefore he was their captain: howbeit he [c]attained not unto the *first* three.

20 And [d]Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, the son of a valiant man of [e]Kabzeel, [f]who had done many acts, he slew two [g]lion-like men of Moab: he went down also and slew a lion in the midst of a pit in time of snow.

21 And he slew an Egyptian, [h]a goodly man: and the Egyptian had a spear in his hand; but he went down to him[2] with a staff, and plucked the spear out of the Egyptian's hand, and [i]slew him with his own spear.

22 These *things* did Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, and had the name among three mighty men.

23 He was more honourable[3] than the thirty, but he attained not to the *first* three: and David set him over his [4]guard.[5]

24 Asahel[k] the brother of Joab *was* one of the thirty; [l]Elhanan the son of Dodo of Beth-lehem,

25 Shammah[m] the Harodite, Elika the Harodite,[6]

26 Helez the Paltite, Ira the son of Ikkesh the Tekoite,

27 Abiezer[n] the Anethothite, Mebunnai the Hushathite,

28 Zalmon the Ahohite, [o]Maharai the Netophathite,

29 Heleb[p] the son of Baanah, a Netophathite, Ittai the son of Ribai, out of Gibeah of the children of Benjamin,

30 Benaiah the [q]Pirathonite, Hiddai of the brooks[7] of Gaash,

31 Abi-albon[r] the Arbathite, Azmaveth the Barhumite,

32 Eliahba the Shaalbonite, [s]of the sons of Jashen, Jonathan,[8]

33 Shammah the Hararite, [t]Ahiam the son of Sharar the Hararite,

34 Eliphelet the son of Ahasbai, the son of the Maachathite, [u]Eliam the son of Ahithophel the Gilonite,

35 Hezrai[x] the Carmelite, Paarai the Arbite,

36 Igal[y] the son of Nathan of Zobah, Bani the Gadite,

37 Zelek[z] the Ammonite, Naharai the Beerothite, armour-bearer to Joab the son of Zeruiah,

38 Ira an [a]Ithrite, Gareb an Ithrite,

39 Uriah[b] the Hittite: thirty and seven[9] in all.[1]

CHAPTER XXIV.

1 *David, tempted by Satan, forceth Joab to number the people.* 5 *The captains, in nine months and twenty days, bring the muster of thirteen hundred thousand fighting men.* 10 *David, having three plagues propounded by God, repenteth, and chooseth the three days' pestilence.* 15 *After the death of threescore and ten thousand, David, by repentance, preventeth the destruction of Jerusalem.* 18 *David, by Gad's direction, purchaseth Araunah's threshing-floor, where, having sacrificed, the plague ceaseth.*

AND again the anger of the LORD was kindled [a]against Israel, and he moved David against them to say, Go, number Israel and Judah.

2 For the king said to Joab the captain of the host, which *was* with him, [b]Go now through all the tribes of Israel, from [c]Dan even to

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A.M. 2989. B.C. 1015.

6 A marauding party of Philistines came to plunder the harvest.—*C.*

t Ps.3.8;18.50. Pr.21. 31.ver.10.

7 Or, *the three captains over the thirty.*

u 1 Sa.22.1. 1 Ch.11. 15-19.

x Or, *giants*, Jos. 15.8.ch.5.18,22.

y 1 Sa.22.4,5, or ch. 5.9.

8 David had been in a disease which sometimes terminates in longing for the water of a particular well. Upon any other supposition than sickness, the fact were discreditable to David. But sickness can bring down the mightiest, that the mighty may learn to be humble. —*C.*

z Perhaps an emblem of Jesus and his Spirit, Jn. 4. 10,14. Is.12.3.

a 1 Sa.25.32,33. ver. 17. 1 Ch. 11. 18, 19. Ps. 72.14;116.15.

b 1 Ch.12.20,21;2.16. 1 Sa.26.6.

9 Probably among the second three, whose feat of daring the historian has just recorded.—*P.*

1 Heb. *slain.*

c Mat.13.8. 1 Co.15. 41,42.

d ch.20.23.1 Ki.2.35. 1 Ch.11.22,25.

e Jos.15.21.

f Heb. *great of acts*, Lu.24.19.

g Heb. *lions of God*, Ex.15.15.

h Heb. *a man of countenance or sight*, called 1 Ch. 11. 23, *a man of* great *stature.*

2 Benaiah had been upon a rock or high ground, and was challenged by the Egyptian to come down. This required great courage in Benaiah. But the exploit is by no means improbable; for by dexterously parrying the spear, he would soon turn aside his adversary's point, and beat down or get within his guard, when his staff would become not only a more manageable, but a more efficient, weapon of assault.—*Note*, Until wars shall cease (which may the Lord hasten) just praise is due to those by whom our families and our country are defended, and our enemies prevented from overrunning and destroying the land.—*C.*

i 1 Sa. 17. 51. The names of these mighties are somewhat different here from what they are in 1 Ch.xi. See there.

3 Or, *honourable among the thirty.*

4 Or, *council.*

5 Heb. *at his command.*

A.M. 2989. B.C. 1015.

k ch. 2. 18. 1 Ch. 11. 26.

l Not as ver.9.

m 1 Ch.11.27,28.

6 This catalogue is full of variations both in the text and in the versions, and differs much from that in Chronicles, which may be partly accounted for by the corruptions that have crept into both. It was the comparison of these texts that led Kennicott to engage in his great work of collating the Hebrew MSS. Perhaps the list here contains the names of the commanders who lived in the *early* part of David's reign; but it underwent various changes, which are noted in 1 Ch.xi.—*P.*

n 1 Ch.11.29.

o 1 Ch.11.30.

p 1 Ch.11.30,31.

q Ju.12.15. Jos.24.30.

7 Or, *valleys.*

r 1 Ch.11.32,33.

s 1 Ch.11.34.

8 Instead of '*the sons of Jashen, Jonathan*,' the parallel passage in Chronicles has—'*the sons of Hashem the Gizonite*,' and then joins 'Jonathan' to the next clause. The word rendered 'the sons of Jashen' is unquestionably a proper name, and ought to be read *Beni-jashen*. Jonathan also should be connected with Shammah, as in Chronicles. The whole would then read:—'Benejashen; Jonathan the son of Shammah (*Ben-shammah*) the Hararite.'—*P.*

t 1 Ch.11.35.

u ch.11.3;15.12.

x 1 Ch.11.37.

y 1 Ch.11.38.

z 1 Ch.11.39.

a Jos.15.48. 1 Ch.11. 40;2.50,53.

b ch.11.3.1 Ch.11.41. 1 Ki.15.5.

9 As there are thirty-seven enumerated, the word translated *thirty*, ver. 13, should be rendered *captains*, as it is in ver. 8, and Ex.14.7. —*C.*

1 It is probable that thirty was the original number of this distinguished corps, and that its technical name was *The Thirty*; but that the number was increased, while the old name was retained. —*P.*

CHAP. XXIV.

B.C. 1017.

a God permitted Satan to tempt them, 1 Ch.21.1-4. Ge. 45.5. ch. 16. 10. 1 Ki. 22. 22. Ac.4.28.

b Jos.9. 14. 1 Ch. 27. 23,24.

c ver.6. Ge.14.14; 21. 31.ch.3.10;17.11. Ju.20. 1. 1 Ki.4.25.

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in different parts of the country, and at different periods. Observe how different is the spelling of many of our historical names now and a century ago. *P.*]

Ver. 15. [The cave or hold of Adullam was in the wilderness of Judah, a little to the south-east of Bethlehem. The well to which tradition has given the name of David's Well is on the northern side of the village, close to the road that leads to the plain of Rephaim. If it be the real well, which is not improbable, David's mighty men must have passed round the village, leaving the Philistine garrison between them and their place of refuge. *P.*]

REFLECTIONS. It is a high honour to be endowed with gifts and invested with offices by the God of Israel, for the benefit of his people: for his gifts and graces are necessary for the faithful discharge of every office in church or state. What a mercy to mankind is Jesus and his compassion! It is pleasant to die in his arms, beholding his glory, resting on his atonement, and cleaving to his promise: but great is the wickedness, and dreadful the end, of those that oppose him and the interests of his church. God distributes, in a most gracious manner, his endowments even in natural things, rendering men weak or strong, cowardly or brave, as is best. And it is sinful for self-indulgence, or to please a superior's humour, to hazard human life: and very necessary to repent bitterly of such conduct. But let me, refreshed with the living water which flows from Jesus the Bethlehemite, be strong in the Lord and in the power of his might; so shall I put to flight the heroes and the armies of the aliens. No powers of hell or earth shall be able to withstand me; and with honour shall my deeds be recorded in the Lamb's book of life.

CHAPTER XXIV. [Ver. 1. *He moved David against them to say, Go, number Israel and Judah.* By comparing this passage with 1 Ch. 21. 1, it will be seen that 'Satan stood up against Israel, and provoked David' to this census. How is it then, in this passage, ascribed to the Lord? Just as the Lord moves men to prayer by danger, and to repentance by affliction; so, being displeased with Israel and David, he delivers them over to Satan their adversary, as he delivered Job; and David is thus judicially moved by the Lord, who has sentenced him, but instrumentally by Satan, who accused him, and received power to tempt him. *C.*]

Ver. 4. [*Went out from the presence of the king to number the people of Israel.* The census being taken by the military, and not by the civil or ecclesiastical authorities, see Nu. 1. 44, proves that David contemplated a military enrolment for purposes of war. But why then is David opposed by Joab and the other generals? Joab had the existing army completely in

Beer-sheba, and number ye the people, [d]that I may know the number of the people.

3 And Joab said unto the king, [e]Now the LORD thy God add unto the people, how many soever they be, an hundred-fold, and that the eyes of my lord the king may see *it:* but why doth my lord the king delight in this thing?

4 Notwithstanding the king's word prevailed against Joab, and against the captains of the host: and Joab and the captains of the host went[f] out from the presence of the king to number the people of Israel.

5 ¶ And they passed over Jordan, and pitched in [g]Aroer, on the right side of the city that *lieth* in the midst of the river[1] of Gad, and toward [h]Jazer:

6 Then they came to [i]Gilead, and to the land of Tahtim-hodshi;[2] and they came to [k]Dan-jaan,[3] and about to [l]Zidon,

7 And came to the strong hold of [m]Tyre, and to all the cities of the Hivites, and of the Canaanites;[4] and they went out to the [n]south of Judah, *even* to Beer-sheba.

8 So, when they had gone through all the land, they came to Jerusalem at the end of nine months and twenty days.

9 And [o]Joab gave up the sum of the number of the people unto the king: and there were in Israel eight hundred thousand valiant men that drew the sword; and the men of Judah *were* five hundred thousand men.[5]

10 ¶ And David's heart [p]smote him[6] after that he had numbered the people. And David said unto the LORD, [q]I have sinned greatly in that I have done: and now, I beseech thee, O LORD, take away the iniquity of thy servant; for I have done very foolishly.

11 For, when David was up in the morning, the word of the LORD came unto the prophet Gad,[r] David's seer, saying,

12 Go[s] and say unto David, Thus saith the LORD, I offer thee three *things;* choose thee one of them, [t]that I may *do it* unto thee.

13 So Gad came to David, and told him, and said unto him, [u]Shall seven years of famine[7] come unto thee in thy land? or wilt thou flee three months before thine enemies, while they pursue thee? or that there be three days' pestilence in thy land? now advise, and see what answer I shall return to him that sent me.

14 And David said unto Gad, [z]I am in a great strait: let us fall now into the hand of the LORD, (for his mercies *are* [y]great,) and let me not fall into the hand of [z]man.

15 ¶ So the LORD sent a [a]pestilence upon Israel from the morning even to the time appointed:[8] and there died of the people, from Dan even to Beer-sheba, seventy thousand [9]men.

16 And when the angel stretched out his hand upon Jerusalem[1] to destroy it, [b]the LORD repented[2] him of the evil, and said to the angel that destroyed the people, It is enough; stay now thine hand. And the angel of the LORD was by the thrashing-place of [c]Araunah the Jebusite.

17 And David spake [d]unto the LORD, when he saw the angel that smote the people, and said, [e]Lo, I have sinned, and I have done wickedly; but [f]these sheep, what have they done? Let thine hand, I pray thee, be against me,[3] and against my father's house.

18 ¶ And Gad came [g]that day to David, and said unto him, Go up, rear an altar unto the LORD in the thrashing-floor of Araunah the Jebusite.

19 And David, according to the saying of Gad, went up, [h]as the LORD commanded.

20 And [i]Araunah looked, and saw the king and his servants coming on toward him: and Araunah went out, and [k]bowed himself before the king on his face upon the ground.

21 And Araunah said, [l]Wherefore is my lord the king come to his servant? And David said, To buy the thrashing-floor of thee, to build an altar unto the LORD, that [m]the plague may be stayed from the people.

22 And Araunah said unto David, [n]Let my lord the king take and offer up what *seemeth* good unto him: behold, *here be* oxen for burnt-sacrifice, and thrashing-instruments, and *other* instruments of the oxen, for wood.

23 All these *things* did Araunah, *as* a king,

A.M. 2987. B.C. 1017.

d De.8.13, 14. Hab. 2.4. Pr.16.18; 29.23; 18.12.

e Ps.115.14. Is.26.15.

f Ex.1.17. Ac. 5. 29; 4.19.

g De.2.36. Jos.13.16. Nu.32.1,3.

1 Or, *valley.*

h Nu.32.35. Is.16.8, 9.

i Ge.31.21,47. Nu.32. 1,39.

2 Or, *netherland newly inhabited.*

k Ge.14.14. Jos. 19. 47. Ju.18.29.

3 *Dan-jaan* was different from *Dan,* the *northern* border city, but it may perhaps have been identical with the *Dan* mentioned in Ge. xiv.—*P.*

l Jos.11.8; 19.28, with Ge.10.15.

m Jos.19.29. 1 Ki. 5. 1. Is.xxiii. Eze. xxvi.–xxviii.

4 The *Hivites* here include the mountain tribes of Lebanon (see Ju.3.3); and the *Canaanites* were the Phœnicians who inhabited the sea-coast.—*P.*

n Ge.21.31 33. Ju.20. 1.ver.2.

o 1 Ch.21.5,6; 27. 23, 24, with Ge. 12.2; 13.16; 15.5; 22. 17. The 288,000 of the trained bands are not included in this number, as in 1 Ch.21.5,6.

5 See note on 1 Ch.21.5,6.—*C.*

p 1 Sa. 24. 5. Pr. 18. 14.

6 This seems to have occurred before Gad came with his message. It indicates sincere repentance, for it admits fully the greatness and the extreme folly of the sin, an acknowledgment that nothing but the spirit of God can induce the sinner to make.—*C.*

q ch.12.13. 1 Ch. 21. 9. Ps. 5.11; 32.5; 38. 4. 1*4.4–11.1 *51.2. Pr.28. 13. 1 Jn.1.9. Mi.7.8, 9, 18.19.

r 1 Sa.22.5; 9.9. 2 Ch. 29.29; 21.9.

s 1 Ch.21.12. 1 Ki.12. 24. Ac. 15. 28; 20. 27. Eze.3.17.

t He.12.6–10. Re. 3. 19. Pr.3.12. Ps.94.12.

u ch. 21. 1. 1 Ch. 21, 12, *i.e.* three years of famine, added to those in ch.21. 1, with the present year between them.

7 'Seven years of famine'—the judgment of Egypt without the preparation of Joseph. 'Three months of flight'—the judgment of God upon David's military pride, and contemplated conquests. 'Three days of pestilence'—the wasting of that numerous population that had first excited the nation's pride, and tempted them to long for military glory and foreign conquest. —*Note.* 'Be sure thy sin will find thee out.' Nu. 32. 23, and punishment will usually be in conformity to guilt.—*C.*

A.M. 2987. B.C. 1017.

x 2 Ki.6.15. Jn.12.27. Mi.7.8,9. He.12.5,8.

y Or, *many,* Ps.103. 11–14; 86.5,15; 145.9; 40. 5. Ex.34.6,7.

z Pr. 12.10. Is. 47. 6. Zec.1.15. 2 Ki.13.3,7. 2 Ch.28.6,9.

a Is.37.36. Nu.16.49; 25.9. 1 Sa.6.19.

8 'The time appointed' has been variously interpreted. The most probable meaning is the time of the evening sacrifice, and assembling of the people for worship. If this be correct, then the plague only lasted part of a day. Its ravages were so sudden and so terrible that all must acknowledge it to be a signal mark of the divine displeasure. —*P.*

9 He had been proud of the numbers of his people, and therefore the judgment must be such as will make them few. What we make the matter of our pride, it is just with God to take from us, and to make the means of our punishment. He had chosen the pestilence, because he and his family would be as much exposed to it as the poorest Israelite; and he would continue for a shorter time under the divine rebuke, however severe it might be.—*J.*

1 Perhaps there was more wickedness, especially more pride (and that was the sin now chastised), in Jerusalem, than elsewhere, and therefore the hand of the destroyer is stretched out upon that city; but then the Lord 'repented him of the evil,' changed not his mind, but his way. 'Jerusalem shall be spared for the ark's sake, for it is the place God hath chosen to put his name there.'—*J.*

b Ge. 6. 6. Ps. 7*. 38. 74.11.106.45; 135 14.90. 13. Ex. 2. 32. Ho. 11.8. Hab. 3.2. Ch.21.15.

2 See note on Ex. 32.14.—*C.*

c Or, Ornan, 1 Ch. 21.15.

d 1 Ch.21.16,17.

e ver 10. Is.6.5; 64 6. Ps.25.11. Job 7.20.

f 1 Ki. 22. 17. Ps. 44. 11. Je.12.3.

3 David is here a beautiful type of Christ delivering himself up, but stipulating to 'let the disciples go.'—*C.*

g 1 Ch.21.18. Ge. 22. 14. 2 Ch.20.12. Ps 46.1. 2 Co. 5.19,21. Col. 1.20. ver.25.

h 1 Ch.27.19. De.12. 32. Ps.119.60.

i 1 Ch.21.20,21.

k Ge.18.2; 19.1. ch.9. 8. Ru.2.10.

l 1 Ch.21. 22. Ge. 23. 8–10. Je. 32. 6–14.

m Nu.16.48. Ps.106. 30.

n Ge.23.11. 1 Ki. 19. 21. 1 Ch.21.23.

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his interest, and was thereby generally too strong for David. But he dreaded such addition of new troops as might enable David to overpower him or depose him from the chief command. Next, what was the sin of David and Israel, for which they are delivered over to the tempter and punished with the plague? Their sin was the appetite for military glory beyond the purposes of defence, and of foreign conquest beyond the boundaries assigned them by God—the most glaring sins, for which, and by which, nations still continue to be punished. *C.*]

Ver. 5. [This description is given to distinguish *Aroer of Gad* from *Aroer of Reuben.* The latter was in the valley of the Arnon; the former a little eastward of Rabbath-ammon, and in the valley in which Rabbah is situated. See Jos. 13. 25. *P.*]

Ver. 6. [*Tahtim-hodshi.* Though this word is translated in some of the old versions, it appears to me to be a proper name, descriptive, however, of the physical aspect of the region to which it was given. The route taken by the king's messengers was first eastward to Moab; then northward through Gilead; then '*to the land of Tahtim-hodshi,*' and on to Danjaan and Zidon. The land of *Tahtim-hodshi* was thus manifestly a section of the upper valley of the Jordan, probably the 'netherland' or 'lowland,' now called *Ard el-Huleh,* lying deep down at the western base of Hermon. *P.*]

Ver. 9. [In all the numbers were 1,300,000; to these must probably be added the trained bands, or standing army, making up the whole people fit for military service to about *a million and a half.* This would represent a population of some *six millions.* It will thus be seen that they had increased nearly threefold since the exodus. *P.*]

Ver. 13. [*See what answer I shall return to him that sent me.* We read in 1 Ch. 21. 12 that the alternative offer was not seven but three years. How are these differences to be reconciled? The Septuagint reads three in both places; and the seven, by what may be called the *Gordian Canon,* is charged to the error of a transcriber. But as there is great danger in this violent criticism, so there is no need of it. On examination the two accounts will be found to have been delivered at different times—that in Chronicles the last; and in it the *interrogative seven* are reduced to the *positive three. C.*]

Ver. 23. [This is one of the most remarkable and solemn incidents in Bible history. A knowledge of the locality renders the story more graphic. The city and palace of David stood on Mount Zion. To the east, separated from it by a very deep and narrow ravine, was another mountain top, somewhat lower. On the summit of the latter an old Jebusite chief, apparently the dethroned king of the Canaanite Jebus, had a thrashing floor; beside it was a cave in the rock. Araunah, the chief, was thrashing wheat. He saw the destroying angel, and fled into the cave. David soon afterwards approached; Araunah 'went out' to meet him. The Jewish king asked to buy the floor, the ex-king of Jebus offered it free. David insisted

give unto the king: and Araunah said unto the king, °The LORD thy God accept thee.

24 And the king said unto Araunah, ᵖNay; but I will surely buy *it* of thee at a price: neither will I offer burnt-offerings unto the LORD my God of that which doth cost me nothing. So David bought the thrashing-floor and the oxen for ᑫfifty shekels of silver.[4]

25 And David ʳbuilt there an altar unto the LORD, and offered burnt-offerings and peace-offerings. So the LORD was ˢentreated for the land, and the plague was stayed from Israel.

A.M. 2987. B.C. 1017.

o 1 Ch. 21. 16. Ps. 20. 3. Ja. 5. 16. Ro. 15. 16, 30. 1 Ti. 2. 1, 2. 1 Pe. 2. 5.

p 1 Ch. 21. 24. Ge. 23. 13. Ro. 12. 17.

q 1 Ch. 21. 25. He gave this for the mere floor, and the oxen treading upon it.

[4] We read in 1 Ch. 21. 25, six hundred shekels of gold by weight. How are these differing accounts to be reconciled? The fifty shekels of silver were for the mere 'thrashing-floor and oxen,' the six hundred shekels of gold for the entire *place*.—*C.*

r Ge. 8. 20; 22. 9. 8, 9, 14. 1 Sa. 7. 9, 17. 2 Ch. 3. 1.

s 1 Ch. 21. 26. ch. 21. 14; ver. 14.

on paying the full price. An altar was erected; and the spot which had been originally consecrated by the sacrifice of Abraham, and called *Moriah*, 'the vision of Jehovah,' was now again dedicated to God. In a few years more the spot became the site of the great altar of Solomon's temple. To this day the site of Araunah's thrashing-floor is one of the holiest shrines of Mohammedanism. *P.*]

REFLECTIONS.—It is very dangerous when the sins of subjects provoke God to permit Satan to tempt their kings. He exactly discerns our pride, and detests it and everything leading to or produced by it. And it is cause of great shame to the saints, when monsters of wickedness are made to put them in mind of the promises of God and of their own duty. The pleasures obtained by sinful methods are quickly turned into the gall of asps within us: and bitter are the griefs and great the straits, when we have no choice but of destructive judgments allowed us by God. Alas! our sin, our folly, makes it so! But let a sense of guilt put an edge of importunity upon our prayers;—it may be the Lord will be gracious. He often smites where he means not to destroy. And though in his just judgment he will abase our pride by smiting our idol, he will mingle mercy with judgment. While, therefore, we tremble at his judgments, let us beware of provoking him by our sins. How it stings a generous mind to have neighbours, and especially a Saviour, suffering for his sins! But under all our guilt, and all our plagues, let Jesus, our altar, our sacrifice, and ransom, be applied to as the means of our reconcilement to God. Let sacrifices of praise attend our pardon, and every manifestation of it. And however generous our friends may be, let us never willingly come under needless obligations to them; and never let us wish to serve God at the expense of others.

THE FIRST BOOK OF KINGS.

Perhaps this and the following book were written by the prophets who lived in their respective periods; and the whole connected together by Jeremiah or Ezra. They contain the history of the Jewish church and nation for about 427 years, from the coronation of Solomon to the burning of the temple by the Chaldeans. The alternate changes of mercies and judgments therein represented are an exact fulfilment of Le. xxvi.; De. xxviii. xxxii.

Forty years the kingdom of Israel continued united under Solomon, whose instalment, wisdom, wealth, erection of the temple, and idolatrous apostasy, are largely described, i.–xi. After the division, the kingdom of the ten tribes continued two hundred and fifty-four years under nineteen kings, descended from nine different families; viz. Jeroboam I., Nadab;—Baasha, Elah;—Zimri;—Omri, Ahab, Ahaziah, Jehoram;—Jehu, Jehoahaz, Jehoash, Jeroboam II., Zechariah;—Shallum;—Menahem, Pekahiah;—Pekah;—Hoshea: all of them idolaters. The kingdom of Judah continued three hundred and eighty-seven years under nineteen kings of the line of David; viz. Rehoboam, Abijah, Asa, Jehoshaphat, Jehoram, Ahaziah (Athaliah was an usurper), Joash, Amaziah, Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, Hezekiah, Manasseh, Amon, Josiah, Jehoahaz, Jehoiakim, Jehoiachin, and Zedekiah: of whom Asa, Jehoshaphat, Jotham, Hezekiah, and Josiah were pious, and Manasseh a penitent. The history of these thirty-nine sovereigns, with that of the prophets Elijah and Elisha, is the subject-matter of these books. The scope is to show how righteousness exalts a nation, and sin is the reproach of any people.

[The First and Second Books of Kings were originally only one book. They are so still in Jewish manuscripts. They were divided in the Septuagint version, and printed so for the first time in Hebrew in the Bible edited by Bomberg. In the Septuagint and Vulgate they are called the Third and Fourth Books of Kings, First and Second Samuel being counted as First and Second Kings. The reason of this is obvious. The history in the four books is continuous, forming in fact a complete outline of the whole Israelitish monarchy from the anointing of David till the captivity.

There can be little doubt that Jeremiah was the author of the Books of Kings. Jewish tradition affirms the fact, and the language and style fully corroborate it. The last chapter bears evidence that the writer of it was an eye-witness of the triumph of the Babylonish arms and the capture of the Jews, while he himself remained in Judea. This exactly accords with the history of Jeremiah. The sources from which he derived his information were doubtless national records and other authentic documents. The latter part of the history came under the author's own observation; and accordingly we find that the narrative of the appointment of Gedaliah as governor, of his murder, and of the flight of the Jews to Egypt, is just an abridgment of the Book of Jeremiah, ch. xl.–xliii. Several works are mentioned by the writer as sources of information:—*The Book of the Acts of Solomon*, 1 Ki. 11. 41; *The Book of Jonah*, 2 Ki. 14. 25. Others are named in Chronicles; such as *The Acts of David; The Book of Nathan; The Prophecy of Ahijah the Shilonite;* and *The Visions of Iddo the Seer*, &c. These were doubtless accessible to Jeremiah; and formed part of the materials from which, under divine inspiration, he composed the Books of Kings. *P.*]

CHAPTER I.

1 Abishag cherisheth David in his extreme age. 5 Adonijah, David's darling, usurpeth the kingdom. 11 By the counsel of Nathan, 15 Bathsheba moveth the king on Solomon's behalf, 22 and Nathan secondeth her. 28 David reneweth his oath to Bathsheba. 32 Solomon, by David's appointment, being anointed king by Zadok and Nathan, the people triumph. 41 Jonathan bringing these news, Adonijah's guests flee. 50 Adonijah, fleeing to the horns of the altar, on condition of his good behaviour, is dismissed by Solomon.

NOW king David was ᵃold *and* stricken in years; and they covered him with clothes, but he gat no heat.

2 Wherefore his ᵇservants said unto him, Let there be sought for my lord the king a young virgin; and let her ᶜstand before the king, and let her cherish[1] him, and ᵈlet her lie in thy bosom, that my lord the king ᵉmay get heat.

3 So they ᶠsought for a fair damsel throughout all the coasts of Israel, and found ᵍAbishag a Shunammite, and brought her to the king.

4 And the damsel *was* very fair, and cherished the king, and ministered to him: but the king ʰknew her not.

A.M. 2988. B.C. 1016.

CHAP. I.

a 2 Sa. 5. 4. Ps. 90. 10.

b Ge. 20. 8; 40. 20; 41. 37, 38, *i.e.* courtiers.

c De. 1. 38; 10. 8. 1 Sa. 16. 21, 22.

[1] Heb. *be a cherisher unto him.* This practice is common in the East; old and decrepit men often repay a young person by leaving her a large property.—*Roberts.*——That Abishag was considered as David's concubine is evident from ch. 2. 22. A 'Shunammite' means a native of Shunem, in the tribe of Issachar, a few miles south of Tabor.—*I.*

d Ge. 16. 5. De. 13. 6. 2 Sa. 12. 3. Mi. 7. 5.

e Ec. 4. 11. ver. 1.

f Es. 2. 2–4.

g ch. 2. 17, 22. Jos. 19. 18. 1 Sa. 28. 4. 2 Ki. 4. 6, 25.

h Ge. 4. 1. Mat. 1. 25.

CHAPTER I. [Ver. 1. *King David was old.* He was now about his 69th year. For he came to the throne at thirty, and reigned forty years; which extended to about a year after this period. He died therefore at an age comparatively young. But his fatigues in eluding Saul during his exile amongst the

5 ¶ Then [i]Adonijah the son of Haggith exalted[k] himself, saying, I will be king: and [l]he prepared him chariots and horsemen, and fifty men to run before him.

6 And his father [m]had not displeased him at any time[1] in saying, Why hast thou done so? and he also *was a* very [n]goodly *man:* and *his mother*[o] bare him after Absalom.[2]

7 And he [p]conferred with [q]Joab the son of Zeruiah, [r]and with Abiathar the priest: and they, following Adonijah, helped *him.*

8 But [r]Zadok the priest, and Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, and Nathan the prophet, and Shimei,[3] and Rei, and the [s]mighty men which *belonged* to David, were not with Adonijah.

9 And Adonijah [t]slew sheep, and oxen, and fat cattle, by the stone of Zoheleth, which *is* by [u]En-rogel,[4] and called all his brethren the king's sons, and all the men of Judah the king's servants:

10 But Nathan the prophet, and Benaiah, and the mighty men, and Solomon his brother, he called not.[5]

11 ¶ Wherefore Nathan [x]spake unto Bathsheba the mother of Solomon, saying, Hast thou not heard that Adonijah the son of Haggith doth reign, and David our lord knoweth *it* not?

12 Now therefore come, [y]let me, I pray thee, give thee counsel, that thou [z]mayest save thine own life, and the life of thy son Solomon.

13 Go and get thee in unto king David, and say unto him, Didst not thou, my lord, O king, swear unto thine handmaid, saying, [a]Assuredly Solomon thy son shall reign after me, and he shall [b]sit upon my throne? why then doth Adonijah reign?

14 Behold, while thou yet talkest there with the king, I also will come in after thee, and confirm[c] thy words.

15 ¶ And Bath-sheba went in unto the king into the chamber: and the [d]king was very old; and Abishag the Shunammite ministered unto the king.

16 And Bath-sheba [e]bowed, and did obeisance unto the king. And the king said, What wouldest thou?

17 And she said unto him, [f]My lord, thou swarest by the LORD thy God unto thine handmaid, *saying,* [g]Assuredly Solomon thy son shall reign after me, and he shall sit upon my throne:[6]

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i 2 Sa.3.4.1 Ch.3.2.

k Lu.14.11.Pr.16.18; 18.12. 2 Sa.19.11. Ju.9. 2.De.17.15.1 Ch.22.9.

l 2 Sa. 15. 1. De. 17. 16.Ps.20.7.

m Pr.23. 13; 29. 15. 1 Sa.3.13.Le.19.17.

1 David's weakness seems to have been over-fondness, and consequent indulgence, of his children. For such a line of education, it is no excuse to call it 'a failing that leans to virtue's side;' however amiable the over-fond parent may be, 'he that spareth the rod (when it is deserved) hateth the child.'—*C.*

n 2 Sa.14.25. 1 Sa. 9. 2;10.23.

o 2Sa.3.3.4.1 Ch.3.2.

2 Absalom's mother was Maacah, Adonijah's Haggith, 2 Sa.3.3.4, the words therefore mean that Haggith bare Adonijah after Maacah had born Absalom.—*C.*

p Ps.2.2.Eze.38.10.

q 2 Sa.8.16,17. ch. 2. 28-35.

r 2 Sa. 8. 17, 18; 7. 2; 12. 1-15; 16. 5.

3 It is by no means probable that this is Shimei of Bahurim, but one of David's 'mighty men' of the same name, whom we find distinguished under Solomon, ch. 4.18.—*C.*

s 2 Sa.23.8-39. 1 Ch. 11.10-47.

t Nu. 23. 1. Pr. 15. 8. Is.1.11-15.

u 2 Sa.15. 17; 17. 17, *r.v.* the fuller's well, Is.7.3.

4 In the bottom of the Kidron, a short distance south of Jerusalem.—*P.*

5 This was a very significant exception, for he doubtless knew that the crown had been assigned to Solomon, though a younger brother. Feeling that this was the best opportunity of asserting his claim, he, in imitation of Absalom, set up a splendid retinue, and courted popularity.—*C.*

x 2 Sa.7.12-15;12.24. 1 Ch.22.9;3.5.Ps.37.3.

y Pr.17.2;11.14;24.6; 12.15,20;15.22;27.9.

z ver. 21. Ge. 19. 17. Ac.27.31.

a 2 Ch.22.9,10. 2 Sa. 12.24,25.

b De.17.18. 1 Ch. 29. 23;28.5;22.9,10.

c Heb. *fill up,* ver. 27-37.

d ver.1,4.

e Ge.18. 2; 19. 1. Ru. 2.10.2 Sa.9.6,8;14.4,22, 33.

f 1 Pe.3.6. Ge.18.12. Ep.5.33.

g 2 Sa.7.13. 1 Ch.29. 1,9;22.9,10.ver.13.

6 As Saul and David had been divinely designated to the throne, so was Solomon, as appears from 1 Ch. 22. 8-11, and not by any undue influence of Bathsheba, or parental partiality of David.—*Note,* In this respect Solomon was a type of Christ, who became 'prince of peace,' not by the will of man, but by the election and appointment of God the Father, Is. 42.1. Mat. 12.18.—*C.*

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h ver.11,13,25.

i ver.7,9,10,25.

7 It appears that David's right to nominate which of his sons he pleased to succeed him was recognized by his subjects. Michaelis thinks that he had secured this right by the terms of his covenant with the people. But it rather seems to have been a right which needed no stipulation, being sanctioned by general usage; as we see exemplified in the case of Jacob, who deprived his eldest son Reuben of that priority which would otherwise have belonged to him. The right of the eldest son was in general recognized, but with a reserved right in the father to give the preference to a younger son if he saw occasion. Oriental kings still enjoy this power. The late King of Persia, for instance, publicly recognized his second son (Abbas Mirza) as his successor, to the exclusion of the eldest, who, however, took no pains to conceal his intention to put the matter to the arbitration of the sword.—*Kitto.*

k Heb. *lie down.* De.31.16. Is.57.2. Ge. 15.15;47.30.

l Heb. *sinners,* Ge. 43.9. Jos.2.19.

m ver.14.

8 He had come into the anteroom, but not yet to the king's private chamber. See ver.28.—*C.*

n ver.16.

o ver.7,9,19.

p Heb. *let king Adonijah live,* 1 Sa. 10.24.ver.34.Re.13.4.

q ver.8,19.

r 2 Sa.7.2; 12. 24,25. ver.20.

9 This should rather be in the direct interrogative form, like the preceding clause: 'Hast thou not shown to thy servant?' insinuating, but in a delicate and respectful manner, that he had done so.—*I.*

1 According to the abbreviated style of Scripture narrative, the retirement of Bathsheba, on the entrance of Nathan, is not noticed, but is clearly to be inferred from her recall.—*C.*

2 Heb. *before the king.*

s Ju.8.18,19.2 Sa.12. 5.ch.17.4.

t Ps. 34. 19,22; 71.23. 2 Sa.4.9. Ge.48.16.

3 The true believer loves to review his past experience, and to remember all the way in which he has been led in the wilderness. The grateful recollection of the distresses out of which the Lord has redeemed him enhances his joy, enlivens his hope, and animates him to his duty, even under the decays of nature and the approach of death.—*I.*

u ver.13,17.

x ver.16,23.Ge.18.2; 19.1.

18 And now, behold, [h]Adonijah reigneth; and now, my lord the king, thou knowest *it* not:

19 And he [i]hath slain oxen, and fat cattle, and sheep in abundance, and hath called all the sons of the king, and Abiathar the priest, and Joab the captain of the host: but Solomon thy servant hath he not called.

20 And thou, my lord, O king, the eyes of all Israel *are* upon thee, that thou shouldest tell them who shall sit on the throne[7] of my lord the king after him.

21 Otherwise it shall come to pass, when my lord the king shall [k]sleep with his fathers, that I and my son Solomon shall be counted [l]offenders.

22 ¶ And, lo, while she yet talked with the king, [m]Nathan the prophet also came in.[8]

23 And they told the king, saying, Behold Nathan the prophet. And when he was come in before the king, he [n]bowed himself before the king with his face to the ground.

24 And Nathan said, My lord, O king, hast thou said, Adonijah shall reign after me, and he shall sit upon my throne?

25 For [o]he is gone down this day, and hath slain oxen, and fat cattle, and sheep in abundance, and hath called all the king's sons, and the captains of the host, and Abiathar the priest; and, behold, they eat and drink before him, and say, [p]God save king Adonijah.

26 But me, [q]*even* me thy servant, and Zadok the priest, and Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, and thy servant Solomon, hath he not called.

27 Is this thing done by my lord the king, and thou hast not [r]showed[9] *it* unto thy servant, who should sit on the throne of my lord the king after him?

28 ¶ Then king David answered and said, Call me Bath-sheba:[1] and she came into the king's presence,[2] and stood before the king.

29 And the king sware, and said, [s]*As* the LORD liveth, that hath [t]redeemed my soul out of all distress,[3]

30 Even as [u]I sware unto thee by the LORD God of Israel, saying, Assuredly Solomon thy son shall reign after me, and he shall sit upon my throne in my stead; even so will I certainly do this day.

31 Then Bath-sheba [x]bowed with *her* face to

Philistines, his various harassing campaigns, but above all his family afflictions, might well bring on a premature old age, and wear out the most vigorous constitution. *C.*]

Ver. 5. [*Adonijah the son of Haggith exalted himself.* The sons of David in order, were Amnon, slain by Absalom; Chileab, of whom there is no subsequent mention; Absalom, slain by Joab; and next Adonijah, who, as eldest, might now claim the throne, by right of orderly succession. *C.*]

REFLECTIONS.—The strongest constitution of men quickly wastes of itself, and every project for retaining of strength or vigor is foolish and ineffectual. A burden of infirmities attends old age; and happy they who, in the views of it, have all things ready for an eternal state! Indulgent parents are commonly in their old age contemned and plagued by their children, especially such as they most indulged. Ambition of reigning leads many to trample on the ordinances of both God and men. And they are, in general, most fond of high stations who neither know the duties of them, nor consider the labour and vexation which attend them. Such as make their belly their god will side with any party that will feast them best. But how easily God defeats every project inconsistent with his promise, even when it seems fully secured! In times of danger every prudent mean ought to be used for averting it. And they who know God's will should be zealous for the accomplishment of it.—While kings are often kept ignorant of things nearly concerning their kingdom and interest, usurpers will stick at no cruelty to fix themselves on a throne. But if the enemies of God's people be alert and vigorous, their friends ought to be active and vigilant: and such as are weak, through infirmity, should be stirred up and encouraged. Our oaths should ever be remembered, and our consciences bound to fulfil them. Hearts truly grateful never forget God's mercies, nor allow themselves to neglect opportunities of thankfully mentioning them. And it is extremely pleasant when aged saints take every opportunity of witnessing for God. What is right and seasonable should be done without delay:

FOUNTAIN OF JOAB—THE KING'S POOL MENTIONED BY NEHEMIAH. [I. KINGS, i : 9.]—"And Adonijah slew sheep and oxen and fat cattle by the stone of Zoheleth, which is by En-rogel, and called all his brethren the king's sons, and all the men of Judah the king's servants." Joab's fountain is identical with En-rogel, which was for years identified with Bir Eyub south of the pool of Siloam, and at the union of the valleys of Hinnom and of Kedron. But according to Haskett Smith, M. Clermont-Gannaeu recovered the stone of Zoheleth mentioned in I. Kings, i : 9, at a rocky plateau in the midst of the village of Silwan, which is known to-day in Arabic as Zhoheh. Thus it is thought that En-rogel or Joab's Fountain is identical with the Virgin's Fountain. This is thought also to be identical with the king's pool mentioned in Nehemiah, ii : 14, and is also thought to be the one called Solomon's reservoir by Josephus. This is between the pool of Siloam and the south side of the Temple.

the earth, and did reverence to the king, and said, [y]Let my lord king David live for ever.[4]

32 ¶ And king David said, Call me [z]Zadok the priest, and Nathan the prophet, and Benaiah the son of Jehoiada. And they came before the king.

33 The king also said unto them, Take with you the servants of your lord, and cause Solomon my son to [c]ride upon mine own mule,[5] and bring him down to [b]Gihon:[6]

34 And let Zadok the priest and Nathan the prophet, [c]anoint him there king over Israel: and[d] blow ye with the trumpet, and say, God save king Solomon.

35 Then ye shall come up after him, that he may come and sit upon my throne; for he shall be king in my stead: and [e]I have appointed him to be ruler over Israel and over Judah.

36 And Benaiah the son of Jehoiada answered the king, and said, [f]Amen: the LORD God of my lord the king say so *too*.

37 As[g] the LORD hath been with my lord the king, even so be he with Solomon, and [h]make his throne greater than the throne of my lord king David.

38 ¶ So [i]Zadok the priest, and Nathan the prophet, and Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, and the Cherethites, and the Pelethites, went down, and caused Solomon to ride upon king David's mule, and brought him to Gihon.

39 And Zadok the priest took an [k]horn of oil out of the tabernacle, and anointed Solomon: and they blew the trumpet; and all the people said, God save king Solomon.

40 And [l]all the people came up after him; and the people piped with pipes, and rejoiced with great joy, so that the earth rent[7] with the sound of them.

41 ¶ And Adonijah, and all the guests that *were* with him, heard *it* as they had made an end[m] of eating.[8] And when Joab heard the sound of the trumpet, he said, Wherefore *is* this noise of the city being in an uproar?

42 And while he yet spake, behold, [n]Jonathan the son of Abiathar the priest came: and Adonijah said unto him, Come in; for thou *art* a[o] valiant man, and bringest good tidings.

43 And Jonathan answered and said to Adonijah, [p]Verily our lord king David hath made Solomon king.

44 And[q] the king hath sent with him Zadok the priest, and Nathan the prophet, and Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, and the Cherethites, and

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[y] Ne.2.3. Da.2.4; 6. 21.

4 Not a form of mere conventional ceremony or courtly adulation, but a prayer—a sincere and humble prayer, not that he might 'live for ever' on earth, in the feebleness and misery of old age, but that he might attain to 'glory, and honour, and immortality, eternal life' with God.—*C.*

[z] ver.8,26,38.

[a] Ge 41.43.Es.6.8.

5 Adonijah and his friends were now at the fountain of Enrogel, ver. 9, a place of public resort, well suited to give publicity to his assumption of royalty. This is generally admitted to have been on the east of Jerusalem. Solomon is sent to the fountain of Gihon, a place of similar publicity on the west, so that all collision of parties might be avoided, and his inauguration peaceably consummated. —*C.*

[b] 2 Ch.32.30.ver.45.

6 The pool of Gihon lay at the head of the valley of Hinnom, nearly half a mile west of the city. From it an aqueduct was made to the city. The flat ground round the pool was an admirable place for public assemblies. *P.*

[c] 1 Sa. 10. 1; 16.13. 2 Ki.9.3; 11.12;23.30. Ps. 45.7. Ac.10.38. 1 Jn.2. 27.

[d] 2 Ki.9.13;11.12–14. 2 Sa.15.10. ver.25. Ps. 97. 1; 72. 27. Mar.11.9, 10.

[e] Ps. 2.6. 2 Sa.19.41, ch.12.19.

[f] Je. 11.5. De.27.15–26.Ps.33.9. Mat.6.13.

[g] Jos.1.5,17. 2 Ki.2, 9. He.13.5. Is.41.10. 1 Ch.22 16.

[h] ver. 47. Ps. 72. 8. 2 Ki.2.9. Da.7.14. Mat. 28.18. Phi.2.10,11.

[i] ver. 8, 26, 32, 33.44. 2 Sa.15.18;8.18.

[k] 1 Sa.10.1;16.1. Ex. 25.6.1 Ch.29.22.

[l] 1 Sa.10.24; 11.15. 2 Ki. 11. 20. 1 Ch. 12. 38. Zec.9.9. Ps.97.1; 47.5–9. Re.11.15–18.

7 This is not a mere figure, but may be matter of fact. In several parts of the Alps, the guides will not permit the traveller to speak above a whisper for fear of disengaging the avalanche. The rejoicing in the multitude may have produced a similar effect on the looser parts of the rocky cliffs around Jerusalem. *C.*—This is synonymous with our expression, 'They rent the air with their cries.'—*I.*

[m] 1 Th. 5. 2. Pr. 14. 13. Job 20.5. Lu.17.26. Phi.3.19. Ac.21.31,32.

8 Adonijah and his guests had wasted much time upon this magnificent feast, when far more important concerns were waiting their attention, and when ruin hung over their heads.—*I.*

[n] 2 Sa.15.36;17.17.

[o] 2 Sa.18.27.1 Ki.22. 8. Je.12.6.1 Th.5.c.3.

[p] ver.32–40.

[q] ver.38,39.

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[r] 1 Ch. 11. 5. 2 Ch.5. 2.

[s] ver.13. Ps. 132. 11. 1 Ch.22.10;28.5;29.23.

[t] 2 Sa.8.10;21.3. Ex. 12.32.

[u] ver.37.

[x] Ge. 24. 26; 47. 31. He.11.21. Ps.103.1–6.

[y] Ps.72. 18, 19. 1 Ch. 29.10–20. Pr.17.6.

[z] Pr.28.1. Ps. 53. 5. Job 20.5. Da.5.4–6. Ac. 12.23.

[a] Ex.38.2;21.14. ch. 2.28. Ps.118.27.

9 There is no precept in the law directing a culprit to take hold of the horns of the altar. Yet it seems to be an act admitted as testimony of an appeal to the legal but temporary protection afforded to certain culprits in the cities of refuge. It is not said where this altar was, but as Gibeon was a city of refuge, and as an altar was still there, ch. 3. 4, it is most likely Adonijah would flee to it, as he might fear to be ranked, if not with actual, yet still with intentional manslayers, according to that principle of European jurisprudence which condemns even the imagining the death of a king. *C.*—The altar erected on the thrashing-floor of Araunah, 2 Sa.24.25. The altar of the Hebrews seems to have been a refuge till a man's case was heard, or till pardon was obtained; though there is no precept in the law to make it a privileged place, as it was among the Greeks and Romans. The *murderer* was to be taken from the altar and slain. Ex.21.12–14. 'Adonijah acknowledged Solomon as king both by word and deed, and received a conditional pardon; but Solomon gave him fair warning that he was put upon his good behaviour. He also required him to go to his house and live a retired life, not affecting the splendour and state that he had done before' (*Scott*).—*I.*

[b] 1 Sa.14.45.2 Sa.14. 11. Ac.27. 34.

[c] Le.19.15. De.1.17. 2 Ch.19.7.

1 Future plotting against Solomon's government.—*C.*

[d] Pr.24.21. Ezr.7.13, 14. Jn.15.14.1 Co.7.20.

CHAP. II.

B.C. 1015.

[a] Ge.47.29;27.1. De. 33.1. Jos. xxiii. xxiv. 2 Pe.1.13,14.

[b] Jos.23.14. He.9.27. Job 30.23.

[c] Jos.1.7;23.6. 1 Ch. 29.20. Pr.16.32. 1 Ti. 4. 2.2 Ti.2.1 Co.16.13.

[d] Jos.1.7. De.4.1;29. 9;26.2;17.18. Mal.4.4. 1 Ch.22.6–16;28.9–21.

1 Keep his *charge*, *i.e.* what he has given thee to keep; walk in *his ways* and not in thine own; keep his *statutes*, receiving all his appointments as holy, just, and good; keep his *commandments*, doing what he bids, avoiding what he forbids; keep his *judgments* and his *testimonies*, for what he deems evil is evil, and what he calls good is good. —*I.*

the Pelethites, and they have caused him[r] to ride upon the king's mule:

45 And Zadok the priest and Nathan the prophet have anointed him king in Gihon: and they are come [r]up from thence rejoicing, so that the city rang again. This *is* the noise that ye have heard.

46 And also Solomon [s]sitteth on the throne of the kingdom.

47 And, moreover, the king's servants came to [t]bless our lord king David, saying, [u]God make the name of Solomon better than thy name, and make his throne greater than thy throne. And the king [x]bowed himself upon the bed.

48 And also thus said the king, [y]Blessed *be* the LORD God of Israel, which hath given *one* to sit on my throne this day, mine eyes even seeing *it*.

49 And [z]all the guests that *were* with Adonijah were afraid, and rose up, and went every man his way.

50 ¶ And Adonijah feared because of Solomon, and arose, and went, [a]and caught hold on the horns of the altar.[9]

51 And it was told Solomon, saying, Behold, Adonijah feareth king Solomon: for, lo, he hath caught hold on the horns of the altar, saying, Let king Solomon swear unto me today, that he will not slay his servant with the sword.

52 And Solomon said, If he will show himself a worthy man, there [b]shall not an hair of him fall to the earth: but if [c]wickedness[1] shall be found in him, he shall die.

53 So king Solomon sent, and they brought him down from the altar. And he came and bowed himself to king Solomon: and Solomon said unto him, [d]Go to thine house.

CHAPTER II.

1 *David, having given a charge to Solomon,* 3 *of religiousness,* 5 *of Joab,* 7 *of Barzillai,* 8 *of Shimei,* 10 *dieth.* 12 *Solomon succeedeth him.* 13 *Adonijah, moving Bathsheba to sue unto Solomon for Abishag, is put to death.* 26 *Abiathar, having his life spared, is deprived of the priesthood.* 28 *Joab fleeing to the horns of the altar is there slain.* 35 *Benaiah is put in Joab's room, and Zadok in Abiathar's.* 36 *Shimei, confined to Jerusalem, by occasion of going thence to Gath in defiance of the king's orders, is put to death.*

NOW the days of David drew nigh [a]that he should die; and he charged Solomon his son, saying,

2 I go [b]the way of all the earth: [c]be thou strong therefore, and show thyself a man;

3 And [d]keep the charge[1] of the LORD thy God, to walk in his ways, to keep his statutes, and his commandments, and his judgments, and

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and that is most likely to prosper which is begun with dependence on God, and fervent prayer for his blessing. It is affection, not force, that can make dutiful subjects: and to leave church and state in a prosperous condition is the joy of a dying saint. What discouragement and danger attend a bad cause! And blustering traitors are often cowards when matters come to a crisis. How becoming is it when kings are ready to forgive those who have injured them! But much more astonishing is the pardoning mercy of our Lord Jesus to the guiltiest sinners who flee to his atonement, and prostrate themselves at his throne of grace.

CHAPTER II. [Ver. 1. At the very close of his life we observe a striking revival alike of David's early spirit and early piety. With a vigour and ability worthy of his best days, he put down the attempt to transfer the succession to Adonijah, although favoured by Joab, the commander-in-chief of the army, and for years the leading man in the kingdom. Every trace of weakness, fear, and submission to the will of others had now disappeared from the mind of David. His trust was in God alone; and fully conscious of pardon, acceptance, and divine guidance, he regarded not the opposition of one who had so long swayed the destinies of the empire. His 'last words' too, and his charge to Solomon, show not only the full power of his poetic

TOMBS OF THE KINGS, JERUSALEM—WHERE THE KINGS OF ISRAEL ARE REPUTED TO BE BURIED. [I. KINGS, ii : 10.]—"So David slept with his fathers, and was buried in the city of David." The tombs of the kings are surrounded by a wall. They are entered from the west side. Twenty-four steps are cut out of the solid rock, nine yards wide. These lead down into the tombs in an eastern direction. These tombs are held in high esteem by the Jews. They call them the cavern of Zedekiah, or the tomb of the rich Kalba Sabua. It is supposed that Queen Helena of Adiabene was also buried here. This queen with her son Izates became converted to Judaism in her own country, and after the death of her husband moved to Jerusalem to live. She returned home, but after her death was brought to Jerusalem and buried. They are called the tombs of the kings, but there is no definite information by which we can know whether any of the kings of Judah are buried here.

his testimonies,[2] as it is written in the law of Moses, that thou mayest prosper in all that thou doest, and whithersoever thou turnest thyself;

4 That the LORD may [c]continue his word[3] which he spake concerning me, saying, If thy children take heed to their way, to walk before me in truth, with all their heart, and with all their soul, there shall not fail thee (said he) a man on the throne of Israel.

5 Moreover, thou knowest also [d]what Joab the son of Zeruiah did to me, *and* what he did to the two captains of the hosts of Israel, unto Abner the son of Ner, and unto Amasa the son of Jether, whom he slew, and shed the blood of war in peace, and put the blood of war upon his girdle that *was* about his loins, and in his shoes that *were* on his feet.

6 Do therefore [e]according to thy wisdom, and let not his hoar head go down to the grave in peace.[4]

7 But [h]show kindness unto the sons of Barzillai the Gileadite, and let them be of those that eat at thy table: for so they came to me when I fled because of Absalom thy brother.

8 And, behold, *thou hast* with thee [i]Shimei the son of Gera, a Benjamite of Bahurim, which cursed me with a grievous[5] curse in the day when I went to Mahanaim: [k]but he came down to meet me at Jordan, and I sware to him by the LORD, saying, I will not put thee to death with the sword.

9 Now therefore [l]hold him not guiltless: for thou *art* a [m]wise man, and knowest what thou oughtest to do unto him; but his hoar head bring thou down to the grave with blood.[6]

10 ¶ So [n]David slept with his fathers, and was buried in the city of David.

11 And [o]the days that David reigned over Israel *were* forty years: seven years reigned he in Hebron, and thirty and three years reigned he in Jerusalem.

12 ¶ Then[p] sat Solomon upon the throne of David his father; and his kingdom was established greatly.

13 ¶ And [q]Adonijah the son of Haggith came to Bath-sheba the mother of Solomon: and she said, Comest thou [r]peaceably? And he said, Peaceably.

14 He said moreover, I have somewhat to say unto thee. And she said, Say on.

15 And he said, Thou knowest [s]that the kingdom was mine, and *that* all Israel set their faces on me, that I should reign: howbeit the kingdom is turned about, and is become my brother's; for [t]it was his from the LORD.

16 And now I ask one petition of thee, [u]deny me not. And she said unto him, Say on.

17 And he said, Speak, I pray thee, unto Solomon the king, (for he will not say thee nay,) that he give me [x]Abishag the Shunammite to wife.

18 And Bath-sheba said, [y]Well; I will speak for thee unto the king.

19 Bath-sheba therefore went unto king Solomon, to speak unto him for Adonijah. And the king [z]rose up to meet her, and bowed himself unto her, and sat down on his throne, and caused a seat to be set for the king's mother; and she sat on his [a]right hand.

20 Then she said, I desire[7] one small petition of thee; *I pray thee,* say me not nay. And the king said unto her, Ask on, my mother; for I will not[8] say thee nay.[9]

21 And she said, [b]Let Abishag the Shunammite be given to Adonijah thy brother to wife.

22 And king Solomon answered and said unto his mother, And why dost thou ask Abishag the Shunammite for Adonijah? ask for him [c]the kingdom also; (for he *is* mine elder brother;) even for him, and for Abiathar the priest, and for Joab the son of Zeruiah.[1]

23 Then king Solomon sware by the LORD, saying, [d]God do so to me, and more also, if Adonijah have not spoken this word against his own life.

24 Now therefore, [e]*as* the LORD liveth, which hath established me, and [f]set me on the throne of David my father, and who hath [g]made me an house, as he promised, Adonijah shall be [h]put to death this day.

25 And king Solomon sent by the hand of Benaiah the son of Jehoiada; and he [i]fell upon him[2] that he died.

26 ¶ And unto Abiathar the priest said the king, Get [k]thee to Anathoth, unto thine own fields; for thou *art* [l]worthy of death: but I will not at this time put thee to death, because thou [m]barest the ark of the LORD God before David my father, and [n]because thou hast been afflicted in all wherein my father was afflicted.

27 So Solomon thrust out Abiathar from being priest unto the LORD; that he might

A.M. 2989. B.C. 1015.

2 *Testimonies,* these chiefly signify those various forms in which God has borne witness to his Son Jesus Christ, whether by prophecy, miracle, type, declaration, or promise, 1 Jn. 5.9.—*C.*

c 2 Sa. 7.25, 11–16. Ps. 132.11, 12. 1 Ch. 22. 13; 28.6, 9, 2 Ti. 4.5. Lu. 1.6. De. 6.5. 2 Ki. 23.3, 25. 1 Th. 2.10.

3 His word of promise.—*C.*

f 2 Sa. 19.5, 6; 3.27; 18. 14, 15; 20.10.

g ver. 9; ch. 3.12. Pr. 20.26. Ec. 8.11, 13. Is. 65. 20.

4 Joab, it will be remembered, was always 'too strong' for David. Being at the head of the army, David was never able to bring him to justice for his murders. He does not now, therefore, revengefully seek his destruction, but to his mighty successor commends the legal investigation and punishment of his crimes. *C.*—Hales says, 'David did not adviseSolomon to put Joab to death absolutely or unconditionally. His words imply, Though you have now pardoned Joab through policy, and as I was compelled to do myself, by the exigency of the times, and the predominant influence of the sons of Zeruiah, yet should he offend again, act according to your discretion, and then punish him as a hoary murderer and confirmed traitor with death.'—*I.*

h 2 Sa. 19.31–39. 10; 17.28, 29. Lu. 22.28–30. Pr. 27.10.

i 2 Sa. 16.5–8. ver. 36–46.

5 Heb. *strong.*

k 2 Sa. 19.16–23, with He. 6.16. Je. 4.2.

l Ex. 20.7; 22.28. Job 9.28. 2 Sa. 19.23.

m ver. 6; ch. 3.12.

6 By rendering literally, and not idiomatically, the translators here have misrepresented the meaning, and thereby exposed the character of David. When the first member of a sentence in Hebrew contains *not,* it is frequently omitted, while implied and required in the second. For examples, see Ps. 1. 5, 9, 18; 38. 1. Accordingly the charge should stand, 'but his hoar head bring thou *not* down to the grave with blood.' And it is evident that Solomon so understood him; for while he sentenced Joab to death, ver. 31, he merely confined Shimei to Jerusalem, ver. 36, where his conduct might be under the royal surveillance, and his seditious spirit restrained.—*C.*

n ch. 1. 21. Ac. 2. 29; 13. 36. 2 Sa. 5. 7. 1 Ch. 29.28.

o 2 Sa. 5.4; 2. 11. 1 Ch. 29.26–30; 3.4.

p ch. 1.46. 2 Sa. 7.12, 13. Ps. 132. 12. 1 Ch. 29. 23–25.

q ch. 1.5–11, 51–53.

r 1 Sa. 16.4. 1 Ch. 12. 17, 18.

s ch. 1.5, 25. Je. 42.15. Lu. 9.53. Pr. 21.30. Da. 2.21.

A.M. 2989. B.C. 1015.

t ch. 1.11–40. 1 Ch. 22. 10; 28.5. Ps. 72.2; 55.21.

u Heb. *turn not away my face,* ver. 17, 20.

x ch. 1.2, 4. 2 Sa. 12.8; 3.7; 16.21.

y Pr. 14.15; 22.3. Mat. 10.16.

z Ex. 20. 12. Le. 19. 32. Pr. 23. 22; 31. 28.

a Ps. 45.9; 110.1. Mat. 25.33; 20.21.

7 She saw nothing important involved in the request, and the law, Le. 18. 8, did not seem to apply where the woman had only acted as a nurse. Bathsheba, however, might have suspected something from the manner in which Adonijah had spoken to her of the loss of the succession, 'when all Israel had set their faces on him that he should reign,' ver. 15. Solomon was at no loss to discover his latent motive, and acted accordingly.—*I.*

8 If it be proper to grant it.

9 Did Solomon break or keep his word on this occasion? He kept it. 'Ask on, my mother, I will not say thee,' (as a mother loving her son, and therefore seeking his good) 'I will not say thee nay.' But she spoke as one deceived, overreached, and rendered an unintentional accomplice in seeking his hurt—to the *loving mother* he would not say *nay*—to the *deceived intercessor* he refuses.—*C.*

b ch. 1.2, 4, with 2 Sa. 3.7; 12.8; 16.21; 16.21.

c 2 Sa. 3.7; 12.8; 16. 21. To get the late king's wife, or concubine, was a step to the throne.

1 Solomon was doubtless cognizant of a plot amongst the parties to render Adonijah's marriage with the Shunammite the first step to the throne. So far, however, as the narrative reveals the facts, we are unable to justify the severity of Solomon. But while ignorant of all the circumstances of the conspiracy, and the guilty intentions and acts of the parties (see ver. 26), neither can we unreservedly condemn him.—*C.*

d Ru. 1. 17. 1 Sa. 14. 44. 2 Sa. 3. 9, 35; 19.13. ch. 20.10. 2 Ki. 6 31.

e ch. 1.29; ver. 12.

f ch. 10.9. 1 Ch. 22.10; 28.5; 29.23.

g Ex. 1. 21. 1 Sa. 25. 28. 2 Sa. 7.12, 13, 27. Ps. 127.1.

h Pr. 21.30. Ec. 8.11, 13.

i 2 Sa. 1.15; 4.12. Ju. 8.20, 21. ver. 34, 46.

2 Probably being attended by guards. Death was often inflicted by military officers and not by common executioners. 'When a great man,' says Thevenot, 'is doomed by the sultan to die, the *capidgi,* or officer who executes such orders, is sent to him with some assistants, and showing his orders, strangles him and cuts off his head.'—*I.*

k ch. 1.53. Jos. 21.18. Je. 1.1.

l 2 Sa. 12.5. Mat. 26. 66.

m 2 Sa. 15. 24, 29. 1 Ch. 15.11, 12.

n 1 Sa. 22.20–23; 23.6, 9. 2 Sa. 15.24. Mat. 10. 42.

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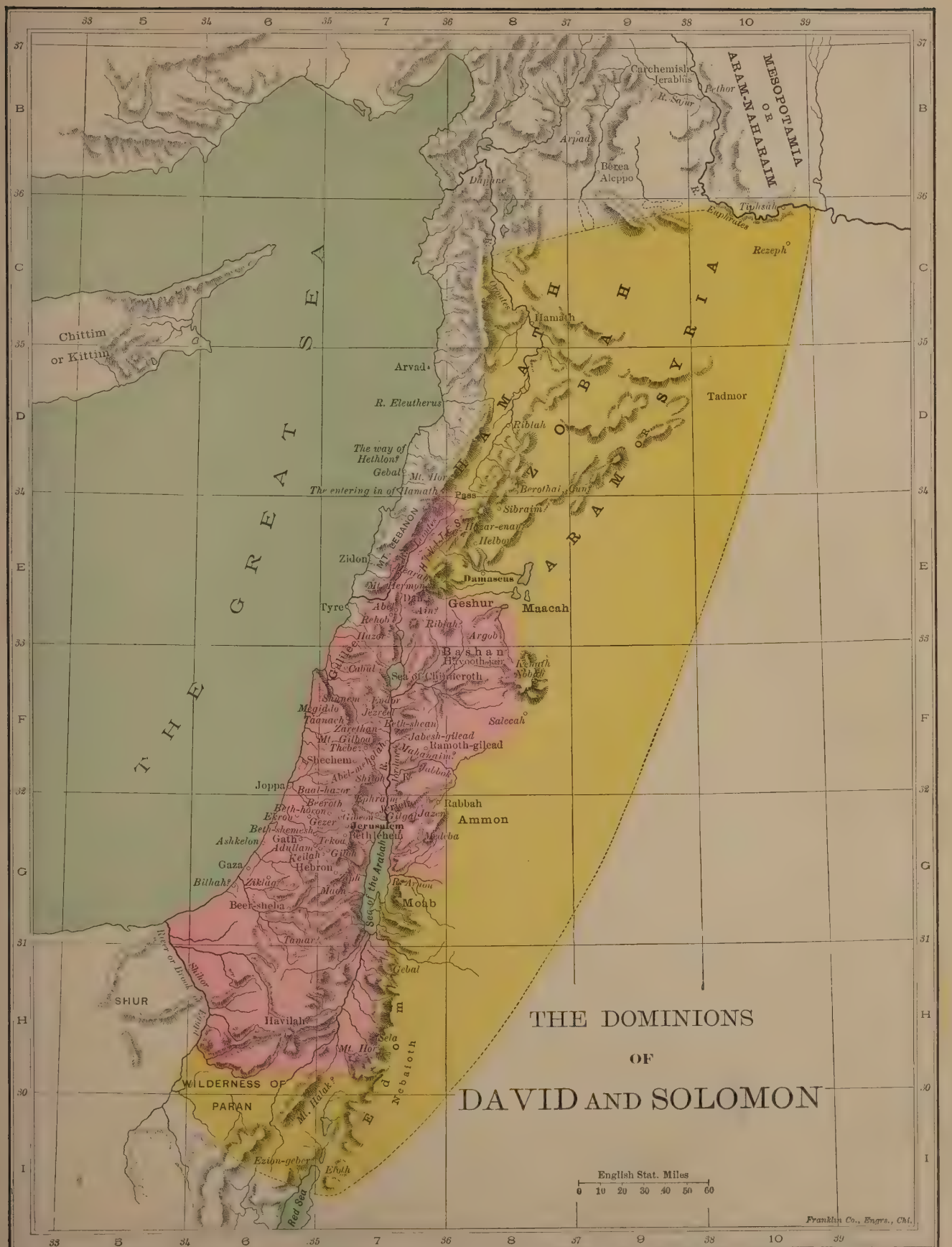
genius, but show also that the Spirit of God inspired him with thoughts purer, holier, and more sublime than those of earth. *P.*]

REFLECTIONS.—Happy are they who die in the Lord, encouraging their survivors to their proper duty! But none can be faithful to God without holy courage answerable to their station. In the way of obedience to God's precepts we may expect the fulfilment of his promises. And all, especially magistrates, ought to be careful in executing justice upon offenders, and discharging the obligations of gratitude. Some, however happy their lot, cannot rest till they ruin themselves; and the most dangerous designs have often fair pretences. While such as mean no ill themselves are, by the craft of others, rendered instruments of ambition. Such, therefore, who have the ear of princes ought carefully to consider their request, lest they abuse their influence to the hurt of their benefactor. No station should protect criminals from justice. And often the awakening of their guilty conscience, and punishment of their sins, meet them in a time and manner which they never expected. But while kindness to God's suffering saints ought to be remembered even in criminals, nothing must satisfy for murder but the blood of the guilty. Wicked men entail a curse on their posterity: and negligent magistrates must bear the sin of those crimes which they are not duly careful to avenge: for the due execution of justice is the establishment of their throne. Men ruin themselves by sinning against their own mercies. Our heart contains much wickedness, to which only God and our conscience are privy. And dreadful is the account to which God will call men at last for their perjury and other sins.—But in David I


THE GREAT SEA
Chittim or Kittim
Arvad
R. Eleutherus
The way of Hethlon?
Gebal
Mt. Hor
The entering in of Hamath
Pass
Zidon
Mt. LEBANON
Mt. Hermon
Tyre
Abel
Dan
Ain?
Reboh
Hazor
Riblah
Geshur
Maacah
Damascus
Argob
Bashan
Havvoth-jair
Kenath
Nobah
Galilee
Canal
Sea of Chinneroth
Shunem
Endor
Megiddo
Taanach
Jezreel
Beth-shean
Zaretham
Mt. Gilboa
Thebez
Jabesh-gilead
Salecah
Ramoth-gilead
Shechem
Succoth
Joppa
Baal-hazor
Ephraim
Rabbah
Ammon
Beeroth
Beth-horon
Ekron
Gezer
Gibeon
Jazer
Jerusalem
Beth-shemesh
Bethlehem
Ashkelon
Gath
Tekoa
Madeba
Adullam
Keilah
Gaza
Hebron
Bilhah?
Ziklag
Moab
Beer-sheba
Arnon
Sea of the Arabah
Tamar?
River or Brook
Shihor
Gebal
SHUR
Havilah?
Sela
Mt. Hor
Edom
Mebaioth
WILDERNESS OF PARAN
Mt. Halak?
Ezion-geber
Eloth
Red Sea
HAMATH
ZOBAH
ARAM
OR SYRIA
Carchemish
Jerablus
Pethor
R. Sajur
MESOPOTAMIA
OR
ARAM-NAHARAIM
Arpad
Berea
Aleppo
Daphne
Euphrates
Tiphsah
Rezeph
Hamath
Riblah
Tadmor
Berothai
Sibraim
Hazar-enan
Helbon
THE DOMINIONS
OF
DAVID AND SOLOMON
English Stat. Miles
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Franklin Co., Engrs., Chi.

fulfil[o] the word of the LORD which he spake concerning the house of Eli in [p]Shiloh.[3]

28 ¶ Then tidings came to Joab; (for [q]Joab had turned after Adonijah, though he turned not after Absalom:) and Joab fled unto the tabernacle of the LORD, and [r]caught hold on the horns of the altar.

29 And it was told king Solomon that Joab was fled unto the tabernacle of the LORD; and, behold, *he is* by the altar: then Solomon [s]sent Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, saying, Go, fall upon him.

30 And Benaiah came to the tabernacle of the LORD, and said unto him, Thus saith the king, Come forth. And he said, Nay; but I will die here.[4] And Benaiah brought the king word again, saying, Thus said Joab, and thus he answered me.

31 And the king said unto him, Do as he hath said, and [t]fall upon him, and bury him; that thou mayest take away the innocent blood, which Joab shed, from me, and from the house of my father.

32 And the LORD shall [u]return his blood upon his own head, who fell upon [x]two men more righteous and better than he, and slew them with the sword, my father David not knowing *thereof, to wit,* Abner the son of Ner, captain of the host of Israel, and Amasa the son of Jether, captain of the host of Judah.

33 Their blood [y]shall therefore return upon the head of Joab, and upon the head of his seed for ever: but [z]upon David, and upon his seed, and upon his house, and upon his throne, shall there be peace for ever from the LORD.

34 So [a]Benaiah the son of Jehoiada went up, and fell upon him, and slew him:[5] and he was buried in his own house in the [b]wilderness.[6]

35 ¶ And the king [c]put Benaiah the son of Jehoiada in his room over the host: and Zadok the priest did the king put in the room of Abiathar.

36 ¶ And the king sent and called for Shimei,[d] and said unto him, Build thee an house in [e]Jerusalem, and dwell there, and go not forth thence any whither.[7]

37 For it shall be, *that* on the day thou goest out, and passest over the [f]brook Kidron, thou shalt know for certain that thou shalt surely die: [g]thy blood shall be upon thine own head.

38 And Shimei said unto the king, [h]The saying *is* good: as my lord the king hath said, so will thy servant do.[8] And Shimei dwelt in Jerusalem many days.

39 And it came to pass at the end of three years,[9] that two of the servants of Shimei ran away unto [i]Achish, son of Maachah king of Gath: and they told Shimei, saying, Behold, thy servants *be* in Gath.

40 And Shimei [k]arose, and saddled his ass, and went to Gath to Achish to seek his servants: and Shimei went, and brought his servants from Gath.

41 And it was told Solomon that Shimei had gone from Jerusalem to Gath, and was come again.

42 And the king sent and called for Shimei, and said unto him, [l]Did I not make thee to swear by the LORD, and protested unto thee, saying, Know for a certain, that on the day thou goest out, and walkest abroad any whither, that thou shalt surely die? and thou saidst unto me, The word *that* I have heard *is* good.

43 Why then hast thou not kept [m]the oath of the LORD, and the commandment that I have charged thee with?[1]

44 The king said moreover to Shimei, [n]Thou knowest all the wickedness which thine heart is privy to, [o]that thou didst to David my father: therefore the LORD shall [p]return thy wickedness upon thine own head;

45 And king Solomon *shall be* [q]blessed, and the throne of David shall be established before the LORD for ever.

46 So the king commanded Benaiah the son of Jehoiada; which went out, and fell upon him, that he died. And the [r]kingdom was established in the hand of Solomon.

CHAPTER III.

1 *Solomon marrieth Pharaoh's daughter.* 2 *High places being in use, Solomon sacrificeth at Gibeon.* 5 *Solomon at Gibeon, in the choice which God gave him, preferring wisdom, obtaineth wisdom, riches, and honour.* 16 *His judgment between the two harlots maketh his wisdom renowned.*

AND Solomon[a] made affinity with Pharaoh king of Egypt, and took Pharaoh's daughter, and brought her into [b]the city of David, until he had made an end of [c]building his own house, and the house of the LORD, and the wall of Jerusalem round about.

2 ¶ Only[d] the people sacrificed in high places, because there [e]was no house built unto the name of the LORD until those days.[1]

A.M. 2989. B.C. 1015.

o 1 Sa.2.33-36; 3.12-14.Mat.13.35.Jn.12.38.

p Jos.18.1. Ps.78.60. Je.7.12,14.

3 Thus was fulfilled the prophetic threatening, 1 Sa. 2. 30-36. Abiathar was the last priest descended from Ithamar. Zadok, his successor, was of the family of Eleazar.—*C.*

q ch. 1.7, with 2 Sa. 18.2,14,15.

r ch.1.50.Ex.21.14.

s ver. 25, 46. 2 Sa. 1. 15;4.12. Ju.8.20,21.

4 There is something very striking in so bad a man taking refuge in the tabernacle, not as a sanctuary where he might escape punishment, but as a place where he might die. Similar instances, however, are still common in point of fact—when wicked men superstitiously seek refuge in rites and ceremonies, and to avoid condemnation by purchase, not by grace and conversion to the Lord. Mat. 18.3. Ro.5.1; 8.1. Ep.2.8.—*C.*

t Ge.9.5,6.De.19.12, 13.Ex.21.14. 2 Ki.9.26, 34.Nu.35.33.

u Ps. 7. 16; 9. 15, 16; 140.11. Ge.4.11;9.6. Ju. 9.24,27.ver.44.

x 2 Sa.3.27;20.10.

y 2 Sa. 3. 29. 2 Ki. 5. 27.Ps 109.6-19.

z ver. 4. 2 Sa. 3. 28. Pr.16.7; 25.5. Ho 2 1. Je. 33. 21, 20. Is. 9 6.; 11 6. Lu. 2.14. Ro.5.1. Phi.4.7.

a ver.25,46.

5 God decreed (Ex. 21. 12-14) that the presumptuous murderer should not taken refuge at his altar should be dragged thence and put to death.—*I.*

b Mat. 3. 1. Jos. 15. 61.

6 'It is usual now,' says Roberts, 'in some parts of the East, for parents or children to build a house, often a splendid one, in some lonely spot, for the purpose of there depositing their dead.' —*I.*

c Ps.109.8.Nu.25.11, 12.1 Sa. 35.1 Ch.6.50; 24.3.ver.27. But Abiathar was still called priest, ch.4.4.

d 2 Sa.16.5-9. ver.8, 9.

e Pr.20.8,26;21.3.

f 2 Sa.15.23.2 Ki.23. 6.Jn.18.1.

g Jos.2.19.2 Sa.1.16. Eze.18.13. Mat.27.25.

h ch. 20. 4. 2 Ki. 20. 19.

7 'No doubt Solomon suspected that Shimei's influence would be dangerous upon his own estate, and among his numerous dependants in different parts of the land, and therefore he proposed to him, as the condition of his indemnity for former crimes, that he should live in Jerusalem under his eye, and by no means remove thence. These terms Shimei readily agreed to, and solemnly sware to observe, and for three years he lived unmolested and in affluence. But growing secure, in contempt of Solomon's authority and of the oath of God, upon an unnecessary business he took a journey, which, according to his own engagement, forfeited his life. Thus the Lord left him to be infatuated, that due punishment might be inflicted upon him, in order that every ringleader of opposition to Solomon's kingdom might be crushed, and others be intimidated by their examples; and that his throne might be established in peace as the type of the Redeemer's kingdom of peace and righteousness.'—*Scott.*

8 From 2 Sa.19.17 it is evident that Shimei was a powerful prince in Benjamin, for his followers were a thousand warriors. His confinement to Jerusalem was therefore a prudent precaution, and Jerusalem being in the neighbourhood of his own tribe and estate, the sentence was most lenient and favourable.—*C.*

9 B.C. 1012.

i 1 Sa.27.2;21.10.

k Pr.15.27. Lu.12.15. 1 Ti.6.10.

l ver.36-38. Ps.15.4. He.6.16. Ju.11.35. Pr. 20.25.

m Ex.22.11. Ec.8.2. Eze.17.18,19.

1 Perjury and disobedience were two heinous crimes—but Shimei seems to have been an actual conspirator against Solomon, as well as against David, for it is not until after his death that the tranquillity of Solomon's reign seems to have been established. See ver.46.—*C.*

n Jn.8.9.Ro.2.15.

o 2 Sa.16.5-9.ver.8.

p ver.33. Pr.5.22; 1. 31;13.21.

q Nu. 25. 11, 12. Ps. lxxii.1.9.6.7. ver.33.

r 2 Ch.1.1. ver.12,33, 45.Pr.25.5;20.4.

CHAP. III.

a ch.7.8. Jos.2.1-14. Ru.4.10.

b 2 Sa.5.7.1 Ch.11.7.

c ch. 7.1; 6. 37,38; 9. 15.

d ch.15.14; 22. 42. 2 Ki 12.3; 14.4; 15.4,35. ver. 3,4.2 Ch.33.17. Le. 26.30.

e De.12.5.ch.5.3.Ps. 76.1.

1 It would seem from this and similar statements that the Lord had specially sanctioned the offering up of sacrifices in certain of the high-places in Palestine—such as Shiloh, Shechem, Bethel, Gibeah, and Gilgal. This was a provisional arrangement continued only until the temple was dedicated. 'The great high-place' at Gibeon was apparently the same round which the Israelites assembled when called together at Mizpeh. Gibeon and Mizpeh were within a very short distance of each other—the latter on the top of the hill, and the former in the plain at its base.—*P.*

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behold a lively figure of Jesus, God's chosen One; the man according to his own heart, born in Bethlehem, and who fulfils all his counsels. How amazing his fidelity, meekness, humility, faith in God, love to him, zeal for his honour, and devout intimacy with him! Thrice—in his conception, at his baptism, and in his ascension—he was plentifully anointed with the Holy Ghost to his arduous and extensive office. He is the living head of all faithful people who are made kings and priests unto God. He is our sweet Psalmist, who tunes our hearts and indites our songs of praise. He is our great Prophet and King, who instructs, forms, and governs his church, the Israel of God. Through debasement, labour, reproach, and temptations on every side—and all endured with holy courage, steady regard to his Father's love, full resignation to his will, and firm confidence of a happy issue—he entered into his kingdom and glory. How skilful, prudent, kind, and righteous is he in governing his subjects! and how active in framing and fixing the worship of God, preparing the temple above for his people, and them for it! All his faithful soldiers are such as, convinced of their spiritual guiltiness, pollution, poverty, and debt, have been led to enlist in his service. His mighties, prophets, apostles, evangelists, pastors, and teachers, by the whole armour of God, particularly the sword of the Spirit, do marvellous exploits. He himself defeated the lions, the bears, the giants of hell. He fulfilled the law, destroyed death and the grave: and by the gospel he persuades the nations to the obedience of faith, and puts all the faithful in the full possession of their promised blessings.

CHAPTER III. [Ver. 1. *Solomon made affinity with Pharaoh.* Amongst the religious aberrations into which Solomon, through temptation of his wives, after-

THE SPHINX—STANDING 2.719 YEARS WHEN SOLOMON TOOK PHARAOH'S DAUGHTER AND BROUGHT HER TO THE CITY OF DAVID. [I. KINGS, iii: 1.]—"And Solomon made affinity with Pharaoh, King of Egypt, and took Pharaoh's daughter, and brought her into the city of David, until he had made an end of building his own house, and the house of the Lord, and the wall of Jerusalem round about." In this verse we see God's people brought through their king into relation with Egypt again. So we present here one of the most interesting pictures of the Sphinx that has ever been taken, to illustrate this fact. This monument stood where it appears to-day 3733 B. C., and had been standing here 2,719 years when Solomon took Pharaoh's daughter, and brought her into the city of David. The Sphinx represented among the Egyptians the God Harmachis, "Horus in the horizon, or Rising Sun, the Conqueror of Darkness, the God of the Morning." The Sphinx is hewn out of the living rock. The body is 153 feet long, paws 50 feet, the head 30 feet long, the face 14 feet wide, and from the top of the head to the base of the monument the distance is about 70 feet.

3 And Solomon [f]loved the LORD, walking in [g]the statutes of David his father: only he sacrificed and burnt incense in high places.

4 And the king went to [h]Gibeon to sacrifice there; for that *was* the great high place: [i]a thousand burnt-offerings did Solomon offer upon that altar.

5 ¶ In Gibeon the LORD appeared to Solomon [k]in a dream by night: and God said, [l]Ask what I shall give thee.

6 And Solomon said, Thou hast showed unto thy[m] servant David my father great mercy, according[n] as he walked before thee in truth, and in righteousness, and in uprightness of heart with thee; and thou hast kept for him this great kindness, that thou hast given him a son to sit on his throne, as *it is* this day.

7 And now, O LORD my God, [o]thou hast made thy servant king instead of David my father; and I *am but* a [p]little child:[2] I know not *how* to [q]go out or come in.

8 And thy servant *is* in the midst of [r]thy people which thou hast chosen, a [s]great people, that cannot be numbered nor counted for multitude.

9 Give[t] therefore thy servant an understanding heart to judge thy people, that I may [u]discern between good and bad: for who is able to judge this thy so great a people?

10 And the speech pleased the LORD, that Solomon had asked this thing.

11 And God said unto him, Because thou hast asked this thing, and hast not asked [x]for thyself [y]long life; neither hast asked riches for thyself, nor hast asked the life of thine enemies; but hast asked for thyself understanding to discern judgment;

12 Behold, I have done according to thy words:[z] lo, I have given thee a wise and an understanding heart;[3] so that there was none like thee before thee, neither after thee shall any arise like unto thee.

13 And I have also [a]given thee that which thou hast not asked, both riches and honour; so that there shall not be[4] any among the kings like unto thee all thy days.

14 And [b]if thou wilt walk in my ways, to keep my statutes and my commandments, as thy father David did walk, then I will lengthen thy days.

15 And Solomon [c]awoke; and, behold, *it was* a dream:[5] and he came to Jerusalem, and stood [d]before the ark of the covenant of the LORD, and offered up burnt-offerings, and offered peace-offerings, and made [e]a feast to all his servants.

16 ¶ Then[f] came there two women, *that were* [g]harlots,[6] unto the king, and stood before him.[7]

17 And the one woman said, [h]O my lord, I and this woman dwell in one house; and I was delivered of a child with her in the house.

18 And it came to pass the third day after that I was delivered, that this woman was delivered also: and we *were* together; *there was* no stranger with us in the house, save we two in the house.

19 And this woman's child died in the night; because she overlaid it.

20 And she arose at [i]midnight, and took my son from beside me, while thine handmaid slept, and laid it in her bosom, and laid her dead child in my bosom.

21 And when I rose in the morning [k]to give my child suck, behold, it was dead: but when I had considered it in the morning, behold, it was not my son which I did bear.

22 And the other woman said, Nay; but the living *is* my son, and the dead *is* thy son. And this said, No; but the dead *is* thy son, and the living *is* my son. Thus they spake before the king.

23 Then said the king, The one saith, This *is* my son that liveth, and thy son *is* the dead: and the other saith, Nay; but thy son *is* the dead, and my son *is* the living.

24 And the king said, Bring me a sword. And they brought a sword before the king.

25 And the king said, [l]Divide the living child in two, and give half to the one, and half to the other.[8]

26 Then spake the woman whose the living child *was* unto the king, (for her bowels [m]yearned upon her son,) and she said, O my lord, give her the living child, and in no wise slay it: but the other said, Let it be neither mine nor thine, *but* divide *it*.

27 Then the king answered and said, Give her the living child, and in no wise slay it: she *is* [n]the mother thereof.

28 And all Israel heard of the judgment which the king had judged; and they [o]feared the king: for they saw that the [p]wisdom of God *was* in him to do judgment.

A.M. 2989. B.C. 1015.

f Ga.6.5.De.30.6;10. 12. Mat.22.36,37. Ro. 13.10. 2Co.5.14. Jn.4. 19.2 Sa.12.24.

g ch.11.34;2.3. 1 Ch. 28.8,9.

h Jos.9.3,17. 2 Ch.1. 3.1 Ch.16 39;21.29.

i ch.8.63. 2Ch.29.31 -35;30.22-24.Lu.7.47.

k Ge. 28. 12; 31. 11. Nu.12.6. Job 33.14,15.

l Mat.7.7. Jn. 16. 23; 15.7. Ja.1.5,6.1 Jn.5.14.

m Nu.12.7. Ps.78,70 -72.2 Sa.7.12.

n Ps.18.20-24; 15. 1-5. 2 Ki.20.3. 1 Ch.29.17. 2 Sa.7.12.

o Ps.75.6,7. Da.2.21; 4.25,32.ch.1.12,46.1 Ch. 22.10;28.5;29.23.

p 1 Ch.29. 1. Je. 1. 6. Mat.5.3.18.3,4.

2 'A little child,' not in years, for he might now be considered of mature age (Dr. Hales has demonstrated that he could not be under twenty), but he calls himself a child in knowledge and experience in the government of a great nation, such as the Jews had become under the wise and vigorous government of David. See ver. 8,9.—*C.*

q Nu.27.17. De.31.2. Jn.10.3,4,9.

r Ex.19.5,6. De.7.6-8;14.2.6.1;28.9.

s Ge.15. 5;22.17.1Ch. 21.5,7;27 23.4.

t 2 Ch.1.10. Ja.1.5;3. 17. Ps.72.1. Pr.3. 13-15; 16.16.

u He.5.14. 2 Sa. 14. 17. Ec. 8. 5. Mal. 3. 18. Je. 15.19. Le.10.10. Is. 11.2-4.2 Co.2.16;3.5.

x Ps.4.6. Ja.4.3. Phi. 2.21.

y Heb. *many days*, ver.14.Pr 16.31.

z ch.9.3;4.29-34; 10. 3-8. 1 Jn.5.14,15. Ec.1. 16. Mat.7.7. Is. 11.2-4. Jn.3.34;5.20.Col.2.3.

3 Solomon had asked (ver. 9) not wisdom in general, but the knowledge of the true science of government, and that was given him. If we find that in after-life he showed himself devoid of much practical wisdom in his *personal* conduct, it was because he was unfaithful to the condition now stipulated at ver. 14.—*I.*

a 2Ch.1. 12. Mat. 6. 33.ch.iv.ix.x. Ep.3.20, with 2.20-23. Phi. 2. 8-11.

4 Or, *hath not been.*

b ch.9.4,5;15.5.1 Ch. 28. 9. Ps.132. 12;91. 16. Phi.3.17. He.13.7. De. 5.16. Pr.3.16.1 Ti.4.8.

c Ge.41.7; 28. 16. Je. 31.26.

5 That dreams furnish one of the 'diverse manners' in which God has communicated his will to men, no reader of the Bible can deny. But even independent of direct divine revelation, dreams afford sometimes a good index of real disposition and character—perhaps because the dreamer thinks and acts as he would do apart from the influence of observing eyes—and may often form valuable assistants in the work of self-observation and self-examination. He that speaks or acts wisely and mercifully in a dream, has reason to thank God—he that speaks foolishly or acts wickedly in a dream, has an intangible call to self-condemnation, watchfulness, and prayer.—*C.*

A.M. 2989. B.C. 1015.

d Ex.40.3-20.2 Sa.6. 17.Le.i.iii.ver.4.

e Ps.116.12-18. 2 Sa. 6.18,19.Es.1.3.

f ver.12,28.

g De.23.17. Jos.2.1.

6 The Targum has 'victuallers,' or tavern-keepers. Not common harlots, but unmarried women who had been guilty of fornication. The Jews suppose they were not Israelites, but strangers, and so not subject to the law in De.23.17.—*I.*

7 Perhaps this difficult case was referred to the king, on account of its having proved too hard for the inferior judges to decide. Solomon in his wisdom adopted the only rational method of discovering the truth, by making an ingenious appeal to the self-denying tenderness of a mother. The murder of illegitimate infants by their mothers, to conceal their shame, so often occurring in this country, is not so much as intimated in any way in the Scriptures. Nor is it met with in ancient history. The practice, however, with the ancients, of exposing their children, whether spurious or not, might remove the temptation to take away their lives by secret murder.—*I.*

h ver. 26. Ge. 43. 20, Ro.13.7.1 Pe.2.17.

i Job 24.15,17. Jn.3. 20.

k Ge.21.7. 1 Sa.1.23. Ca.4.3.1 Ti.5.14.Is.49. 15.

l Pr.25.3.

8 The profound knowledge of the human heart indicated by his judgment will readily be acknowledged. But its most important characteristic is the unlimited power of life and death which it indicates as resting in the mere will of the king. Were a British judge to issue such an order, he would be deposed as insane; or, were it carried into execution, would be held guilty of murder. How may we, then, vindicate the despotic authority assumed in principle by Solomon? We may in no wise vindicate despotism—for the divine rule was never despotic—but we can account for the assumption of Solomon, in the fact, that for centuries the land of Judea had, with few and brief exceptions, been constantly under military law—a state of things that necessarily supersedes divided authority, and invests, for the time, to one, a power above the ordinary forms of procedure, and authorizes and requires of him, by the pressure of circumstances, extemporaneously as it were, both to make and administer the law.—*I.*

m Heb. *were hot*, Ge.43.30. Je. 31.20. Is. 49.15. Ho.11.8.

n Phi.2.20. Her affection to him showed it.

o De.13.11;21.21;17. 13. Ro.13.3,4. Ec.7.19.

p Is.11.3. De.1.16. 2 Sa.8.15. Je.21.12.

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wards fell, no mention is made of the superstitions and idolatries of Egypt, 1 Ki. 11. 1–5; it is not improbable, therefore, that this daughter of Pharaoh may have been, at the time of her marriage, a proselyte to the Jewish religion. This alliance forms a striking example of the progress of events. The descendant of an Egyptian slave is now the son-in-law of the Egyptian king. Truly, neither pride nor despair were made for man. 'The rich and the poor meet together,' the Lord is the maker of them all. *C.*]

Ver. 3. [*He sacrificed and burnt incense in high places.* All sacrifices in high places were prohibited, Le. 26. 30, unless where the tabernacle of the Lord was located. The occasional exceptions in the cases of Samuel and others are only to be accounted for on the principle of necessity and mercy, which alone, as the spirit, can warrant any deviation from the letter of the law, Mat. 12. 4. In the case of Solomon such sacrificing is charged as a drawback upon his love, and we see from the history how it afterwards became a snare. *C.*]

REFLECTIONS.—Happy are the children who walk in the steps of their pious parents; and highly honoured are they to whose unfeigned faith and love God himself bears witness. How infinitely bountiful is God!—he even encourages us to ask his favours: and such as wait upon him in prayer and praise will find him speedy in his returns of blessing. Happy are they whose devout turn of mind, when awake, tinctures their very dreams with serious devotion. Godly children will always pay great regard to their parents' memory. None are so sensible of their own insufficiency as they who seriously ponder the weight of public offices; and

CHAPTER IV.

1 *Solomon's princes.* 7 *His twelve officers who provided for his household.* 20, 24 *The peace and largeness of his kingdom.* 22 *His daily provision.* 26 *His stables.* 29 *His extraordinary wisdom.*

SO king Solomon was king over [a]all Israel.
2 And these *were* the [b]princes which he had: Azariah the son of Zadok the priest;[1]
3 Elihoreph and Ahiah, the sons of [c]Shisha, scribes;[2] Jehoshaphat the son of Ahilud, the recorder.[d]
4 And [e]Benaiah the son of Jehoiada *was* over the host: and [f]Zadok and Abiathar *were* the priests:[3]
5 And Azariah the son of Nathan *was* over the officers: and Zabud the son [g]of Nathan *was* principal officer, *and* the king's [h]friend:[4]
6 And Ahishar *was* over the household: and [i]Adoniram the son of Abda *was* over the tribute.[5]
7 ¶ And Solomon had twelve officers over all Israel, which provided victuals for the king and his household: each man his month in a year made provision.[6]
8 And these *are* their names: The son of Hur,[7] in [k]mount Ephraim.
9 The son of Dekar,[8] in Makaz, and in Shaalbim,[l] and Beth-shemesh, and Elon-beth-hanan:[9]
10 The son of Hesed,[1] in [m]Aruboth; to him *pertained* Sochoh, and all the land of Hepher:[2]
11 The son of Abinadab,[3] in all the region of [n]Dor;[4] which had Taphath the daughter of Solomon to wife:
12 Baana the son of Ahilud; *to him pertained* [o]Taanach, and Megiddo, and all Beth-shean, which *is* by [p]Zartanah, beneath Jezreel, from [q]Beth-shean to Abel-meholah, *even* unto *the place that is* beyond Jokneam:[5]
13 The son of Geber,[6] in [r]Ramoth-gilead; to him *pertained* the towns of Jair the son of Manasseh, which *are* in Gilead; to him *also pertained* the region of Argob, which *is* in Bashan, threescore great cities with walls and brazen bars:[7]
14 Ahinadab the son of Iddo *had* [s]Mahanaim.[8]
15 Ahimaaz *was* in [t]Naphtali; he [u]also took Basmath the daughter of Solomon to wife:
16 Baanah the son of Hushai *was* in [w]Asher and in Aloth:

A.M. 2990. B.C. 1014.

CHAP. IV.

a 2 Sa.5.5, 1 Ti.6.15. Mat.28.18.
b Ex.18. 21. 1 Co.12. 28.
1 Or, *the chief officer.*
c Sheva, or Shamsha, 2 Sa. 8. 16; 20. 24, 25. 1 Ch.18.16.
2 Or, *secretaries.*
d Or, *remembrancer*, 2 Sa.8.16; 20.24.
e 2 Sa.8.18. ch. 2. 35. 1 Ch.18.16.
f 2 Sa.8.17; 20.25. ch. 2.27, 35. 1 Ch.18.16.
3 There can be no doubt that between the accession of Solomon, ch. 1. 39, the complete consolidation of his authority, ch. 2. 12, and the second and covert attempt of Adonijah upon the throne, ver. 22, a considerable period of time must have elapsed. And as Abiathar was not banished to Anathoth, and removed from being high-priest, ver. 27, till after this period, the historian inserts his name, not as being second in dignity in the Aaronic family, but as having been actually in the first rank during a part of the reign of Solomon.—*C.*
g 2 Sa.7.2; 12.2. ch.1. 10, 40.
h 2 Sa.15.37.
4 The title of 'king's friend' seems not to indicate a special office, nor yet to convey the unpopular idea of 'favourite,' but seems, most probably, to be in Solomon a natural and affectionate imitation of David's special friendship for Jonathan.—*C.*
i ch.5.14.
5 Or, *levy.*
6 See note ver.19.
7 Or, *Ben-hur.*
k Jos.17.18. Ju.17.1; 19.1.
8 Or, *Ben-dekar.*
l Jos.19.41,42.
9 This district included a large section of the tribe of Dan, along the western slopes of the mountains, with the plain at their base.—*P.*
1 Or, *Ben-hesed.*
m Jos. 15. 35, 46; 12. 17; 17. 3.
2 *Aruboth* was the southern part of the plain of Philistia.—*P.*
3 Or, *Ben-abinadab.*
n Jos. 12, 23; 17. 11. Ju.1.27.
4 'The region of Dor' embraced the northern division of the plain of Sharon, up to the base of Carmel.—*P.*
o Jos.17.11. Ju.5.19; 7.22.
p Jos. 3.16. ch.7.46; 18.46.
q 1 Sa. 31. 10. ch.19 16.
5 The great and rich plain of Esdraelon from the Bay of Acre to the Jordan.—*P.*
6 Or, *Ben-geber.*
r ch.22.3. Nu.32.41. De.3.4. Jos.21.38.
7 These provinces included only a part of northern Gilead and Bashan.—*P.*
s Or, *to Mahanaim*, Ge. 32. 1. 2 Sa. 2.8; 17.24.
t Jos.19.32–39.
u ver.11. 1 Sa.18.18.
w Jos.19.24–31.
8 *Mahanaim* was a strong city, and capital of a district along the banks of the Jabbok in central Gilead.—*P.*
x Jos.19.17–23.
y Jos.18.21–28.
z Nu. 32. 33–38. De. 3.12–17. Jos.13.9–12.
8 He seems to have been the father of Geber, ver.13, and to have held a rank superior to his son.—*C.*
9 In the East, and even in some parts of Europe, rents are paid in the produce of the soil. In some of the newly peopled districts of America, even servants' wages are so discharged. A somewhat similar state of things in the reign of Solomon will account for this monthly arrangement of *caterers* to the royal household.—*C.*
b Ge.12.2; 13.16; 15.5; 22.17.
c 1 Ch. 12. 39. Job 1. 18. Is.22.13. 1 Sa.30.16. Ro.14.17.
d 2 Ch.9.26 Ps.72.8. Ge. 15. 18. Ex. 23. 31. De.11.24. Jos.1.4.
1 The Euphrates, the eastern boundary of the promised land, Ge.15.18.—*C.*
e 2 Ki. 17. 3. 2 Ch.17. 5; 32. 23. Ps.72.10.
2 Heb. *cor*, *i.e.* near 59,000 pounds weight of meal, which might serve 20,000 men.
3 The extent of Solomon's household establishment will not be surprising to those who are acquainted with the arrangement of eastern courts, or even with the history of the great feudal barons of Europe anterior to the blessed Reformation.—*C.*
4 A famous city on the Euphrates, so named from the ford or pass on which it was situated.—*C.*
f Ge.10.19. Ju. 16. 1. De.2.23.
5 Gaza on the Mediterranean.—*C.*
g Heb. *confidently*, Mi.4.4. 2 Ki.18.31. Je. 23.6. Is.60.18. Zec.3.10.
h Ju.20.1. 2 Sa.24.2; 17.11 ch.8.65.
i 2 Ch.9.25; 1.14. ch. 10.25,26. De.17.16.
6 On comparing this passage with ch. 10. 26. 2 Ch. 1. 14, the difference suggests to several judicious commentators the necessity of the usual solution—the assumed error of a transcriber. The assumption is unauthorized, gratuitous, and unnecessary. Estimating two horses for each chariot, and one for each dragoon, with a reasonable allowance of supernumerary brood-mares, and foals in training, the number in the text will not appear extraordinary.—*C.*
k Or, *mules* or *swift beasts*, Es.8.10, 14. Mi.1.13.
l Ja. 1. 5, 17. ch.3.10, 28. 2 Co. 6. 11–13. Ps. 119. 32. Ja. 3. 34; 5. 20. Col.2.3.
m Job iv.–xxxvii. Mat.2.1. Da.4.7; 5.11, 12.
7 Heb. 'all the *Bene-kedem*,' a proper name given to the nomad tribes of Arabia. They were celebrated for wisdom.—*P.*
n Ac.7.22. Is.19.11,12.

17 Jehoshaphat the son of Paruah, in [y]Issachar:
18 Shimei the son of Elah, in [z]Benjamin.
19 Geber the son of Uri *was* in the [a]country of Gilead, *in* the country of Sihon king of the Amorites, and of Og king of Bashan; and *he was* the only officer which *was* in the [8]land.[9]
20 ¶ Judah and Israel [b]*were* many, as the sand which *is* by the sea in multitude, [c]eating and drinking, and making merry.
21 And [d]Solomon reigned over all kingdoms from the river[1] unto the land of the Philistines, and unto the border of Egypt: they [e]brought presents, and served Solomon all the days of his life.
22 ¶ And Solomon's provision for one day was thirty measures[2] of fine flour, and threescore measures of meal,
23 Ten fat oxen, and twenty oxen out of the pastures, and an hundred sheep, besides harts, and roe-bucks, and fallow-deer, and fatted fowl.[3]
24 For he had dominion over all *the region* on this side the river, from Tiphsah[4] even [f]to Azzah,[5] over all the kings on this side the river: and he had peace on all sides round about him.
25 And Judah and Israel dwelt [g]safely, every man under his vine and under his fig-tree, [h]from Dan even to Beer-sheba, all the days of Solomon.
26 ¶ And [i]Solomon had forty thousand[6] stalls of horses for his chariots, and twelve thousand horsemen.
27 And those officers provided victual for king Solomon, and for all that came unto king Solomon's table, every man in his month: they lacked nothing.
28 Barley also and straw for the horses and [k]dromedaries brought they unto the place where *the officers* were, every man according to his charge.
29 ¶ And [l]God gave Solomon wisdom and understanding exceeding much, and largeness of heart, even as the sand that *is* on the sea-shore.
30 And Solomon's wisdom excelled the wisdom of all the children of [m]the east [7]country, and all the wisdom [n]of Egypt.

A.M. 2990. B.C. 1014.

a Nu. 32. 33–38. De. 3.12–17. Jos.13.9–12.
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g Heb. *confidently*, Mi.4.4. 2 Ki.18.31. Je. 23.6. Is.60.18. Zec.3.10.
h Ju.20.1. 2 Sa.24.2; 17.11 ch.8.65.
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m Job iv.–xxxvii. Mat.2.1. Da.4.7; 5.11, 12.
7 Heb. 'all the *Bene-kedem*,' a proper name given to the nomad tribes of Arabia. They were celebrated for wisdom.—*P.*
n Ac.7.22. Is.19.11,12.

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hopeful is their administration who earnestly ask wisdom and direction from God. The disinterested prayer of faith is always acceptable to God: and when we seek first the kingdom of God, all things shall be added to us. He will give us exceeding abundantly above what we can ask or think: and quickly he gives opportunity for the exercise of the gifts which he bestows. How helpless and perilous is our infantile state! by the most marvellous providence we escape the dangers of it. How tender is the affection of a mother's breast! and monsters of brutality must they be who can neglect and destroy the fruit of their own womb. Magistrates, before whom such difficult causes come, have great need of their subjects' fervent prayers and of God's special direction. And the greater abilities men have, they are the more indebted to God who bestowed them. But alas! oftentimes the fear of detection and punishment from men is a greater restraint upon evil-doers than all the terrors of God's everlasting wrath.

CHAPTER IV. [Ver. 11. *The daughter of Solomon to wife.* Not signifying that he had her to wife when Solomon came to the throne—for Solomon was then too young to have a marriageable daughter—but who had her to wife before the time when the history was written. But if this be not admitted, she may, according to eastern custom, have been betrothed at an early age. *C.*]

Ver. 19. ['Geber Ben-Uri in the land of Gilead, the land of Sihon king of the Amorites and Og king of Bashan; and the one officer who was in the land.' This verse is somewhat obscure, especially when connected with ver. 13, 14. The meaning seems to be that Geber was set over the very wide district embracing the allotted territories of Reuben and Gad; part of which had originally been subject to Sihon, and a small part to Og; while to the whole the sacred writer now gives the name Gilead. *P.*]

Ver. 21. [All these countries acknowledged Solomon's authority, and paid tribute to him; but still this was not a fulfilment of the conditional promise made to Abraham. The countries specified were not then, and never were, possessed by the Israelites as a people. *P.*]

Ver. 28. ['Barley also and chopped straw for the horses and post-horses they brought unto the place

DAM, ABANA RIVER—A SCENE IN THE OLDEST CITY IN THE WORLD, INCLUDED IN THE KINGDOM OVER WHICH SOLOMON REIGNED. [I. KINGS, iv: 21.]—"And Solomon reigned over all kingdoms from the river unto the land of the Philistines, and unto the border of Egypt: they brought presents and served Solomon all the days of his life." In the first chapter of Joshua, the Lord spake unto Joshua, saying, "Every place that the soul of your foot shall tread upon, that have I given unto you, as I said unto Moses from the wilderness, and this Lebanon even unto the great river, the river Euphrates, all the land of the Hittites, and unto the great sea towards the going down of the sun shall be your coast" The promise made to Joshua was practically confirmed and realized at the conclusion of David's reign. Solomon came into possession of this great inheritance, but by forgetting God he prepared the way for the dismemberment of his great kingdom. The Abana river is a scene near Damascus, at this time embraced within the dominions of Solomon.

31 For he was [o]wiser than all men; than Ethan[p] the Ezrahite, and Heman, and Chalcol, and Darda, the sons of Mahol:[8] and his fame was in all nations round about.

32 And he [q]spake three thousand proverbs: and his songs were a thousand and five.

33 And he spake of trees, from the cedar-tree that *is* in Lebanon, even unto the hyssop that springeth out of the wall: he spake also of beasts, and of fowl, and of creeping things, and of fishes.[9]

34 And there came [r]of all people to hear the wisdom of Solomon, from all kings of the earth, which had heard of his wisdom.

CHAPTER V.

1 *Hiram, sending to congratulate Solomon, is certified of his purpose to build the temple, and desired to furnish him with timber for that purpose.* 7 *Hiram, blessing God for Solomon, and requesting food for his family, furnisheth him with timber.* 13 *The number of Solomon's workmen and labourers.*

AND Hiram[a] king of Tyre[1] sent his servants unto Solomon; (for he had heard that they had anointed him king in the room of his father:) for Hiram [b]was ever a lover of David.

2 And [c]Solomon sent to Hiram, saying,

3 Thou knowest how that David my father could[d] not build an house unto the name of the LORD his God, for the wars which were about him on every side, until the LORD [e]put them under the soles of his feet.

4 But now the LORD my God [f]hath given me rest on every side, *so that there is* neither adversary nor evil occurrent.

5 And, behold, I [2]purpose [g]to build an house unto the name of the LORD my God,[3] as the LORD spake unto David my father, saying, Thy son, whom I will set upon thy throne in thy room, he shall build an house unto my name.

6 Now therefore command thou that they hew me [h]cedar-trees out of Lebanon; and my servants shall be with thy servants: and unto thee will [i]I give hire for thy servants, according to all that thou shalt appoint:[4] for thou knowest that *there is* not among us any that can skill to hew timber like unto the [k]Sidonians.[5]

7 ¶ And it came to pass, when Hiram heard the words of Solomon, that he rejoiced greatly, and said, [l]Blessed *be* the LORD this day,[6] which hath given unto David a wise son over this great people.

8 And Hiram sent to Solomon, saying, I have considered[7] the things which thou sentest to me for: *and* I will do all thy desire concerning timber of cedar, and concerning [m]timber of fir.

9 My servants shall bring *them* down from [n]Lebanon unto the sea; and I will convey them by sea in floats unto the place that thou shalt appoint[8] me, and will cause them to be discharged there, and thou shalt receive *them:* and thou shalt accomplish my desire in [o]giving food for my household.[9]

10 So Hiram gave Solomon cedar-trees, and fir-trees, *according to* all his desire.

11 And Solomon[1] gave Hiram twenty thousand [p]measures of wheat *for* food to his household, and twenty measures[2] of pure oil:[3] thus gave Solomon to Hiram year by year.

12 And the LORD [q]gave Solomon wisdom, as he promised him: and there was peace between Hiram and Solomon; and they two [r]made a league together.

13 ¶ And king Solomon raised a levy out of all Israel; and the levy was [s]thirty thousand men.

14 And he sent them to Lebanon, ten thousand a month by courses: a month they were in Lebanon, *and* two months at home: and [t]Adoniram *was* over the levy.

15 And Solomon had threescore and [u]ten thousand that bare burdens, and fourscore thousand hewers in the mountains;

16 Besides the chief of Solomon's officers which *were* over the work, [x]three thousand and three hundred, which ruled over the people that wrought in the work.

17 And the king commanded, and they [y]brought great stones,[4] costly stones, *and* hewed stones, to lay the foundation of the house.

18 And Solomon's builders and Hiram's builders did hew *them,* and the [z]stone-squarers:[5] so they prepared timber and stones to build the house.

A.M. 2990. B.C. 1014.

o ch. 3. 12. Col. 2. 3. Ja. 3. 34.

p Ps. 89. title; 88. title. 1 Ch. 15. 17, 19; 2. 6.

8 It appears from 1 Ch. 2. 6 that Ethan, Heman, Chalcol, and Darda were all sons of *Ezra* or *Zerah.* The Hebrew words therefore rendered 'sons of Mahol' signify 'sons of music'—men of high musical talent. This is proved from 1 Ch. 15. 16, 17, 19; 25. 4. Ps. lxxviii. lxxix.—*P.*

q Ec. 12. 9. Pr. 1. 1. Ca. 1. 1.

9 There is no need to speculate about the supposed loss of any of Solomon's writings, as it is not said he *wrote,* but *spake* on these subjects.—*C.*

r ver. 21, 31; ch. 10. 1–8, 24. 2 Ch. 9. 22, 23. Is. 2. 2; 55. 5.

CHAP. V.

a 2 Sa. 5. 11. Is. 30. 1.

1 There were two cities called Tyre—the one on the continent, the other on an island. The former was, most probably, the residence of Hiram, the latter is the Tyre of prophecy, and its grandeur and destruction continue to furnish a striking evidence of the divine origin of the Holy Scriptures, in which its fates were predicted.—*C.*

b 1 Ch. 14. 1. 2 Sa. 5. 11. Am. 1. 9.

c 2 Ch. 2. 3. Huram.

d 2 Sa. 7. 5–11. 1 Ch. 22, 8; 28. 3.

e Jos. 10. 24. Ps. 8. 6; 110. 1. Mal. 4. 3. Ep. 1. 22.

f 1 Ch. 22. 9, 18. Mat. 11. 28–30. Ac. 9. 31.

2 Heb. *say.*

g 2 Sa. 7. 12, 13. 1 Ch. 22. 10; 28. 6, 20, 21. Mat. 16. 18. 2 Ch. 2. 1.

3 The religious character of this embassy forms one of the most beautiful episodes in the history of human diplomacy. And is it not an emblem of Christ calling the Gentiles to join with him in building up his church, the true and holy temple where the Lord dwells?—*C.*

h Ps. 29. 5; 92. 12. Ca. 5. 15. ch. 6. 9, 10, 16, 20.

i Ro. 12. 17. Phi. 4. 8.

4 Heb. *say.*

k Ezr. 3. 7. Ge. 10. 15.

5 Almost every country has some peculiar productions for beneficial exchange, and some peculiar arts and manufactures in which it excels. Thus God binds nations together by mutual necessities and benefits, provides for the extension of the gospel, and overrules the tendencies of men for war.—*C.*

A.M. 2990. B.C. 1014.

l ch. 10. 9. 2 Ch. 2. 10, 12. De. 32. 31. 2 Ki. 5. 16. Ps. 58. 11. Da. 3. 28.

6 Hiram was evidently no idolater, but a devout worshipper of the true God.—*C.*

7 Heb. *heard.*

m ch. 6. 15, 34. 2 Sa. 6. 5. 2 Ch. 3. 5.

n De. 3. 25. Ju. 3. 3. Jos. 11. 17.

8 Heb. *send.*

o 1 Ti. 5. 8. Ac. 12. 20. Ezr. 3. 7. Eze. 27. 17.

9 Sidon being a large commercial city, built on the coast, and having near it only a narrow plain, required a large supply of provisions. 'Food for his household' was consequently the most acceptable return Solomon could make to Hiram for his services.—*P.*

1 B.C. 1012.

p Heb. *cors.* 2 Ch. 2. 10, *i.e.* about 42,500 bolls.

2 About 1560 gallons, wine measure.

3 In 2 Ch. 2. 10 we find mention of 20,000 baths of oil. But this does not necessarily contradict the 120 measures in the text—as the one account may refer to oil of common quality—the text to *pure oil* for Hiram's own household.—*C.*

q ch. 4. 29; 3. 12. 2 Ch. 1. 12.

r ch. 15. 19. Ge. 21. 32. Am. 1. 9.

s ch. 9. 15.

t ch. 4. 6.

u 2 Ch. 2. 2, 17, 18. ch. 9. 20–22.

x 2 Ch. 2. 2. ch. 9. 23.

y ch. 7. 9, 6. 7. 1 Co. 3. 10, 11. 1 Pe. 2. 5. Is. 28. 16. Re. 21. 14, 27.

4 As an illustration of what is meant by *great stones,* it may be remarked that in the ruins of Baalbec, generally ascribed to Solomon, Irby and Mangles measured one 66 feet long and 12 feet in depth and breadth; and Wood found one in a neighbouring quarry, prepared for removal, which was 70 feet long by 14 feet 5 inches in breadth, and 14 feet in depth, which, estimated as Portland stone, would weigh 1135 tons.—*C.*

z Or, *Gibilites;* as Eze. 27. 9. Ps. 83. 7.

5 This clause ought to be translated as follows:—'And Solomon's builders, and Hiram's builders, and the Giblites hewed.' The *Giblites* were the inhabitants of *Gebal,* a small city situated on the shore of the Mediterranean a little beneath Lebanon, and eighteen miles north of Beyrout. It is a remarkable fact that the masonry of the ancient walls of Gebal bear a close resemblance to those of the temple-wall at Jerusalem.—*P.*

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where they (the *horses,* not the *officers*) were—each man in his turn.' The word rendered 'dromedaries' means a swift animal, or an animal accustomed to perform journeys. *P.*]

REFLECTIONS.—Great men should appear great, answerably to their stations. And it is often prudent for kings to continue most of their predecessors' officers in their respective places. But it is necessary for all men to provide for their household in the manner that is best for their own and the nation's advantage. God wisely balances men's honour and wealth with proportionate burdens of expense and care. He can give great happiness on earth: but infinitely greater is the happiness of Jesus' kingdom, which fills both heaven and earth; and unbounded are his provisions of new-covenant blessings. How gracious is God in the bestowal of his gifts and grace! But let us never envy such as outshine us. It is the Lord; let him give as seemeth him good! If we lack wisdom, let us ask it of God; and out of Jesus' fulness, in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge, let us receive, and grace for grace.

CHAPTER V. [Ver. 6. The skill of the Sidonians in hewing timber was owing to two causes: 1. The cedar forests were in the mountains of Lebanon, within a very few miles of the city. There remains of ancient cedar forests have been discovered within the past five years. It was thought until very recently that the only remnant of the famous cedars was the little grove near the northern extremity of the mountain chain. Now, no less than *seven* distinct groves are known. 2. The Sidonians were the earliest and most celebrated navigators, they had consequently acquired skill in cutting timber for ship-building. *P.*]

Ver. 15. [It must be remembered that in those early days there were no regularly constructed roads, and there were no engines constructed to economize human labour. Palestine besides was a mountainous country; and transport was difficult. Every stone and beam had to be dragged along by strength of arm. Thousands were thus required to do work which as many scores could now do by the aid of machinery. The bearers of burdens and hewers spoken of in this verse were employed in the mountains around Jerusalem. It appears from 2 Ch. 2. 17, 18 that these pressed labourers were Canaanites. *P.*]

Ver. 17. [The stones laid bare by recent excavations round the walls of the temple area are of enormous magnitude, and the walls themselves, as now in part exposed to view, show what a vast amount of labour and time must have been spent upon them. Some of the stones measure nearly 40 ft. in length by 5 ft. in thickness. *P.*]

REFLECTIONS.—Condolence with the afflicted is truly kind; and faithful friends love the children for their parents' sake. It is good for kings to cultivate peace with their neighbours, especially such as fear God. The more outward rest we have, the more earnestly we should lay out ourselves in promoting the

CHAPTER VI.

1 *The building of Solomon's temple begun.* 5 *The chambers thereof.* 11 *God's promise unto it.* 14 *The ceiling and adorning of it.* 23 *The cherubims.* 31 *The doors.* 36 *The court.* 37 *The time of building it.*

AND it[a] came to pass in the four hundred and eightieth year after the children of Israel were come out of the land of Egypt, in the fourth year of Solomon's reign over Israel, in[b] the month Zif, which *is* the second month,[1] that he began to build the house of the LORD.

2 ¶ And the house which king Solomon built for the LORD, the length thereof *was* [c]threescore cubits, and the breadth thereof twenty *cubits*, and the height thereof thirty cubits.

3 And the [d]porch before the temple of the house, twenty cubits *was* the length thereof, according to the breadth of the house; *and* ten cubits *was* the breadth thereof before the house.[2]

4 ¶ And for the house he made [e]windows of narrow lights.

5 ¶ And against the wall[3] of the house he built [f]chambers round about, *against* the walls of the house round about, *both* of the temple and of the [g]oracle: and he made chambers round about.

6 The nethermost chamber *was* five cubits broad, and the middle *was* six cubits broad, and the third *was* seven cubits broad: for without *in the wall* of the house he made narrowed rests[4] round about, that *the beams* should not be fastened in the walls of the house.[5]

7 And the house, when it was in building, was [h]built of stone made ready before it was brought thither: so that there was neither hammer,[i] nor axe, *nor* any tool of iron, heard in the house while it was in building.[6]

8 The door for the middle chamber *was* in the right side[7] of the house: and they [k]went up with winding stairs into the middle *chamber*, and out of the middle into the third.

9 So he built the house, and finished it; and covered the house with beams and boards[8] of cedar.[9]

10 And *then* he built [l]chambers against all the house, five cubits high: and they rested on the house with timber of cedar.

11 ¶ And the word of the LORD came to Solomon, saying,

12 *Concerning* this house which thou art in building, [m]if thou wilt walk in my statutes, and execute my judgments, and keep all my commandments to walk in them; then will I perform my word with thee, which I spake unto David thy father:

13 And I [n]will dwell among the children of Israel, and will not forsake my people Israel.

14 ¶ So Solomon built the house, and finished it.[1]

15 And he built the walls of the house within with boards of cedar, both the floor of the house, and the walls[2] of the ceiling: *and* he covered *them* on the inside with wood,[3] and covered the floor of the house with planks of fir.

16 And he [o]built twenty cubits on the sides of the house, both the floor and the walls with boards of cedar: he even built *them* for it within, *even* for the oracle, *even* for the [p]most holy *place*.

17 And the house, that *is*, the temple before it, was forty cubits *long*.

18 And the cedar of the house within *was* carved with knops[4] and open flowers:[5] all *was* cedar; there was no stone seen.

19 ¶ And the oracle he prepared in the house within, to [q]set there the ark of the covenant of the LORD.

20 And the oracle[6] in the fore-part *was* twenty cubits in length, and twenty cubits in breadth, and twenty cubits in the height thereof: and he overlaid[7] it with pure gold; and *so* covered the [r]altar *which was of* cedar.

21 So [s]Solomon overlaid the house within with pure gold: and he made a partition[8] by the [t]chains of gold before the oracle, and he overlaid it with gold.

22 And the whole house he overlaid with gold, until he had finished all the house: also the whole altar that *was* by the oracle he overlaid with gold.

23 ¶ And within the oracle he made [u]two cherubims[9] *of* [x]olive-tree,[1] *each* ten cubits high.

24 And five cubits *was* the one wing of the cherub, and five cubits the other wing of the cherub: from the uttermost part of the one wing unto the uttermost part of the other *were* ten cubits.

25 And the other cherub *was* ten cubits: both the cherubims *were* of one measure and one size.

26 The height of the one cherub *was* ten cubits, and so *was it* of the other cherub.

27 And he set the cherubims within the inner house: and [y]they stretched forth the

A.M. 2993. B.C. 1011.

CHAP. VI.

a 2 Ch.3.1. Ac.7.47, with Jn.2.21.Col.2.9. 1 Co.6.19. 1 Pe.2.5. Ep. 2.20–22.

b Nu. 1. 1, with Ex. 12.2,3.

1 Of the sacred year, *i.e.* about the end of April.

c Ezr.6.3. Eze.41.8. Re. 21. 16, 17. Its length was 109½, its breadth 36½, its height 54¾ feet.

d Lu.1.10. Jn. 10.23. Ac.3.10,11.

2 The searcher of Scripture is referred to the plan of the temple and courts by Lamy, which there is every reason to consider a near approach to the original. But let him never forget that this earthly temple is the emblem of the personal and mystical body of Christ, Jn.2.19. Ep.1.22.—*C.*

e Or, *windows broad* within and *narrow* without, or *shewed* and *closed*. Eze.40.16;41.16. Ca.2. 9. Is.60.8. 1 Co.12.4.

3 These erections against the walls must appear so contrary to all European ideas of church architecture, that it may be well to remind the reader that the light of the temple was principally supplied by the golden candlestick within, the emblem of Christ in the heart of believers, the hope of glory.—*C.*

f 1 Ch.28. 11. Ne. 10. 37. Eze.40.44; 41.6; 42. 3. Ca.1.4.

g Or, *holy of holies*, ver.16,19–23; ch.8.6, 8. Nu.7.89. Le.16.2. Ex. 30.6;25.22.

4 Heb. *narrowings* or *rebatements*. These chambers might denote particular societies of saints.

5 The walls, according to the soundest architectural principle, diminished in thickness as they ascended; and, by contracting a cubit at each successive story, afforded a resting-place for the end of the beams, which were not allowed to enter the wall.—*C.*

h Ac.7.48. Pr. 24. 27. 1 Pe.2.5. 2 Co.5.5. Col. 1.12.

i Is.4.3. Ep.4.16, 31, 32.1 Ti.6.3–5.

6 The hammer is for breaking, the axe for hewing, but neither were used in building the temple, though both in preparing the materials. So, the law and the prophets serve to break in pieces and to slay, but the work of the Spirit in regeneration is merely to build up believers in noiseless peace.—*C.*

7 Heb. *shoulder*.

k Eze.41.6,7. Noting progress in holiness and honours.

8 Or, *the vault beams and the ceilings with cedars*.

9 Or, in modern terms, joisted and celled the house, ver. 10, with cedar the flooring-boards being of fir, ver. 15.—*C.*

l Eze.41.6.

m ch.2.4;3. 14; 8. 25; 9.4,5. Ps.132. 12; 19. 11. Is.3.10. 2 Sa.7.13. 1 Ch. 22.10. 2 Ch.7.17,18. Ro. 2.7,10. 1 Co.15.58.

A.M. 2993. B.C. 1011.

n Ex. 25. 8. Ps. 132. 13,14. Le.26.11. 2 Co.6. 16. Re.21.3.

1 B.C. 1004.

2 Or, *from the floor of the house unto the walls*, &c., and so ver. 16.

3 Or, as we would term it, he wainscotted the walls with cedar.—*C.*

o 2 Ch.3.8.ver.19,20, Ex.25.21,22.

p He.9.3. Ex. 26. 33 Le.7.6;16.2. Nu.18.10. Where the ark and cherubims were placed.

4 Or, *gourds*.

5 Heb. *opening of flowers*.

q 2 Ch.5.7. Ex.40.20, 21.ch.8.6–10. He.9.3,4.

6 The place from which God gave his responses by Urim and Thummim.—*C.*

7 Heb. *shut up*.

r Of incense, ch. 7. 48;ver.22. Ex.30.1.

s 2 Ch.3.6–10. Re.21. 18,21

8 This *partition* was, most probably, the veil of the temple, covering the doors, ver. 31, and ornamented by golden chains for drawing it up at the annual entrance of the high-priest.—*C.*

t 2 Ch. 3. 14, 16. Ex. 26.33.

u 2 Ch. 3. 10–13. Ex. 25.18–22. He.1. 14. Ge. 3.24.

9 The precise form of the cherubim the Scriptures do not describe. Some particulars, however, both of appearance and service are revealed. For example, some appear to have had but one face, as in Ex. 25. 20. Some four faces, as in Eze. 1. 6. Some had two wings, as in 1 Ki. 6. 24; some six, as in the vision of Ezekiel, 1. 6. As to their service, some were appointed to resist the vain and rebellious dispositions of man, Ge. 3. 24; others to bear up the throne of God, or become the vehicles of his almighty power, Eze. 1. 19–25. Ps. 18. 10; in all which they present either the agents or emblems of that divine administration, in which the angels that excel in strength are 'ministering spirits to them who shall be heirs of salvation,' He.1.14.—*C.*

x Heb. *trees of oil*, Ex. 25. 18. Ne. 8. 16. These cherubims represented angels and ministers, as wondering at and serving in the work of our redemption.

1 The olive furnished oil, the emblem of light and anointing to office; as the cedar was the emblem of the indestructibility of the covenant; the fir, of the endurance of God's people while trodden upon in his service.—*C.*

y Or, *the cherubims stretched forth their wings*. Ex.25.20, 22. 2 Ch.3.11. Ps.17.8;31.20; 91.1.

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worship and honour of God: and when we have God's promise to encourage us we need never doubt of our success. They have often most of natural ingenuity who have no real knowledge of God. And frequently God employs those in building his church who have no spiritual interest in her. But it is highly honourable to assist in promoting her welfare. In all bargains the conditions ought to be clear, that after-disputes may be prevented. And labourers' wages should be always paid with the greatest punctuality. When God hath a temple to build he can easily provide workmen; and in his work every one ought to have his particular allotment. But great is the mercy, that thousands unnumbered of Gentile sinners have been brought into the gospel church, and built up a spiritual temple, a meet habitation of God, through the Spirit.

CHAPTER VI. [Ver. 1. *Began to build the house of the Lord.* Chronologists differ widely respecting this most important epoch, ranging from 330 to 680, but no good reason seems assigned by any for questioning the correctness of the Hebrew text. *C.*]

Ver. 2. [*The height thereof thirty cubits.* That is, the height of the body of the house; for from 2 Ch. 3. 4 it appears that the height of the porch was 120 cubits, or 180 feet. The *Codex Alexandrinus* of the Septuagint makes it but 30 cubits, equal to the rest of the building; but there seems no reason whatever to question the existence of the noble tower implied in the Hebrew text. *C.*]

Ver. 6. [The form and dimensions of the temple, as far as they can be ascertained, were as follows:—Its total length was 80 cubits; its breadth 40; and its

GENERAL VIEW OF THE POOLS OF SOLOMON—PART OF THE WATER SUPPLY OF THE MOSQUE OF OMAR. [I. KINGS, vi: 14.] — "So Solomon built the house, and finished it." We give a general view of the Pools of Solomon here because a part of the water which supplied the temple was brought to Jerusalem from this place. There are three of these pools. They are about 9 miles from Jerusalem. The length of the upper cistern is about 380 feet, the breadth about 230 feet, the depth 25 feet. The middle cistern is 423 feet long, something over 200 feet broad, 39 feet deep. The lower cistern is 580 feet long, and over 200 feet broad, and 50 feet deep. The road from Hebron to Jerusalem passes just westward of them. Even to a recent day these cisterns sent water to the great mosque in Jerusalem which is built on the site of Solomon's Temple

wings of the cherubims, so that the wing of the one touched the *one* wall, and the wing of the other cherub touched the other wall; and their wings touched one another in the midst of the house.

28 And he overlaid the cherubims with gold.

29 And he carved all the walls of the house round about with carved [z]figures of cherubims, and palm-trees, and [a]open flowers, within and without.

30 And the [b]floor of the house he overlaid with gold within and without.[1]

31 ¶ And for the [c]entering[2] of the oracle he made doors *of* olive-tree: the lintel *and* side-posts *were* [d]a fifth part *of the wall.*

32 The two doors[3] also *were of* olive-tree; and he carved upon them carvings of cherubims, and palm-trees, and open flowers,[4] and overlaid *them* with gold, and spread gold upon the cherubims, and upon the palm-trees.

33 So also made he for the door of the temple posts *of* olive-tree, a fourth part[5] *of the wall.*

34 And the two doors *were of* [e]fir-tree: the two[f] leaves of the one door *were* folding, and the two leaves of the other door *were* folding.

35 And he carved *thereon* cherubims, and palm-trees, and open flowers; and covered *them* with gold fitted upon the carved work.[6]

36 ¶ And he built the inner [g]court[7] with three rows of hewed stone, and a row of cedar-beams.

37 ¶ In [h]the fourth year[8] was the foundation of the house of the LORD laid, in the month Zif:

38 And in the eleventh year,[9] in the month Bul, (which *is* the eighth month,)[1] was the house [i]finished throughout all the parts thereof, and according to all the fashion of it.[2] So was he seven[3] years in building it.

A.M. 3000. B.C. 1004.

z He.1.14. Ps.34.7; 92.13-15. Lu.2.14.

a Heb. *opening of flowers*, ver.18,32.

b Re.21.18,21.

1 This repetition of 'within and without,' shows that it means the *inner and outer house*, not within and without the temple. —*C.*

c Jn.10.7,9; 14.6. Is. 4.2; 11.1. He.10.19,20. Ep.2.18; 3.12.

2 It would seem that besides the vail of the temple, there was another partition between the outer sanctuary and the oracle. When the vail was drawn aside, there were doors that took up a fifth of that partition, or about four cubits. 'In the centre of the partition,' says Bardwell, 'there was a pair of folding doors of olive-wood, seven feet six inches wide, very richly carved. —*P.*

d Or, *five-square*, ver. 16, 22, 23. Eze.41. 23,24.

3 Or, *leaves of the doors.*

4 Heb. *opening of flowers.*

5 Or, *four-square.*

e ch.5.8.

f Eze.41.23.

6 It thus appears that the whole interior of the temple—floor, walls, and ceilings; the whole of the doors, and also, as it seems, the most prominent portions of the outside—were covered with plates of pure gold, carved and sculptured by the first artists of the age. —*P.*

g Of the priests, 2 Ch.4.9. Re.11.2.

7 The court of the priests, 2 Ch. 4. 9, as distinct from the outer court of the people. The emblem of that priesthood of intercession by his sacrifice, which Christ now holds in the heavens, He.6.19, 20;7.24,25.—*C.*

h ver.1.

8 B.C. 1011.

9 B.C. 1004.

A.M. 3000. B.C. 1004.

1 About the end of October.

i Zec.4.7,9. Lu.14. 28.

2 Or, *with all the appurtenances thereof, and with all the ordinances thereof.*

3 And a half.

CHAP. VII.

a ch.9.10. Ec.2.4,5.

b ch.9.10;10.17. Mat. 6.33. Col.3.1.

1 Thirteen years more, see 2 Ch.8.1.—*C.*

2 This first verse is a superscription or heading to what is recorded in the following verses. Solomon spent thirteen years in the erection of his royal palace. Having made this general statement, the historian proceeds to describe in detail the several parts of the magnificent structure. These were classed under *four* heads: 1. The house or rather hall of the forest of Lebanon. 2. The porch or adytum connected with it. 3. The throne-room or judgment-hall. 4. The private dwelling, which would now be called in the East the *harim*. Connected with the latter was a separate house for his Egyptian wife.—*P.*

3 B.C. 991.

4 Nothing is precisely known of the reason why this house was so called. That it was in or immediately adjoining to Jerusalem, seems evident from ver. 7, for we cannot imagine the supreme court of law removed to any considerable distance. Still, it may have been surrounded with such lofty trees, and erected on such a lofty position, as may have suggested the name both of the forest and the mountain.—*C.*

5 Heb. *ribs.*

6 Heb. *sight against sight.*

7 Or, *spaces and pillars* were *square in prospect.*

8 Or, *according to them.*

9 Or, *according to them.*

1 B.C. 990.

c ch.10.18. Ps.122.5; 110.1;45.6. Is.9.7.

d ch.3.16. Pr.20.8.

2 Heb. *from floor to floor.*

CHAPTER VII.

1 *The building of Solomon's house.* 2 *Of the house of Lebanon.* 6 *Of the porch of pillars.* 7 *Of the porch of judgment.* 8 *Of the house for Pharaoh's daughter.* 13 *Hiram's work of the two pillars.* 23 *Of the molten sea.* 27 *Of the ten bases.* 38 *Of the ten lavers,* 40 *and all the other vessels.*

BUT Solomon was building [a]his own house thirteen[b] years,[1] and he finished all his house.[2]

2 ¶ He built[3] also the house of the forest of Lebanon;[4] the length thereof *was* an hundred cubits, and the breadth thereof fifty cubits, and the height thereof thirty cubits, upon four rows of cedar-pillars, with cedar-beams upon the pillars.

3 And *it was* covered with cedar above upon the beams,[5] that *lay* on forty-five pillars, fifteen *in* a row.

4 And *there were* windows *in* three rows, and light *was* against light[6] *in* three ranks.

5 And all the doors and posts *were* square with the windows:[7] and light *was* against light *in* three ranks.

6 ¶ And he made a porch of pillars; the length thereof *was* fifty cubits, and the breadth thereof thirty cubits: and the porch *was* before them;[8] and the *other* pillars and the thick beam *were* before them.[9]

7 ¶ Then[1] he made a porch for [c]the throne where he might judge, *even* the porch [d]of judgment: and *it was* covered with cedar from one side of the floor to the other.[2]

8 ¶ And his house where he dwelt *had*

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height 30. The interior was 60 cubits long by 20 wide, and was divided by the vail into two chambers. The inner chamber, or holy of holies, was an exact cube, 20 cubits each way. The outer, or holy place, measured two cubes, being 40 cubits long, 20 wide, and 20 high. In front was a porch measuring half a cube, and containing the two pillars Jachin and Boaz. The door was in the east end, and in front of it was the great altar of burnt-offering. Along each side and the west end of the shrine was a range of small chambers for the priests, carried up in three stories to near the top of the temple walls. Above the whole rose a peaked roof 10 cubits high. The porch was remarkable. It was 120 cubits high. Probably each wing was carried up so as to form a great tower, resembling some of the English cathedrals. *P.*]

Ver. 37, 38. Never was such a magnificent structure on earth as this temple of Solomon. God himself had given the plan of it to David, 1 Ch. 28. 19. David and his princes prepared for the erection of it about 46,000 ton weight of gold and silver; amounting in all to about £942,719,750. About 183,600 Canaanites and Hebrews were employed in building it. It took about seven years to finish it. The whole top of Mount Moriah was inclosed within a wall to be a court for it. This court was divided into two: the outer for the clean Hebrews, which had an entrance from every side, but the principal one was from the east, and that of the royal family from the south-west: the inner court, separated from the outer by a low wall, was appointed for the priests and Levites. Here, just before the east end of the temple, stood the brazen altar, 36½ feet square, and 18¼ high, with the brazen sea; ten lavers, five on each side of the entrance of the temple. Immediately westward from these was the *porch* of the temple, 36½ feet from north to south, and 18¼ from east to west, and about 219 feet high: on each side it had an ornamental pillar of brass about 33 feet high. This served as a magnificent steeple, and as a place of shelter and prayer for the serving priests. Passing through this porch you entered into the sanctuary, an apartment about 73 feet long, 36½ broad, and 54¾ high. This was illuminated by at least ten golden candlesticks; each of which had seven curiously adorned branches for lamps: five of these were placed on the north, and as many on the south side of the house. An equal number of golden tables, furnished each with 12 loaves of show-bread, stood on each side of the house, probably between the candlesticks. Close to the west end, in the middle, stood the golden altar of incense: passing by it, through a doorway hung with a fine vail, and having leaves for shutting it, the high-priest, on the day of atonement, entered into the *Oracle*, or *most holy place.* It was an apartment 36½ feet in length, and as much in breadth, and 54¾ in height. Here, amidst perpetual darkness, was placed the ark, with its golden cherubims overshadowing it and the whole furniture. Solomon added two new cherubims of olive-trees, which stretched their wings over it and to the whole breadth of the house, each wing extending about 18 feet. The wall of this temple consisted of alternate rows of cedar planks and hewn stone, probably polished marble. The whole inside of the house was overlaid with fine gold, and curiously ornamented with figures of cherubims and palm-trees. On the outside of the wall were erected ninety chambers in three stories, for the accommodation of the priests who served at it. After Solomon had dedicated it to the service of God by solemn prayer and sacrifices, and God had taken possession of it, by the entrance of the cloud of glory, the priests, singers, and porters attended it in the order prescribed by king David. After it had stood about 416 years, and had been frequently pillaged, it was burned by Nebuchadnezzar. About 70 years after it was rebuilt, with inferior glory, by the captives who returned from Babylon. This had stood about 500 years when it was rebuilt with far more magnificence by Herod the Great; and a new court for the Gentiles was added; but in little more than 80 years after it was finally destroyed by the Romans, A.D. 72, 1 Ch. xvii. xxii.–xxix.; 2 Ch. ii.–viii.; 2 Ki. xxv.; Je. iii.; Ezr. ii.–vi.; Jn. i.

REFLECTIONS.—How little God regards pomp in his worship who wanted a temple so long in his holy nation! But when he calls for our substance, we ought cheerfully to give in proportion to our greatness and wealth. What we do in God's church should be done diligently, orderly, and peaceably. But a hearty obedience to his law is more valuable than the most expensive donations to his church. They who go forth with a desire to his glory, may confidently expect some tokens of his approbation. And whenever God, by his grace, begins a good work, he will finish it in his time. But great is our mercy that instead of a magnificent but carnal temple, we have now an incarnate, an ascended Redeemer! a glorious gospel church, planned, prepared for, erected, fashioned, and furnished by God:—that every believer is made a living temple for the Lord; and that in heaven we have a house eternal, immovable, incorruptible, and that fadeth not away!

CHAPTER VII. [Ver. 8. *Like unto this porch.* It is difficult, perhaps impossible, for those accustomed to European ideas of architecture to form any very accurate conception of Solomon's building. According

another[e] court within the porch, *which* was of the like work. Solomon made also an house for Pharaoh's daughter, [f]whom he had taken *to wife*, like unto this porch.

9 ¶ All these[3] *were of* [g]costly stones, according to the measures of hewed stones, sawed with saws,[4] within and without, even from the foundation unto the coping, and *so* on the outside toward the great court.

10 And the [h]foundation *was of* costly stones, *even* great stones, stones of ten cubits, and stones of eight cubits.

11 And above *were* [i]costly stones (after the measures of hewed stones) and cedars.

12 And the great court round about *was* with[k] three rows of hewed stones, and a row of cedar-beams, both for the inner court of the house of the LORD, and for the porch of the house.

13 ¶ And [l]king Solomon sent[5] and fetched Hiram[6] out of Tyre.

14 He *was* a widow's son[7] of the tribe of Naphtali,[8] and his father *was* a man of Tyre, a worker in brass; and he was [m]filled with wisdom and understanding, and cunning to work all works in brass: and he came to king Solomon, and wrought all his work.

15 ¶ For he [n]cast two pillars of brass, of eighteen cubits high apiece;[9] and a line of twelve cubits did compass either of them about.[1]

16 And he made two chapiters *of* molten brass, to set upon the tops of the pillars: the height of the one chapiter[2] *was* [o]five cubits, and the height of the other chapiter *was* five cubits:

17 *And* nets of checker-work, and wreaths of chain-work, for the chapiters which *were* upon the top of the pillars; seven for the one chapiter, and seven for the other chapiter.

18 And he made the pillars, and two rows round about upon the one net-work, to cover the chapiters that *were* upon the top with pomegranates: and so did he for the other chapiter.[3]

19 And the chapiters that *were* upon the top of the pillars *were* of lily-work[4] in the porch, four cubits.

20 And the chapiters upon the two pillars *had pomegranates* also above, over against the belly which *was* by the net-work: and the pomegranates *were* [p]two hundred, in rows round about upon the other chapiter.

21 And[q] he set up the pillars in the porch of the temple: and he set up the right pillar, and called the name thereof [r]Jachin:[5] and he set up the left pillar, and called the name thereof [s]Boaz.

22 And upon the top of the pillars *was* lily-work: so was the work of the pillars finished.

23 ¶ And he made a [t]molten sea,[6] ten cubits from the one brim to the other: *it was* round all about, and his height *was* five cubits: and a line of thirty cubits[7] did compass it round about.

24 And under the brim of it round about *there were* knops compassing it, ten in a cubit, [u]compassing the sea round about: the knops *were* cast in two rows, when it was cast.

25 It[x] stood upon twelve oxen, three looking toward the north, and three looking toward the west, and three looking toward the south, and three looking toward the east: and the sea *was set* above upon them, and all their hinder parts *were* inward.

26 And it *was* an [y]handbreadth thick, and the brim thereof was wrought like the brim of a cup, with flowers of lilies: it contained two thousand baths.[8]

27 ¶ And he made ten bases of brass: four cubits *was* the length of one base, and four cubits the breadth thereof, and three cubits the height of it.

28 And the work of the bases *was* on this *manner:* they had [z]borders, and the borders *were* between the ledges:

29 And on the borders that *were* between the ledges [a]*were* lions, oxen, and cherubims: and upon the ledges *there was* a base above: and beneath the lions and oxen *were* certain additions made of thin work.

30 And every base had four brazen wheels, and plates of brass: and the four corners thereof had undersetters: under the laver *were* undersetters molten, at the side of every addition.

31 And the mouth of it within the chapiter and above *was* a cubit: but the mouth thereof *was* round, *after* the work of the base, a cubit and an half: and also upon the mouth of it *were* gravings with their borders, four-square, not round.[9]

32 And under the borders *were* four wheels; and the axle-trees of the wheels *were joined* to the base:[1] and the height of a wheel *was* a cubit and half a cubit.

33 And the work of the wheels *was* like the work of a chariot-wheel: their axle-trees, and their naves, and their felloes, and their spokes, *were* all molten.

34 And *there were* four undersetters to the

A.M. 3014. B.C. 990.

e 2 Ki.20.4.

f ch.3.1.2 Ch.8.11.

3 All these buildings, including the temple and palace.—*P.*

g ch.5.17.

4 A method of cutting valuable stone still practised, by means of a thin saw of iron, acting by means of sand and water.—*C.*

h 1s.28.16.1 Co.3.10, 11. Re.21.19,20.

i 1 Pe.2.5. Ep. 2. 20–22

k ch.6.36.

l 2 Ch.4.11:2.14.ver. 40.

5 B.C. 1011.

6 Not the king of that name, but a skilful artisan.—*C.*

7 Heb. *the son of a widow woman.*

8 How is this to be reconciled with 2 Ch. 2. 14, which says she was of the tribe of Dan? She may have been of the one tribe by the father, and of the other tribe by the mother; or a daughter of Naphtali married into the tribe of Dan; or the reverse, and, when a widow, married to a man of Tyre, by whom she had this son.—*C.*

m Ex. 31. 3: 35. 35. Da.1.17. Lu.2.40. Job 35.11.

n Heb. *fashioned,* 1: 52. 21. 2 Ch. 3. 15. 2 Ki 25.10.17.

9 This statement is reconciled with 2 Ch.3.15, where they are said to be 35 cubits, by recollecting that as modern ounces, pounds, perches, acres, &c., differ from one another, so Jewish weights and measures of the same name differed. The common cubit, accordingly, was but one-half the cubit of the sanctuary, so that 18 of the one would give 36 of the other, which, deducting a foot for the plinth, would give 35 for the shaft of the pillar.—*C.*

1 B.C. 1004.

2 The part commonly called the *capital,* differing in modern architecture in height and form, according to the orders derived from the ancients, or the varieties occasionally adopted by modern architects.—*C.*

o 2 Ki.25.17. These pillars might denote Christ, his prophets, and apostles, as ornamental and supporting pillars in the church.

3 The words 'pillars' and 'pomegranates,' as appears from some ancient manuscripts, have been transposed in this verse. It may be rendered as follows: 'And he made the pomegranates, even two rows all round upon one network, to cover the chapiters which were upon the top of the pillars; and so did he for the other chapiter.'—*P.*

4 Work in imitation of lilies, as differing from the fretted work in imitation of nets. The lily, the representative of the church in her life, purity, and beauty—the other, as bringing every thought into the captivity of Christ, Ca.2.1. Mar.4.19.—*C.*

p Je.52.22,23.2Ch.3.16&4.13.2 Ki.25.17.

q 2 Ch.3.17.Re.3.12. Ca.3.10.Ga.2.9.

r That is, *He shall establish,* Is.9.7. 2 Sa. 7.12.

5 We are not told that these pillars bore any part of the building. Taken together, and according to the best interpreters, their names form a prophecy—'It shall stand in strength.' Are they not the emblems of these conquering believers (1 Jn. 5. 4) addressed by our Lord (Re. 3. 12), who do not bear up the house by their own strength, but are borne themselves by Christ the only foundation and strength? Ps.75.3.1 Co.3.11.—*C.*

s That is, *In it is strength,* Mat. 16. 18. Ze.10.12. Is.45.24.

t 2 Ch. 4.2. Je.52.17. Ex.30.18,20. Zec.13.1. 1 Jn.1.7.

6 The Hebrews called any large collection of water a *sea*—as the Sea of Tiberias, which was a mere fresh-water lake. This vessel was called a *sea,* from its size, being computed to contain about 16,000 gallons.—*C.*

7 64¾ feet.

u 2 Ch.4.3.

x 2 Ch. 4. 3, 4. Je.52. 20. Ac.9.15. Re.21.14. These were figures of the twelve apostles preaching Christ.

y 2 Ch.4.5. Je.52.21. 1 Jn.1.7. It had ordinarily but 3000 in it; but would hold 3000 when quite filled; or it and its undersetters held 3000, 2 Ch. 4. 5. Ki 15,140 corn, or 22,210 English wine gallons.

8 This may easily be reconciled with the 3000 baths stated as its contents, 2 Ch. 4.5, for here it is said to have contained 2000 baths, the actual quantity put in for use; in Ch. it is said to have received and held 3000 baths, that is, when filled to the brim. The one estimation is by the actual contents, the other by absolute capacity.—*C.*

z Heb. *shootings,* ver.29,36.

a Re. 4. 6-8. Ge. 3. 24. Ps. 18.10. ch. 6. 27. These figures represented the courage, patience, labour, holiness, activity, and heavenly-mindedness of Christ and his members.

9 The rabbins conceive that the vessel was round for the two upper cubits of its height, and square below. This seems to have been devised for the purpose of giving a greater capacity to the sea, and also is somewhat sanctioned by the statement that the twelve oxen faced by threes the cardinal points of the compass. Josephus says that the vessel was hemispherical, its bottom resting on a pillar a cubit in diameter, and on the hinder parts of the twelve oxen. The present text says (ver. 26) that it contained 2000 baths, which is about 16,000 gallons; but in 2 Ch.4.5, which is followed by Josephus, 3000 is the number given. Some suppose one of these texts corrupted; while others endeavour to account for the discrepancy by a difference of measures, or by relative explanations. Calmet concludes that the cup held 2000, and the base or font 1000 more. —*Kitto.*

1 Heb. *in the base.* These wheels represented the gospel ministrations, as unfixed, accessible to any comer, and bringing Christ near to men.

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to the still subsisting arrangements of eastern palaces, it seems to have consisted of three principal departments: a court of justice, with the necessary public offices, ver. 7; a court for Solomon and his male attendants, including officers of state and servants, ver. 8; and a court for Pharaoh's daughter and her ladies and servants. The whole is an emblem of the church, the true Solomon's house, with its 'thrones of judgment' for the consciences of men, and its residence for the Gentiles whom he has espoused. *C.*]

Ver. 12. [In speaking of the 'courts' and 'foundations' it would appear that the substructions of the temple courts are specially meant. The summit of Mount Moriah in its natural state was barely sufficient for the temple itself and the great altar. The steepness of the mountain side would have prevented the great body of the people from seeing the sacrifices or joining in the daily worship. To remedy this Solomon

four corners of one base: *and* the undersetters *were* of the very base itself.[2]

35 And in the top of the base *was there* a round compass of a half cubit high: and on the top of the base, the ledges thereof and the borders thereof *were* of the same.

36 For on the plates of the ledges[3] thereof, and on the borders thereof, he graved [b]cherubims, lions, and palm-trees, according to the proportion[4] of every one, and additions round about.

37 After this *manner* he made the ten bases: all of them had one casting, one measure, *and* one size.

38 ¶ Then made he ten [c]lavers of brass: one laver contained forty baths;[5] *and* every laver was four cubits: *and* upon every one of the ten bases one laver.

39 And he put five bases on the right side[6] of the house, and five on the left side of the house: and he set the sea on the right side of the house eastward, over against the south.

40 ¶ And [d]Hiram made the lavers,[7] and the shovels, and the basons. So Hiram made an end of doing all the work that he made king Solomon for the house of the LORD:

41 The [e]two pillars, and the *two* bowls of the chapiters that *were* on the top of the two pillars; and the two net-works to cover the two bowls of the chapiters which *were* upon the top of the pillars;

42 And four hundred pomegranates for the two net-works, *even* two rows of pomegranates for one net-work, to cover the two bowls of the chapiters that *were* upon the pillars;[8]

43 And the [f]ten bases, and ten lavers on the bases;

44 And [g]one sea, and twelve oxen under the sea;

45 And the [h]pots, and the shovels, and the basons: and all these vessels, which Hiram made to king Solomon for the house of the LORD, *were of* bright[9] brass.

46 In the plain of Jordan did the king cast them, [i]in the clay-ground[1] between Succoth and Zarthan.

47 And Solomon left all the vessels *unweighed*, [k]because they were exceeding many:[2] neither was the weight of the brass found[3] out.[4]

48 ¶ And Solomon [l]made all the vessels that *pertained* unto the house of the LORD: the altar of gold, and the table of gold, whereupon the show-bread *was;*

A.M. 3000. B.C. 1004.

2 The wheels being intended for motion, the undersetters seem to have been intended for rest, so that when the laver was brought to its proper place the weight might not rest altogether upon the axle. If shorter than the wheels they could have been of no use in bearing up the weight. But if equal, 'and of the very base itself,' how could the wheels move? The whole is evidently the emblem of motion and stability—apparent contradictions, yet reconciled by Solomon. On the smooth floor of the temple the wheel must revolve, the undersetter slide—they must move, yet be steadfast.—*C.*

3 Heb. *hands* or *handles*.

b ch. 6. 27. Ge. 3. 24. Ps. 18. 10. Re. 4. 6-8.

4 Heb. *nakedness*.

c 2 Ch. 4. 6. Ex. 30. 17-21. 1 Jn. 1. 7. Tit. 3. 5.

5 502 wine gallons.

6 Heb. *shoulder*.

d Heb. *Hirem*, ver. 13. 2 Ch. 4. 8, 11-18. Je. 52. 17-23.

7 Not the ten lavers mentioned ver. 38, but the same with the pots, ver. 45, and are so called 2 Ch. 4. 11, the use of which was to hold and carry away the ashes of the altar.—*C.*

e ver. 15-22. 2 Ch. 4. 12.

8 Heb. *upon the face of the pillars*.

f ver. 27-39. 2 Ch. 4. 14, 15.

g ver. 23-26.

h Ex. 27. 3. Le. 6. 28. 1 Sa. 2. 13. 2 Ch. 4. 11, 16.

9 Heb. *made bright* or *scoured*.

i Heb. *in the thickness of the ground*. 2 Ch. 4. 17. Ge. 33. 19. Jos. 13. 27; 13. 16. Ch. 4. 12.

1 The *clay* was not used in the ordinary sense of moulds for the castings, such moulds being made of a species of fine sand, rendered adhesive by pressure. But such moulds can be formed only when there are metallic or wooden models. The clay in this case was used, as in bronze castings, to form first the model of the interior of the vessel or figure, then to be covered by a layer of wax, of the proper thickness, and finished in form of the exterior. This being again covered with clay, the clay being dried, the wax is melted, thus leaving between the two surfaces a perfect mould for the vessel or figure required. In ruder castings of this description the wax is not required, but the internal and external moulds formed separately, and placed the one over the other. But in such a work as that of Hiram, with so many complicated figures, the clay and wax most probably were used as described.—*C.*

k Heb. *for the exceeding multitude*, 1 Ch. 22. 12.

2 The emblem of that glorious company of the vessels of mercy prepared unto glory, which no man could number, Re. 9. 23. Re. 7. 9.—*C.*

3 Heb. *searched*.

l 2 Ch. 4. 19-22. Ex. 7. 10, 11, 26. Le. 24. 6.

4 Christ came not to judge and condemn, but to save. But he will come, and every soul shall be judged as if weighed in the balance of the sanctuary.—*C.*

m Ex. 35. 27-31; 37. 17.

5 Heb. *ash-pans*.

n 1 Ch. 28. 11-19.

6 Solomon, as a type of Christ, makes 'all things new'—the vessels of Moses, the representative of the law, being now 'waxed old, and ready to vanish away,' Re. 21. 5. He. 8. 13.—*C.*

7 Heb. *holy things of David*.

o 2 Ch. 5. 1. 2 Sa. 8. 7, 11. 1 Ch. 26. 26-28.

A.M. 3000. B.C. 1004.

49 And the [m]candlesticks of pure gold, five on the right *side*, and five on the left, before the oracle, with the flowers, and the lamps, and the tongs, *of* gold;

50 And the bowls, and the snuffers, and the basons, and the spoons, and the censers,[5] *of* pure gold; and the hinges *of* gold, *both* for the doors of the inner-house, the most holy *place*, *and* for the doors of the house, *to wit*, of the temple.

51 So was ended all the [n]work that king Solomon made for the house of the LORD.[6] And Solomon brought in the things[7] which [o]David his father had dedicated: *even* the silver, and the gold, and the vessels, did he put among the treasures of the house of the LORD.

CHAPTER VIII.

1 *The feast of the dedication of the temple.* 12, 54 *Solomon's blessing.* 22 *Solomon's prayer.* 62 *His sacrifice of peace-offerings.*

THEN Solomon[a] assembled the elders of Israel, and all the heads of the tribes, the chief[1] of the fathers of the children of Israel, unto king Solomon in Jerusalem, that they might [b]bring up the ark of the covenant of the LORD out of the city of David, which *is* Zion.

2 And all the men of Israel assembled themselves unto king Solomon[2] at the [c]feast in the month Ethanim, which *is* the seventh month.

3 And all the [d]elders of Israel came, and the priests [e]took up the ark.

4 And they brought up the [f]ark of the LORD, and the [g]tabernacle of the congregation, and all the holy vessels that *were* in the tabernacle, even those did the priests and the Levites bring up.

5 And [h]king Solomon, and all the congregation of Israel, that were assembled unto him, *were* with him before the ark, sacrificing sheep and oxen, that could not be told nor numbered for multitude.[3]

6 And [i]the priests brought in the ark of the covenant of the LORD unto his place, into the oracle of the house, to the most holy *place*, *even* under the wings of the cherubims.

7 For the [k]cherubims spread forth *their* two wings over the place of the ark, and the cherubims covered the ark and the staves thereof above.

8 And they drew out the staves, that the ends[4] of the staves were seen out in the [l]holy *place* before the oracle, and they were not seen without:[5] and there they are unto this day.[6]

9 *There* [m]*was* nothing in the ark save the

CHAP. VIII.

B.C. 1003.

a 1 Ch. 15. 3. 2 Ch. 5. 2 [illegible].

1 Heb. *princes*.

b ch. 3. 15. Nu. 10. 33. 2 Sa. 5. 7, 9; 6. 12, 17. 1 Ch. 13. 5; 15. 3.

2 The building of the temple was finished in the 8th month, ch. 6. 38, and therefore there were eleven months till the dedication. This time would naturally be employed in ordering the vessels and other furniture of the interior, and, as Usher supposes, that the dedication might correspond to the jubilee, and the fourteen days, ver. 65, included the dedication, expiation, and feast of tabernacles.—*C.*

c Le. 23. 34. De. 16. 13. About eleven months after the temple was finished.

d 2 Ch. 5. 4. 2 Sa. 6. 1-19. 1 Ch. xv. xvi.

e 1 Ch. 15. 2, 14. Jos. 3. 15; 6. 4.

f Ex. 37. 1-5. 2 Sa. 6. 17.

g Ex. xxvi. xxvii. xxxvi. xl. Nu. iii. iv.

h 2 Sa. 6. 13. 1 Ch. 16. 1. 2 Ch. 5. 6. ver. 62, 63; ch. 3. 4. 15.

3 This is not to be pronounced an hyperbole—the meaning is literal, signifying that the sacrifices could not be numbered even by all the means Solomon and the priests had in their power. Thus we say of many things, they *cannot be done*, simply meaning they cannot be done by man, but not excluding practicability by the power of God.—*C.*

i 2 Ch. 5. 7. ch. 6. 19. Ex. 26. 33, 34; 40. 3, 20, 21. ver 21.

k Ex. 25. 15, 20; 37. 5, 9. ch. 6. 23-27.

4 Heb. *heads*.

l Or, *ark*, as 2 Ch. 5. 9.

5 After the ark had been set down in its place, the staves for carrying it were drawn forward so that their ends could be seen pressing on the vail in the sanctuary, though the staves themselves were covered from view. The object probably was to indicate the precise position of the ark and mercy-seat.—*P.*

6 This must have been written before the destruction of the temple, recorded 2 Ki. 25. 1-9, 13-17, which occurred, according to Hales, 422 years from the date of its foundation.—*C.*

m 2 Ch. 5. 10. Ex. 25. 21; 16. 33. He. 9. 4. De. 10. 5. Nu. 17. 10.

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planned and commenced a work of gigantic magnitude and boldness of design. He erected massive walls round the hill, filling up the space inclosed partly with earth and partly with enormous piers and arches. The south-east angle of the rampart, impending over the Kidron, has still an elevation of 133 feet, and the lower part is built of stones measuring from 10 to 30 feet in length; each course being 5 feet high. The south-western angle is no less than 190 feet high; and one of its stones which I measured, and which is placed 110 feet above the foundation, is 34 feet long, and weighs above 100 tons. *P.*]

REFLECTIONS.—Great men may lodge and live in a manner becoming their station. But great builders had need to beware of neglecting to build up their own souls in their most holy faith, and of forgetting the building not made with hands, the house eternal in the heavens. If therefore we wish to be honoured let our great and earliest care be to honour God. It is an agreeable thing to have instruments employed in the church who are at once active, honest, and faithful. But great is our mercy, that instead of these materiai utensils we have the blessed Jesus as our pillar of stability and strength. We have him as the great propitiation—and full of grace and truth—to be our sea, our laver, for washing our hearts and hands in our approaches to, and dealings with, God.—We have him

two tables of stone,[5] which Moses put there at Horeb, when the LORD made *a covenant* with the children of Israel, when they came out of the land of Egypt.[6]

10 ¶ And it came to pass, when the priests were come out of the holy *place*, that [n]the cloud filled the house of the LORD,

11 So that the [o]priests could not stand to minister because of the cloud: for the glory of the LORD[7] had filled the house of the LORD.

12 ¶ Then spake Solomon, The LORD [p]said that he would dwell in the thick darkness.

13 I have [q]surely built thee an house to dwell in, a settled place for thee to abide in for ever.

14 And the king turned his face about, and blessed[r] all the congregation of Israel: (and all the congregation of Israel stood:)

15 And he said, [s]Blessed *be* the LORD God of Israel, which spake with his mouth unto David my father, and hath with his hand [t]fulfilled *it*, saying,

16 Since[u] the day that I brought forth my people Israel out of Egypt, I chose no city out of all the tribes of Israel to build an house, that my name might be therein; but [x]I chose David to be over my people Israel.[8]

17 And [y]it was in the heart of David my father to build an house for the name of the LORD God of Israel.

18 And the LORD [z]said unto David my father, Whereas it was in thine heart to build an house unto my name, thou didst well that it was in thine heart:

19 Nevertheless thou [a]shalt not build the house; but thy son that shall come forth out of thy loins, he shall build the house unto my name.

20 And the LORD [b]hath performed his word that he spake; and I am risen up in the room of David my father, and sit on the throne of Israel, as the LORD promised, and have built an house for the name of the LORD God of Israel.

21 And [c]I have set there a place for the ark, wherein *is* the [d]covenant of the LORD, which he made with our fathers, when he brought them out of the land of Egypt.

22 ¶ And Solomon [e]stood before the altar of the LORD, in the presence of all the congregation of Israel, and spread forth his hands toward heaven:[9]

23 And he said, [f]LORD God of Israel, *there is* no God like thee, in heaven above, or on earth beneath, who [g]keepest covenant and mercy with thy servants that [h]walk before thee with all their heart;

24 Who hast kept with thy servant David my father that thou promisedst him: thou spakest also with thy mouth, and hast [i]fulfilled *it* with thine hand, as *it is* this day.

25 Therefore now, LORD God of Israel, keep with thy servant David my father that thou promisedst him, saying, [k]There shall not fail thee a man in my sight[1] to sit on the throne of Israel; so that thy children take heed to their way, that they walk before me, as thou hast walked before me.

26 And now, O God of Israel, [l]let thy word, I pray thee, be verified, which thou spakest unto thy servant David my father.

27 But [m]will God indeed dwell on the [2]earth? behold, the heaven, and heaven of heavens, cannot contain thee; how much less this house that I have builded?

28 Yet have [n]thou respect unto the prayer of thy servant, and to his supplication, O LORD my God, to hearken unto the cry and to the prayer which thy servant prayeth before thee to-day:

29 That [o]thine eyes may be open toward this house night and day, *even* toward the place of which thou hast said, [p]My name shall be there; that thou mayest hearken unto the prayer which thy servant shall make [q]toward this place.

30 And hearken thou to the supplication of thy servant, and of thy people Israel, when they shall pray toward this place:[3] and hear thou in heaven thy [r]dwelling-place; and, when thou hearest, [s]forgive.

31 ¶ If [t]any man trespass against his neighbour, and an oath be laid upon him[4] to cause him to swear, and the oath come before thine altar in this house:[5]

32 Then hear thou in heaven, and do, and [u]judge thy servants, condemning the wicked, to bring his way upon his head; and justifying the righteous, to give him according to his righteousness.

33 ¶ When thy people Israel be [x]smitten down before the enemy, because they have sinned against thee, and shall [y]turn again to thee, and confess thy name, and pray, and make supplication unto thee in this house:

34 Then hear thou in heaven, and [z]forgive the sin of thy people Israel, and bring them again unto the land which thou [a]gavest unto their fathers.[6]

A.M. 3001. B.C. 1003.

5 Aaron's rod, the pot of manna, and the copy of the law, formerly deposited there, must have been placed *before* or *beside* the ark; or it is possible these sacred relics had been purloined, perhaps at Bethshemesh, and if so that would well account for the heavy judgment there inflicted. —*J.*

6 Ex.16.33,34. Nu. 17.10, and this assertion may be easily reconciled with He. 9. 4 by referring the word 'wherein,' not to the *ark*, but to the *holiest*, in which all the articles enumerated were contained, the ark itself inclusive.—*C.*

n Ex.40.34;16.10;24. 15,16. Le. 16. 2. Nu.9. 15.2 Co.5,19; 3.18. Col. 1.19.1 Co.13.12.

o Ex.40.35. Le.9.23. Eze. 10. 4. 2 Ch. 5. 14. Re.15.8.

7 Thick darkness, Ex. 20. 21, produced by a cloud, Ex. 24.15,18. in the midst of which appeared light as a devouring fire, Ex.24.17, constitutes that mysterious but most intelligible and appropriate emblem which Moses terms 'the glory of the Lord.'—*C.*

p 2 Ch.6.1. Ex.13.21, 22; 24.16; 40, 35. De. 4. 11;5.22. Ps.18.11,12;97. 2.

q 2 Ch.6.2.2 Sa.7.13. Ps.102.13,14.

r Jos.22. 6. 1 Ch. 16. 2. Nu.6.23-26. Ps. 118. 26.ver.55,56.

s 1 Ch.29. 10-13. Ps. 115.17;72. 18,19. Lu. 1. 70.1 Ti.1.17.

t Jos.23.14.Is.38.15.

u 2 Ch.6.5,6. 2 Sa.7. 6-8.De.12.11. Ps. 132. 13,14.1 Ch.17.5,6.

x 1 Sa. 13. 14; 15. 28; 16. 1-13. Ps. 89. 20; 78. 70.2 Sa.7.25,27. Ac.13. 22.

8 Kennicott remarks that allusion is made here to some *one* place, and some *one* person preferred above all others; the place is Jerusalem, and the person is David. But a reference to the parallel place in 2 Ch. 6. 5, 6 will help to complete the sense.—*J.*

y 2 Sa.7.2,3,1 Ch.17. 1,2;22.7;28.2. Ac.7.46.

z 2 Sa.7.4,11.2 Co.8. 12.2 Ch.6.8.

a ch.5.3.2 Sa.7.5,12, 13.1 Ch.22.8-10; 17. 12; 28.6,10,20.

b ch. ii. v-viii., with 2 Sa.7. 12, 13. 1 Ch. 17. 11,12;28.5,6,20.

c ver.5,6.

d Ex.xx. De.v.

e 2 Ch.6.12, 13. 2 Ki. 11. 14; 23. 3. Ps. 5. 15. Job 11.13. Ps.63.4. 1 Ti. 2.8.

9 Not as if Solomon thought that God was far away from earth, and locally resident in some region of heaven, but in testimony to his infinity, whereby he fills 'heaven and earth,' Je. 23, 24, and of the duty of lifting up the heart to him in glory above, while the spirit converses with him in all the nearness of a present and listening auditor on the earth.—*C.*

f Ex.15.11. Ps.35.10; 86.8-10;89.6-8.1 Ch.29. 10, 13.

g Ne.1.5;9.32. Ps.89. 2-4, 28, 33, 34. Da.9.4. Ex.20.6. De.7.9,12.

A.M. 3001. B.C. 1003.

h ch.2.4;6.12. Ge.17. 1. 2 Ki.20.3. De.10.12. Lu.1.6.2 Co.1.12.

i Ex.20.6. 2 Sa.7.12. Is.46.3,4.ver.15.

k 2 Sa.7.12. ch. 2. 4. Ps.132.12. Je.33.20-26. Lu.1.32,33.

1 Heb. *There shall not be cut off unto thee a man from my sight.*

l 2 Sa.7.28,29. 2 Ch. 1.9. Eze.36.36,37. 1 Ch. 17.23-27. Je.11.5.

m Ps.113.4. Je.23.24. Is.66.1. Ac.7.49;17.24. 2 Ch.2.6; 6. 18. De. 10. 14. Job 11.7,8.

2 Will God localize himself in a temple so that he may be found in it and nowhere else? This must be the sense, for in every other God does indeed dwell with men 'He that dwelleth in love, dwelleth in God, and God in him,' 1 Jn. 4. 16. But Israel being prone to the idolatry of local gods, the prayer of Solomon is not only directed to ask a blessing, but to counterwork an error.—*C.*

n Ep.6.18. Phi.4.6. 1 Ti.2.1. Da.9.17-19. Ps. 4.1;5.1;141.2;130.1,2.

o 2 Ch.6.40. Ps.33.18; 34.15;132.13,14. ch.9.3.

p De.12.11. Da.6.10. Jn.14.13,14.

q Or, *in this place*, Da.6.10.

3 Daniel in Babylon pr yed with his face toward Jerusalem, Da. 6. 10, a practice which the Jews continue everywhere till this day. The practice may, no doubt, be with many superstitious, but rightly understood it is the emblem of a praying spirit 'looking unto Jesus' for salvation. Is. 45. 22. He.12.1.—*C.*

r Ps 113.5; 123.1. Is. 66.1. Mat.6.9.

s Mat.6.11. Ps. 85.1, 2.

t 2 Ch.6.22. Nu.5.16-22. Ex.22.8-11.

4 Heb. *and he require an oath of him.*

5 From this it is evident that solemn oaths—oaths rightly understood being acts of worship—were wont to be taken at the altar. This prayer for righteous judgment between man and man is the first of *seven* distinct cases in which Solomon entreats the divine favour to himself and people. *C.* ——Solomon puts here *seven* cases in which the mercy and intervention of God would be indispensably requisite, and he earnestly bespeaks that mercy and intervention where the people should pray toward the holy place with sincerity and earnestness.—It would appear from this that it was the custom to take solemn oaths at the altar, whence arose the practice of swearing *by* the altar, Mat. 23.20.—*J.*

u Ps.43.1;7.8. De.25. 1. 2 Ch.6.23.

x Le.26.14,16,17,25. De.28.25.

y Le.26.39,40. De.4. 29-31; 30.2,3. Jonah 3. 10. 1 Sa.7.3. Jos.7.19.

z 2 Ch.6.25. Ps.99.8; 25.11; 30.4,7,8; 79.8-12; 106.45,46.

a Ge.13.15;12.7. Ex. 6.8;3.8. Jos.21.43.

6 National defeat, because of sin, is the second case in which Solomon calls for mercy and forgiveness.—*C.*

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to be our altar of incense, our light, and our true bread, which cometh down from heaven.

CHAPTER VIII. [Ver. 53. It will be useful in carefully reading and studying this prayer to compare the two reports of it—that given here, and that given in 2 Ch. 6. 1–39. Christian nations and the Christian church ought to learn from it important lessons:—1. That afflictions, whether national, social, or individual, are often sent as chastisements for sins, and it is the duty of those afflicted to repent and turn to God. 2. That afflictions are sometimes sent, not so much as chastisements, as to arouse the careless, and to stir up Christians to more zeal. 3. That under every trial it is the duty of nations, churches, and individuals to resort to prayer and humiliation. 4. That we have reason to feel confident that God, in answer to earnest faithful prayer, will turn away his wrath and bestow blessings. *P.*]

Ver. 60. [There is a depth of meaning in this 60th verse which is apt to be overlooked by the reader. Heathen nations believed in a multitude of local deities. They supposed that each country and city had its own tutelary god, who watched over its interests and pro-

35 ¶ When [b]heaven is shut up, and there is no rain, because they have sinned against thee; if[c] they pray toward this place, and confess thy name, and turn from their sin, when thou afflictest them:

36 Then hear thou in heaven, and forgive the sin of thy servants, and of thy people Israel, that[d] thou teach them the good way wherein they should walk, and give rain upon thy land, which thou hast given to thy people for an inheritance.[6]

37 ¶ If there be in the land [e]famine, if there be pestilence, blasting,[7] mildew, locust, *or* if there be caterpillar;[8] if their enemy besiege them in the land of their cities,[9] whatsoever plague, whatsoever sickness *there be;*

38 What [f]prayer and supplication soever be *made* by any man, *or* by all thy people Israel, which shall know every man [g]the plague of his own heart,[1] and spread forth his hands toward this house:

39 Then hear thou in heaven thy dwelling-place, and forgive, and do, and [h]give to every man according to his ways, whose heart thou knowest; (for thou, *even* [i]thou only, knowest the hearts of all the children of men;)

40 That they may [k]fear thee all the days that they live in the land which thou gavest unto our fathers.

41 ¶ Moreover, concerning [l]a stranger, that *is* not of thy people Israel, but [m]cometh out of a far country for thy name's sake;

42 (For they shall [n]hear of thy great name, and of thy strong hand, and of thy stretched-out arm;) when he shall come and pray toward this house;

43 Hear thou in heaven thy dwelling-place, and do according to all that the stranger calleth to thee for; that [o]all people of the earth may know thy name, to fear thee, as *do* thy people Israel; and that they may know that this house which I have builded is called by thy name.

44 ¶ If thy people [p]go out to battle against their enemy,[2] whithersoever thou shalt send them, and shall pray unto the LORD toward the city [q]which thou hast chosen, and *toward* the house that I have built for thy name:

45 Then hear thou in heaven their prayer and their supplication, and maintain their cause.[3]

46 If they sin against thee, (for *there is* no man that sinneth not,) and thou be angry with them, and deliver them to the enemy, so that they carry them away captives[4] unto the land of the enemy, far or near;

47 *Yet* if they shall [s]bethink themselves in the land whither they were carried captives, and repent, and make supplication unto thee in the land of them that carried them captives, saying, We have sinned, and have done perversely, we have committed wickedness;

48 And *so* [t]return unto thee with all their heart, and with all their soul, in the land of their enemies which led them away captive, and pray unto thee toward their land which thou gavest unto their fathers, the city which thou hast chosen, and the house which I have built for thy name:

49 Then hear thou their prayer and their supplication in heaven thy dwelling-place, and [u]maintain their cause,[5]

50 And forgive thy people that have sinned against thee, and all their transgressions wherein they have transgressed against thee, and [x]give them compassion before them who carried them captive, that they may have compassion on them:

51 For [y]they *be* thy people, and thine inheritance, which thou broughtest forth out of Egypt, from the midst of the [z]furnace of iron.[6]

52 That [a]thine eyes may be open unto the supplication of thy servant, and unto the supplication of thy people Israel, to hearken unto them in all that they call for unto thee.[7]

53 For thou didst [b]separate them from among all the people of the earth, *to be* thine inheritance, as thou spakest by the hand of Moses thy servant, when thou broughtest our fathers out of Egypt, O Lord GOD.

54 ¶ And it was *so*, that, when Solomon had made an end of praying all this prayer and supplication unto the LORD, he arose from before the altar of the LORD, from [c]kneeling on his knees with his hands spread up to heaven.

55 And he stood, and [d]blessed all the congregation of Israel with a loud voice, saying,

56 Blessed *be* the LORD, that hath [e]given rest unto his people Israel, according to all that he promised: there hath [f]not failed one word of all his good promise, which he promised by the hand of Moses his servant.

57 The[g] LORD our God be with us, as he was with our fathers: let him not leave us, nor forsake us;

58 That he may [h]incline our hearts unto him,

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[b] 2 Ch.6.26. Le. 26. 19. De.11.17; 28.11,12, 23. Mal.3.10. Je.14.1–6. Joel.1.Hag.1.10,11.

[c] ver.33.

[d] 1 Sa.12.23. Is.35.8. Ps.27.11; 32.8; 94.12. 2 Pe. 1. 21. ch. 18.39–45. Joel 2. 12–23. Eze. 34. 25,26. Ho.2 21,22.

[6] The judgment of drought, and the grant of rain, with instruction from these acts of Providence, is the third case which Solomon commends to the merciful hearing of God.—*C.*

[e] 2 Ch. 6. 28. Le. 26. 16. De.28.21–42. 2 Sa. 14.15. Ge 41.6. Ex.10.4, 5. Ps.105.34,35. Joel i.; 2.1–11. Hag.2.17. Ju.2. 14,15.

[7] That includes anything by which the crop is injured, so that the ear is never matured, but yields only a black offensive dust. *Mildew* is anything that vitiates or corrodes the texture of the stalk, destroys the blossoms, or causes the young fruit to fall.—*I.*

[8] Famine, pestilence, &c., constitute fourth case for which mercy is sought, to teach men the 'plagues of their own hearts,' and lead them to Jesus the only physician and deliverer, Mat 9. 12. Ro.11.26.—*C.*

[9] Invasion of enemies, and besieging of cities, form the fifth case.—*C.*

[f] Ja.5.16–18. Eze.22. 30. Ps.50.15; 91.15.

[g] Ro.8.7, 8; 7. 14, 24. Job 40.4; 42.6. Je.31.19. Pr.30.2. Ps.73.22.

[1] This is an impressive image of severe affliction from any cause, real or imaginary, which may occasion such anguish as to threaten life, comp. 2 Ch. 6.29. As the prayers in the preceding verses referred to national sufferings, visible to and which all might sympathize, this prayer especially respects grief, of the cause of which no friends can, with any advantage, be even informed, because it may be frequently traced to those which concern only God and a man's own heart-temptations, not to be spoken of without the risk of drawing others to sin, or to temporal trials that cannot be mentioned to the nearest friends without the apprehension of occasioning them useless distress. —*Davidson.*

[h] Ps.18.20–28; 11.4–7. Is.3.10,11. Ro. 2. 7,10. Je.17.10.

[i] 2 Ch.6.30. 1 Sa. 16. 7. 1 Ch.28.9; 29.17. Pr. 17.3. Re.2.23. Ac. 1.24. Je.17.10; 20. 12; 11. 20. Ju.2.25. He.4.13.

[k] Ps.130.4. Je.32.39, 40. De.6.2,13.

[l] Ex. 12. 49. Nu. 15. 15,29. Le. 6. 32. Ru. 2.11. Is.56.6. Mat.2. 1; 12.42.

[m] Ex. 18. 12. Ac. 8. 27.

[n] Jos.2.10. De.4.6; 3. 24. Ps.136.12. 2 Ki. 17. 36. Je.32.17.

[o] Ps.67. 2; 72. 10, 19. Re.11.15. Is.11.9.

[p] 2 Ch.6.34; 14.11; 20. 3–14.

[2] Exposure in just war, against unjust enemies, is the sixth case.—*C.*

[q] Ps.78.67,69; 132.13, 14.

[3] Or, *right.*

[r] 2 Ch.6.36. Ec.7.20. 1 Jn.1.8,10. Pr.20.9. Ja. 3.2.

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[4] Captivity by enemies is the seventh case—the last, and the still existing judgment for which mercy is sought. O! that captive Israel would indeed look unto him whom they have pierced, then would he soon deliver them, and gather them again, as a hen gathereth her brood under her wings!—*C.*

[s] Le.26.40. De.4.29–31; 30. 2, 3. 2 Ch.32.12, 13. Da.6.10; ix. 1 Ti. 2. 8. Pr.28. 3. 1 Jn. 1. 9. 2 Sa.12.13. Ps.32.5. Ezr. 9.6. Ne.9.26. La.15.18.

[t] De.30.1,2. Ne.1. 9. ch. 2. 4. Je. 29. 12–14. Da.6.12.

[u] ver.45. Is. 10. 6, 7. Zec.1.15.

[5] Israel still stands, not merely as a criminal before God, for their crucifixion of our Lord, but, alas! the neglect or contempt, or oppression, of heathen, Mahomedan, and even Christian nations have hitherto followed them. But God will yet arise and have mercy upon Zion, Ps. 102. 13, and will maintain her cause against all her enemies, for it is finally the cause of Christ his Son, Ps. 9. 4.—*C.*

[x] Ps.106.46. Da. 1.9, 10. Ezr.7.6; 9.8,9. Ne.1. 8. Es.2.9,17; 6. 10. Je. 24.5–7.

[y] Ex.19.5,6; 32.11,12. Ne.1.10. Is.64.9; 63.18.

[z] De.4.20. Je. 11. 4. Ex.1.11,14; 13. 14. Ps. 68.13; 81. 6, *i.e.* cruel bondage.

[6] As no country can ever excel in arts without the use of iron, produced, imported, or manufactured, and as Egypt did excel in several departments, we may certainly conclude, either that the smelting of iron from the ore, or the working of it when imported, occupied a large portion of the nation. In either case, Israel was brought forth from the furnace, at which, in the burning climate of Egypt, employment must be inconceivably laborious.—*C.*

[a] ver.29,30.

[7] This intercession was answered in the restoration of the Jews from Babylonish captivity, for it was in this very way it was brought about, Da. 9. 1–19. But it will hereafter receive another more remarkable answer when the remnant of Israel shall be gathered into the church of Christ. It is very instructive to compare the several parts of this prayer with the preceding prophecies and the subsequent history which may be partly done by consulting the marginal references.—*I.*

[b] Lv.19.5,6. De.4.31 –37; 7.6,8; 32.9; 26. 18; 28. 9; 30.3,4; 2. Tit.2.14. 1 Pe. 2. 9.

[c] 1 Ki.22.41. Ep.3.14. Ps.95.6.

[d] ver.14. 2 Ch. 16. 2. Nu.6.23–26. Ps.118.26.

[e] Jos.21.44. 2 Ch.14. 6. He.4.3,9. Re.3.21.

[f] Jos.21.45; 23.14,15. Lu.1.68–70. 2 Ki.10.10. De. 12. 10–12. He. 10. 3. Tit.1.2.

[g] De.31.6,8. Jos.1.5. 1 Ch.28.20. 2 Ch. 32.7, 8. Is.41.10; 46. 3,4. Ro. 8.31. He.13.5.

[h] Ps. 119. 36; 110. 3. Je.10.23. 2 Co.3.5; 5.14. Ca.1.4. Ho.2.14.

tected its people. They were therefore most careful in ancient times, when removing from one country to another, to worship the deity peculiar to each country. There is unfortunately a relic of this superstition in Christian lands. Tutelary *saints* have taken the place of tutelary *gods*. The petition of Solomon had special reference to this form of idolatry. He prayed '*that all the nations of the earth may know that* JEHOVAH *he is God, and that there is none other.*' *P.*]

REFLECTIONS.—When religion prospers it is the subject of general joy to God's people: and when kings become nursing fathers to the church, courtiers will pretend much zeal for her interests. But it is pleasant to observe all ranks concur in the solemn worship of God. He rejoices to meet them who work righteousness, and remember him in all their ways, and to take up his abode with them. Though clouds and darkness be round about him, justice and judgment are the habitation of his throne, and mercy and truth go before his face. When God is present, and his Spirit poured out, with what liveliness do men observe the fulfilment of God's promises, and pour forth their prayers to him. The fervent petitions which are then presented to God, in the name of Christ our true temple, are always effectual, and available to nations, families, and individuals. What pardon—what healing—what purification—what victory—what deliverance, may they

to walk in all his ways, and to keep his commandments, and his statutes, and his judgments, [i]which he commanded our fathers.

59 And let these my words,[8] wherewith I have made supplication before the LORD, [k]be nigh unto the LORD our God day and night, that he maintain the cause of his servant, and the cause of his people Israel at all times, as the matter shall require;[9]

60 That [l]all the people of the earth may know that the LORD *is* God, *and that there is* none else.[1]

61 Let your heart therefore be [m]perfect with the LORD our God, to walk in his statutes, and to keep his commandments, as at this day.

62 ¶ And [n]the king, and all Israel with him, offered sacrifice before the LORD.

63 And Solomon offered a [o]sacrifice of peace-offerings, which he offered unto the LORD, two and twenty thousand oxen, and an hundred and twenty thousand sheep. So the king and all the children of Israel dedicated the house of the LORD.[2]

64 The[p] same day did the king hallow the middle of the court that *was* before the house of the LORD: for there he offered burnt-offerings, and meat-offerings, and the fat of the peace-offerings; because [q]the brazen altar that *was* before the LORD *was* too little to receive the burnt-offerings, and meat-offerings, and the fat of the peace-offerings.

65 ¶ And at that time Solomon [r]held a feast, and all Israel with him, a great congregation, [s]from the entering in of Hamath unto the river of Egypt, before the LORD our God, seven days and seven days, *even* fourteen days.

66 On [t]the eighth day he sent the people away: and they blessed[3] the king, and went unto their tents[4] joyful and glad of heart, for all the goodness that the LORD had done for David his servant, and for Israel his people.

CHAPTER IX.

1 *God's covenant in a second vision with Solomon.* 10 *The mutual presents of Solomon and Hiram.* 15 *In Solomon's works the Gentiles were his bondmen, the Israelites honourable servants.* 24 *Pharaoh's daughter removeth to her house.* 25 *Solomon's yearly solemn sacrifices.* 26 *His navy fetcheth gold from Ophir.*

AND it[a] came to pass, when Solomon had finished the building of the house of the LORD, and the king's house, and all Solomon's desire which he was pleased to do,

2 That the LORD appeared to Solomon the second time, [b]as he had appeared unto him at Gibeon.

3 And the LORD said unto him, [c]I have heard thy prayer and thy supplication that thou hast made before me: I [d]have hallowed this house, which thou hast built, to put my name there for ever; and mine eyes and mine heart shall be there perpetually.

4 And [e]if thou wilt walk before me, as David thy father walked, in integrity of heart, and in uprightness, to do according to all that I have commanded thee, *and* wilt keep my statutes and my judgments;

5 Then I will establish the throne of thy kingdom upon Israel for ever, [f]as I promised to David thy father, saying, There shall not fail thee a man upon the throne of Israel.

6 *But* [g]if ye shall at all turn[1] from following me, you or your children, and will not keep my commandments *and* my statutes, which I have set before you, but go and serve other gods, and worship them;

7 Then [h]will I cut off Israel out of the land which I have given them: and this house, which I have hallowed for my name, will I cast out of my sight; and Israel shall be a proverb and a by-word among all people:

8 And [i]at this house, *which* is high, every one that passeth by it shall be astonished, and shall hiss; and they shall say, [k]Why hath the LORD done thus unto this land, and to this house?

9 And they [l]shall answer, Because they forsook the LORD their God, who brought forth their fathers out of the land of Egypt, and have taken hold upon other gods, and have worshipped them, and served them; therefore hath the LORD brought upon them all this evil.[2]

10 ¶ And [m]it came to pass at the end of twenty years,[3] when Solomon had built the two houses, the house of the LORD, and the king's house,[4]

11 (*Now* Hiram the king of Tyre had furnished Solomon with cedar-trees and fir-trees, and with gold, according to all his desire,) that then king Solomon gave Hiram [n]twenty cities in the land of Galilee.[5]

12 And Hiram came out from Tyre to see the cities which Solomon had given him; and they [o]pleased him not.[6]

13 And he said, What cities *are* these which

A.M. 3001. B.C. 1003.

f Ge.17.1. De.4.1; 6. 1. Jos.24. 14. 1 Sa. 7. 3; 12.24. Ps.147.19,20.

[8] This and the following verse are a kind of supplement to the prayer which ended at ver. 53, but thereto is an important addition to this prayer in the parallel place, 2 Ch. 6.41, 42, 'Now therefore arise, O Lord God, into thy resting-place, thou and the ark of thy strength,' &c.—*I.*

k Mal.3.16. Ps.65.2; 18.6;102.1 2; 116.2; 118. 5;130.2;141.2. He.7.25.

[9] Heb. *the thing of a day in his day.*

l ver.43. De.4.35,39. Ps.67.2. Is. 45. 22; 44.6, 8,23.

[1] There is no real exhibition of the nature and character of God except what is revealed in the Bible. And as God deals with nations and churches, he is made known chiefly in the Scripture history of the Jews, supplemented by his providence towards the New Testament church, as recorded in the Evangelists, Acts, and Epistles, and prophetically shadowed out in the Apocalypse.—*C.*

m 1 Ch. 28. 9; 29. 19. De. 18. 13. Ch. 2. 33. 2 Ki. 20. 3 Ge. 17. 1. Phi. 2.12. 15; 3.12–15 8.

n 2Ch.7.4.2 Sa.6.17. 1 Ch.16.1.

o Le.iii. 1 Ch.29.21. 2Ch 15.11;29.32,33; 35.7–9. Ezr. 6. 16, 17. Mi.6.7.

[2] This is generally supposed to be the whole amount offered during the fourteen days of this great solemnity, rather than the offering of a single day. But the phrase 'the same day,' ver. 64, seems to attribute the whole to one day —a meaning corroborated by the word 'sacrifice,' not 'sacrifices,' ver.63.—*Note,* May it not be the emblem of the wondrous, the almost incredible sacrifice of the 'one offering,' whereby Christ has perfected for ever them that are sanctified? He.10.14.—*C.*

p 2 Ch.7.7.

q 2 Ch.4.1.

r ch.3 15. 1 Ch.16.1. ver.2.2 Ch.7.9.

s ch.4.21, 24, 25. Nu. 34.8. Ge.15.18. Ex. 23. 31. Am.6.14.

t 2 Ch. 7. 10. Le. 23. 34. 1 Ch.15.26. ch.1.47; 3.6.

[3] Or, *thanked.*

[4] Whereby the nomadic and still unsettled condition of the people appears. —*Note,* Let all believers remember, whatever be their attainments, that still 'here they have no continuing city;' but let them be 'joyful in their hearts for the goodness of the Lord.'—*C.*

CHAP. IX.

a 1 Ch.7.11;8.6. Ec. 2.20.

A.M. 3001. B.C. 1003.

b ch.3.5;11.9.2 Ch.7. 11,12.

c Ps.10. 17; 65. 2. Is. 58.9; 65. 24. Da. 9. 23. Mi.7.7. Ju.11.42.

d ch. 8. 10, 11,13,16, 29. De.11.12. Ps.132.13, 14. Pr.15.3. 2 Ch. 7. 15, 16.

e ch.2.4; 3. 14; 8. 25. Job 2.3; 27.5. Ps.15. 2; 26.1,11. Pr.20.7. Lu. 1. 6. De.28.1.2 Ch.7.17.

f 2 Sa.7.12. 1 Ch. 22. 10;17.12–14. Je.33. 20–20.ch.6.12;8.15. Ps.132. 11.2 Ch.7.18.

g 2 Sa.7.14. Ps.89.30 –34. 1 Sa 2.30;12.21,25. 2 Ch.15.2;7.19.

[1] This certainly means, 'if ye shall *wholly* turn,' for it is not every sin that is alluded to, but only national idolatry or apostasy, sanctioned or tolerated by their rulers. As that violated the national covenant, it necessarily caused the forfeiture of covenant blessings.—*I.*

h 2 Ki.17. 20–25 0. Je. 7.14, 15;24.9;26.6 0. Eze. 7.20–22. De.28. 37.

i 2 Ch.7.21;29 8. Da. 9.11. Je. 19. 15. Je. 19. 8. 49. 17. 50. 13.

k De.29.24. Je.22. 8, 28;5.9.

l De.29.25 27. Ja.4. 13.14; 15 Je. 31. 31; 1 Ki.5.19; 10.1 .11; 20.; 30.7.

[2] Were idolatry merely the forming and worshipping of wood or stone, or metal, in human or other forms, it were still a horrible insult to the glory of God. But it is more even than this—it is the source of all moral abominations, on account of which the wrath of God cometh upon all the children of disobedience.—*C.*

m 2 Ch.8.1. ch.6.37, 38;7.1.

[3] B.C. 991.

[4] This verse confirms the view set forth in the note on ch. 7. 1, that 'the house of the forest of Lebanon' was a part of the royal palace. It appears that the temple on Moriah and the palace on Zion, with, as shall be seen afterwards, the bridge connecting them, were Solomon's great architectural works. —*I.*

n Cities conquered, but inhabited by Canaanites, 2 Ch.8.2.

[5] The northern region or *circle* of the Holy Land. It was sometimes called 'Galilee of the Gentiles,' or nations, Mat. 4. 15, because chiefly possessed by heathen tribes. As such Solomon presented it to Hiram, for he could not have given him cities inhabited by Israel.—*C.*

o Heb. *were not right in his eyes,* 2 Ch.8.2.

[6] The reason of his dissatisfaction is not assigned, probably because he rather wished for maritime cities, as better suited to the genius and pursuits of his people. But is not his dissatisfaction also an emblem of the prejudging, despising, or rejecting of Jesus Christ as coming out of Galilee, Jn. 7.41,52.—*C.*

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obtain! The grateful sense of God's special favours thus enjoyed, the influences of his presence and grace, and the faith of his Son's mediation, most powerfully determine and constrain to a holy obedience to his laws. Such real and lively religion would make our meetings and partings on earth pleasant and happy. But how much more so shall our gathering to Jesus be, never to part, but to feast eternally on him as our great atonement, our only peace-offering, and our ALL and in ALL.

CHAPTER IX. [Ver. 1. *When Solomon had finished the building of the house of the Lord, and the king's house.* It is recorded that 'the king's house' was not finished till thirteen years after the finishing of the temple, ch. 7. 1; are we therefore to conclude that the temple was not dedicated till after the secular works had been completed? We think not. We hold with Usher that the dedication took place eleven months after the building had been finished, ch. 8. 2.—*Note,* There is something peculiarly appropriate in God's appearing immediately after Solomon had finished his own house; for if ever there be a time when any man specially needs an admonition it is when he has completed for himself a dwelling-place, and, like the monarch of Babylon, is ready to say, 'Is not this great Babylon which I have built?' Da. 4. 30. And that wise men need this admonition as well as others the history of Solomon must testify. *C.*]

Ver. 13. [The word *Galil* signifies 'circuit' or 'ring,' and may at first have been given to one of the little circular upland plains amid the mountains of Naphtali. There is such a plain just beside Kedesh. From a comparison of ancient notices it appears that the circuit of Galilee lay on the level summit of a broad mountain ridge. Here were the towns offered by Solomon to Hiram. The latter, however, whose great want was

A VIEW IN LEBANON. [I KINGS, ix : 11.]—(Now Hiram, king of Tyre, had furnished Solomon with cedar trees and fir trees, and with gold, according to all his desire), that then King Solomon gave Hiram twenty cities in the land of Galilee." As illustrative of this Scripture we give a picture of a view in Lebanon, because from the Lebanon Mountains, we are told, Hiram, King of Tyre, secured the cedars which he sent by way of Joppa to Solomon for use in building the temple. The Lebanon Mountains have been called the focus of Syria. In these mountains arise four great rivers The Orontes flows northward, making Antioch possible; the Abana flows east, creating Damascus; the Litany flows west, and the Jordan flows south. Of these rivers only two reach the open sea—the Litany and the Orontes. The Jordan ends in the Dead Sea, and the Abana sinks out of sight in the Syrian desert. The Lebanon Mountains have always been celebrated for the great cedar trees which grow in them.

thou hast given me, [p]my brother?[6] And he called them the land of Cabul[7] unto this day.

14 And Hiram sent[8] to the king sixscore talents of gold.[9]

15 ¶ And this *is* the reason of the [q]levy which king Solomon raised; for [r]to build the house of the LORD, and his own house, and [s]Millo,[1] and the wall of Jerusalem, and [t]Hazor, and [u]Megiddo, and [x]Gezer.

16 *For* Pharaoh king of Egypt had gone up and taken Gezer, and burnt it with fire, and slain the Canaanites that dwelt in the city, and given it *for* a present unto his daughter, [y]Solomon's wife.

17 And [z]Solomon built Gezer, and Bethhoron the nether,

18 And [a]Baalath, and Tadmor[2] in the wilderness, in the land,

19 And all [b]the cities of store that Solomon had, and cities for his chariots, and cities for his horsemen, and that which Solomon desired to build in Jerusalem, and in Lebanon, and in all the land of his dominion.

20 ¶ *And* all the people *that were* [c]left of the Amorites, Hittites, Perizzites, Hivites, and Jebusites, which *were* not of the children of Israel,

21 Their children that were [d]left after them in the land, whom the children of Israel also were not able utterly to destroy, upon those did Solomon [e]levy a tribute of bond-service unto this day.

22 But [f]of the children of Israel did Solomon make no bond-men:[3] but they *were* men of war, and his servants, and his princes, and his captains, and rulers of his chariots, and his horsemen.

23 These [g]*were* the chief of the officers that *were* over Solomon's work, five hundred and fifty, which bare rule over the people that wrought in the work.

24 ¶ But [h]Pharaoh's daughter came up out of the city of David unto her house which *Solomon* had built for her: then did [i]he build Millo.

25 ¶ And [k]three times in a year did Solomon offer burnt-offerings and peace-offerings upon the altar which he built unto the LORD, and [l]he burnt incense upon the altar that *was* before the LORD. So he finished the house.[4]

A.M. 3013. B.C. 991.

[p] ch. 20, 32; 5. 1, 2. Am. 1.9.

6 Perhaps being accustomed to nothing but trade, he had no turn for agriculture, and finding the appearances uninviting, he was not aware of the advantages he might reap from his possession of these places, and would have preferred part of the coast. They were afterwards rebuilt by Solomon, 2 Ch.8.2, but Hiram no doubt received some equivalent.—*A.*

7 That is, *displeasing*, or *dirty*, or *the border*, [Jos. 19. 27, where mention is made of a town of Cabul in the land of Zebulun, and as that lay towards Tyre it is possible that Hiram gave the obnoxious name of the town to the whole district. Yet the precise meaning of 'Cabul' is doubtful. It is Josephus who says that in the Phœnician language it signified 'displeasing.' The Septuagint has 'border-land.' Michaelis gives us an Arabic etymology, 'land given for a debt.'—*A.*]

8 Not that he sent *after* this dissatisfaction, but *had* sent before it, comp. ver. 11. —*C.*

9 £654,084.

[q] ver. 21; ch. 5. 13.

[r] ver. 10; ch. 6. 38; 7. 1.

[s] 2 Sa. 5. 9. ver. 24; ch. 11. 27. 2 Ch. 32. 5.

1 The chief place of arms in the city—in modern terms the arsenal. It signifies *fulness*.—*C.*

[t] Jos. 11. 1; 19. 36.

[u] Jos. 17. 11. Ju. 5. 19.

[x] Jos. 16. 10. Ju. 1. 29. ver. 16, 17.

[y] ch. 3. 1; ver. 24.

[z] Jos. 21. 21, 22. 2 Ch. 8. 5. ver. 15, 16.

[a] Jos. 19. 44. 2 Ch. 8. 3, 4, 6.

2 Afterwards, by Alexander of Macedon, called *Palmyra*, or city of palmtrees. The stupendous ruins of this city still remain to attract and astonish travellers. A permanent emblem of the mutability of all human glory.—*C.*

[b] Ex. 1. 11. ch. 4. 26. Ec. 2. 10.

[c] Ju. 1. 27–35; 2. 23 Ps. 106. 34.

[d] Ju. 1. 21, 27–35; 2. 21, 23. Jos. 15. 63.

[e] ver. 15; ch. 5. 13, with Ezr. 2. 55. Ne. 7. 57.

[f] 2 Ch. 8. 9. Le. 25. 39. ch. 4. 1–27.

3 The emblem of the spiritual freedom of the children of God, Jn. 8. 36.

[g] 2 Ch. 8. 10; 2. 10. ch. 5. 16.

[h] 2 Ch. 8. 11. ch. 7. 8; 3. 1. 2 Sa. 5. 9.

[i] ver. 15; ch. 11. 27. 2 Ch. 32. 5.

[k] 2 Ch. 8. 12, 13. Ex. 23. 14–17; 34. 22–25. De. 16. 16. Le. xxiii.

[l] By the priests, 2 Ch. 26. 16.

4 B.C. 990.

A.M. 3014. B.C. 990.

[m] 2 Ch. 8. 17. Nu. 33. 35. De. 2. 8. 2 Ki. 14. 22; 16. 6. ch. 22. 48.

5 Ezion-geber was situated at the head of the Gulf of Elath, now called Akabah, and on the southern border of Edom. Though far distant from Jerusalem, yet it was the nearest port from which access could be had to India and the eastern shore of Africa, as well as the whole of Southern Arabia. The city remained for a considerable time in the hands of the Israelites.—*P.*

[n] 1 Ch. 20. 36, ch. 22. 48, 49.

[o] Ge. 10. 29. Job 22. 24; 28. 16. Ps. 45. 9. Is. 13. 12. ch. 10. 11, 22.

6 The precise situation of this country is mere matter of conjecture. Some suppose it to be India, others Africa opposite Madagascar, others the island of Ceylon, and some Southern Arabia; some the coast of Guinea, some Carthage, others Armenia, and some have suggested America. That it lay at a great distance is the only point that seems certain, as the fleet took three years for the voyage, ch. 10. 22, 2 Ch. 9. 21.—*C.*

[p] 2 Ch. 8. 18. Near £2,304,000, Pr. 3. 14.

CHAP. X.

[a] 2 Ch. 9. 1. Mat. 12. 42. Lu. 11. 31. ver. 24; ch. 4. 31. Ju. 14. 12. Pr. 1. 5; 13. 20.

1 The country properly called Sheba lay in the south-east of Arabia, and received its name from Sheba the grandson of Cush, Ge. 10. 7. But the queen who visited Solomon is by many supposed to have come from Abyssinia. This opinion is partly founded on Abyssinian history, and partly on our Lord's calling her 'queen of the south,' whereas any part of Arabia would have been more properly east, Mat. 12. 42.—*C.*

[b] Es. 1. 4, 7. Ac. 25. 23.

[c] Eze. 27. 22. Ps. 72. 10, 15. Is. 60. 6.

[d] Pr. 1. 5; 13. 20. Is. 50. 4. 48. 17. Col. 2. 3. 1 Co. 1. 30.

[e] ch. 4. 7, 22–33; vii. 19, 15. Col. 2. 3.

[f] Jn. 6. 58; 1. 51. Re. 3. 21. He. 1. 14.

[g] 2 Ki. 16. 18. 1 Ch. 9. 18. Eze. 44. 3; 46. 2.

9 The Septuagint, Chaldee, Syriac, and Arabic translations render it thus: 'And the burnt-offerings which he offered in the house of the Lord.'—*C.*

[h] 2 Ch. 9. 6.

8 Or, *sayings*.

[i] Jn. 20. 29. 1 Co. 2. 9. Zec. 9. 17. Ca. 5. 9–16.

4 Heb. *thou hast added wisdom and goodness to the same.*

[k] Pr. 1. 5; 8. 34; 13. 20; 22. 29. Lu. 11. 28.

[l] ch. 5. 7; 8. 15. Ps. 72. 17–19.

[m] 2 Ch. 2. 11. De. 7. 7, 8; 33. 3. 1 Ch. 17. 22.

[n] Pr. 8. 15, 16. 2 Sa. 8. 15. Ro. 13. 1–4. Is. 9. 7. Lu. 1. 32.

26 ¶ And king Solomon made a navy of ships [m]in Ezion-geber, which *is* beside Eloth, on the shore of the Red sea, in the land of Edom.[5]

27 And Hiram sent in the navy his servants, shipmen that had knowledge of the sea, [n]with the servants of Solomon.

28 And they came to [o]Ophir,[6] and fetched from thence gold, [p]four hundred and twenty talents, and brought *it* to king Solomon.

CHAPTER X.

1 *The queen of Sheba admireth the wisdom of Solomon.* 14 *Solomon's yearly revenue in gold.* 16 *His targets.* 18 *The throne of ivory.* 21 *His vessels.* 24 *His presents.* 26 *His chariots and horsemen.* 28 *His tribute.*

AND when the [a]queen of Sheba[1] heard of the fame of Solomon concerning the name of the LORD, she came to prove him with hard questions.

2 And she came to Jerusalem with a [b]very great train, with camels that bare [c]spices, and very much gold, and precious stones: and when she was come to Solomon, she communed with him of all that was in her heart.

3 And Solomon [d]told her all her questions: there was not *any* thing hid from the king, which he told her not.

4 ¶ And when the queen of Sheba had seen all Solomon's [e]wisdom, and the house that he had built,

5 And [f]the meat of his table, and the sitting of his servants, and the attendance of his ministers, and their apparel, and his cup-bearers, and his [g]ascent by which he went up unto the house of the LORD;[2] there was no more spirit in her.

6 And she [h]said to the king, It was a true report that I heard in mine own land of thy acts,[3] and of thy wisdom.

7 Howbeit [i]I believed not the words, until I came, and mine eyes had seen *it;* and, behold, the half was not told me: thy wisdom and prosperity exceedeth the fame which I heard.[4]

8 Happy[k] *are* thy men, happy *are* these thy servants, which stand continually before thee, *and* that hear thy wisdom.

9 Blessed[l] be the LORD thy God, which delighted in thee, to set thee on the throne of Israel: [m]because the LORD loved Israel for ever, therefore [n]made he thee king, to do judgment and justice.

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grain for his city, and who doubtless expected a section of some of the rich plains of central Palestine, could not conceal his disappointment when he saw the mountain towns and their rugged environs, and he refused them as worthless. *P.*]

REFLECTIONS.—The Lord bears the greatest regard to his people's hearty and solemn worship of himself. Everywhere his eyes are on the righteous, and his ears are open to their cry. If we would secure to our children the entail of God's blessings, we must leave them the examples of our fidelity. But if our growth in grace does not correspond with our privileges, the best forms of religion will but delude and destroy us. How gracious are God's rewards of his people's obedience; and how severe his corrections of their transgressions! While we tremble at the ruin of Israel and their temple, let our care be to take fast hold of the better covenant, which is established upon better promises, and in which men are kept, by the power of God, through faith unto salvation. Generous minds are forward to discharge their obligations if it be in their power. But very diversified are the sentiments of men concerning worldly things. Nothing but Jesus Christ and God in him is answerable to every need, every state, every mind. And it is glorious when great activity in secular business is attended with a proportionate ardour in religion. They who make God's glory their first concern may expect his blessing upon the work of their hands; for at his command both earth and sea shall concur to enrich them.

CHAPTER X. [Ver. 5. There can be little doubt that reference is here made to some grand entrance which Solomon had made to the temple. This entrance must have been from the palace; but the palace stood on Zion and the temple on Moriah; and between the two was the deep ravine of Tyropœon. Now we learn from Josephus that one of the most stupendous works of ancient Jerusalem was the *bridge* which connected the outer court of the temple with the palace on Zion, spanning the Tyropœon. The remains of it still exist, and recent excavations have enabled us to form

STABLES OF SOLOMON. [I. KINGS, x: 28.]—"And Solomon had horses brought out of Egypt." In this picture we have the vaults which are found under the temple area. A tourist in 1722 gives a distinct account of these stables. One traveler represents them as capable of accommodating 2,000 horses, and it is thought that they were used in the times of the crusades as stables. The floor of this vault is a little over 38 feet below the level of the pavement above. The arches are 11 feet 5 inches in span, and 5 feet 9 inches in height. The aisles open from south to north. Here the Jews sought refuge during the struggle against the Romans. Solomon's intercourse with Egypt brought horses into use in Israel. He was the first to ride in a chariot through the streets of Jerusalem.

10 ¶ And she gave the king [o]an hundred and twenty talents of gold, and of spices very great store, and precious stones: there came no more such abundance of spices as these which the queen of Sheba gave to king Solomon.[5]

11 And the navy also of Hiram, that brought gold from [p]Ophir, brought in from Ophir great plenty of almug-trees,[6] and precious stones.

12 And the king made of the almug-trees [q]pillars[r] for the house of the LORD, and for the king's house, harps also and psalteries for singers: there came no such almug-trees, nor were seen unto this day.

13 And king Solomon gave unto the queen of Sheba all [s]her desire, whatsoever she asked, besides *that* which Solomon gave her of his royal bounty. So [t]she turned and went to her own country, she and her servants.

14 ¶ Now the weight of gold that came to Solomon in one year was six hundred threescore and six talents[7] of gold,

15 Besides *that he had* of the merchant-men, and of the traffick of the spice-merchants, and of all the kings of [u]Arabia, and of the governors of the country.

16 ¶ And king Solomon made [x]two hundred targets *of* beaten gold: six hundred *shekels*[8] of gold went to one target.[9]

17 And *he made* [y]three hundred shields *of* beaten gold; three pound[1] of gold went to one shield:[2] and the king put them in the house of the forest of Lebanon.

18 ¶ Moreover, the king [z]made a great throne of [a]ivory, and overlaid it with the best gold.

19 The throne had six steps, and the top of the throne *was* round behind:[3] and *there were* stays[4] on either side on the place of the seat, and two lions stood beside the stays.

20 And twelve lions stood there on the one side and on the other upon the six steps: there was not the like[5] made in any kingdom.

21 ¶ And [b]all king Solomon's drinking-vessels *were of* gold, and all the vessels of the house of the forest of Lebanon *were of* pure gold; none *were of* silver:[6] it was nothing accounted of in the days of Solomon.[7]

22 For the king had at sea a navy of [c]Tharshish[8] with the navy of Hiram: once in three years came the navy of Tharshish, bringing gold, and silver, [d]ivory, and apes, and peacocks.

23 So king Solomon [e]exceeded all the kings of the earth for riches and for wisdom.

24 ¶ And [f]all the earth sought to Solomon, to hear his wisdom, which God had put in his heart.

25 And [g]they brought every man his present, vessels of silver, and vessels of gold, and garments, and armour, and spices, horses, and mules, a rate year by year.

26 ¶ And[h] Solomon gathered together chariots and horsemen: and he had a thousand and four hundred chariots, and twelve thousand horsemen, whom he bestowed in the cities for chariots, and with the king at Jerusalem.

27 And [t]the king made silver *to be* in Jerusalem as stones, and cedars made he *to be* as the sycamore-trees[9] that *are* in the vale, for abundance.

28 ¶ And[k] Solomon had horses brought out of Egypt, and [l]linen yarn: the king's merchants received the linen yarn at a price.

29 And [m]a chariot came up and went out of Egypt for six hundred *shekels* of silver, and an horse for an hundred and fifty: and so for all the kings of the Hittites, and for the kings of Syria, did they bring *them* out [n]by their means.[1]

CHAPTER XI.

1 Solomon's wives and concubines. 4 In his old age they draw him to idolatry. 9 God threateneth him. 14 Solomon's adversaries were Hadad, who was entertained in Egypt, 23 Rezon, who reigned in Damascus, 26 and Jeroboam, to whom Ahijah had prophesied. 41 Solomon's acts, reign, and death: Rehoboam succeedeth him.

BUT king Solomon loved [a]many strange women, (together with the daughter of Pharaoh,) women of the Moabites, Ammonites, Edomites, Zidonians, *and* Hittites;

A.M. 3014. B.C. 990.

o ch.9.14; ver.2. Ps. 72.10,11. Mat.2.11, *t.e.* £654.084.

5 This visit of the queen of Sheba is not to be considered as a mere historical record; it is also a beautiful emblem and illustration of the manner in which souls are brought to Christ; in which, won by his excellence, Phi. 3. 8, they present him their hearts, and return, not to the service, but to the duties of the world, enriched with 'the unsearchable riches of Jesus,' Ep.3.8.—*C.*

p ch.9.28. 2 Ch.2. 8; 9.10,11.

6 Called in Chronicles *algum-trees*. It was most probably the *Pterocarpus santalinus* of Linnæus, which furnishes the red sandal-wood, and is called by the Arabs *el-bakam*. The wood is firm, hard, and heavy, is esteemed very precious in the East, and is used by the Hindoos in adorning their temples. Western Asia still receives a variety of Indian productions by way of Arabia.—*I.*

q Or, *rails*, ver.5.

r Heb. *a prop*, ch. 7.15.

s ver.2; ch.8.17; 9.1. Ep.3.20. Jn. 14. 13, 14; 15 7. Mar.11.24. Ac.20. 35.

t With Jn.6.66.2 Ti. 4.10.

7 *i.e.* above 27 tons weight, and £3,634,382 value.

u 2 Ch. 9. 14, 23, 24; 17.11. Ps.72.10,15.

x 2 Ch.9.15;12.9.

8 £1095 value.

9 Estimated by some of the most acute calculators at £28,131,165. 9½*d.*—*C.*

y 2 Ch. 9. 16. ch.7.2; 14.26.

1 Three hundred shekels.

2 These have been estimated at £210,976, 7*s.* 7*d.* But the real value no man can tell, or even guess, as the nature of the work in the casting or chasing is totally unknown. Ornamental works in the precious metals vary from 50 to 300 per cent. and upwards on the original value.—*C.*

z 2 Ch. 9. 17–19. Ps. 122.5;1To.1,5;9.4,7; 45. 6. Phi.2.11. He. 1.3,8. Re.20.11.

a ver.22.

3 Heb. *on the hinder part thereof.*

4 Heb. *hands.*

5 Heb. *so.*

b 2 Ch.9.20–22.

A.M. 3029. B.C. 985.

6 Or, there was *no silver* in them.

7 Not that it was undervalued in commerce, but for ornament.—*C.*

c Ge.10.4. 2Ch.20.36. Is.23.1, with ch.9.28.

8 The situation of this country it is perhaps not possible to ascertain. Amongst different conjectures, the most probable is that there are more countries or places than one called Tarshish in Scripture, and that one may be found in the Indian Ocean, another probably in Spain, and a third in Tarsus of Cilicia. This community of a name is amply exemplified in modern geography.—*C.*

d Or, *elephants' teeth*, ch.22.39. Ps.45.8, 9. Eze.27.6. Am.3.15. Re.18.12.

e ch.3.12,13; 4.30,31. 2 Ch.9.22,23. Nu.24. 7. Ps.89.27. Col.1.19; 2.3. 1 Co.1.30.

f ch. 4. 34. Is. 52. 15; 55.5.

g ch.4.21. Ps. 68. 29. Is. 60. 6, 16, 17; 66. 20. Ro.12.1;15.16.

h 2 Ch.1.14; 9. 25,28, 29. ch. 4. 26, with De. 17.16. Ps.20.7.

i 2 Ch.1.15;9.27. Ge. 13.2. Mat.6.33. Job 22. 24,25. ver.21.

9 A tree partaking of the combined qualities of the fig and mulberry tree—the *Ficus Sycomorus* of botanists. It is one of the most splendid vegetable productions, the branches spreading to a vast extent, and the trunk often attaining such a size that three men touching fingers are unable to encircle it.—*C.*

k 2 Ch. 1. 16; 9. 28. De.17.16. Is.31.1. Eze. 17.15.

l Ge.41.42. Pr. 7. 16. Eze.27.7.

m 2 Ch.2.17.

n Heb. *by their hand*, Mal. 1. 1. ch. 8. 53.

1 This verse states what Solomon's merchants charged for duty, commission, and transport — namely, 150 for each horse, and 600 for each chariot. Of course this cannot mean the actual price of the horse, for some horses are far more valuable than others. The sums here stated were over and above the intrinsic value of each animal and chariot. Such, at least, appears to me the sense.—*P.*

CHAP. XI.

B.C. about 983.

a ch.3.1, 3. Ge. 6. 2. Ezr.9.12; 10. 2–18. Ne. 13. 26, 27. Re. 2. 4. 14. De.17.17. Pr.2.16; 5 3, 20;6.24;7.5;22.14;23.27, 33.

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some estimate of its colossal dimensions. The breadth of the roadway was 50 feet; the span of each arch was 45 feet, and there were five arches; and the total height above the bed of the Tyropœon was 225 feet. The stones with which it was built were of colossal size; the spring-stones of one arch which are still in position measure 24 feet in length by 6 in thickness. I am inclined to believe that this was 'the ascent by which Solomon went up into the house of the Lord.' *P.*]

Ver. 28. [This is a very obscure passage. The meaning of the Hebrew word translated 'linen yarn' is much controverted. Some say it means 'toll' or 'duty;' some 'a band' or 'troop;' some a proper name with a preposition prefixed; some 'a cord' by which troops of horses were fastened. I prefer the interpretation of Gesenius, who renders the verse as follows:—'*And the horses of Solomon were brought out of Egypt; and a band of the king's merchants brought up a band* (of horses) *at a fixed price.*' This interpretation requires a change in the Masoretic accents, and would represent the merchants of Solomon as having entered into an arrangement with the Egyptian government to pay a gross sum of duty on each troop of horses. *P.*]

REFLECTIONS.—So respectable is true wisdom that one cannot purchase it too dear or fetch it too far; nor hath God confined it to one sex more than another. And such as have real knowledge should delight in the communication of it. But especially let us observe that God, on every occasion, has taken delight to prefigure the gathering of the Gentiles to Jesus Christ, in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. Good order in families, courts, and kingdoms is extremely amiable and useful; and to enjoy the converse of such as are wise in the things of God is a great and unspeakable mercy: but God, who is the author of all our mercies, deserves the praise of them all. Mutual presents are pledges of friendship: but happiest of all is friendship with God. Prosperity in earthly enjoyments shall attend the active honouring of him, if for the real good of his people, but the most certain prosperity of soul. The Almighty himself is their gold; and they shall have plenty of silver.

But in these labours, these glories of Solomon, let me contemplate the infinitely greater one, even Jesus Christ our Prince of Peace. He is JEDIDIAH, the darling of the Lord. His birth is our consolation against griefs and woes unnumbered. He is infinitely peaceful, prudent, and wise; and to him everything is naked and open. Notwithstanding oppositions innumerable, he was solemnly chosen, anointed, and enthroned by his Father. Justly he punishes the guilty and rewards the virtuous, particularly such as have favoured his cause in distress. Wisely he judges his subjects, and will judge the world. In infinite wisdom he indites and applies his revelations of truth. At infinite expense he builds the temple of his church, and consecrates her to God by his great sacrifice of himself and his prevalent intercession. Plentifully he enriches and prudently he governs his people in his extensive dominions. Great is the peace, the safety, the glory of his reign! and no report can sufficiently describe his glory and wisdom. Happy they who are his servants, behold his beauty, and for ever inquire reverently in his temple! And blessed be the Lord that multitudes, chiefly of Gentile sinners, are brought to him, admire his excellency, and labour in his service: nay, captivated with his love, grace, and beauty, abide in his house for ever.

CHAPTER XI. [Ver. 3. *His wives turned away his heart.* Hitherto we have viewed Solomon as the

MILITARY MOSQUE, DAMASCUS—THE CITY PASSED BY ABRAHAM, WHEN HE CAME UP FROM UR, OF THE CHALDEES. [I. KINGS, xi: 24.]—"And he gathered men unto him, and became captain over a band, when David slew them of Zobah: and they went to Damascus, and dwelt therein, and reigned in Damascus." In going from Jerusalem to Damascus we pass through the gate in the west wall, and before reaching the center of the city we pass the military mosque on the side of the Abana river. Here the soldiers are quartered, and this building is both a place of worship and a barrack. Turkish soldiers are always in evidence in Damascus, and it is well that they are. Life and property would not be safe here without them. The foreign policy of the northern king of Israel was very much occupied in its relations to Damascus. During the reign of Solomon, Rezon made himself king of Damascus, and we learn from the 25th verse of the 11th chapter of I. Kings that he was an adversary of Israel all the days of Solomon.

2 Of the nations *concerning* which the LORD said unto the children of Israel, [b]Ye shall not go in to them, neither shall they come in unto you; *for* surely they will turn away your heart after their gods. Solomon clave unto these in love.

3 And he had seven hundred wives, princesses, and three hundred concubines: and his wives [c]turned away his heart.

4 For it came to pass, when Solomon was old,[d] *that* his wives turned away his heart after other gods: and [e]his heart was not perfect with the LORD his God, as *was* the heart of David his father.

5 For Solomon went after [f]Ashtaroth the goddess of the Zidonians, and after [g]Milcom the abomination of the Ammonites.

6 And Solomon [h]did evil in the sight of the LORD, and went [i]not fully after the LORD, as *did* David his father.

7 Then did Solomon build an [k]high place for [l]Chemosh the abomination of Moab, in [m]the hill that *is* before Jerusalem, and for [n]Molech the abomination of the children of Ammon.[9]

8 And likewise did he for [o]all his strange wives, which burnt incense, and sacrificed unto their gods.[1]

9 ¶ And the LORD was [p]angry with Solomon, because [q]his heart was turned from the LORD God of Israel, [r]which had appeared unto him twice,

10 And had commanded him concerning this thing, [s]that he should not go after other gods: but he kept not that which the LORD commanded.

11 Wherefore the LORD said unto Solomon, Forasmuch as this is done of thee, and thou hast[t] not kept my covenant and my statutes, which I have commanded thee, [u]I will surely rend the kingdom from thee, and will give it to thy servant.

12 Notwithstanding [x]in thy days I will not do it for David thy father's sake: *but* [y]I will rend it out of the hand of thy son.

13 Howbeit I will not rend away all the kingdom; *but* will give [z]one tribe[2] to thy son, for[a] David my servant's sake, and for Jerusalem's sake which I have chosen.

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b Ex.34.15,16. De.7.3,4. Jos. 23. 12. Ge.6.4; 38.2,18. Nu.25.1,2.

c Ec.7.26. Ex. 34.15, 16. De. 7. 4. ch. 16. 31. Ne.13.26.

d About fifty years, ch.6.1,19.10;14.21.

e ver.6,9,11; ch.8.61; 15.3, with 3.14;9.4.

f Ju.2.13; 10. 6. 1 Sa. 7.14; 12.10. 2 Ki. 23.13. Je.2.10–12.

g Molech, ver.7,33. Le.18.21; 20.2–4. 2 Ki. 23.10. Am.5.26.

h ch.14.22;21.20.

i ver.2,4. Nu. 14. 24. Jos.14.8.

k Le.26.30. Ps.78.58.

l Ju.11.24. Nu.21.29. Je.48.13.

m 2 Sa. 15. 30. Mat. 26.30. 2 Ki.23. 13. Zec. 14 4. Ac.1.12.

n ver.5.

9 The hill before (*i.e.* eastward of) Jerusalem is the Mount of Olives. It has three tops. The central one is the highest, and seems to have been an ancient sanctuary. It is probable Solomon dedicated each summit to a heathen deity, in accordance with the wish of his favourite wives; and for this reason Olivet is called in 2 Ki. 23. 13, *the Mount of Corruption*. The licentious and cruel rites with which these deities were worshipped gave this name of infamy to the mount.—*P.*

o Eze.16.24, 25. Ho. 12.11. 1 Co.10.11,12.

1 There is not a more melancholy or astonishing instance of depravity than that here recorded. He who was named 'beloved of the Lord,' who had been favoured with such special tokens of God's favour, who had received such answers to prayer, who had been honoured to build the temple, who was renowned through the earth for wisdom and piety, who was a penman of sacred Scripture, who gave such excellent counsel to others, who was so illustrious a type of Christ, even he became a public worshipper of abominable idols.—*Scott.*

p Ex.4.14. 2 Sa.6.7. 1 Ch. 21. 7. De. 32. 21, 22; 4.25; 10.19; 31.16,17.

q 2 Ti.4.10. Pr. 4. 23. Is.29.13,14.

r ch.3.5; 9.2, 6; 6. 11, 12.

s ch.3.14; 9.4-9. Ex. 20.3,4,23; 34.11–17. Le. 19.4. De.4.15–28; 6. 14, 15; 7.26; 8.19; xiii.; 27.2–7.

t 2 Sa.12.9. 1 Sa.2.30 –32; 12.13,14; 15.26–28. ch.12.15,20.

u ver.12,31,35.

x ch.21.29. 2 Ki. 20. 19. La. 3.32. Ps.103.10. Hab. 3.2. ver.34.

y ch.12. 1, 15, 16, 19, 20. 2 Ch. 10. 15, 16, 19. ver.35.

z ch.12. 17, 20. 2 Ch. 10.17. ver.32,36.

2 One tribe, Benjamin, in addition to his own tribe of Judah: the one he had by *inheritance*, the other he received by *gift*.—*C.*

a Ex.32.13. De. 9. 5. 2 Ki. 13. 23. 2 Sa. 7.12–16. ver.12, 32, 36.

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b ch.12. 15. 1 Sa. 26. 19. 2 Sa.24.17. 1 Ch. 5.26. Is.10.5,6. Ps.89.30 –32.

3 B.C. 1037.

c 2 Sa.8.14. 1 Ch. 18. 12,13. Nu.24.19. De.20. 13. Ps.60. title; 108.10.

4 Edom is here taken in some restricted sense; most probably for the capital and its adjoining district. Nothing is more common than to find a kingdom, a province, a county, and their respective capitals called by one name.—*C.*

d Ge.44.20. ch.3.7.

5 A little boy, aware of his danger, and capable of retaining the recollections of paternal dignity and national inflictions.—*C.*

e Ge.25.2,6. Ex.2.15, 16. Nu.22.4; 25.1; 31. 2. Ju.vi.–viii.

6 Not Midian near Horeb, where Moses was when the Lord appeared to him, Ex. 2. 15, but that Midian on the south of Moab, where the Israelites were seduced and punished, Nu. 22. 4, 7. Their capital remained in the time of Eusebius, and was situated on the Arnon.—*C.*

f Ge.14.6; 21.21. Nu. 13. 3, 26. De. 1. 1; 33.2. Hab.3.3.

g Ge. xii. xl.–xlvii. ch.3.1.

h Ge. 18. 3; 39. 4, 21. Ru.2.11.

i Household mistress, ch.15.13. Je. 13. 18; 29.2.

k Ge.21.7. 1 Sa.1.24.

7 From Ge. 21. 8 it appears that among the Hebrews the weaning of a child was accompanied with solemn feasting —a custom which seems to have prevailed in Egypt, and as a public ceremony, somewhat equivalent to the European celebration of a birthday, has been here deemed worthy of historic notice, as marking the interest that Pharaoh took in cherishing one of Solomon's enemies. This Pharaoh was Solomon's father-in-law, but such is the want of natural affection in the world, that it has been said, and too truly, that kingdoms are seldom married.—*C.*

l Mat.2.20. Ex.4.19.

8 Heb. *Send him away.*

9 Heb. *Not.*

m 2 Sa. 8. 2. Ps. 60. title. 1 Sa.14.47.

n 2 Sa. 8. 3; 10. 18. 1 Ch.18.3; 19.6,16–19.

1 It is probable that this statement simply means that Rezon became a successful general, and obtained such influence at court as to be virtual ruler. According to Josephus Hadad was at this period king of Damascus, and Rezon a powerful chief of bandits, who was permitted to settle in the kingdom, and to attack and plunder at will all the enemies of the state.—*P.*

o After his apostasy, ch.5.4. 2 Ch.15.2. Ps.89.32. 2 Sa.7.14.

p 2 Ch.x.xi.xiii. ver. 11,28–40; ch.9.22; xii.–xv. 2 Sa.20.21.

14 ¶ And the LORD [b]stirred up an adversary unto Solomon, Hadad the Edomite: he *was* of the king's seed in Edom,[3]

15 For[c] it came to pass, when David was in Edom, and Joab the captain of the host was gone up to bury the slain, after he had smitten every male in Edom,

16 (For six months did Joab remain there with all Israel, until he had cut off every male in Edom,)[4]

17 That Hadad fled, he and certain Edomites of his father's servants with him, to go into Egypt; Hadad *being* yet a [d]little child.[5]

18 And they arose out of [e]Midian,[6] and came to [f]Paran: and they took men with them out of Paran, and they came to Egypt, unto Pharaoh king of Egypt; which gave him an house, and appointed him victuals, and gave him land.

19 And Hadad found [g]great favour in the sight of [h]Pharaoh, so that he gave him to wife the sister of his own wife, the sister of Tahpenes the [i]queen.

20 And the sister of Tahpenes bare him Genubath his son, whom Tahpenes [k]weaned in Pharaoh's house:[7] and Genubath was in Pharaoh's household among the sons of Pharaoh.

21 And when Hadad [l]heard in Egypt that David slept with his fathers, and that Joab the captain of the host was dead, Hadad said to Pharaoh, Let me depart,[8] that I may go to mine own country.

22 Then Pharaoh said unto him, But what hast thou lacked with me, that, behold, thou seekest to go to thine own country? And he answered, Nothing:[9] howbeit let me go in any wise.

23 ¶ And God stirred him up *another* adversary, Rezon the son of Eliadah, which fled from his [m]lord Hadadezer king of Zobah:

24 And he gathered men unto him, and became captain over a band, [n]when David slew them *of Zobah:* and they went to Damascus, and dwelt therein, and reigned in Damascus.[1]

25 And he was an adversary to Israel [o]all the days of Solomon, besides the mischief that Hadad *did:* and he abhorred Israel, and reigned over Syria.

26 ¶ And [p]Jeroboam the son of Nebat, an

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sun in his splendour, now we must view him sadly clouded and eclipsed. Blessed with unexampled and uninterrupted prosperity he forgets the God who gave it, breaks his law *in principle*, comp. Ex. 34. 16; De. 7. 3, with ver. 1, and in *the letter*, comp. De. 17. 17 with ver. 3, and forfeits all his character for wisdom by the lowest act of human folly—building temples for idols, and patronizing, if not joining in, their abominable worship, ver. 7, 8.—*Note*, His falling away is certain, ver. 4; God's displeasure revealed, ver. 9; of his repentance nothing is said—a silence that speaks volumes of warning to backsliders who have 'forgotten their first love.' One ray of hope arises from the reservation in the word 'fully,' ver. 6; and the favourable reference to his name by our blessed Redeemer, Mat. 12. 42. *C.*]

REFLECTIONS.—Lord, what is man! Is this Solomon—the beloved of the Lord—the miracle of wisdom—the man of prayer—the builder of the temple! How art thou fallen from heaven, O son of the morning! How ensnaring is the inordinate love of women! Every indulgence given to lewd desires only renders them more insatiable: and they who give way to one wilful sin never know when or where they shall stop. Indulgence of fleshly lusts makes the heart brutish and stupifies the conscience: and even sumptuous fare too fearfully pampers our lusts. No present attainment of gifts or grace, without continued watchfulness, will secure us against the most shameful falls. How sad, how stumbling, when the old age of once famous saints becomes a long and continued scene of profligacy! Alas! how Solomon's inordinate love of horses issues in an inordinate love of base women; and this in a multiplication of abominable idols! How the aged saint is ensnared by youthful lusts! How the wisest sage is made an arrant fool by silly women! How the man who so often warned others against levity and whoredom, turns out a monster of vileness! How the man once so familiar with his God is plunged into the vilest depths of fellowship with Satan and his most abominable agents! Let me then always suspect my corruptions and depend on the grace that is in Christ Jesus. Let me never covet great prosperity which hath so great snares attending it. Nay, if I have made a great profession of religion, let me take heed lest Satan render me a remarkable reproach to it. Never let me expect that base ingratitude and wilful disobedience will pass unpunished. But God never deals with his people in such severity as they deserve. For Jesus' sake he defers his anger, and in wrath remembers mercy. But, alas! how sin turns peace into

Ephrathite of Zereda, Solomon's servant, (whose mother's name *was* Zeruah, a widow woman,) even he lifted up *his* hand against the king.

27 And this *was* the cause that he lifted up *his* hand against the king: Solomon [q]built Millo,[2] *and* repaired[3] the breaches of the city of David his father.

28 And the man Jeroboam *was* a mighty man of valour: and Solomon [r]seeing the young man that he was industrious, he made him ruler over all the [s]charge of the house of Joseph.[4]

29 And it came to pass at that time, when Jeroboam went out of Jerusalem, that the prophet [t]Ahijah the Shilonite found him in the way; and he had clad himself with a new garment; and they two *were* alone in the field:

30 And Ahijah caught the new garment that *was* on him, and [u]rent it *in* twelve pieces.[5]

31 And he said to Jeroboam, Take thee ten pieces: for thus saith the LORD, the God of Israel, Behold, [x]I will rend the kingdom out of the hand of Solomon, and will give ten tribes to thee:

32 (But [y]he shall have one tribe for my servant David's sake, and for Jerusalem's sake, the city which I have chosen out of all the tribes of Israel:)

33 Because[6] that they have forsaken me,[6] and have worshipped Ashtaroth the goddess of the Zidonians, Chemosh the god of the Moabites, and Milcom the god of the children of Ammon,[7] and have not walked in my ways, to do *that which is* right in mine eyes, and *to keep* my statutes and my judgments, as *did* David his father.

34 Howbeit [a]I will not take the whole kingdom out of his hand: but I will make him prince all the days of his life for David my servant's sake, whom I chose, because he kept my commandments and my statutes:

35 But [b]I will take the kingdom out of his son's hand, and will give it unto thee, *even* ten tribes.[8]

36 And unto his son will I give one tribe,[9] that David my servant may have a [c]light alway before me in Jerusalem, [d]the city which I have chosen me to put my name there.

37 And I will take thee, and thou shalt reign [e]according to all that thy soul desireth, and shalt be king over Israel.

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q ch.9.15.

2 It is difficult to decide what Millo was, but the best information may be obtained by consulting 2 Sa.5.9. 1 Ki. 9. 15, 24. 2 Ki.12.20. 1 Ch.11.8. 2 Ch.32.3. Some have supposed it to have been a valley which Solomon filled up; however, it evidently was a building, and one of the chief defences of Jerusalem, 2 Ch. 32. 3. From comparing Ju. 9. 6 with the above quotations, it appears not improbable that Millo was a name for a building comprehending a fortress and senate-house, or kind of *forum* for public assemblies.—*C.*

3 Heb. *closed.*

r Pr. 14. 35; 22. 29. ver 11.

s Heb. *burden*, Ex. 5. 13. 1 Ki. 11. 28.

4 The part of the building allotted of Ephraim and Manasseh, the expense and labour of which, together with the protective character of Millo, as a citadel, not for defending, but overawing the city, may have laid the foundation of Jeroboam's rebellion.—*C.*

t ch.12.15; 14.2. Jos. 18.1.

u ch.14.30; 15.27; 16. 10–15.2 Ki.10.30; 15.13. 1 Sa.15.27,28; 13.14; 24. 5,20.

5 These were symbolical of the twelve tribes. The whole emblematic action seems to imply that the garment belonged to the prophet, and not to Jeroboam. He had purposely provided himself with a new garment, and he *'gave'* ten parts of it to Jeroboam.—*J.*

x ver. 11–13, 32, 34–36; ch. 12.1, 16, 19, 20. 2 Ch.10.15, 16, 19.

y ver.13; ch.12.17, 20.

z ch.3.14; 9.6, 7; 15.5; 22. 43; 2.3, with 2 Ki. 21.22; 20.3. ver.1–11.

6 Boothroyd, following some MSS. and versions, reads 'he hath;' Dathe, 'he and his people have.' —*J.*

7 Apostasies are here assigned as the reasons of divisions and calamities, a rule which Providence pursues in all the history of churches and kingdoms.—*C.*

a ver.12, 13, 31. Hab. 3.2. Ps.103.10. Job 11.6. La.3.32. Ho.11.8.

b ver. 12, 13; ch. 12. 15–20.2 Ch.10.15–19.

8 Neither the design of God, nor the declaration of the prophet, excused Jeroboam's rebellion. David was faithful to Saul long after he had been anointed in his room. Jeroboam, moreover, instead of seeking to secure the promise by obedience, endeavoured to establish his throne by disobedience, and hence forfeited the kingdom both for himself and his posterity.—*J.*

9 See note on ver. 13.—*C.*

c Heb. *lamp* or *candle*, 2 Sa. 21. 17. 2 Ki.8.19. 2 Ch.21.7. Ps. 132.17. ch.15.4. Je. 33. 20–26.

d 1 Ch. 17. 24. ch. 8. 16,44.

e ver.26.

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f Ex.19.5, De.4.1; 15, 5; ch. 3.14; 9.4, 5.

g De. 31. 8. Jos. 1. 5, ch. 9. 5. 1 Sa.2.30, 35. 2 Sa. 7. 16, 27–29. Je. 33. 20–26.

h ch. xii. xv. 2 Ki. xiv. xvi. 7, 21. Ps.89.30–32, 38–46.

i Lu.1.32, 33; 2.4, 11. Is.7.14; 9.6, 7.

1 Wise Solomon, rendered foolish by idolatry, here attempts the very same crime that Saul had attempted against David.—*C.*

k ch. 14. 25. Who hated Solomon. Perhaps for some injury done to his sister, ver.1; ch.3.1.

2 Newton identifies him with the famous Sesostris; but Hales identifies him with Cephrenes son of Cheops, father-in-law of Solomon. Champollion considers him the Sesonchosis of Manetho whose name (Sheshouk) appears in an inscription on a pillar on the ruins of Carnac.—*C.*

l 2 Ch.9.29, 30. ver.4; ch.14.19, 29; 15.7, 23, 31; 16.5, 14, 20, 27; 22.39, 45. 2 Ki.1.18; 8.23; 10.34; 12.19; 13.8, 12; 14 15, 18, 28; 15.6 11, 15, 21, 26, 31, 36; 21.17, 25.

3 There is no reason for supposing this a separate history now lost, it is much more likely to describe the additional notices embodied in the Chronicles, and kept in a separate roll or book. —*C.*

4 See introductory note to this book.—*P.*

m ch. 2. 10. Is. 57. 2. Da.12.13; 25.8; 49.33.

5 B.C. 975.

CHAP. XII.

B.C. 975.

a 2 Ch.10.1. Mat. 1. 7. 1 Ch.3.10.

b Jos. 24. 1. Ju. 9. 1. Ge.12.6; 23.19.

1 The reasons of the assembly being held at Shechem do not appear. The most probable are: (1) It was situated between Ebal and Gerizim, where the blessings and curses of the law had been nationally announced, De. 11. 29. (2) It was the place of assembly for Joshua's last charge, Jos. xxiv. (3) It was an ancient place of coronation, Ju. ix. (4) It was a capacious valley, and much better suited to such a popular assembly than any around Jerusalem. (5) The leaven of disaffection that was evidently working, led, most probably, to the selection of a 'mustering place,' distant from the influence of Jerusalem. It is at present called Nablous, and is still a considerable town, beautifully situated amidst gardens and groves.—*C.*

c ch. 11. 40, 43. 2 Ch. 10. 2–5.

d With ch. 4.7, 22, 23; 5. 18; 9. 15. It seems he had laid taxes on them to build his idolatrous temples, ch.11.7, 8, 33.

2 The man who requires advice before he can decide upon redressing a grievance and showing mercy, is not likely to take good advice when given, and so it was with Rehoboam.—*C.*

38 And it shall be, [f]if thou wilt hearken unto all that I command thee, and wilt walk in my ways, and do *that is* right in my sight, to keep my statutes and my commandments, as David my servant did; that I [g]will be with thee, and build thee a sure house, as I built for David, and will give Israel unto thee.

39 And I will for this [h]afflict the seed of David, but [i]not for ever.

40 Solomon sought therefore to kill Jeroboam:[1] and Jeroboam arose, and fled into Egypt, unto [k]Shishak[2] king of Egypt, and was in Egypt until the death of Solomon.

41 ¶ And [l]the rest of the acts of Solomon, and all that he did, and his wisdom, *are* they not written in the book[3] of the acts of Solomon?[4]

42 And the time that Solomon reigned in Jerusalem over all Israel *was* forty years.

43 And Solomon [m]slept with his fathers,[5] and was buried in the city of David his father: and Rehoboam his son reigned in his stead.

CHAPTER XII.

1 *The Israelites, assembled at Shechem to crown Rehoboam, by Jeroboam make a suit of relaxation unto him.* 6 *Rehoboam, refusing the old men's counsel, by the advice of young men, answereth them roughly.* 16 *Ten tribes revolting, kill Adoram, and make Rehoboam to flee.* 21 *Rehoboam, raising an army, is forbidden by Shemaiah.* 25 *Jeroboam strengtheneth himself by cities,* 26 *and by the idolatry of the two calves.*

AND Rehoboam[a] went to [b]Shechem:[1] for all Israel were come to Shechem to make him king.

2 And it came to pass, when Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who was yet in [c]Egypt, heard *of it,* (for he was fled from the presence of king Solomon, and Jeroboam dwelt in Egypt;)

3 That they sent and called him: and Jeroboam and all the congregation of Israel came, and spake unto Rehoboam, saying,

4 Thy father made our [d]yoke grievous: now therefore make thou the grievous service of thy father, and his heavy yoke which he put upon us, lighter, and we will serve thee.

5 And he said unto them, Depart yet *for* three days, then come again to me.[2] And the people departed.

6 ¶ And king Rehoboam [e]consulted with the old men, that stood before Solomon his father while he yet lived, and said, How do ye advise that I may answer this people?

7 And they spake unto him, saying, [f]If thou

e Je.42.2, 5; 43.2, with Job 12.12, 13; 32.7. 2 Ch.10.6, 7.
f 2 Ch.10.7. Pr.15.1; 29.15. Ec.3.1.

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war! From the most abject and low condition God can raise up the most terrible instruments of his wrath: and when he intends to chastise he never wants a rod, but makes men's sinful ambition the means of his just but awful rebukes. Diligence paves the way to advancement, and advancement inflames ambition. But hopeless is the case when God gives men kings in his anger: and it is impossible to keep down the scourge which the Lord stirs up. God generally renders sinners inexcusable by the fair warnings which he gives them of their danger. But it is shameful and very depressing when his people die under divine frowns. To what a tremendous length and degree God may carry the just chastisement of his dearest saints!

CHAPTER XII. [Ver. 1. Shechem was the capital, stronghold, and gathering-place of the great tribe of Ephraim, which had from the time of the exodus disputed the supremacy with Judah. There was a traditional glory, too, about Shechem. There the patriarchs Abraham and Jacob pitched their tents: there Jacob bought his only property in Canaan; there the first great national assembly was held on entering Palestine; and there the law was publicly read, and adopted as the national code, both civil and sacred. Rehoboam was doubtless aware of the growing discontent, and he wished by going to Shechem to conciliate the powerful tribe of Ephraim. *P.*]

Ver. 28. [*Made two calves of gold.* The worship of the *bull* was the chief idolatry of Egypt, where Jeroboam was educated, and a form that Israel was known to be ready to receive, Ex. 32. 4.—*Note,* He that commits a sin once is always in danger of being tempted specially to the same sin again. *C.*——Jeroboam cunningly pandered to popular superstition, while he carefully abstained from shocking national feeling. The

GARDENS OF SHECHEM—WHERE REHOBOAM WAS CROWNED KING OF ISRAEL. [I. KINGS, xii : 1.]—"And Rehoboam went to Shechem; for all Israel were come to Shechem to make him king." Rehoboam was the son of Solomon, by the Ammonite princess Naamah (I. Kings, xiv : 21.) He selected Shechem as the place of his coronation, 975 B. C. The people at Shechem demanded a remission of the severe burdens imposed by Solomon, but Rehoboam rejected the advice of his father's counsellors, and followed that of his young courtiers, and returned an insulting answer, which resulted in an open rebellion among the tribes. He fled to Jerusalem, the tribes of Judah and Benjamin alone remaining true to him. Jeroboam was made king of the Northern tribes. During Rehoboam's lifetime peaceful relations between Israel and Judah were never restored. In the fifth year of Rehoboam's reign Jerusalem was captured by the Egyptian Shishak.

wilt be a servant unto this people[3] this day, and wilt serve them, and answer them, and speak good words to them, then they will be thy servants for ever.

8 But he [g]forsook the counsel of the old men, which they had given him, and consulted with the young men that were grown up with him, *and* which stood before him:

9 And he said unto them, [h]What counsel give ye that we may answer this people, who have spoken to me, saying, Make the yoke which thy father did put upon us lighter?

10 And the young men that were grown up with him spake unto him, saying, Thus shalt thou speak unto this people that spake unto thee, saying, Thy father made our yoke heavy, but make thou *it* lighter unto us; thus shalt thou say unto them, [i]My little *finger* shall be thicker than my father's loins.

11 And now whereas my father did lade you with a heavy yoke, I will add to your yoke: my father hath chastised you with whips, but I will chastise you with scorpions.[4]

12 ¶ So Jeroboam and all the people came to Rehoboam the third day, as the king had appointed, saying, Come to me again the third day.

13 And the king answered the people roughly,[j] and forsook the old men's counsel that they gave him;

14 And spake to them after the counsel of the young men, saying, [k]My father made your yoke heavy, and I will add to your yoke: my father *also* chastised you with whips, but I will chastise you with scorpions.

15 Wherefore the king hearkened not unto the people: for the cause was from the LORD, that [m]he might perform his saying, which the LORD spake by Ahijah the Shilonite unto Jeroboam the son of Nebat.

16 ¶ So when all Israel saw that the king hearkened not unto them, the people answered the king, saying, [n]What portion have we in David? neither *have we* inheritance in the son of Jesse: to your tents, O Israel: now see to thine own house, David. So Israel departed unto their tents.

17 But *as* [o]*for* the children of Israel which dwelt in the cities of Judah, Rehoboam reigned over them.

18 Then king Rehoboam sent [p]Adoram, who *was* over the tribute;[5] and [q]all Israel stoned him

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3 The real character of a king—the ruler, but still the first servant of the state, a sentence embodying more sound political truth than whole volumes of human theories. It is likewise the best description of a father and a mother; nor less of those who rule, yet minister (do service) in the church of Christ.—*C.*

g ver.6,7,9–11. 2 Ch. 10.8–11.

h 2 Ch.19.9;18.5–7.

i Pr. 18. 6, 7; 20.6,11, 14. 2 Ch. 22. 4, 5; 10.10. Ps.7.16;140.11,ver.13.

4 The scorpion is a poisonous animal, perhaps considered hideous because it is known to be dangerous, and whose sting causes exquisite pain, or even death. It is here supposed by the rabbins to be a name for a scourge with sharp, thorny twigs and knots. Others derive the name from an Arabian shrub called the *scorpion thorn*. It is here the appropriate emblem of folly, cruelty, and tyranny.—*Note*, How thankful should a people be for a well-ordered government, where law, not will, governs, and where mercy and justice preside in every court and decision! *C.*——Here a simple scourge is contrasted with another more painful. The latter is called a scorpion, probably to denote a comparison between the pain occasioned by the scourge and the reptile. Isidore, and after him Calmet, assert that it was a sort of severe whip, the lashes of which were armed with iron points; while others say it was a long bag of leather, filled with sand, and stuck full of spikes.—*I.*

j Heb. *harshly*, Pr. 15.1; 10. 14; 18.6,7. Je. 5.4.

k ver. 10. Pr. 12. 13; 18.6,7.

l Ju.14.4;9.23. ch.22. 23. 2 Ch.10 15;22.7;25. 20, 2 Sa.24.1. Am.3. 6. De.29.4.

m 1 Sa.15.29. ch.11. 29–38.2 Ki.9.36;10.10.

n Pr. 15. 1; 18, 6,7. 2 Sa.20.1.1 Sa.22.7.

o ch.11.13,32,35;ver. 20.

p ch.4.6;5.14.

5 Rehoboam commences by a foolish act in seeking advice where he needs none; he proceeds as foolishly as he had begun, in rejecting good advice and following bad; he consummates his folly by sending his most obnoxious agent to an insulted and irritated multitude; and as the proceeding was foolish, the result is disastrous.—*Note*, A wise father may have a foolish son; and that partly to restrain parental vanity, and to incite rather to prayer for filial grace. But a wise father may give a foolish education, of which fact the example of Solomon forms a melancholy illustration, followed by its natural and disastrous consequences. —*C.*

q Ac.7.57,58.

A.M. 3029. B.C. 975.

6 Heb. *strengthened himself.*

r Or, *fell away*, 2 Ki.17.21. Pr.5.11–14.

7 To the time of Ezra.

8 The day or period in which the author lived. I have stated in the introduction that Jeremiah seems to have been the author of the Books of Kings; if so, then these words were written about 400 years after the events occurred.—*P.*

s 1 Sa. 10. 24. Ho. 1. 10,11; 8.4. Ps. 75. 6, 7. Da.2.21;4.34,35.

t No whole tribe, ch.11.13,32,36. Ec. 10. 16,ver.17.

9 This is reconciled with ver. 21, not by considering Benjamin a mere appendage to Judah, but by a very natural supposition, that the tribe of Benjamin did not at first join him, but were induced to do so after he had come to Jerusalem. —*C.*

u 2 Ch.11.1–4.Ps.33. 16;146.3.Pr.21.30,31.

x 2 Ch.11.2–4.

y ch.13.1.1 Sa.9.6. 2 Ch.12.5,15.

z ver.27. 2 Ch.11.13, 16.

1 Refugees from the other tribes who maintained unshaken their loyalty to the house of David. —*C.*

a Nu.14.42. 2 Ch.11. 4;25.7,8;28.13.

b ver. 15; ch. 11.29–38.

2 Not that the people should rebel against legitimate authority, but that a foolish and cruel king should be punished by the disaffection of his people and dismemberment of his kingdom.—*C.*

c 2 Ch. 25. 10; 28.13. Pr.21.3.1 Sa.15.22.

d ch. 9. 15–18. 2 Ch. 11.5–11.

e Ge.12.6; 34. 2. Jos. 21.27;24.1. Ju.9.1. Jn.4. 5 Ac.7.16.

f Ge.32.30. Ju. 8. 17; 9.45.

3 So called by Jacob, Ge. 32. 30. It was situated on the Jabbok, about four miles east of Jordan, and not a ruin remains to point out its precise locality.—*C.*

g Ps.14.1.Ro.1.30;8. 7,8.Ge.6.5.Je.17.9.

h De.12.6,7.

i ch. 11.9; 13.34. Pr. 29.25.

k Ex.1. 10. Is. 30. 1. Ps.36.1–4, with ch. 11. 33,38.

l Ge.3.5. Ex.32.1, 4, 8.2 Pe.2.19.

m Ge.28.19;12.8; 31. 13;35.1;36.1Jos.7.2;8.9. 1Co.4 15.

4 Within twelve miles of Jerusalem, on the north, so that idolatry stands at the very threshold of the temple.—*C.*

n Ju. 18. 29–31. Jos. 19.47.

o ch. 13. 34. 2 Ki.10. 31;17.21. Ho.5.11.

5 A breach of the first, ver. 28, and second commandment, Ex.20.3.—*C.*

p ver.29. Ju.18.7,27, 28;20.21.2Sa.24.2,6;17. 11.

6 The people of the northern parts went for their private sacrifices to Dan, but the king appointed their public national feasts at Bethel.—*C.*

q ch.13.32. Eze. 16. 25. Ho.12.11.

with stones, that he died: therefore king Rehoboam made speed[6] to get him up to his chariot, to flee to Jerusalem.

19 So Israel [r]rebelled against the house of David unto[7] this day.[8]

20 ¶ And it came to pass, when all Israel heard that Jeroboam was come again, that they [s]sent and called him unto the congregation, and made him king over all Israel: there was [t]none that followed the house of David, but the tribe of Judah only.[9]

21 ¶ And[u] when Rehoboam was come to Jerusalem, he assembled all the house of Judah, with the tribe of Benjamin, an hundred and fourscore thousand chosen men, which were warriors, to fight against the house of Israel, to bring the kingdom again to Rehoboam the son of Solomon.

22 But [x]the word of God came unto Shemaiah the [y]man of God, saying,

23 Speak unto Rehoboam the son of Solomon, king of Judah, and unto all the house of Judah and Benjamin, and to the [z]remnant of the people,[1] saying,

24 Thus saith the LORD, [a]Ye shall not go up, nor fight against your brethren the children of Israel: return every man to his house; [b]for this thing is from me.[2] They [c]hearkened therefore to the word of the LORD, and returned to depart, according to the word of the LORD.

25 ¶ Then Jeroboam [d]built [e]Shechem in mount Ephraim, and dwelt therein; and went out from thence, and built [f]Penuel.[3]

26 ¶ And Jeroboam [g]said in his heart, Now shall the kingdom return to the house of David:

27 If this people [h]go up to do sacrifice in the house of the LORD at Jerusalem, then shall the heart of this people turn again unto their lord, *even* unto Rehoboam king of Judah, and they [i]shall kill me, and go again to Rehoboam king of Judah.

28 Whereupon the king [k]took counsel, and made two calves *of* gold, and said unto them, [l]It is too much for you to go up to Jerusalem: behold thy gods, O Israel, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt.

29 And he set the one in [m]Beth-el,[4] and the other put he in [n]Dan.

30 And this thing [o]became a sin:[5] for the people went *to worship* before the one, *even* [p]unto Dan.[6]

31 And he made an [q]house of high places,

Israelites had from the time of the exodus manifested a desire to have some *visible* embodiment of their God. They did not reject JEHOVAH. They did not wish to do so. Jeroboam gave them their wish. He set up the two calves, and said, 'Behold thy gods, O Israel, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt.' *P.*]

Ver. 33. [*Devised of his own heart.* The sin of Cain —not in the offering, which here was a proper sacrifice —but in the principle, a sacrifice in object, place, time, and priesthood the device of the worshipper's own heart.—*Note*, God will be worshipped, but in the manner of his own order. 'No man cometh to the Father, but by the Son,' Jn. 14. 6. *C.*]

REFLECTIONS.—Sin is but a bad way of building families. By all his wives Solomon seems to have had but one son, and he a fool. Neither wisdom nor grace runs in the blood. And often the best instructions are thrown away upon children; especially if the parent has practically disregarded them himself. Some factious spirits are always ready to blow up the coals of sedition; and often their vile designs lurk under the most specious appearances. It is astonishing that we hear no complaint of Solomon's idolatry when we hear so much of his oppressive servitude. But most men seek their own, not the things of Jesus Christ. They are more concerned to save their money than their souls. That government is but in a tottering condition which subsists by severity, and where the king does not reign in the hearts of his subjects. They are our best friends who dissuade us from our rash designs, and they our worst enemies who soothe our folly and flatter our pride. It is mad to give true causes of provocation to those who are already provoked

and made priests [r]of the lowest of the people, which were not of the sons of Levi.[7]

32 And Jeroboam ordained a [s]feast in the eighth month, on the fifteenth day of the month, like unto the feast that *is* in Judah; and he offered upon the altar, (so did he in [t]Beth-el,) sacrificing[8] unto the calves that he had made: and he placed in Beth-el the priests of the high places which he had made.

33 So he offered upon the altar[9] which he had made in Beth-el the fifteenth day of the eighth month, *even* in the month which he had devised[u] of his own heart; and ordained a feast unto the children of Israel: and he [x]offered upon the altar, and burnt incense.[1]

CHAPTER XIII.

1 *Jeroboam's hand, that offered violence to him that prophesied against his altar at Bethel, withereth,* 6 *and at the prayer of the prophet is restored.* 7 *The prophet, refusing the king's entertainment, departeth from Bethel.* 11 *An old prophet, seducing him, bringeth him back.* 20 *He is reproved by God,* 23 *slain by a lion,* 26 *buried by the old prophet,* 31 *who confirmeth his prophecy.* 33 *Jeroboam still persisteth in his evil courses.*

AND, behold, there came a man of [a]God out of Judah [b]by the word of the LORD unto Beth-el: and Jeroboam stood by the altar to [c]burn incense.

2 And he [d]cried against the altar in the word of the LORD, and said, O altar, altar! thus saith the LORD, Behold, a child shall be born unto the house of David, [e]Josiah by name, and upon thee shall he offer the priests of the high places that burn incense upon thee, and men's bones shall be burnt upon thee.[1]

3 And he [f]gave a sign the same day, saying, This *is* the sign which the LORD hath spoken; Behold, the altar shall be rent, and the [g]ashes that *are* upon it shall be poured out.

4 ¶ And it came to pass, when king Jeroboam heard the saying of the man of God, which had cried against the altar in Beth-el, that he [g]put forth his hand from the altar, saying, Lay hold on him. And his hand, which he put forth against him, [h]dried up, so that he could not pull it in again to him.

5 The altar also was rent, and the ashes poured out from the altar, according to the sign which the man of God had given by the word of the LORD.

6 And the king answered and said unto the man of God, [i]Entreat now the face of the LORD thy God, and pray for me, that my hand may be restored me again. And the man of God [k]besought the LORD, and the king's hand was restored him again, and became as *it was* before.

7 ¶ And the king said unto the man of God, Come home with me, and [l]refresh thyself, and I will give thee a [m]reward.[2]

8 And the man of God said unto the king, [n]If thou wilt give me half thine house, I will not go in with thee, neither will I eat bread nor drink water[3] in this place:

9 For [o]so was it charged me by the word of the LORD, saying, [p]Eat no bread, nor drink water,[4] nor turn again by the same way that thou camest.[5]

10 So he went another way, and returned not by the way that he came to Beth-el.

11 ¶ Now there dwelt [q]an old prophet in Beth-el; and his sons came and told him all the works that the man of God had done that day in Beth-el: the words which he had spoken unto the king, them they told also to their father.

12 And their father said unto them, What way went he? For his sons had seen what way the man of God went which came from Judah.

13 And he said unto his sons, [r]Saddle me the ass. So they saddled him the ass: and he rode thereon;

14 And went after the man of God, and found him [s]sitting under an oak: and he said unto him, [t]*Art* thou the man of God that camest from Judah? And he said, I *am*.

15 Then he said unto him, [u]Come home with me, and eat bread.

16 And he said, [x]I may not return with thee, nor go in with thee; neither will I eat bread nor drink water with thee in this place:

17 For it was said to me by the word of the LORD, Thou shalt eat no bread nor drink water there, nor turn again to go by the way that thou camest.

18 He said unto him, I *am* a prophet[6] also as thou *art;* and an [y]angel spake unto me by the word of the LORD, saying, Bring him back with thee into thine house, that he may eat bread and drink water. *But* he lied unto [z]him.

19 So he [z]went back with him, and did eat bread in his house, and drank water.

A.M. 3029. B.C. 975.

[r] 2 Ki.17.32.2 Ch.11. 15;13.9.Eze.44.7,8. ch. 13,33, with Nu.3.6,10.

7 And he made an house of high-places; and he made priests of all the people who were not of the sons of Levi.' The words 'lowest of the people' does not express the sense of the original. The meaning is, he made priests of the people indiscriminately, without any regard to hereditary qualification.—*P.*

[s] With Le. 23. 32. Nu.29.12–38.ch.8.2.

[t] Ge.12.8;13.3;28.19; 31.13;35.1. Jos.7.2; 8.9. Ju. 20.23. Am.4.4.

8 Or, *to sacrifice.*

9 Or, *went up to the altar,* &c.

[u] Nu.15.39. Mat.15. 9.Ps.106.39.

[x] ver.32; ch. 13. 1. 2 Ch.26.16.1 Sa.13.9,12.

1 Heb. *to burn incense.*

CHAP. XIII.

B.C. 974.

[a] 2 Ki.23. 17. ch. 12. 22.

[b] ch.14,7, 8. 2 Ch. 9. 29.Eze.2.7;3.17. Je.23. 28.Mat.28.20.

[c] Or, *to offer,* ch.12. 33.2 Ch. 26. 18.—[Like gods, like priest. Let there be a departure from the true worship of Jehovah, and other innovations will easily follow. The priests and Levites were faithful, and would not be partakers in Jeroboam's sin, so that while he was glad to make men priests out of any tribe, he dared to assume the functions of the high-priest.—*J.*]

[d] Is. 58.1; 1.2. Je. 22. 29. Ho.8.1. De.32.1.

[e] 2 Ki. 22.1,2; 23. 14–17. Is.44.28.

1 This prophecy, according to Hales, was fulfilled 366 years afterwards, and for distinctness nobly puts to shame all the obscure and equivocal oracles of paganism, while the boldness and faithfulness of the prophet may well read an impressive and admonitory lesson to all who are surrounded with idolatry, even under the Christian name, and who are bound by their sacred office to exhort and rebuke with 'all long-suffering and doctrine.' *C.*

—Here is one of the clearest and most remarkable prophecies in the Bible, and we know it was fulfilled about 360 years after its delivery, 2 Ki. 23. 15–20. It was attested by both nations. The Jews would guard it most carefully; and it was the interest of the Israelites, against whom it was levelled, to impugn its authenticity and expose its falsehood had that been possible.—*J.*

[f] Je.28.16. Is.7.13,14; 38.7,8. Ex.iv.viii. Ju.6. 21,36–40;7.13,14. 1 Sa. 10.2–11.

[g] Am. 7. 10, 11. Ac. 12.1. Je.20.2;38.4–6.

[h] Ac.13. 8–11. 2 Co. 10.6. Je 21 2–4; 36. 29, 30;38.17. Am. 7. 10 17. De.18.22. Mar.16.20.

[i] Ex.8.8,9,28; 10. 17; 32.11,12. Nu.21. 7. Ac. 8.24.2 Ch.33.12. Jonah 1.6.

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[k] Mat.5.44. Ro. 12. 20. Ja.5.16. Ho.6.1. Ex. 8.12,13.

[l] Ge.18.5. Ju.13.15.

[m] 1 Co.2.14.ch.14.3. 2 Ki. 5. 15. 1 Sa.9.7,8. 2 Co.12.14.

2 For the restoration of his hand from the paralysis: but freely he had received the gift and right of prayer, and freely he gave, and would receive no return that might identify him with idolatry.—*C.*

[n] Nu. 22. 18; 24. 13. Es.5.3. Mar.6.23.

3 An eastern symbol of friendship and alliance, which, therefore, the prophet is instructed to refuse. Had it been mere hospitality, the prophet would not have declined, any more than Paul did the kindness of the barbarous people of Melita, Ac.28.2.—*C.*

[o] De. 12. 32. Job 23. 12. Jn.4.34.

[p] 2 Jn.10. Ro.16.17. 1 Co. 5.11.

4 This would have been a symbol and seal of mutual friendship and peace, and it sufficiently explains why he was forbidden to refresh himself in this evil place.—*J.*

5 To extend his witness against idolatry as far as the time of his mission would permit, his appearance in every new locality being calculated to excite inquiry as to who he was, what he had done, and the God who had sent him.—*C.*

[q] ver.20,21. 2 Ki.23. 18. Nu.23. 5. ch. 18. 25. Je.2.8. Eze.13.2. Mat. 7.22,23.2 Pe.2.1.

[r] Nu.22.21. Ju.5.10; 1.14; 10.4. 1 Sa.25.20. 2 Sa.19.26. ver.27.

[s] Jn.4.6. ch.19.4.

[t] Heb. *a word* was, ch.20.35.1 Th.5.15,20.

[u] ver.7. Ps.12. 2; 55. 21. Mi.7.5. Pr.1.10.

[x] ver.8,9.

6 Most probably he was so, even as Balaam was, and as reluctantly as Balaam, compelled to bear witness for God. Wicked men are still occasionally so compelled, if not to foretel future events, yet to confess and announce truth, however contrary to their habitual feelings, wishes, and interests.—*C.*

[y] Nu.22.35. Je. 5.12. Mat.7.15.1 Jn.4.1.

7 It is not, perhaps, possible to say what motive moved the aged prophet to lie so deliberately, when he knew that he could only inflict evil on his brother by bringing him back. Probably he proceeded to weaken the solemn warning of the man of God, and prevent the people from becoming alienated from Jeroboam. But certain it is, that the calamitous death by the lion was peculiarly fitted to awaken inquiry concerning the message from heaven, and this might prove an unspeakable blessing to many Israelites, by leading them to repent of their idolatry.—*Davidson.*

[z] 2 Pe.1.19 Ga.2.18. ver.9.

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without cause. But it is common at courts to study the pleasure of the king more than the profit of the kingdom. And God fulfils his purposes, promises, and threatenings by the follies as well as by the crimes of mankind. When people once become unreasonable, they will not stick to contemn and calumniate the best of kings and the best of governments. And they who by oppression drive men into rebellion must blame themselves for the mischiefs which they incur. Princes, once infatuated in their counsels, readily add one blunder to another, running to the various extremes of haughtiness, silly compliance, and open violence. We often see the miseries which our follies occasion when it is too late to remedy them. Hasty words often produce endless mischiefs. But love to our brethren should make us put up with many injuries, rather than seek to redress them in a manner which may be ruinous to both: and when God's will contradicts our designs, we must submit without delay. If we fight against him, there can be no hope of success. Wicked princes soon forget the express conditions on which God granted them their power. And with infinite infamy, guilt, and danger to themselves and their subjects, they model the worship of God after patterns of human invention which they have seen, or as they hope will best answer their carnal purposes; or which, by contrariety to what God has appointed, most gratifies their enmity against him. But to secure our safety by sin is only to hasten our ruin. Great men's examples are grievously infectious: and most subjects are ready to comply with any form of religion which their rulers please to appoint.

CHAPTER XIII. REFLECTIONS.—God warns men before he strikes. And his prophets must, without fear of the greatest or the worst, faithfully declare his messages. Nothing, however contingent or distant in futurity, is unknown to God: he has definite complete knowledge with respect to even the smallest circumstances of our lot. Shame and disgrace attend sin and sinners at last. Most daring is their presumption who persecute the faithful messengers of God: but faithful rebukes will often provoke proud wrath. Faithful preachers are the butt of wicked men's malice; but God will protect them. In the way of duty we need

20 ¶ And it came to pass, as they sat at the table, that the word of the LORD came unto the[a] prophet that brought him back:[8]

21 And he cried unto the man of God that came from Judah, saying, Thus saith the LORD, Forasmuch[b] as thou hast disobeyed the mouth of the LORD, and hast not kept the commandment which the LORD thy God commanded thee,

22 But camest back, and hast eaten bread and drunk water in the place of the which *the LORD* did say to thee, Eat no bread, and drink no water; [c]thy carcass shall not come unto the sepulchre of thy fathers.

23 ¶ And it came to pass, after he had eaten bread, and after he had drunk, that he saddled for him the ass, *to wit*, for the prophet whom he had brought back.

24 And when he was gone, [d]a lion[9] met him by the way, and slew him; and his carcass *was* cast in the way, and the ass stood by it, the lion also stood by the carcass.

25 And, behold, men passed by, and saw the carcass cast in the way, and the lion standing by the carcass: and they came and told *it* in the city where the old prophet dwelt.

26 ¶ And when the prophet that brought him back from the way heard *thereof*, he said, It *is* the man of God, who was disobedient unto the word of the LORD; therefore the LORD hath delivered him unto the lion, which hath [e]torn him, and slain him, according to the word of the LORD, which he spake unto him.

27 And he spake to his sons, saying, Saddle me the ass. And they saddled *him*.

28 And he went, and found his carcass cast in the way, and the ass and the lion standing by the carcass: the lion [f]had not eaten the carcass, nor torn the ass.[1]

29 And the prophet took up the carcass of the man of God, and laid it upon the ass, and brought it back; and the old prophet came to the city, to mourn and to bury him.

30 And he laid his carcass in his own grave; and they [g]mourned over him, *saying*, Alas, my brother![2]

31 And it came to pass, after he had buried him, that he spake to his sons, saying, When I am dead, then [h]bury me in the sepulchre where-

A.M. 3030. B.C. 974.

a Nu.23.5. Jn.11.51. Mat.7.22,23.ver.11.

8 In ver.23 the same words are translated 'whom he had brought back,' and it is obvious they should likewise be so translated here, as the translation obviates the objection urged from the word of the Lord seeming to be addressed, not to the true, but to the lying prophet. This view is farther confirmed by the false prophet's declaration, ver. 26.—*C.*

b ver.9,17. Ga.1.8,9. Ge.2.17;3.6–19.

c ch.14. 13. 2 Ch. 21. 20. Is.14. 19, 20. Je. 22. 19.

d ch.20.36. Ec.9.2. 2 Sa.6.7, 2 Ki.2.24, 1 Co. 11. 30. Le.10.2,3. 1 Pe. 4.17,18.

9 In 2 Ki. 2. 24 we find that there was a wood near Bethel, out of which came two she-bears; and it is probable that this lion came from the same wood. All the circumstances of this transaction, 'the cluster of miracles' (as Patrick calls them), viz. that the lion did not devour the body, nor rend the ass, nor molest the passing travellers, nor the old prophet and his ass —all was calculated in the most striking manner to direct the attention of the people to that divine power which thus authenticated its own message by the very destruction of the messenger; and all counteracted the inference which Jeroboam might otherwise have drawn from his death against the truth of his prophecy.—*I.*

e Heb. *broken*, Le. 26.15.2 Sa.6.7.2 Ch.12. 2; 15.2; 24.20. Ps. 9. 11; 71.9,11.1 Co.11.30.

f Le.10.2,3. Da.6.22. Job 38.11.ver.24.

1 The forbearance of the lion, and what may justly be considered either the courage or affection of the ass, made the animals themselves witnesses against the idolatry that had changed the glory of God into the likeness of four-footed beasts. —*C.*

g ch.14.13. Je.22.18.

2 An anxious curiosity, with the vanity of entertaining a distinguished guest, joined to an unscrupulous carelessness about truth, with a portion of that *esprit de corps*, that if not affection, may be its substitute, seems to have been the leading motives in the mind of the prophet, in tempting the brother whom he now uselessly laments.—*Note*, In all the lamentation there is no recorded acknowledgment of his own sin. Does not the dead here, as in many cases, seem to say, 'Weep not for me, but weep for yourselves?'—*C.*

h 2 Ki.23.17,18. Nu. 23.10. Ps.26.9.

A.M. 3030. B.C. 974.

i Le.26.30.ch.12.31. Ho.12.11.

k ch. 16. 24. Jn. 4. 5. Ac.8.1,14.

l Je.3.8. Am. 4.6–11. ch.12. 31–33, with Nu. 3.10,1. 30–33;xvii.

3 Jeroboam stands one of a large class, who call for prayer and promise amendment during sickness: but who, when recovered, forget their terrors and their promises, and return not to God from their evil ways. —*C.*

m Ex. 28. 41. Le. 7. 37; viii. ix. Ju. 17.12. 2 Ch.11.14,15.

n ch.12.30; 15.29,30. 2 Ki.1 1.31; 17. 21, with ch. 12. 26–33; 14. 7–14; 15.29,30.

CHAP. XIV.

B.C. 956.

a ch.13.33,34.

b ch.13.3;ver.12,13.

c 1 Sa.28.8, ch.22.30. 2 Ch.18.29.

1 Jeroboam had openly renounced the Mosaic institutions, by violating the first principles of the decalogue, and yet, in his time of need, he has recourse to a prophet of the Lord. This inconsistency is to be accounted for in three ways. (1) The idea of local gods, common to all idolaters. (2) The admission of superiority in one over another, in oracular responses. (3) The readiness of wicked men to acknowledge the true God in times of trouble, whom they had forgotten in their day of prosperity.—*C.*

d Jos.18.1. Ps.78.60, 67. Je.7.12,14;26.6.

e ch.11.29–38.

f 1 Sa.9.7,8. 2 Ki.5.5, 15,ch.13.7.

2 Heb. *in thine hand*. It was customary to carry a present to a prophet when he was inquired of, 1 Sa.9.7. Patrick thinks this was designedly a *poor* present, to conceal the feigned character she had assumed; yet D'Arvieux mentions that when he waited on an Arab emir, his mother and sister sent him a present of 'pastry, honey, and fresh butter, with a bason of sweetmeats of Damascus,' a present not unlike that of Jeroboam's wife to the prophet. And presents of provisions are still made in the East, by persons in good circumstances to others whom they respect. We need not therefore suppose that the queen thought the affectation of a very low condition necessary for her purpose. —*I.*

3 Or, *cakes*.

4 Or, *bottle*.

g 2 Ki.8. 9; 1.6. 2 Sa. 12. 14. Am.3. 7. Ps. 25. 14.

h Heb. *stood for his hoariness*, Ge.27. 1. Ex. 1 : 3.

i Pr. 21.30. Am. 3.7. Ps.25.14.

k Ps.33.10. Job 5.13.

l Heb. *hard*, Je. 23.28. Is.3.11. Eze.2.7, ver.1 ,11.

m ch.11.31,37;12.24; 16.2. 2 Sa.12.7,8. Ps.75. 6,7.

in the man of God *is* buried; lay my bones beside his bones:

32 For the saying which he cried by the word of the LORD against the altar in Beth-el, and against all the [i]houses of the high places which *are* in the cities of [k]Samaria, shall surely come to pass.

33 ¶ After this thing Jeroboam [l]returned not from his evil way,[3] but made again of the lowest of the people priests of the high places: whosoever would, he [m]consecrated him, and he became *one* of the priests of the high places.

34 And this thing [n]became sin unto the house of Jeroboam, even to cut *it* off, and to destroy *it* from off the face of the earth.

CHAPTER XIV

1 Abijah being sick, Jeroboam sendeth his wife disguised with presents to the prophet Ahijah at Shiloh. 5 Ahijah, forewarned by God, denounceth God's judgments. 17 Abijah dieth, and is buried. 19 Nadab succeedeth Jeroboam. 21 Rehoboam's wicked reign. 25 Shishak spoileth Jerusalem. 29 Abijam succeedeth Rehoboam.

AT that[a] time Abijah the son of Jeroboam fell[b] sick.

2 And Jeroboam said to his wife, Arise, I pray thee, and [c]disguise thyself, that thou be not known to be the wife of Jeroboam,[1] and get thee to [d]Shiloh: behold, there *is* Ahijah the prophet, which told me that *[e]I should be* king over this people.

3 And [f]take with thee[2] ten loaves, and cracknels,[3] and a cruse[4] of honey, and go to him: he [g]shall tell thee what shall become of the child.

4 And Jeroboam's wife did so, and arose, and went to Shiloh, and came to the house of Ahijah: but Ahijah could not see; for his eyes [h]were set by reason of his age.

5 ¶ And the [i]LORD said unto Ahijah, Behold, the wife of Jeroboam cometh to ask a thing of thee for her son; for he *is* sick: thus and thus shalt thou say unto her: for it shall be, when she cometh in, that she shall feign herself *to be* another *woman*.

6 And it was *so*, when Ahijah heard the sound of her feet, as she came in at the door, that he said, Come in, [k]thou wife of Jeroboam; why feignest thou thyself *to be* another? for I *am* sent to thee *with* [l]heavy *tidings*.

7 Go, tell Jeroboam, Thus saith the LORD God of Israel, [m]Forasmuch as I exalted thee

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fear no danger. But it is infinitely dangerous to contemn God's warnings, when he can so easily make us monuments of his justice. They who in prosperity contemn the messengers of God, may soon be obliged by their troubles to have recourse to their prayers. Nor must saints ever be averse to pray even for them who despitefully use them.—Impenitent sinners are in general more affected with their sufferings than with their sins: neither mercies nor judgments will make any lasting impression upon reprobates. And men are often more ready to thank the instruments of their deliverance than to thank God, the author of them. God and his faithful servants detest false worship, and everything which contributes to the support of it: and we should rather deny ourselves the common comforts of life than have fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness. How dangerous enemies to God's people are false prophets and unfaithful ministers, who pretend intercourse with God! Men may be seduced to evil by appearances of piety, when no fears of suffering can drive them to it. And none are more ready to upbraid and torment us than those who have seduced us. God severely punishes the disobedience of his dearest saints; and yet how marvellously he bounds their trouble! How great his divine power in permitting the tempter to escape while the seduced is so awfully punished! How necessary is constant readiness for death! But hypocrites in vain claim kindred to and connection with the people of God, and wish their last end to be like theirs.—God will never want witnesses for his cause. If the man of God be dead, the false prophet must attest his warnings. And how desperate those sinners who, after repeated warnings, corrections, and mercies, continue impenitent! For, sooner or later, the judgment of God will overtake the sinner, and he shall perish in his own deceivings.

CHAPTER XIV. [Ver. 14. The concluding part of this verse is very obscure. The Hebrew words may be literally translated as follows:—'. . . who shall cut off the house of Jeroboam.—This is the day. And what, even now!' The meaning seems to be that Ahijah, after predicting the fall of Jeroboam's house, was enabled by prophetic vision to see its near approach,

from among the people, and made thee prince over my people Israel,

8 And [n]rent the kingdom away from the house of David, and gave it thee; and *yet* thou hast not been as my servant David, [o]who kept my commandments, and who followed me with all his heart, to do *that* only *which was* right in mine eyes;[4]

9 But [p]hast done evil above all that were before thee: for thou hast gone and made thee other gods, and molten images, to provoke me to anger, and [q]hast cast me behind thy back:

10 Therefore, behold, [r]I will bring evil upon the house of Jeroboam, and will cut off from Jeroboam [s]him that pisseth against the wall,[5] *and* him that is shut up and left in Israel,[6] and will take away the remnant of the house of Jeroboam, as a man taketh away [t]dung, till it be all gone.

11 Him[u] that dieth of Jeroboam in the city shall the dogs eat; and him that dieth in the field shall the fowls of the air eat: for the LORD hath spoken *it*.

12 Arise thou therefore, get thee to thine own house; *and* [v]when thy feet enter into the city, the child shall die.

13 And all Israel [y]shall mourn for him, and bury him; for he only of Jeroboam shall come to the grave, because in him there is found *some*[x] good thing toward the LORD God of Israel in the house of Jeroboam.[7]

14 Moreover, [a]the LORD shall raise him up a king over Israel, who shall cut off the house of Jeroboam that day: but what? [b]even now.

15 For the LORD [c]shall smite Israel, as a reed is shaken in the water,[8] and he shall root up Israel out of this good land, which he gave to their fathers, and shall scatter them beyond the river,[9] because they have made their groves, provoking the LORD to anger.

16 And [d]he shall give Israel up, because of the sins of Jeroboam, [e]who did sin, and who made Israel to sin.

17 ¶ And Jeroboam's wife arose, and departed, and came to [f]Tirzah: *and* [g]when she came to the threshold of the door, the child died;

18 And they buried him: and all Israel mourned for him, according to the word of the LORD, which he spake by the hand of his servant[1] Ahijah the prophet.

19 ¶ And [h]the rest of the acts of Jeroboam, how he warred, and how he reigned, behold, they *are* written in the book of the Chronicles of the kings of Israel.[2]

20 And the days which Jeroboam reigned *were* two and twenty years: and he slept with his fathers;[3] and Nadab his son reigned in his stead.

21 ¶ And Rehoboam the son of Solomon reigned[4] in Judah. Rehoboam[i] *was* forty and one years old when he began to reign; and he reigned seventeen years in Jerusalem, the city [k]which the LORD did choose out of all the tribes of Israel, to put his name there: and his mother's name *was* Naamah an [l]Ammonitess.[5]

22 And Judah [m]did evil in the sight of the LORD,[6] and they provoked him [n]to [7]jealousy with their sins which they had committed, [o]above all that their fathers had done.

23 For they also [p]built them high places, and images,[8] and groves, on every high hill, and under every green tree.

24 And there were also [q]sodomites in the land: *and* they did according to all the abominations of the nations which the LORD cast out before the children of Israel.[9]

25 ¶ And it came to pass, in the fifth year of king Rehoboam, *that* [r]Shishak king of [l]Egypt came up against Jerusalem:

26 And he took away the [s]treasures of the house of the LORD, and the treasures of the king's house; he even took away all: and he took away all [t]the shields of gold which Solomon had made.

27 And king Rehoboam [u]made in their stead brazen shields, and committed *them* unto the hands of the chief of [z]the guard, which kept the door of the king's house.

28 And it was *so*, when the king went into the house of the LORD, that the guard bare them, and brought them back into the guard-chamber.

29 ¶ Now [v]the rest of the acts of Rehoboam, and all that he did, *are* they not written in the book of the Chronicles of the kings of Judah?

30 And there [z]was war between Rehoboam and Jeroboam all *their* days.

A.M. 3048. B.C. 956.

n ch.11.11–13,31–38; 12.1–20.

o ch.2.4;15.5. Ac.13.22,36.

4 David sinned, and his sins are recorded and condemned; how then can he be characterized as in the text? In two ways he is entitled to this description. 1. He followed God with all his heart in opposition to idolatry, which he never countenanced. 2. In zealously reforming the church of God, according to the divine model, in doctrine and worship. 3. In faith unswerving in the divine promises, and in deep repentance wherever he had sinned. Here, by grace truly he denied himself, took up his cross, and followed Christ, even God in Christ, reconciling him to himself, and not imputing his trespasses.—*C.*

p ch.12.27–33; 13.33, 34, with ch. 11. 9, 33. De.32.21.

q Eze. 23. 35. Ne. 9. 26. Ps. 50. 17.

r ch.15.29; 16.3, 4; 21. 21. Am. 3. 6.

s Or, every male, 2 Ki.9.8; 14.26. 1 Sa.25. 22. ch.16.11. De.32.36.

6 Even to a dog, 1 Sa.25.22.—*C.*

6 'Shut up and secure in Israel,' viz. in the walled towns that Jeroboam had fortified, ch.12.25.—*C.*

t 2 Ki.21.13. Is.14.23. Eze.26.4. ch.15.29. Ps. 83.10.

u ch.16.4; 21.24. Is. 66.24. Je.15.3; 16.4. Ec. 6.3, 4. Re.19.17.

v ver.17.

y Je.22.18. Nu.20.29. De.34.8.

x 2 Ch.19.3. Phile.6. 2 Pe.2.8, 9. Ge.42.18.

7 By what practical means this 'remnant according to the election of grace' was converted to the true God, we are not informed; until it is refreshing and delightful to see him as 'a brand plucked out of the burning;' and though cut off by a premature death, he was taken home from the evil to come, and doubtless had a 'desire to depart and be with Christ,' whose day, in common with all believers, he saw and longed for.—*C.*

a ch.15.27–30.

b Eze. 12. 25. Ec. 8. 11, *i.e.* speedily.

c 1 Sa.12.22,25. 2 Ki. 17.6; 15.29. Ps.52.5. De. 8.7, 8; 28.16–68. Le.26. 15–39. Am.5.27.

8 The water-reed, like the aspen leaf, is shaken by the slightest breeze, and bent by every ripple.—*C.*

9 In Assyria, Media, Chaldea, &c.

d Is.42.24. Ho.9.12.

e ch.12.28–33; 13.33, 34; 15.6, 34; 16.2, 26. 2 Ki.3.3; 10.29, 31; 13.2, 11; 14.24; 15.9, 18, 24, 27. Ho.5.11. Mat.18.7. Ro. 1.32.

f Jos.12.24. ch.16.6, 8, 15, 25 Ca.6.4.

g 1 Sa.2.30–34. ver. 12, 13.

A.M. 3048. B.C. 956.

1 'Spake by his servant' (Boothroyd); or, if translated as in the text—'spake by the hand of his servant' held up to heaven in the attitude of appeal, warning, and threatening.—*C.*

h 2 Ch. 13. 2–20. ch. 15.31; 16.5, 14, 20, 2; 11. 41.

2 No good reason appears for supposing with most expositors that these Chronicles are not the books of that name, but certain annals from which the two books of Chronicles were afterwards compiled. The parts referred to seem to be 2 Ch. 10. 3; 11. 14; 12. 15; 13. 1–20, which parts, instead of being composed long *after* this book of Kings, it is more natural to suppose were written *before* it, just as we now find it, and subsequently incorporated with the other narratives.—*C.*

3 B.C. 954.

4 B.C. 975.

i 2 Ch. 12. 13, and yet very foolish, Ec. 4.13.

k ch. 11. 36; 8.16, 44. Ps. 78.68, 69; 132.13, 14; 87.1, 2; 48.1, 2. 2 Ch.6.6.

l ch.11.1, 2; yer. 31.

5 A note of genealogy that may go far to account for Rehoboam's apostasy and anti-national feelings.—*C.*

m 2 Ch.12.17. Ju.3.7, 12; 4.1.

6 B.C. 972.

n ver.9. De.4.24; 29. 28; 32.16–21. Pr.6 34,35. Is.65.2–6.

7 Jealousy in God is that dissatisfaction wherewith he sees that love and glory given to an idol which is due to him alone.—*C.*

o Eze.16.47, 48. Ex. 32.1–6. Nu.xiv.xvi.xxi. xxv. Ju.i.iii.iv.vi.x.

p De.12.2. ch.3.2. 2 Ch. 28. 4. 2 Ki.17.9, 10. Je.2.20; 11.13. Ho.4.12, 13; 8.11; 12.11. Is.57.5. Ro.1.21–24.

8 Or *standing images*, or *statues*.

q ch.15.12; 22.46. Ge. 19.5. Ju.19.22. Ro.1.24, 26, 27. De.23.17, 18. 2 Ki.23.7. Le.18.24.

9 Idolatry led to immorality. The reason was that the rites by which the deities of the Ammonites, Moabites, and Phœnicians were worshipped, were in many cases most obscene. The high-places became scenes of revelry and the grossest licentiousness.—*P.*

r 2 Ch. 12. 2. ch. 11. 40.

1 See note on ch. 11. 40. Besides what is there stated, it is worthy of remark that amongst the sculptures is one representing thirty conquered nations at the feet of the conqueror, and one of these inscribed 'Jouda-ha-Melek,' 'the king of Judah or the Jews.'—*C.*

s ch.7.51; 15.18. Ps. 127.1, 2.

t ch.10.16, 2 Ch.9.15; 12.9. Pr.23.5. Ec.2.18.

u 2 Ch.12.10, 11.

x Heb. *runners*, 1 Sa.22.17.

y 2 Ch.12.15. ver.19; ch.11 41; 15.23; 22.45.

z ch.15.6, 16, 32, with ch.12.24.

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and then he broke out into the abrupt exclamation—'This is the day:' *i.e.* the time is at hand when it shall happen. 'And what even now' is about to occur? The son and heir of Jeroboam is just expiring. His only hope of succession is gone. *P.*]

Ver. 17. [*Tirzah* was an ancient city of Ephraim, in the mountains, beautifully situated, about 4 miles north of Shechem. Its site is now occupied by the large village of *Telluzah*. *P.*]

Ver. 26. [A fuller account of Shishak's invasion is given in 2 Ch. 12. 2–9. He has been identified as the first of the Diospolitan dynasty. His name occurs on Egyptian tablets in the form *Sheshouk*. He appears to have been an Ethiopian, and to have dethroned Pharaoh, Solomon's father-in-law. In Karnac there is a bas-relief representing him bearing to the feet of his gods the chiefs of vanquished nations; and among them is one with a Jewish physiognomy, and having the inscription *Yuda Melki*, 'kingdom of Judah.' *P.*]

REFLECTIONS.—When God visits our family with his rod, we ought to search out the sinful cause. And as sickness and death are equally the lot of young and old, we should always expect and prepare for it. It is common for sinners to be more anxious about the removal of their troubles than of their sins; and under trouble to apply for the assistance of God's ministers, whom they heartily hate. But it is absolute folly for those who do evil to expect from God's faithful ministers an answer of peace. It is daring to attempt imposing upon them, however aged and blind. But as no covering can hide the hypocrite from the eye of God, no presents, nor compliments, nor flattery must ever divert a minister from a bold and free declaration of the mind of God. Fearfully confounded will such imposers appear when he discovers them, especially at his awful bar. And ingratitude for singular favours, and seduction of others to sin, entail upon the transgressors the most terrible ruin. God tenderly bestows his grace upon all, even the worst of families. He takes of such the greatest care, and often removes them from the evil to come by an honourable death. How amiable is early religion! and happy is it to be early ripe for, and transported to, the joy of the Lord! At the same time it is a fearful prelude of destruction to families or nations when the godly

31 And [a]Rehoboam slept with his fathers, and was buried with his fathers in the city of David;[2] and his mother's name *was* Naamah an Ammonitess:[3] and Abijam his son reigned in his stead.

CHAPTER XV.

1 Abijam's wicked reign. 7 Asa succeedeth him. 9 Asa's good reign. 16 The war between Baasha and Asa causeth him to make a league with Benhadad. 23 Jehoshaphat succeedeth Asa. 25 Nadab's wicked reign. 27 Baasha conspiring against him executeth Ahijah's prophecy. 31 Nadab's acts and death. 33 Baasha's wicked reign.

NOW, in the eighteenth year of king Jeroboam the son of Nebat reigned [a]Abijam over Judah.

2 Three[b] years reigned he in Jerusalem: and his mother's name *was* Maachah, the daughter of Abishalom.[1]

3 And he [c]walked in all the sins of his father, which he had done before him: and his heart was [d]not perfect with the LORD his God, as the heart of David his father.

4 Nevertheless, [e]for David's sake, did the LORD his God give him a lamp[2] in Jerusalem, to set up his son after him, and to establish Jerusalem;

5 Because David [f]did *that which was* right in the eyes of the LORD, and turned not aside from any *thing* that he commanded him all the days of his life, [g]save only in the matter of Uriah the Hittite.[3]

6 And there was war between [h]Rehoboam[4] and Jeroboam all the days of his life.

7 ¶ Now [i]the rest of the acts of Abijam, and all that he did, *are* they not written in the book of the Chronicles of the kings of Judah? And there was war between Abijam and Jeroboam.

8 And [k]Abijam slept with his fathers; and they buried him in the city of David: and Asa his son reigned in his stead.

9 ¶ And in the twentieth year of Jeroboam king of Israel reigned Asa over Judah.

10 And forty and one years reigned he in Jerusalem: and his [l]mother's name *was* Maachah, the daughter of Abishalom.

11 And Asa did *that which was* [m]right in the eyes of the LORD, as *did* David his father.

12 And he took away the [n]sodomites out of the land,[5] and [o]removed all the idols that [p]his fathers had made.

13 And also [q]Maachah his mother, even her he removed from *being* queen, because she had made an idol in a grove: and Asa [r]destroyed her idol, and burnt *it* by the brook Kidron.

14 But the [s]high places were not removed:[6] nevertheless Asa's heart was [t]perfect with the LORD all his days.

15 And he [u]brought[7] in the things[8] which his father had dedicated, and the things which himself had dedicated, into the house of the LORD, silver, and gold, and vessels.[9]

16 ¶ And[x] there was war between Asa and Baasha king of Israel all their days.

17 And [y]Baasha king of Israel went up against Judah, and built [z]Ramah,[1] that he might not suffer any to go out or come in to Asa king of Judah.

18 Then [a]Asa took all the silver and the gold *that were* left in the treasures of the house of the LORD, and the treasures of the king's house, and delivered them into the hand of his servants: and king Asa sent[2] them to [b]Ben-hadad, the son of Tabrimon, the son of Hezion, king of Syria, that dwelt at Damascus, saying,

19 *There is* a [c]league between me and thee, *and* between my father and thy father: behold, I have sent unto thee a present of silver and gold;[3] come and break thy league with Baasha king of Israel, that he may depart from me.

20 So [d]Ben-hadad hearkened unto king Asa, and sent the captains of the hosts which he had against the cities of Israel, and smote [e]Ijon, and Dan, and Abel-beth-maachah, and all Cinneroth, with all the land of Naphtali.

21 And it came to pass, [f]when Baasha heard *thereof*, that he left off building of Ramah, and dwelt in [g]Tirzah.

22 Then [h]king Asa made a proclamation throughout all Judah, (none *was* exempted:) and they took away the stones of Ramah, and the timber thereof, wherewith Baasha had builded; and king Asa built with them [i]Geba[4] of Benjamin, and Mizpah.

23 ¶ The [k]rest of all the acts of Asa, and all his might, and all that he did, and the cities which he built, *are* they not written in the book of the Chronicles of the kings of Judah? Nevertheless [l]in the time of his old age he was diseased in his feet.[5]

24 And Asa slept with his fathers,[6] and was buried with his fathers in the city of David his father: and [m]Jehoshaphat his son reigned in his stead.

25 ¶ And Nadab the son of Jeroboam [7]began to reign over Israel in the second year of Asa king of Judah, and reigned over Israel two years.

26 And he [n]did evil in the sight of the

A.M. 3046. B.C. 958.

a 2 Ch.12.13,16. ch. 11. 43; 15. 8, 24; 22.50; ver.20.

2 B.C. 958.

3 This is not a mere repetition, but a repeated warning in the history of an idolatrous son and an idolatrous mother.—*C.*

CHAP. XV.

a Or, *Abijah*, 2 Ch. 13.1.1 Ch.3.10. Mat.1. 7.

b 2 Ch. 13. 2; 11. 20–22;15.16.ver.10,13.

1 This statement may be reconciled with that in 2 Ch. 13. 1, 2, by reference to a fact of very common occurrence, viz. the same person being called by different persons, or at different times of life, by different names, of which a striking instance occurs in the case of Abijam, ver. 1. Comp. 2 Ch. 13, 20, 21. Mat. 1, 7. Or, according to the analogy of ver. 3, Abishalom may have been grandfather, and Uriel father of Maachah.—*C.*

c 2 Ch. 12. 1, 2, 5,14. ch.14.22.

d ch.11. 4; 3. 14. Ps. 119.80. 2 Ti. 3. 5. 2 Ch. 25.2.

e ch. 11. 12, 32, 36. 2 Sa.7.12–16. Ps.132. 12, 17.

2 Or, *candle.*

f ch.11.6,33,34; 14.8. Ac.13.22,36. Ps.119. 6. Lu.1.6. Re.2. 10. 2 Ti. 4.7.

g 2 Sa.11.4;12.9. Ps. li.title.

3 'Turned not aside' deliberately from any known and commanded duty save in this case. 'Some sins in themselves, and by reason of several aggravations, are more heinous in the sight of God than others;' and this was David's only aggravated offence. In other sins he fell, in this he 'turned aside.'—*C.*

h Abijam, the son of Rehoboam.

4 Some translations and MSS. read *Abijam.* But instead of gratuitously pronouncing it the mistake of a transcriber, may we not as well conclude that Abijam was also called Rehoboam, but that the name was generally dropped for sake of distinction?—*C.*

i 2 Ch. 13. 2–22. ch. 14.29,30;11.41.

k 2 Ch.14. 1. ch. 14. 31;2.10;11.43.

l That is, *grandmother's*, ver. 2, 13. 2 Ch.12.16.

m 2 Ch.6.7; 16. 7,10, 12.ver.5.

n ch.14.24;22.46.Ro. 1.26,27.

5 Either by banishment or death, as the law of God directed, Le.28.13.—*C.*

o 2 Ch.xiv.xv.

p ver.3; ch.14.23;11. 7. Eze.20.18.

q 2 Ch.15.16. De.33. 9. Zec.13.3.ver.2,10.

r De.7.5. Ex.32. 20. 2 Ch.15.16.2 Ki.23.12.

s ch.22.43.2 Ki.12.3; 14.4;15.4,35,with 2 Ch. 14.3. Le.26.30. De.12. 13,14.

6 The reason of this neglect or shortcoming is not mentioned, perhaps from some superstitious veneration the good king retained for them, or his inability to attain such a complete reform without popular commotion. —*C.*

A.M. 3053. B.C. 951.

t ch.11.4.

u 1 Ch 26. 28. ch. 7. 51.2 Ch.13.15;14.13;15. 18.

7 B.C. 951.

8 Heb. *holy things.*

9 From the character of Abijam, we would scarcely expect him to dedicate anything to God. But irreligious men are often liberal to religious institutions, and the statement, ver. 3, that his 'heart was not perfect with the Lord as the heart of his father David,' intimates that, in the midst of his sins, he still had some yearnings after religion.—*C.*

x ch.14.30; ver.6,32, with 2 Ch. 14. 1, *i.e.* after.

y 2 Ch.16. 1; 11. 13–17.

z Jos. 18. 25. Je.31. 15.1 Sa.7.17.

1 B.C. 939.—[*Ramah*, as its name implies, stood on 'a hill' in the territory of Benjamin, five miles north of Jerusalem. It lay on the borders of the rival kingdoms of Judah. It was a strong position, and commanded the great road from the north to Jerusalem. The king of Judah was naturally alarmed at the erection of a fortress in such close proximity to his capital, so he stopped the work by bribing the Syrians to invade northern Palestine, and then carried off all the building materials. —*P.*]

a 2 Ch.16.2. 2 Ki.18. 15,16,with 1 Ki.7. 51. 2 Ch.15.18.

2 935.

b ch.20.34;xxii.2 Ki. 8.7.

c Ex.23.22. Ju.2.2. Is. 31.1.2 Ch.16.3.

3 Some nations have always been accustomed to hire their soldiers to any country and to fight in any cause for pay; and such seems to have been the acknowledged habit of the Damascenes—one of the most melancholy employments of an overflowing population.—*C.*

d 2 Ch.16.4. 2 Ki.15. 29.1 Ti.5.10.

e 2 Ki. 15. 29. Ju. 18. 27–31. ch. 12. 29. 2 Sa. 20.15. Jos. 11.2; 19. 32–39.

f 2 Ch.16.5.

g ch.14.17. Ca.6.4.

h 2 Ch.16.6.

i Jos.21.17; 18.23,26. 1 Sa.7.5,7,16. Je.40. 6, 8.

4 Geba lay about two miles east of Ramah, and Mizpeh four miles southwest.—*P.*

k 2 ch. xiv.–xvi. ch. 11.41–43;14.29–31; ver. 7,8.

l 2 Ch. 16. 12,13. Ec. 12.1,2. Ps.90.10. He.12. 6–10. Re.3.19.

5 The precise nature of the disease we cannot tell; but while it reminds us that kings are not exempt from the common lot of humanity, it reminds us by a high example to 'remember our Creator in the days of our youth, before the evil days come, and the years draw nigh, in which we shall say, we have no pleasure in them.'—*C.*

6 B.C. 914.

m 2 Ch. 16. 14; 17. 1. 1 Ch. 3. 10. Joel 3. 12. Mat.1.8.ch.22.41–43.

7 B.C. 954.

n ch.12.30–33;13.33; 14.16;16.2,9,26.

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die out from among them. Alas! that, notwithstanding warnings and judgments upon the wicked, their pattern should be so greedily followed! Even amidst weakness and distress men will become more and more wicked; while God, to punish former sins, gives them up to their hearts' lusts, till they have ripened themselves for his judgments. God's instruments are always ready at hand for chastising even his professed people: and sin quickly reduces the wealthiest to poverty and debasement. Jerusalem is now emptied of her gold and silver; yet not chiefly Shishak, but sin hath done it.

CHAPTER XV. [Ver. 2. *Abishalom* is a lengthened form of Absalom, and the person alluded to is most probably the well-known son of king David. His daughter Thamar appears to have married Uriel of Gibeah, and bare him Maachah, who was the mother of Abijam. This illustrious descent will account for the mention of the grandfather rather than the father. *P.*]

Ver. 20. [Ijon lay in a beautiful plain on the northern border of Naphtali, between the ranges of Lebanon and Anti-lebanon. Abel-beth-maachah was a few miles south of it. The invaders marched southward down the valley of the Upper Jordan as far as the Sea of

GOVERNMENT CAFE, DAMASCUS—THE CITY WHERE BEN-HADAD LIVED, TO WHOM ASA SENT THE GOLD AND SILVER THAT WERE IN THE HOUSE OF THE LORD. [I. KINGS, XV: 18.]—"Then Asa took all the silver and the gold that were left in the treasures of the house of the Lord, and the treasures of the king's house, and delivered them into the hands of his servants: and king Asa sent them to Ben-hadad, the son of Tabrimon, the son of Hezion, king of Syria, that dwelt in Damascus." Ben-hadad was the name which several of the princes of Damascus bore, as Pharaoh was the name of the kings of Egypt. Damascus is the oldest city in the world. Shakespeare refers to the story that the murder of Abel took place here in King Henry VI:

"*Winchester:*—'Nay, stand thou back, I will not budge a foot;
This be Damascus, be thou cursed king
To slay thy brother Abel, if thou wilt."

This city was founded before Balbek and Palmyra. It is in the midst of a desert, and the Abana river is its life. The government cafe is simply one of the many coffee gardens of the city.

LORD, and walked in the way of his father, and in his sin wherewith he made Israel to sin.

27 ¶ And Baasha the son of [o]Ahijah, of the house of Issachar, [p]conspired against him: and Baasha smote him at [q]Gibbethon,[8] which *belonged* to the Philistines; (for Nadab and all Israel laid siege to Gibbethon;)

28 Even in [r]the third year of Asa king of Judah did Baasha slay him,[9] and reigned in his stead.

29 And it came to pass, when he reigned, *that* [s]he smote all the house of Jeroboam;[1] he left not to Jeroboam any that breathed, until he had destroyed him, according unto the saying of the LORD, which he spake by his servant Ahijah the Shilonite:[2]

30 Because of the sins of Jeroboam which he sinned, and which he made Israel sin, by his provocation wherewith he provoked the LORD God of Israel to anger.

31 Now[t] the rest of the acts of Nadab, and all that he did, *are* they not written in the book of the Chronicles of the kings of Israel?[3]

32 ¶ And there [u]was war between Asa and Baasha king of Israel all their days.[4]

33 In the third year of Asa king of Judah began[5] Baasha the son of Ahijah to reign over all Israel in Tirzah, [x]twenty and four years.

34 And he [y]did evil in the sight of the LORD, and walked in the way of Jeroboam, and in his sin wherewith he made Israel to sin.

CHAPTER XVI.

1, 7 *Jehu's prophecy against the house of Baasha.* 5 *Elah succeedeth him.* 8 *Zimri conspiring against Elah succeedeth him.* 11 *Zimri executeth Jehu's prophecy.* 15 *Omri, made king by the soldiers, forceth Zimri desperately to burn himself.* 21 *The people being divided, Omri prevaileth against Tibni.* 23 *Omri buildeth Samaria.* 25 *His wicked reign.* 27 *Ahab succeedeth him.* 29 *Ahab's most wicked reign.* 34 *Joshua's curse fulfilled upon Hiel the builder of Jericho.*

THEN the word of the LORD came to [a]Jehu the son of Hanani[1] against Baasha, saying,

2 Forasmuch as I [b]exalted thee out of the dust, and made thee prince over my people Israel, and thou hast walked in the way of Jeroboam, and hast made my people Israel to sin, to provoke me to anger with their sins;

3 Behold, I will take away the posterity of Baasha, and the posterity of his house; and will make thy house like [c]the house of Jeroboam the son of Nebat.

4 Him[d] that dieth of Baasha in the city shall the dogs eat; and him that dieth of his in the fields shall the fowls of the air eat.

5 ¶ Now[e] the rest of the acts of Baasha, and what he did, and his might, *are* they not written in the book of the Chronicles of the kings of Israel?

6 So [f]Baasha slept with his fathers,[2] and was buried in Tirzah: [g]and Elah his son reigned in his stead.

7 And also by the [h]hand[3] of the prophet Jehu the son of Hanani came the word of the LORD against Baasha, and against his house, even for all the evil that he did in the sight of the LORD, in provoking him to anger with the [i]work of his hands, in being like the house of Jeroboam; and because he [k]killed[4] him.[5]

8 ¶ In the twenty and sixth year of Asa king of Judah began Elah the son of Baasha to reign over Israel in Tirzah, two years.

9 And his servant Zimri (captain of half *his* chariots) [l]conspired against him, as he was in Tirzah, [m]drinking himself drunk in the house of Arza, steward of *his* house in Tirzah.

10 And Zimri went in and smote him, and killed him, in the twenty and seventh year of Asa king of Judah, and [n]reigned in his stead.

11 ¶ And it came to pass, when he began to reign, as soon as he sat on his throne, *that* [o]he slew all the house of Baasha: he left him not one that [p]pisseth against a wall,[6] neither of his kinsfolks, nor of his friends.

12 Thus did Zimri destroy all the house of Baasha, [q]according to the word of the LORD, which he spake against Baasha by[7] Jehu the prophet,

13 For[r] all the sins of Baasha, and the sins of Elah his son, by which they sinned, and by which they made Israel to sin, in provoking the LORD God of Israel to anger with their [s]vanities.

14 Now[t] the rest of the acts of Elah, and all that he did, *are* they not written in the book of the Chronicles of the kings of Israel?

15 ¶ In the twenty and seventh year of Asa king of Judah did Zimri reign [u]seven days in Tirzah:[8] and the people *were* [x]encamped against Gibbethon, which *belonged* to the Philistines.

A.M. 3050. B.C. 954.

o Not ch.11.29; 14.2.
p ch. 16. 9. 2 Ki. 12. 20;15.10,25,30.
q Jos.19. 44; 21. 23. ch.16.15,17.

8 It belonged to the tribe of Dan, and was given by that tribe to the Levites, Jos. 19. 24; 21. 33. The latter seem to have been dispossessed of the towns they held in the ten tribes, which may have afforded the Philistines an opportunity of getting Gibbethon into their own hands.—*I.*

r ch.14.14. De.32.35. Job 20.5.

9 B.C. 953.

s ch.14.10,11, 14, 16; 12.26–33;13.33.

1 He doubtless left the dead bodies of Jeroboam's family unburied, as Ahijah had foretold, ch. 14. 9–14. Baasha soon showed that his motive in this massacre was his own malice and ambition, and that in gratifying his thirst for blood he might secure his usurped authority: for though he roots out the sinners, he cleaves to their sins. Thus ungodly men 'treasure up the rod of God's anger,' even when ripening themselves for his judgment *I.*

2 This tragic fulfilment of prophecy took place only about two years after the prophecy itself was uttered, thus confirming the interpretation given of ch. 14. 14.—*P.*

t ch. 14. 19; 16. 5, 14, 20,27;11.41.

3 Nadab was made king, or regent, during his father's life, and both father and son died in the same year, when it is said that the acts of Nadab are written in the 'book of the Chronicles of the kings of Israel,' it is plain that the present canonical book cannot be meant, for the name of Nadab is not even mentioned in it.—*P.*

u ver.6,16; ch.14.30, with 2 Ch. 14. 1; 15.19; 16.1.

4 Constant inroads and skirmishing between the border tribes —*C.*

5 B.C. 953.

x ch.16.8.

y ver.26; ch. 12. 26–33;13.33; 14.16; 16. 2, 7, 26.

CHAP. XVI.

B.C. 931.

a 2 Ch.19.2;20.34;16. 7.ver.7.

1 Of this prophet little is known, but that little illustrates his character for plainness of speech, intrepidity of spirit, and sternness of rebuke, even an honest and full delivery of the divine message, declaring the 'whole counsel of God,' and enabling him, in the integrity of his heart, to say, 'I am clear from the blood of all men.'—*C.*

b 1 Sa.2.8; 15. 17–19. Ps.113.8;50.21. 2 Sa. 12.7–11 ch.11.11; 14.7–9;21.20–24.

c ch.14.10, 11;15. 29, 30;21.21,22;ver.11,12.

A.M. 3073. B.C. 931.

d ch.14.11;21.24. Je. 15.3; 16.4;22.19. Is. 66. 24. Re.19.17. Eze.39.17–20. Ec.6. 3,4.

e ch.14.19; 15. 23, 31; 11.41.

f ch.14.20;15.8,24.

2 B.C. 930.

g ch. 14. 17; 15. 33; ver.8,9,13.

h Ministry, ch.8.53; ver.2–4.

3 Either by his hand lifted up in prophetic denunciation, or, more probably, by a written message under the prophet's hand.—*C.*

i Ps.115.4. Is.2.8;44. 9–20. De.32.21. ch.14.9, 22,23;9.6,7;11.10.

k ch.15.27–29. Ho.1. 4. Am.1.11.

4 It was suggested (see editorial note on ch.15. 6), that instead of solving the difficulty by the common refuge of the 'error of a transcriber,' it were easier and better to consider Abijam as being also called Rehoboam. Now, is not this suggestion confirmed here? For Baasha did not kill Jeroboam, but Nadab, who seems also to have been called Jeroboam, by the structure of the verse, is undoubtedly the person said to be killed. —*C.*

5 This ought to be translated as follows: 'And because he smote it;' *i.e. the house* of Jeroboam, as Ahijah had prophesied. It seems that Baasha exterminated the race of Jeroboam, not in obedience to divine command, but to gratify his own passion. The fact of Baasha having smitten *the house* of Jeroboam is expressly mentioned in ch.15.29.—*P.*

l ch. 15. 27. 2 Ki. 12. 20;15 10,25,30.

m 2 Sa.13.28,29. Da. 5.2,30. Lu.21.34.

n ver. 15. Job 20. 5. Ho.8.4;13.10,11.

o ver.1–4, 7. Ju. 1. 7. Mat.7.2. ch.15.29.

p 1 Sa. 25. 22. ch. 14. 10, *i.e.* males.

6 Not a dog.—*C.*

q ver.1–4,7.

7 Heb. *by the hand of.*

r Is.3.11; 10.6, 7. Ps. 18.26,27;9.15,16. ch.15. 29,30. Je.2.19. ver.2, 7. Pr.1.31;13.21;5.22.

s De 32.21. 2 Ki. 17. 15. Is.41.28,29. Jon.2.8. Je.10 3–16. 1 Co.8.4;10. 19,20.

t ch.14.19; 15. 31; 16. 5,20,27;22.39;11.41.

u Job 20.5. Ps.37.35, 36.2 Ki.9.31.

8 Zimri was no doubt executing the prophetic denouncements of the Lord, and thereby fulfilling his will, ver. 12; yet this did not excuse his wickedness, for he merely sought self, and not the honour of God. His triumphing is short; and seven days of successful conspiracy against his king, are succeeded by defeat and suicide.—*C.*

x ch. 15. 27. Jos. 19. 44.

Galilee, the region round which was called Cinneroth. Then they probably turned back across the mountains of Naphtali. *P.*]

REFLECTIONS.—How few great men, especially kings, have any real piety! And what a plague to their subjects is their want of it! Parents' ill example is very pernicious to their children: and it is a double reproach on those who degenerate from the piety of their ancestors. Sin often shortens men's days, and hastens them to an untimely end. But what a remarkable blessing to nations and families are God's true children! Even after their death God often pities, from regard to them, and to his promises made to them. It is a mercy when God shortens the reign of wicked rulers to make way for better, and who will begin reformation at themselves and their court. Many defects are in the best; much imperfection in their works of reformation; and great proneness to rely upon an arm of flesh in the time of trouble. But God generally imbitters to his people the success of their own sinful projects. How wretched are nations when one wicked prince still follows another! when successors murder their wicked sovereigns, but continue cleaving to their ruinous wickedness!

CHAPTER XVI. [Ver. 33. *Ahab made a grove.* When a *grove* is said to be *planted* or *cut down*, there is no difficulty in the interpretation; but when the word occurs as in 2 Ki. 21. 7; 23. 6, it must be understood of an *image*, such as was ordinarily worshipped by the heathen in a grove. *C.*——The special aggravated sin of Ahab was this, he set aside Jehovah altogether from being the national God of Israel. His predecessor Jeroboam had only set up an idol to represent Jehovah; whereas Ahab made Baal the national deity, and built a temple of Baal in the capital. *Baal* was the supreme male deity of the Canaanites. The name signifies 'lord,' but in the sense of *master* or *possessor*, rather than ruler. It has always the article in Hebrew when a proper name, so that there is no difficulty in understanding in what sense it is used in any given passage. Here it is unquestionably the proper name of the Phœnician god. The worship of this god, when established in Israel by Ahab, was appointed with great pomp and ceremony. His priests were very numerous, were dressed in pontifical robes, burned incense, offered sacrifices, which were sometimes human victims. The officiating priests danced with frantic gestures and shouts round the smoking sacrifices, and cut themselves with knives to excite the attention and compassion of the god. *P.*]

16 And the people *that were* encamped heard say, Zimri hath conspired, and hath also slain the king: wherefore all Israel made [v]Omri, the captain of the host, king over Israel that day in the camp.

17 And Omri went up from Gibbethon, and all Israel with him, and they [z]besieged Tirzah.

18 And it came to pass, when Zimri saw that the city was taken, that he went into the palace of the king's house, and [a]burnt the king's house over him with fire, and died,

19 For his sins which he sinned in doing evil[b] in the sight of the LORD, in walking in the way of Jeroboam, and in his sin which he did, to make Israel to sin.[9]

20 Now[c] the rest of the acts of Zimri, and his treason that he wrought, *are* they not written in the book of the Chronicles of the kings of Israel?

21 ¶ Then were the people of Israel [d]divided into two parts: half of the people followed Tibni the son of Ginath, to make him king, and half followed Omri.[1]

22 But the people that followed Omri prevailed against the people that followed Tibni the son of Ginath: so Tibni died, and Omri reigned.

23 ¶ In the thirty and first year of Asa king of Judah began Omri to reign over Israel[2] twelve[e] years: six years reigned he in Tirzah.

24 And he bought the hill Samaria of Shemer for two talents of silver,[3] and built on the hill, and called the name of the city which he built, after the name of Shemer, owner of the hill, [f]Samaria.[4]

25 ¶ But Omri wrought evil in the eyes of the LORD, and did [g]worse than all that *were* before him.

26 For he [h]walked in all the way of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, and in his sin wherewith he made Israel to sin, to provoke the LORD God of Israel to anger with their vanities.

27 ¶ Now [i]the rest of the acts of Omri which he did, and his might that he showed, *are* they not written in the book of the Chronicles of the kings of Israel?

28 So Omri slept with his fathers, and was buried in Samaria: and Ahab his son reigned in his stead.

A.M. 3075. B.C. 929.

y Mi.6.16.

z 2 Sa.20.15. Ju.9.45, 50. Lu.19.43.

a Ju.9.54. 1 Sa. 31.4, 5. 2 Sa.1.7.23. Mat.27.5.

b ch.15.30; ver.7,13. Ps.9.16. Is. 3. 11. Je. 2. 19. Ro.2.8,9. Pr.1.31;15. 22;13.21.

9 Uninspired historians almost invariably trace disasters, personal or national, to any origin but sin. And even when impropriety of conduct, such as cruelty, covetousness, or luxury, is admitted, it is seldom, if ever, condemned as sin against God. The Scriptures alone trace disasters to sin, and characterize sin as direct rebellion against God.—*C.*

c ver.5,14,27; ch. 14. 19;15.31;22.39; 11.41. 2 Ki.1.18; 10. 34; 13.8,12; 14.15, 28; 15. 11, 15, 21, 26,31.

d Ju. 5. 8. Pr. 28. 2. The civil war lasted about five years.

1 The army, encamped before Gibbethon, chose Omri, their commander, king: but it seems either that some of them were afterwards disgusted by him, or that the principal persons, who were absent, disapproved of this measure, and set up Tibni against him. As the war lasted four years, numbers no doubt were cut off on both sides, before the contest ended with the death of Tibni, who was probably slain in battle. —*J.*

2 His election is recorded, ver. 16: his reign over all Israel, on the overthrow of Tibni, commences ver. 23, and ends ver. 29.—*C.*

e From the death of Elah, ver.8.

3 Six hundred eighty-four pounds seven shillings and sixpence.

f Heb. *Shomeron*, ch. 18. 2; 20.1; 22. 37. 2 Ki.17.1,6. Mi.1.5. Am. 4.1.

4 This city was situated on a large insulated hill, 40 miles north of Jerusalem, and seems to have been selected for its capabilities of fortification, as appears from the various sieges it sustained from the days of Benhadad, 1 Ki. xx.; to Shalmaneser, 2 Ki. xvii. and xviii. Subsequently it underwent various disasters and revivals; and is at present a poor Turkish village, but with several ruins that indicate its ancient greatness. Its situation, however, is one of the most beautiful in Palestine, and the region one of the most fertile.—*C.*

g He established the idolatry by a law, Mi.6.16. Ho.5.11.

h ver.2,7, 13, 19; ch. 12.26–33;13.33,34; 14.9, 16.

i ver.5,14,20; ch. 14. 19;15.31.

A.M. 3086. B.C. 918.

k ver.10,15,23.

l ch.14.9; 21.25; ver. 25,33. 2 Ki.3.2.

5 Heb. *was it a light thing*, &c.

m ch.18. 4; 21. 7, 25; 11.1. 1 Ch.6.2. Pr.23.2.

n Ju.2.11,13; 3.7; 10. 6.

o 2 Ki.10.21,26,27.

p Ex.34.13. 2 Ki. 13. 6;17.16;21.3.

q ver.31,32; ch. 22.6, 8;21.4,19,20,25;20.42.

r Ge.28.19; 35.1. ch. 12.29,33.

6 This grievous family judgment is noted at the distance of 500 years from the utterance of the prediction. Let believers remember in adversity, that 'the Lord is not slack concerning his promise;' but let sinners recollect, that 'though sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily,' the judgment is but deferred, and not laid aside.—*C.*

s Jos.6.26. Nu.15.30. Job 9. 4. 1 Co. 10. 22. Zec. 1. 6. Da.9. 11. Ps. 50.21,22. Je.44.28.

7 The building of Jericho here referred to is manifestly the rebuilding of its walls, so as to make it a city. It appears to have had some inhabitants from the time of its capture by Joshua; but still the ban lay upon it. Its walls remained in ruins for five centuries; and now when they were rebuilt the prophetic curse fell upon the builder. —*P.*

CHAP. XVII.

B.C. 910.

a Lu.1.17;4.24,25.

1 The rendering of the Septuagint seems, when given in literal English, much more agreeable to the Hebrew, and also more explanatory, viz. 'The Tishbite from Tishbe of Gilead.'—*C.*

b 2 Ki.3.14. De.10.8. Ja.5.17. Re.11.6. Lu.4. 23. Is.45.11.

2 *Elijah* is one of the most majestic characters in the Old Testament. In many respects he is scarcely inferior to Moses, while in a few he even excels him. Yet their missions were very different. Moses was a deliverer; Elijah a destroyer. Moses was a lawgiver; Elijah a reformer. Elijah was valued, and is still celebrated, not for what he taught or said, but for what he did; not because he created a new and pure worship, but because he annihilated an old and corrupt one. Stern, fearless, uncompromising, Elijah was specially fitted to counteract and overthrow the haughty and cruel Jezebel.—*P.*

c Je.7.1;11.1;18.1;21. 1;26.1;27.1;30.1, &c.

d Je.36.26. Ju. 8. 59. He.11.38. Mat.10.23.

3 Eastward of it.

e Ps. 78. 23; 37. 3, 19. Job 38.41. Re.12.6,14.

f Pr. 3. 5, 6. Mat. 16. 24. ch.19.9.

4 B.C. 909.

g Mat. 19. 26; 16. 25. Hab.3.17,18. Pr. 30. 8–10. Ju.14.14. Ps.37.3,34. 9,10.

29 ¶ And in the [k]thirty and eighth year of Asa king of Judah began Ahab the son of Omri to reign over Israel: and Ahab the son of Omri reigned over Israel in Samaria twenty and two years.

30 And Ahab the son of Omri did evil in the sight of the LORD [l]above all that *were* before him.

31 And it came to pass, as if it had been a light thing[5] for him to walk in the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, that he took to wife [m]Jezebel, the daughter of Ethbaal king of the Zidonians, and went and served [n]Baal, and worshipped him.

32 And he reared up an altar for Baal in the [o]house of Baal, which he had built in Samaria.

33 And Ahab [p]made a grove; and Ahab did [q]more to provoke the LORD God of Israel to anger than all the kings of Israel that were before him.

34 ¶ In his days did Hiel the [r]Beth-elite build Jericho: he laid the foundation thereof in Abiram his first-born, and set up the gates thereof in his youngest *son* [s]Segub, [s]according to the word of the LORD, which he spake by Joshua the son of Nun.[7]

CHAPTER XVII.

1 *Elijah, having prophesied against Ahab, is sent to Cherith, where the ravens feed him.* 8 *He is sent to a widow of Zarephath.* 17 *He raiseth the widow's son: the woman believeth him.*

AND Elijah[a] the Tishbite, *who was* of the inhabitants of Gilead,[1] said unto Ahab, [b]*As* the LORD God of Israel liveth, before whom I stand, there shall not be dew nor rain these years, but according to my word.[2]

2 And [c]the word of the LORD came unto him, saying,

3 Get thee hence, and turn thee eastward, and [d]hide thyself by the brook Cherith, that *is* before Jordan.[3]

4 And it shall be, *that* thou shalt drink of the brook; and I have [e]commanded the ravens to feed thee there.

5 So he went and did [f]according unto the word of the LORD: for he went[4] and dwelt by the brook Cherith, that *is* before Jordan.

6 And the [g]ravens brought him bread and flesh in the morning, and bread and flesh in the evening; and he drank of the brook.

REFLECTIONS.—For the wickedness of a land many and bad are the princes thereof: and they multiply their murders and massacres one of another. But short-lived and troublesome is the power and honour procured by murder. How eagerly do men follow the very sins, or worse, which ruined their predecessors before their eyes! But if thus they harden themselves in their ingratitude, their blood must be on their own heads. God indeed sometimes permits wicked men to die in their beds, and leave their wicked children to pay off their awful reckoning. Drunkards fearfully expose themselves to death in a thousand forms. And it is terrible to be hurried drunk to the tribunal of a holy God! Rebellious projectors often perish in the flames which they have kindled; and revenge and envy attend them in death. And it is terrible when God punishes men's harmony in wickedness with civil wars and discords. Dreadful is his case who is married to a wicked and abandoned woman: nothing is so base or horrid but she can persuade him to it. When kings are monsters of wickedness, the subjects will strive to outdo them in contempt of God. But such as despise his curse shall feel the weight of it.

CHAPTER XVII. [Ver. 6. *Ravens brought him bread and flesh in the morning.* There was a rock called 'Oreb,' Ju. 7. 25, and there may have been a village of the same name, whose inhabitants secretly supplied the prophet; and the same word may be translated 'ravens,' or as it would be in English, 'people of Ravenstown.' But against this interpretation (1) we have—no mean authority—nearly all translations. (2) If any people brought food, they could have brought water, see ver. 7. (3) Hence we conclude he was literally supplied by *ravens* carrying away the flesh and bread dedicated in the groves to heathen idols. Thus the worship of the false, ministers to the prophet of the true God. *C.*]

REFLECTIONS.—God will have his witnesses in the worst of times, and will endue them with gifts and graces proportionable to the difficulties with which they are called to struggle. Great and inexpressible is the power of fervent prayer with God. But it bodes ill for a people when God's prophets are driven into corners, and when obscurity becomes their duty by the call of

PALACE OF HEROD, SAMARIA—THE REMAINS OF THE PALACE, BUILT BY HEROD IN HONOR OF AUGUSTUS. [I. KINGS, xvi: 24.]—"And he bought the hill Samaria of Shemer for two talents of silver." The city of Samaria was built by Omri about 925 B. C. For two centuries it was the capital of the Ten Tribes of Israel. It was a seat of idolatry; a temple of Baal was built here by Ahab and destroyed by Jehu. Ahab was buried here. After the capture of the city by Shalmaneser and the exile of the Ten Tribes, Shechem became the capital of the new residents. The pillars we see in the picture are supposed to be the remains of the palace built by Herod in honor of Augustus. The site of this city is now occupied by the village of Sebustieh, and it is built chiefly out of the ruins of the ancient city. It is one of the most beautiful sites for a city in Palestine. Its strength, fertility and beauty have been praised by all who have seen it.

7 And it came to pass after a while,[4] that the brook dried up, because there had been no rain in the land.

8 ¶ And the [h]word of the LORD came unto him, saying,

9 Arise, get thee to [i]Zarephath,[5] which *belongeth* to Zidon, and dwell there: behold, I have commanded a widow woman[6] there to sustain thee.

10 So he arose, and went to Zarephath: and when he came to the gate of the city, behold, the widow woman *was* there gathering of sticks: and he called to her, and said, [k]Fetch me, I pray thee, a little water in a vessel, that I may drink.

11 And as she was going to fetch *it*, he called to her, and said, [l]Bring me, I pray thee, a morsel of bread in thine hand.

12 And she said, [m]*As* the LORD thy God liveth,[7] I have not a [n]cake, but an handful of meal in a barrel, and a little oil in a cruse: and, behold, I *am* gathering two sticks, that I may go in and dress it for me and my son, that we may eat it, and [o]die.

13 And Elijah said unto her, Fear not; go *and* do as thou hast said: but [p]make me thereof a little cake first, and bring *it* unto me, and after make for thee and for thy son.

14 For thus saith the LORD God of Israel, The[q] barrel of meal shall not waste, neither shall the cruse of oil fail, until the day *that* the LORD sendeth rain upon the earth.

15 And she [r]went and did according to the saying of Elijah: and she, and he, and her house, did eat *many* days.[8]

16 *And* the barrel of meal wasted not, neither did the cruse of oil fail, [s]according to the word of the LORD, which he spake by[9] Elijah.

17 ¶ And it came to pass after these things, *that* the [t]son of the woman, the mistress of the house, fell sick; and his sickness was so sore, that there was no breath left in him.

18 And she said unto Elijah, [u]What have I to do with thee, O thou [x]man of God? [y]art thou come unto me to call my sin to remembrance,[1] and to slay my son?

19 And he said unto her, Give me thy son.

A.M. 3095. B.C. 909.

4 Heb. *at the end of days.*

h ver.2.Ge.22.14 Is. 41.17. Ps.46.4. Ju.15.19.

i Ob. 20. called *Sarepta*, Lu.4.26.

5 Situated between Tyre and Sidon, and so beyond the jurisdiction of Ahab. Thus the heathenism that will not acknowledge God, unwittingly affords an asylum for his servant.—*C.*

k 6 'Strange comfort this to mere natural reason! A woman who has herself lost her chief earthly sustainer; a Phœnician, who might be a heathen, against whose idols Elijah was so zealous. Yet poor as she appeared, by the occupation which now engaged her, his faith could tell him she would have wherewith to sustain him.'—*Krummacher.*

l ver.4. Is.33.16, Ps. 24.1. Lu. 4. 25, 26. Ge. 18.4;21.15. He. 11. 37.

m ver.12. 1 Sa.25.26, 34.

7 How she recognized him to be a worshipper of Jehovah is not recorded, probably by his Hebrew accent or prophetic garb.—*C.*

n Ge.18.6.2 Ki.4.42.

o Ge.21.15,16.

p 1 Pe. 1. 7. Ge.22.1. Ju.7.2-4.

q 1 Ti.4.8. Is. 33. 16. 2 Ki.4.2-7. Jn. 6. 9-13. Mat. 15. 32-38; 14. 13-21.

r 2 Ch.20.20. Is. 7.9. Mat.15.28. Mar.12.43.

8 Or, *a full year.*

s ver. 14; ch. 13. 5. 2 Ki. 14. 25. Nu. 23. 19. Tit.1.2. He. 10. 23. Je. 32.17,27.

9 Heb. *by the hand of.*

t 2 Ki. 4. 18-20. 1 Pe. 4.12;1.7. Ja.1.2-4. Jn.4. 49,50.

u Lu.5.8.2 Sa.16.10. Ro.2.4.

x De.33. 1. Ju. 13. 6. 1 Sa.9.6,8.ch.13.1.

y ch. 18. 9. Lu. 5. 8. Mat.14.20.

1 One of the constant characteristics of an humble believer, is the acknowledgment of guilt and unworthiness, Lu. 15. 18, 19. *C.*——This is certainly strange language, but very significant. She seems to say, 'Surely the Lord could not have approached so near a poor sinner as I am, if thou hadst not brought his awful presence into my house.' Alas! what absurd ideas, and yet with all this foolishness, what genuine feeling, what self-annihilation, what humility! The object of the stroke is gained.—*Krummacher.*

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x Ac.9.39;1.13. Mar. 14.15.

a Ex.14.10. Ja.5.13, 16. Phi.4.6. Mat.7.7;21. 22. Is. 45. 11. Jn.14.13, 14;16.23;15.7. 1 Jn.5.14.

b ver. 9. Pr. 14. 21. Jos.7.9.

c 2 Ki.4.34. Ac.20.10.

2 To indicate that while the miracle was wrought by his *instrumentality*, it was not by his *power*. Had it been by the prophet's power, once would have sufficed. It was also intended to teach the Sidonians, and all others, the efficacy of persevering prayer; and formed, as it were, the model for Paul in the depth of his afflictions, 2 Co.12.8.—*C.*

d Ps.65.2. Ja.5.15,16. ver.19.

e De.32.39.2 Ki.4.35. Lu. 7. 14, 15; 8. 54, 55. Jn. 11. 43, 44. Ac. 9. 40; 20.11. He.11.35.

f Jn.3.2;2.11;15.24.

3 Previously she may have considered him as merely possessed of some extraordinary natural secret, by which the increase of the meal and oil was effected —the restoration of life, however, proves his commission from the living God.—*C.*

4 It would seem that Elijah had once said something to her which she did not fully comprehend or believe. But now when he said unto her, See, thy son liveth, her heart was ready to say something greater still, 'I know that my Redeemer liveth.'—*Krummacher.*

CHAP. XVIII.
B.C. 906.

a Lu.4.25. Ja.5.17.

b Of his abode with the widow, ch.17.9,15.

1 The Hebrew calculation omits any additional months, and mentions merely the full years, unless where peculiar circumstances require the months to be specially noted. This fact (or the conjecture of Brown) will reconcile the text with Lu.4.25. Ja.5.17. —*C.*

c ver.18-41.

d De. 28. 12, 22, 23. Le.26.4. Am.4.7. Mal. 3.10. Zec.10.1. Jobs.10.

e He. 13.5,6. Ps.119. 46;56.4.

f Gc. 39.4;41.38-40.

g Ge.42.18. Ne. 7. 2. 2 Ki. 4. 1. Pr.14.27; 28. 14. Mal.3.16. Ac.10.2; 24.16.

h Re.17.4-6.

i ver.13. Mat.10.40-42;25.35. Is.33.16.

2 Most probably their sole food, according to the abstemious habits of the prophets, see Da. 1.12. Mat.3.4, though the phrase 'bread and water' may be considered as inclusive of every other necessary. See Ex. 23.25. 1 Ki.4.22, *margin.* Is. 33. 16. Mat. 6. 11.—*C.*

3 Where water yet sprung or ran.—*C.*

k Job 8. 11, 12. Ps. 104.14.

4 Heb. *that we cut not off* ourselves *from the beasts.*

And he took him out of her bosom, and carried him up into a [z]loft where he abode, and laid him upon his own bed.

20 And he [a]cried unto the LORD, and said, O LORD my God, hast thou also [b]brought evil upon the widow with whom I sojourn, by slaying her son?

21 And he [c]stretched himself upon the child three times,[2] and cried unto the LORD, and said, O LORD my God, I pray thee, let this child's soul come into him again.

22 And the LORD [d]heard the voice of Elijah; and the soul of the child came into him again, and he [e]revived.

23 And Elijah took the child, and brought him down out of the chamber into the house, and delivered him unto his mother: and Elijah said, See, thy son liveth.

24 And the woman said to Elijah, [f]Now by this I know that thou *art* a man of God,[3] *and* that the word of the LORD in thy mouth *is* truth.[4]

CHAPTER XVIII.

1 *In the extremity of famine Elijah, sent to Ahab, meeteth good Obadiah.* 9 *Obadiah bringeth Ahab to Elijah.* 17 *Elijah, reproving Ahab, by fire from heaven convinceth Baal's prophets.* 41 *Elijah, by prayer obtaining rain, followeth Ahab to Jezreel.*

AND it came to pass *after* [a]many days, that the word of the LORD came to Elijah in the [b]third year,[1] saying, [c]Go, show thyself unto Ahab; and I [d]will send rain upon the earth.

2 And Elijah went [e]to show himself unto Ahab: and *there was* a sore famine in Samaria.

3 ¶ And Ahab called Obadiah, which *was* [f]the governor of *his* house: (now Obadiah [g]feared the LORD greatly;

4 For it was *so*, when Jezebel [h]cut off the prophets of the LORD, that Obadiah took an hundred prophets, and hid them by fifty in a cave, and [i]fed them with bread and water:)[2]

5 And Ahab said unto Obadiah, Go into the land, unto all fountains of water, and unto all brooks;[3] peradventure we may find [k]grass to save the horses and mules alive, that we lose not all the beasts.[4]

6 So they divided the land between them to pass throughout it: Ahab went one way by

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God. They who dare to be bold for God may trust him with their protection; he will take care that they shall not starve. He can make the most ravenous or the most destitute creatures on earth to provide for them. When one created source runs dry, he can make another to break forth. And plentifully he rewards those who cheerfully supply the wants of his servants. Yet to what straits and perplexity may those who fear his name, or their children, be reduced before he appear for their relief! But in our deepest distresses God is nearer to relieve us than we think, and faith must silence all objections. A promise of God is instead of a thousand arguments. They who can trust God with their all, will find themselves no losers by him: and works of piety and charity bring us our own again with usury. God often exercises his people with the heaviest trials after they have met with remarkable favours And the more unexpected the stroke, the harder it is to be composed under it at first. In our troubles, how apt are we to quarrel with our best friends, and in our haste to speak unadvisedly with our lips! But it is more decent and becoming humbly to search out, confess, and acknowledge our sin, which is the cause of them. And if others be in trouble, our business is to sympathize with them, and intercede with God in their favour. And great is the mercy when troubles and deliverances concur to strengthen our faith and increase our knowledge. But how great the condescension of God—he hath chosen the poor, rich in faith, and heirs of his kingdom! How great his compassion in raising the monuments of his special kindness! A Canaanitish widow is regarded, is honoured with miracles, when multitudes in Israel, as destitute as she, are overlooked!

CHAPTER XVIII. [Ver. 40. The site of Elijah's sacrifice is pointed out by local tradition; and its present name, *el-Muhrakah*, 'the sacrifice,' connected with the general features of the district, leaves no doubt as to its identity. It is a rocky projection, overlooking the plain of Esdraelon, and forming the eastern termination of the ridge of Carmel. Here in a thicket of evergreens is a terrace of natural rock, in the midst of which are the remains of a building of large hewn stones. Upon this spot stood the altar of the Lord which Jezebel broke down and Elisha repaired. Close beneath, on a wide upland sweep, round a copious fountain, which may have supplied the water which the prophet poured on the altar, must have been ranged the people of Israel headed by Ahab. Before them opened the whole plain of Esdraelon, with the city of Jezreel visible on its eastern border. Beneath them, at the base of the mountain, flowed the Kishon. On the bank of the river is a mound called 'the hill of

himself, and Obadiah went another way [l]by himself.

7 ¶ And as Obadiah was [m]in the way, behold, Elijah met him: and he knew him, and fell[n] on his face, and said, *Art* thou that my lord Elijah?

8 And he answered him, I *am:* go, tell thy lord,[o] Behold, Elijah *is here.*

9 And he said, [p]What have I sinned, that thou wouldest deliver thy servant into the hand of Ahab, to slay me?

10 *As*[q] the LORD thy God liveth, there is no nation or kingdom[5] whither[r] my lord hath not sent to seek thee: and when they said, *He is* not *there,* he took an oath of the kingdom and nation, that they found thee not.

11 And now thou sayest, Go, tell thy lord, Behold, Elijah *is here.*

12 And it shall come to pass, *as soon as* I am gone from thee, that the Spirit of the LORD shall[s] carry thee whither I know not; and *so* when I come and tell Ahab, and he cannot find thee, he shall slay me:[6] but I thy servant fear the LORD [t]from my youth.

13 Was it not told my lord [u]what I did when Jezebel slew the prophets of the LORD, how I hid an hundred men of the LORD's prophets by fifty in a cave, and fed them with bread and water?

14 And now thou sayest, Go, tell thy lord, Behold, Elijah *is here:* and he shall slay me.

15 And Elijah said, *As* the [z]LORD of hosts liveth, before whom [y]I stand, I will surely show myself unto him to-day.

16 So Obadiah went to meet Ahab, and told him; and Ahab went to meet Elijah.

17 ¶ And it came to pass, when Ahab saw Elijah, that Ahab said unto him, *Art* thou he that [z]troubleth Israel?[7]

18 And he answered, I [a]have not troubled Israel; but thou, and thy father's house, in that ye have forsaken the commandments of the LORD, and thou hast followed Baalim.

19 Now therefore send, *and* gather to me all Israel unto mount Carmel,[8] and the [b]prophets of Baal four hundred and fifty, and the prophets of the groves[9] four hundred, which eat at Jezebel's table.

20 So Ahab sent unto all the children of Israel, and gathered the prophets together unto mount Carmel.

21 ¶ And Elijah came unto all the people, and said, [c]How long halt ye between two opinions?[1] if the LORD *be* God, follow him: but if Baal, *then* follow him.[2] And the people answered [d]him not a word.

22 Then said Elijah unto the people, I, [e]*even* I only, remain a prophet of the LORD; but Baal's prophets *are* [f]four hundred and fifty men.

23 Let them therefore give us two bullocks; and let them choose one bullock for themselves, and cut it in pieces, and lay *it* on wood, and put no fire *under:* and I will dress the other bullock, and lay *it* on wood, and put no fire *under:*

24 And call ye on the name of your gods, and I will call on the name of the LORD; and the God that [g]answereth by fire, let him be God.[3] And all the people answered and said, It is well spoken.[4]

25 ¶ And Elijah said unto the prophets of Baal, Choose you one bullock for yourselves, and dress *it* first; for ye *are* many; and call on the name of your gods, but put no fire *under.*

26 And they took the bullock which was given them, and they dressed *it,* and called on the name of Baal from morning even until noon, saying, O Baal, hear[5] us![6] But *there was* [h]no voice, nor any that answered.[7] And they [8]leaped upon the altar[9] which was made.

27 And it came to pass at noon, that Elijah [i]mocked them, and said, Cry aloud: for he *is* a god;[1] either he is talking,[2] or he is pursuing, or he is in a journey, *or* peradventure he sleepeth, [k]and must be awaked.

28 And they cried aloud, and [l]cut themselves after their manner with knives and lancets, till the blood gushed out upon them.

29 And it came to pass, when mid-day was past, and they [m]prophesied[3] until the *time* of the offering of the *evening* sacrifice, that *there was* [n]neither voice, nor any to answer, nor any that regarded.

30 ¶ And Elijah said unto all the people, Come near unto me. And all the people came near unto him: and he repaired the altar of the LORD[4] *that was* [o]broken down.

31 And Elijah took [p]twelve stones, according to the number of the tribes of the sons of Jacob, unto whom the word of the LORD came, saying, [q]Israel shall be thy name;

32 And with the stones he [r]built an altar in the name of the LORD: and he made a trench about the altar, as great as would contain two measures of seed.

33 And he [s]put the wood in order, and cut the bullock in pieces, and laid *him* on the wood, and said, Fill four barrels with water, and [t]pour *it* on the burnt-sacrifice, and on the wood.

34 And he said, Do *it* the second time: and they did *it* the second time. And he said, Do *it* the third time: and they did *it* the third time.

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l Je.14.3.

m ch.11.29,2 Ki.1.8.

n Ge. 18, 2; 50. 18. 1 Sa. 20. 41. 2 Sa. 19. 18. 1 Ti.5.17.

o Ahab, ver.3.

p ver. 12; ch. 17. 18. Lu. 5. 8. Mat. 14. 31. Mar.5.36.

q Ju.8.19. Ru.3.13. 1 Sa.14,39; 19.6;29.6.ch. 1.29; 2.24; 7.1,22; ver. 15.

5 In ver. 5 all 'fountains and brooks' evidently signified all likely to afford water; so here 'nation and kingdom' signify every community where the prophet was likely to be found, and where, through his political influence or military power, he could enforce an oath.—*C.*

r Ps.10.2; 69.26. Je. 26.20–23.Jn.5.16.

s 2 Ki. 2.11,16. Eze. 3.14. Ac.8.39.

6 A striking example of the junction of infidelity, cruelty, and despotism.—*C.*

t 2 Ch.34.3.2 Ti.3.15. 1 Sa.1.27,28.Ps.71.17.

u ver. 4. Mat.10.40–42;25.35.

x Ge. 2. 1. De. 4. 29. Ps.103.21; 148.2; 24.9, 10.

y ch.17.1. Ge.18.22. De.1.38;18.5.

z Jos.7.25. Lu.23.2. Ac.16.20; 17.6; 24.5; 2. 36,37. Am.7.10.

7 It is thus ever that wicked men are self-deceived, attributing to the reprovers of their sins the troubles which these sins have procured. It is thus the Bible of God has been accused of producing troubles which lie at the door of those superstitions, traditions, and false doctrines which the Bible condemns. Read ver. 18. *C.*——It often appears as if faithful ministers were the storm-birds and messengers of misfortune, the disturbers of peace, and such as turn the world upside down, just as Elijah seemed to be when at his word the famine overspread Samaria. — *Krummacher.*

a Ac.24.13. Mat.14. 4. Eze.3.8. 2 Sa.12.7. 1 Sa.12.25. Pr.11.19; 13. 21. Is.3.11. Ro.2.8,9.

8 A mountain of Issachar, abuting upon the sea on the south of the Bay of Acre; estimated by some at 1500, by others at 2000 feet. The gradual descent to the brook Kishon and plain of Esdraelon on the east was most probably the scene of this great national assembly and sacrifice. See ver. 40.—*C.*

b 2 Pe.2.1. ch.16.33; 15.13; 22. 6. 2 Ki.13.6; 10.19.

9 Or Ashtaroth, the Syrian goddess of licentiousness.—*C.*

c Mat. 6. 24. 2 Co. 6. 14. Re.3.15. Jos.24.15.

1 Literally, 'leap ye from upon two branches,' as a bird or other unsettled creature; 'everything by turns, and nothing long;' a character in religion more than once denounced, especially in the word of God, Ge.49.4. Ja.1. 6–8.—*C.*

d Re. 3. 19, 20; 6.21. Ge.44.16. Job 40.4;9.3. Mat. 22 12.

e ch.19.10,14.

2 The heathen are sometimes praised by infidels and semi-infidels for their *toleration,* a praise which Ahab and Jezebel have badly earned. See ver. 12, 13. The fact is, heathenism was never tolerant, but it readily amalgamated the worship of various gods, and

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in this way, and in this only, was tolerant to those who could degrade the worship of Jehovah, by joining it with idols—a junction which the prophet publicly denounces. —*C.*

f ver.19,20; ch. 22.6. Re.9.3.

g Le. 9. 24. 1 Ch.21. 26.2 Ch.7.1. Ju.6.20,21; 13.19,20.

3 From the earliest period the answer by fire was the universally recognized test of the acceptance of a sacrifice. The Israelites, degraded and ignorant as they were in the days of Ahab, admitted this. To have denied it would have been to ignore their national history. They were taught by the priests of Baal to believe in his power. He was, in fact, the *fire-god*—a personification of the sun, the source of light, heat, and life. So they were led to believe; and believing this, they accepted Elijah's test. Baal's priests were doubtless averse to the trial; but in the presence of the king and of assembled Israel they dared not to draw back.—*P.*

4 And it was 'well spoken' as an experimental test; but how degraded the condition of the idolatrous people to whom the experiment was necessary!—*C.*

5 Or, *answer.*

6 One of those 'vain repetitions' of the same words which our Lord condemns, Mat. 6. 7. In Hindostan a prayer to an idol often consists of a single word repeated for hours together. —*C.*

h Ps.115.5. Is.44.17; 45. 20. Je. 10. 5, 14, 15. Hab. 2.18,19. 1 Co. 12. 2;8.4.

7 Or, *heard.*

8 Or, *leaped up and down at the altar.*

9 Or, 'danced *around* the altar.'—*C.*

i ch.22.15.2 Ch.25.8. Ec.12.5. Lu.4.21. Am. 4.4,5. Eze.20.39.

1 Not God, but 'a god,' one of your own fancying or choosing; 'pursuing,' or hunting.—*Note,* All the states of Baal here described are attributed to the Grecian deities—by Homer—and of modern India. Hasten the time, Lord, when the last then shall be enlightened, and become 'thine inheritance,' Ps.ii.—*C.*

2 Or, *he meditateth.*

k Ps.121.4.

l Le.19.28. De.14.1. Mi.6.7. Eze.16.36.

m 1 Sa.18.10. ch.22. 10. Ac.16.16,17.

3 Worshipped, a sense in which prophesying is sometimes used, 1 Sa.10.5, 6,10,13. 1 Ch. 25.2,3.—*C.*

n Je.10.15. Ps.115.4–7; 135.15–18. 2 Ti.3.9. 1 Co.8.4; 12. 2. Is.45.20; 46.1,2. Hab.2.19.

4 Some ancient altar erected to Jehovah, the emblem of a revived and reformed church.—*C.*

o ch. 19. 10, 14. 2 Ki. 16.17.

p Jos.4.20. Ezr.6.17. Ex.24.4; 1.2–5. 1 Co.1. 10. Ep.4.3–6.

q Ge. 32. 28. 2 Ki.17. 34.

r Ju. 21. 4. 1 Sa.7. 9, 17. 1 Co. 10. 31. Col.3. 17. 1 Pe.2.4,5. Mi.4.5. ver. 26.

s Ge.22.9. Le.1.6,7.

t Ju.6.20.

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slaughter,' which probably marks the scene, as it preserves the memory, the slaughter of the 850 prophets of Baal. The Mediterranean is not visible from the place of sacrifice on the mountain brow; the view being intercepted by a projecting peak. That peak, however, can be ascended in a few minutes, and then a full view of the sea is gained. From it, doubtless, the prophet's servant saw, on his seventh visit, the little cloud 'like a man's hand.' *P.*]

MOUNT CARMEL—WHERE FIRE FELL AND CONSUMED THE SACRIFICE OF ELIJAH. [I. KINGS, xviii: 42.]—"So Ahab went up to eat and to drink. And Elijah went up to the top of Carmel; and he cast himself down upon the earth, and put his face between his knees." Carmel is first mentioned in Joshua, xix: 26. Its name signifies "a fertile field." Ahab, the king of Israel who had married Jezebel, a Sidonian princess, introduced the Phœnician worship upon Carmel and built an altar to Baal there. It was here that through Elijah the relationship of the Israelite worship and that of the Phœnicians was brought into marked contrast and Carmel was brought into prominence by being the scene of it. Mountains were regarded as sacred places, as we learn that Tabor was in the time of Deborah, and when Samuel lived he sought the heights of Mizpah as a place of worship, and we are told in Micah, vii: 14, that Jehovah himself dwelt upon Mount Carmel.

35 And the water ran[5] round about the altar; and he filled the [u]trench also with water.

36 And it came to pass, [x]at *the time of* the offering of the *evening* sacrifice,[6] that Elijah the prophet came near, and said, [y]LORD God of Abraham, Isaac, and of Israel, [z]let it be known this day that thou *art* God in Israel, and *that* I *am* thy servant, and *that* I have done all these things at thy word.

37 Hear[a] me, O LORD, hear me, that this people may know that thou *art* the LORD God, and *that* thou hast [b]turned their heart back again.

38 Then[c] the fire of the LORD fell,[7] and consumed the burnt-sacrifice, and the wood, and the stones, and the dust, and licked up the water that *was* in the trench.[8]

39 And when all the people saw *it*, they [d]fell on their faces: and [e]they said, The LORD, he *is* the God; the LORD, he *is* the God.

40 And Elijah said unto them, [f]Take the prophets of Baal, let not one of them escape. And they took them: and Elijah brought them down to the brook [g]Kishon, and slew them there.[9]

41 ¶ And Elijah said unto Ahab, Get thee up, [h]eat and drink; for *there is* a sound of abundance of rain.[1]

42 So Ahab went up to eat and to drink: and [i]Elijah went up to the top of Carmel; and he[k] cast himself down upon the earth, and put his face between his knees,

43 And said to his servant, [l]Go up now, look toward the sea. And he went up, and looked, and said, *There is* nothing. And he said, [m]Go again seven times.

44 And it came to pass, at the seventh time, that he said, Behold, there ariseth [n]a little cloud out of the sea, like a man's hand. And he said, Go up, say unto Ahab, Prepare[2] *thy chariot*, and get thee down, that the rain stop thee not.

45 And it came to pass, in the mean while, that the heaven was black with clouds and wind, and [o]there was a great rain. And Ahab rode, and went to [p]Jezreel.[3]

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5 Heb. *went.*

u ver.32,38.

x Exr.9.5. Ex.29.39, 41.

6 The prophet waits to demonstrate the reality of the miracle to the excited and continued attention of the people.—*C.*

y Ge.26.24. Ex.3.6,1 Ch.29.18.

z Ps.9.16; 58.11; 83.18. Jos.24.17,23. Ex.32.16. Jn.3.2. He.2.4.

a ver. 24, 29, 36. Phi. 4.6. Jn.14.13,14. Ps.65.2.

b Je. 10. 23; 31.18. 1 Th.1.9.

c Le.9.24. Ju.6.21. 1 Ch.21.26.2 Ch.7.1.

7 The fire *fell* and did not *ascend*, to show that it was by the power of God from heaven.—*C.*

8 All was consumed as additional proof that it was no ordinary and earthly fire.—*C.*

d Le.9.24. Ju.13.20. 1 Ch.21.16.

e ver.24. Ho.6.4. Jn. 5.35.

f Or, *apprehend*, Je. 48. 10. 2 Ki. 10. 25. De.13.5; 18.20. Ca. 2. 15. Re.2.2.

g Ju.4.7,13; 5.21. Ps. 83.9.10.

9 As leaders in idolatry, they were liable to death by the law of God; but, as heathen priests, they were the abettors, counsellors, and most probably the agents of the murderous Jezebel; and as such, were liable to capital punishment, Ge. 9. 6. De.13.2,5.—*C.*

h Jos. 7. 6, 2 Sa. 21. 14. Ac.27.34. Ec.9.7.

1 Most probably a peculiar sound from the sea, by which, according to the quarter from which it seems to come, rain is often prognosticated with great accuracy.—*C.*

i Mat.17.1. Ac.10.9.

k 2 Sa.7.27. Da. 9.2, 3. Eze.36.36,37. Ps.50. 15;91.15. Phi.4.6.

l Ps.5.3. Lu. 18. 1–6; 11.8.

m Ge.32.26. Hab.2. 3. Lu. 18. 1. Ep. 6. 18. He.10.36,37.

n Zec.4.10;10.1. Job 8.7. Is.60.22.

2 Heb. *Tie* or *bind.*

o Nu. 16. 50; 25. 8. 2 Sa.21.14. ver.39,40. Ja. 5.16. Mal.3. 10. Joel 2. 23. Je.10.13;51.16. Job 37.6.

p Jos.19.13.ch.21.1.

3 Jezreel stood at the eastern side of the great plain of Esdraelon, on a projecting western spur of Mount Gilboa. The site was a noble one. Upon it now stands a wretched village, with a few ruins, and a large number of subterranean magazines for storing grain. The name of the village is *Zerain*, an Arabic corruption of Jezreel.—*P.*

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q 2 Ki.3.15. Eze.1.3; 3.14.

r 2 Ki.9.1. Je.1.17. 1 Pe.1.13. He.12.1.

46 And the [q]hand of the LORD was on Elijah; and he [r]girded up his loins, and ran before Ahab to the entrance of Jezreel.

CHAPTER XIX.

CHAP. XIX.

1 *Elijah, threatened by Jezebel, fleeth to Beersheba.* 4 *In the wilderness, being weary of his life, he is comforted by an angel.* 9 *At Horeb God appeareth unto him, sending him to anoint Hazael, Jehu, and Elisha.* 19 *Elisha, taking leave of his friends, followeth Elijah.*

AND Ahab told Jezebel [a]all that Elijah had done, and withal how he had slain all the prophets with the sword.

2 Then Jezebel sent a messenger unto Elijah, saying, [b]So let the gods do *to me*, and more also, if I make not thy life as the life of one of them by [c]to-morrow about this time.

3 And when he saw *that*, [d]he arose, and went for his life, and came to [e]Beer-sheba,[1] which *belongeth* to Judah, and left his servant there.

4 ¶ But[2] he himself went a day's journey into the wilderness,[3] and came and [f]sat down under a juniper-tree: and he requested [g]for himself that he might die; and said, It is enough; now, O LORD, take away my life; for I *am* not better than my fathers.[4]

5 And [h]as he lay and slept under a juniper-tree,[5] behold, then an angel touched him, and said unto him, Arise *and* eat.

6 And he looked, and, behold, *there was* [i]a cake baken on the coals, and a cruse of water at his head:[6] and he did eat and drink, and laid him down again.

7 And the angel of the LORD came again the second time, and touched him, and said, Arise *and* eat; [k]because the journey *is* too great for thee.

8 And he arose, and did eat and drink, and went in the [l]strength of that meat [m]forty days and forty nights unto [n]Horeb[7] the mount of God.

9 ¶ And he came thither unto [o]a cave, and lodged there; and, behold, the word of the LORD *came* to him,[8] and he said unto him, [p]What doest thou here, Elijah?

10 And he said, I have been [q]very jealous for the LORD God of hosts: for [r]the children of Israel have forsaken thy covenant, thrown down thine altars, and slain thy prophets with

CHAP. XIX.

a ch.18.19-40.

b Ru.1. 17. ch. 2. 23; 20.10. Ac.23.12. Ex.15. 9.

c Pr.1.16; 4. 16; 2. 14, 15. Is.59.7. Ro.3.15.

d 1 Sa.27.1. Mat.26. 56.2 Co.12.7.

e Ge.21.31. Ju. 20. 1. ch.4.25.

1 Generally considered about 90 miles from Jezreel.—*C.*

2 He was afraid to continue in Judea, because Jehoshaphat was Ahab's friend.

3 The wilderness of Paran, 20 miles farther south.—*C.*

f ch.13.14. Ge.21.15. Jn.4.6.

g ver.3. Jon.4.3. Nu. 11. 15. Job 3. 2, 20–22. Ja.3.2.

4 That I should outlive their years.—*C.*

h Ge.28.11–16. He.1. 14;13.5.

5 The modern Arabic word, which is the same as the Hebrew, signifies a kind of broom, which still grows abundantly in Paran, and the scanty shade of which may have served to suggest the despondency of the prophet.—*C.*

i He.13. 5. Is. 33. 16. Ps.37.3; 34.9,10; 111. 5. Mat.6.26–33.

6 Heb. *bolster.*

k Ps.103. 13, 14. De. 33.25. 1 Co.9.7; 10.13. 2 Co.12.9.

l Da.1.15. Hab.3.19. Mat. 4. 4. Phi. 4. 13. 2 Co.12.9.

m Ex.34.28. Mat. 4. 2. Mal.4.2.

n Ex.3.1;19.18.

7 Horeb was evidently either a part of Sinai, or another top of the same mountain range; its distance from Paran, where the prophet was, might be about 150 miles in a direct line.—*C.*

o Ex.33.21, 22. Je. 9. 2. He.11.38.

8 An appearance of Christ, 'the Word of the Lord,' and whom Elijah calls (ver. 10) 'the Lord God of hosts,' the object of the altar worship, and Lord of the holy prophets.—*C.*

p ver.13. Ge.16.8.

q Nu.25.11. Ps. 69.9; 119.139. Ju.2.17.

r Ho. 5. 11. Mi.6.16 ch.18.4,30; ver.14.

REFLECTIONS.—God can turn a fruitful land into barrenness for the sins of them that dwell therein: but judgments, instead of humbling, enrage the impenitent. When persecutors cannot wreak their malice and fury on God they do it upon his servants. But what a mercy is it that God, even in wicked courts, hath those who fear him and protect his ministers. It is very honourable when saints are so faithful in relative duties that such who hate their religion cannot but show them distinguished regard; and when persons in high station lay out their influence or wealth for the support of God's faithful ministers and people. But God often, when his people's condition is seemingly desperate, raises up helpers where they could be least expected. It is proper that saints be cautious in dealing with enraged persecutors: but sometimes they are apt to overdo in their caution. The faithful servants of Christ are often calumniated as enemies to the state: and even when they bring the best of tidings the impenitent brand them as their troublers. But they who by their sins provoke God against a nation, are the real troublers of it, and ought faithfully to be told it. God can overrule the hearts of his most inveterate enemies, and make them to grant what his servants demand for his honour. Unsettled notions of religion lead to unsound practices: and there can be no communion betwixt Christ and Belial. Let us then never, in inclination, profession, or practice, halt between God and his rivals. Nor must the ministers of Christ be discouraged when they see multitudes against them: it is enough that God is on their side. He can take the wise in their own craftiness, and turn the counsel of the froward headlong; and the hope of the hypocrite perishes. It is a poor religion that consists chiefly in externals; and a devilish one that requires inhuman severities. Nothing, neither disappointment nor public shame, will undeceive those whom God hath given up to strong delusions. But how condescending was it in God to put his own preeminence, or rather Godhead, to the trial! Graciously he answers the fervent prayers of his zealous servants: and gloriously he overcomes when he is judged. Dreadful is the ruin of such as obstinately dispute his supremacy. But when false prophets and evil ministers are removed from a land God will return and refresh it. Secret, importunate, and repeated prayers must indeed be used to draw down the promised blessings; and great mercies may arise from the very smallest beginnings. But distinguished humility, and dependence upon an all-strengthening God, ought to attend upon and flow from the receipt of such most distinguishing honours.

CHAPTER XIX. [Ver. 15. 'The wilderness (*i.e.* the *midbar*, 'pastoral region' as distinguished from cultivated ground) of Damascus' lay to the south and south-east of the city. The plain of Damascus, so far as it can be irrigated by the waters of Abana and Pharpar, is cultivated and planted, and is one of the richest and most beautiful in the world. Outside the circuit

the sword; and [s]I, *even* I only, am left; and they seek my life, to take it away.

11 And he said, Go forth, and [t]stand upon the mount before the LORD. And, behold, the[u] LORD passed by, and a great and strong wind rent the mountains, and brake in pieces the rocks before the LORD; [x]*but* the LORD *was* not in the wind: and after the wind an earthquake; *but* the LORD *was* not in the earthquake:

12 And after the earthquake a fire; *but* the LORD *was* not in the fire: and after the fire [y]a still small voice.[9]

13 And it was *so*, when Elijah heard *it*, that he[z] wrapped his face in his mantle,[1] and went out, and stood in the entering in of the cave: and, behold, *there came* a voice unto him, and said, [a]What doest thou here, Elijah?[2]

14 And he said, [b]I have been very jealous for the LORD God of hosts: because the children of Israel have forsaken thy covenant, thrown down thine altars, and slain thy prophets with the sword; and I, *even* I only, am left; and they seek my life, to take it away.

15 And the LORD said unto him, Go, return on thy way to the [c]wilderness of Damascus: and when thou comest, [d]anoint Hazael *to be* king over Syria:

16 And [e]Jehu the son of Nimshi shalt thou anoint *to be* king over Israel: and [f]Elisha the son of Shaphat of [g]Abel-meholah[3] shalt thou anoint *to be* prophet in thy room.[4]

17 And it shall come to pass, *that* him that escapeth [h]the sword of Hazael shall Jehu slay; and him that escapeth from the [i]sword of Jehu shall [k]Elisha slay.

18 Yet[l] I have left *me* seven thousand in Israel, all the knees which have not bowed unto Baal, and every mouth which hath not [m]kissed him.

19 ¶ So he departed thence, and found Elisha the son of Shaphat, who *was* plowing *with* twelve yoke *of oxen* before him, and [n]he with the twelfth: and Elijah passed by him, and cast his [o]mantle upon him.[5]

20 And he [p]left the oxen, and ran after Elijah, and said, Let me, I pray thee, kiss my father and my mother, and *then* I will follow thee. And he said unto him, Go back again: for what have I done to thee?[6]

21 And he returned back from him, and took a yoke of oxen, and slew them, and [q]boiled their flesh with the instruments of the oxen, and [r]gave unto the people, and they did eat: then he arose, and went after Elijah, and ministered unto him.

CHAPTER XX.

1 *Benhadad, king of Syria, not content with Ahab's homage, besiegeth Samaria.* 13 *By the direction of a prophet the Syrians are slain.* 22 *As the prophet had forewarned Ahab, the Syrians, trusting in the valleys, come against him in Aphek.* 28 *By the word of the prophet, and God's judgment, the Syrians are smitten again.* 31 *The Syrians submitting themselves, Ahab sendeth Benhadad away with a covenant.* 35 *The prophet, under the parable of a prisoner, making Ahab to judge himself, denounceth God's judgment against him for his unseasonable lenity.*

AND Ben-hadad[a] the king of Syria gathered all his host together: and *there were* [b]thirty and two kings with him,[1] and horses and chariots: and he went up and [c]besieged Samaria, and warred against it.

2 And he [d]sent messengers to Ahab king of Israel into the city, and said unto him, Thus saith Ben-hadad,

3 Thy [e]silver and thy gold *is* mine; thy wives also and thy children, *even* the goodliest, *are* mine.

4 And the king of Israel answered and said, My lord, O king, according to thy saying, [f]I *am* thine, and all that I have.

5 And the messengers came again, and said, Thus speaketh Ben-hadad, saying, Although I have sent unto thee, saying, [g]Thou shalt deliver me thy silver, and thy gold, and thy wives, and thy children;

6 Yet I will send my servants unto thee tomorrow about this time, and they shall search thine house, and the houses of thy [2]servants; and it shall be, *that* whatsoever is pleasant[3] in thine eyes, they shall put *it* in their hand, and take *it* away.

7 Then the king of Israel called [h]all the elders of the land, and said, Mark, I pray you, and see how this *man* [i]seeketh mischief; for he sent unto me for my wives, and for my children, and for my silver, and for my gold, and I [k]denied him not.

8 And all the elders, and all the people, said unto him, [l]Hearken not *unto him*, nor consent.

A.M. 3098. B.C. 906.

[s] Ro.11.3, ch. 18.22; ver.14.
[t] Ex.19.20; 24.18; 34.2; 33.21.
[u] Ex.33.21,22; 34.6. Ps.50.3; 97.2–5. Na.1.3–6.
[x] Ex. 19. 18. Eze. 3. 12; 37.9. Ps.50.3–5.
[y] Zec.4.6. Ac. 2. 37, 39. Job 4.16. Ex.34.6.
[z] A realized parable, intended to teach (1) That wind, earthquake, and fire—the most terrible agents of destruction—are all in the hand of God. (2) That as 'the kingdom of heaven cometh not with observation,' it was not by these terrible powers God intended to work, but by a 'still small voice,' audible only to the attentive listener, Is. 55.3.—*C.*
[a] Ge. 16. 13; 18. 27. Ex.3.6; 33.23. Is.6.2, 5.
[1] An eastern acknowledgment of respect.—*C.*
[a] ver.9. Ge.16.8. Jn. 21.15–17.
[2] The angel of the Lord appears to have either directed or approved of this journey, ver.7, which this question seems to condemn. But the reprehension is not that of the journey, but of the prophet's despondency. The lessons which the narrative conveys are pregnant with instruction. 1. It teaches that 'man shall not live by bread alone,' since a little can sustain for 40 days. 2. That no retreat is free from danger, since storm, earthquake, and fire visit the deepest solitudes. 3. That solitude, contemplative inaction, and despondency are unbecoming the commissioned servants of the Lord. 4. That God can soon raise up agents to punish wicked and idolatrous rulers; and 5. that he will preserve a succession of witnesses in his church, to testify against sin and sinners to all generations.—*C.*
[b] ver. 10. Ro. 11. 3. Ps.69.9; 119.139. Is. 62. 1, 6. Jn.2.17.
[c] Ge.14.15.
[d] Je.1.10.2 Ki.8.13.
[e] 2 Ki.9.1–3,4.
[f] Lu. 4. 27, called *Eliseus*. ver.19–21.
[g] ch.4.12.
[3] *Abel - meholah* was situated in the Jordan valley, south of Bethshean. The route of Elijah appears to have been up the Jordan valley, through Samaria, and then northward to Damascus.—*P.*
[4] And who, accordingly, in 'his room,' fulfilled this commission in due time.—*C.*
[h] 2 Ki.8.12; 10.32; 12.17, 18; 13.7, 22.
[i] 2 Ki.x.x. Am.2.14. Is.21.18. Je.48.44.
[k] Je. 1. 10. Ho.6.5. 2 Ki.10.32; 13.3. Is. 11.4.
[l] Ro.11.4. Is.1.9; 10. 20–22.
[m] Job 31.27. Ho.13.2.
[n] Am.7.14. Ps.78.70, 71. Ex. 3. 1. Ju. 6. 11. Mat.4.18, 21.
[o] 2 Ki.2.8, 13. ver.13.
[p] Mat.4.20, 9; 8.21, 22; 19.27. Lu.9.61, 62.
[5] The transfer of the mantle was the 'sign and seal' of inauguration and succession to the prophetic office. A similar custom, most probably derived from this account, still prevails among the Soofees in Persia, where the older the mantle it is counted the more valuable and honourable.—*C.*
[6] What have I done to hinder thee?—*C.*
[q] 2 Sa.24.22.
[r] Lu.5.29. 2 Sa.6.19.

CHAP. XX.

B.C. 901.

[a] ch.15.20. 2 Ki.8.15.
[b] Ge.14.1, 2. Jos.12. 7–24. Ju.1.7.
[1] The kings of small cities and territories, each having a distinct and independent jurisdiction, but members of a general league, under some chief political head, to whom, on occasions of war, each state furnished its contingent of troops. The German Confederation and United States of America furnish in modern times a near approach to this arrangement. *C.*——If we go back to the early ages of Syria, we find a number of isolated cities surrounded by a territory of very limited extent, and governed by kings or princes. Sometimes one of these towns obtained a marked superiority over the others, over which it arrogated a species of dominion, and of this number was Damascus. But this dominion was no more than a forced allyance, which only obliged these cities to furnish troops and subsidies in time of war, without compromising their distinct existence, under their own laws and rulers.—*Heeren.*
[c] Le.26.25. De.28.52. 2 Ki.6.24, 25; 17.5, 6.
[d] Is. 36. 2, 3; 37.9, 10. 2 Ki.18.4; 19.9.
[e] Ex.15.9. ver.5. Pr. 16.18; 18.12.
[f] ver.7. De.28.48.
[g] De.28.29–48. 2 Sa. 24.14. Pr.12.3, 10; 13.3, 10, 20, 21; 16.18; 18.6, 7, 12; 10.8, 14; 11.2, 28; 14.16; 15.25.
[2] First he demanded the king's property, which the king pusillanimously tendered: now he demands the plunder of the whole city, which the elders and people magnanimously refuse.—*C.*
[3] Heb. *desirable.*
[h] Le. 4. 15. ch. 8. 1. Pr.11.14; 15.22; 24.6. 1 Ch.13.1; 28.1.
[i] Pr.1.19; 4.16. 1 Ti. 6.10. Ro.3.13–18. Is.59. 7.
[k] Heb. *I kept not back from him*, ver. 4.
[l] ver.6.

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of irrigation it is dry and parched, and in general can only be used for pasture. *P.*]

Ver. 18. [*Have not bowed unto Baal, and every mouth which hath not kissed him.* The heathen kissed several of their idols, either by touching them with the right hand (Plin. lib. xxviii. c. 2), or by actually saluting them with the lips (Cic. *in Verrem*). A similar practice has been transferred into those superstitious forms of Christianity where the images of saints have displaced the ancient idols and set up modern idolatry. *C.*]

REFLECTIONS.—The promoters of false worship desperately hate those who zealously oppose their designs. And no persecutor is more malicious or furious than a profane woman. How weak and spiritless are the greatest zealots for God when left to themselves! Elijah had just commanded both king and subjects: now he shrinks for fear of a dignified harlot. But it is mean to desire death as a refuge from distress; and to seek to die like a wandering sheep in the wilderness, while shunning the honourable death of a martyr for God at Jezreel. When men impatiently wish for death they are ordinarily in a frame very unfit for it, and would be ready to recall their wish if God were to grant it. We ought never to desert the path of duty though it lead us through the valley of the shadow of death. However dark providences appear we must never despair. We know not what further work God may have for us. To desire to be with Christ is laudable; but to be weary of our warfare is sinful. But God kindly overlooks the infirmities of his people; visits them when on the brink of despair; and lays meat before them when they shamefully desert his service. Such as are travelling to Horeb, to the mount of God in heaven, will find strength ministered to them for their journey, and angels to be their ministering spirits. To encourage their own peevish frowardness saints are apt to think matters in the church worse than they really are. But whom the Lord loves he will rebuke and chasten, he will direct and further employ. No place can exclude his gracious manifestations. It is the folly of human weakness to be discouraged for want of success in God's work. The sufficiency of the power is of God, not of ourselves. They that would be faithful for God in bad times must put their lives in their hands and be ready to die for him.—In the most terrible manner God often introduces his most mild and gracious intimations. God's saints are generally few; but they are often more numerous in times of general apostasy than good men think: and all of them are under the special knowledge and care of God. It bodes ill when God's children become intercessors

9 Wherefore he said unto the messengers of Ben-hadad, Tell my lord the king, All that thou didst send for to thy servant at the first I will do; but this thing I may not do. And the messengers departed and brought him word again.

10 And Ben-hadad sent unto him, and said, The[m] gods do so unto me, and more also,[4] if the dust of Samaria shall [n]suffice for handfuls for all the people that [o]follow me.

11 And the king of Israel answered and said, Tell *him*, [p]Let not him that girdeth on *his harness* boast himself as he that putteth it off.[5]

12 And it came to pass, when *Ben-hadad* heard this message,[6] (as he *was* [q]drinking, he and the kings in the pavilions,[7]) that he said unto his servants, Set[8] *yourselves in array:* and they set *themselves in array* against the city.

13 ¶ And, [r]behold, there came[9] a prophet unto Ahab king of Israel, saying, Thus saith the LORD, Hast thou seen all this great multitude? behold, I will deliver it into thine hand this day; and [s]thou shalt know that I *am* the LORD.

14 And Ahab said, By whom? And he said, Thus saith the LORD, *Even* by the [t]young men of the princes of the provinces. Then he said, Who shall order[1] the battle? And he answered, [u]Thou.

15 Then he numbered the young men of the princes of the provinces, and they were two hundred and thirty-two: and after them he numbered all the people, *even* all the children of Israel, *being* [x]seven thousand.[2]

16 And they went out at noon:[3] but[y] Ben-hadad *was* drinking himself drunk in the pavilions,[4] he and the kings, the thirty and two kings that helped him.

17 And the young men of the princes of the provinces went out first; and Ben-hadad sent out, and they told him, saying, There are men come out of Samaria.

18 And he said, [z]Whether they be come out for peace, take them alive; or whether they be come out for war, take them alive.[5]

19 So these young men of the princes of the provinces came out of the city, and the army which followed them.

20 And they slew [a]every one his man:[6] and the Syrians [b]fled; and Israel pursued them: and Ben-hadad the king of Syria escaped on an horse with the horsemen.

21 And the king of Israel [c]went out, and smote the horses and chariots, and slew the Syrians with a great slaughter.

22 ¶ And the [d]prophet came to the king of Israel, and said unto him, Go, [e]strengthen thyself, and mark, and see what thou doest: for [f]at the return of the year the king of Syria will come up against thee.

23 And the servants of the king of Syria said unto him, [g]Their gods *are* gods of the hills;[7] therefore they were stronger than we: but let us fight against them in the plain, and surely we shall be stronger than they.

24 And do this thing, [h]Take the kings away, every man out of his place, and put captains in their rooms;

25 And number thee an army like the army that thou hast lost,[8] horse for horse, and chariot for chariot; and we will fight against them in the plain, *and* surely we shall be stronger than they. And he hearkened unto their voice, and did so.

26 And it came to pass[9] at the return of the year,[1] that Ben-hadad numbered the Syrians, and went up [i]to Aphek,[2] to fight against [j]Israel.

27 And the children of Israel were numbered, and were all[4] present,[5] and went against them: and the children of Israel pitched before them like two little flocks of kids;[6] but the Syrians [k]filled the country.

28 ¶ And there came [l]a man of God, and spake unto the king of Israel, and said, Thus saith the LORD, [m]Because the Syrians have said, The LORD *is* God of the hills, but he *is* not God of the valleys, [n]therefore will I deliver all this great multitude into thine hand, and ye shall know that I *am* the LORD.

29 And they pitched one over against the other [o]seven days: and *so* it was, that in the seventh day the battle was joined; and the children of Israel slew of the Syrians [p]an hundred thousand footmen in one day.[7]

30 But the rest fled to Aphek, into the city; [q]and *there* a wall fell[8] upon twenty and seven thousand of the men *that were* left. And Ben-hadad fled, and came into the city, into an [r]inner chamber.[9]

31 ¶ And his servants said unto him, Behold now, we have heard that the kings of the house of Israel *are* merciful kings: let us, I pray thee, put sackcloth on our loins, and ropes upon our heads, and go out to the king of Israel; peradventure he will save thy life.

A.M. 3103. B.C. 901.

m ch.19.2. Ac.23.12.

4 This wicked imprecation imports—'The gods do so to me (as I purpose to do to you), and more (worse) also, if,' &c. —*C.*

n Is. 36. 12. 2 Sa. 17. 13. We will carry off everything.

o Heb. are *at my feet*, Ex.11.8. Ju.4.10.

p Ec.7.8. 9.11. 1 Sa. 14.6. Pr.21.30;27.1.

5 There is much practical human wisdom in the proverb, but, as might be expected from Ahab's character, an evident lack of divine knowledge or pious feeling. He that boasts himself before he begins a warfare is a vain fool—but he that boasts himself after a victory is an ungrateful infidel. The humble believer has but one boast—the name, covenant, and grace of God, Ps. 34. 2;44.8.—*C.*

6 Heb. *word.*

q ch.16.9. Da.5.2,30. ver.16 Pr. 31 4.5.

7 Or, tents.

8 Or, *Place* the engines, *And they placed* engines.

r Ps.46.1,7,11. Is.33. 22–24. Ge.22.14. De.32. 36.

9 Heb. *approached.*

s ver. 28. Ps. 7. 16;9. 15,16;83.18. Is.8.9,10.

t Or, *servants*, Ju. 7.2. 1 Co.1.27,28.

1 Heb. *bind* or *tie.*

u 2 Sa. 17.1–3,11.

x 2 Ki.13.7, with ch. 19.18. Ps.106.40–43.

2 All the Israelites he could muster—being the number, and perhaps the very persons, who had not bowed the knee to Baal—at once the most pious and the most courageous. —*C.*

3 They went out in the heat of the day, when the luxurious monarch and his confederates were engaged in rioting and drunkenness.—*C.*

y Ec.10.16. Pr.23.29 –32; 33.4,5. ver.12; ch. 16.9. Da.5.2,20. Lu.21. 34.

4 More properly *booths*, constructed of boughs of trees, to protect them from the rays of the sun.—*C.*

z 1 Sa.2.3,4. Ps.75.5 –7. Pr.1.32;16.18;18.12.

5 Not an order of humanity, but either to make them slaves, or hold them as hostages, or submit them to torture. Ben-hadad's character is warrant for either or each of these views. For had they come out for peace, the order was a breach of all public faith, and every principle of international law, which the man who could violate, was capable of every other act implied in these suggestions.—*C.*

a i.e. 7232, ver.15.

6 They slew 7232, which implies an evidence of extreme courage, as they must have deployed near the city, and advanced in a front merely one in depth, where each man, under Providence, depended on his own arm, without any support from a rear rank or reserve.—*C.*

b Ps.33.16. Le.26.8. Jos.23.10.

c Ju.3.28. 1 Sa.14.22, 23.2 Ki.3.18,24.

A.M. 3103. B.C. 901.

d ver. 13, 28. Perhaps Micaiah, ch. 22. 8.

e Ps.46.1;27.1. Ro.8. 31. Pr.18.10;20.18.

f 2 Sa.11.1. 1 Ch.20. 1. 2 Ch.36.10. Is.36.11. Pr.29.9.

g ch. 14. 23. Is. 42. 8. Ps. 50.21, 22;121.1,2.

7 This was not only in strict accordance with heathen ideas of local godship, but the most plausible excuse they could form for their own cowardice. —*Note*, Always beware of that religion whose principles afford colour or excuse for any defect, error, or sin. True religion leads the way to pardon, but never to palliate or excuse transgression.—*C.*

h Job 5.12,13. Pr.21. 30. Ps.33.10,16;20.7.

8 Heb. *that was fallen.*

9 B.C. 900.

1 In spring, about the month of April, when the winter rains had to a great extent ceased, and when men could with safety sleep in the open air. It is at the same season the nomads of the eastern desert make their periodical incursions into Palestine.—*P.*

i Jos.13.4; 19.30. Ju. 1. 31. ver. 30.

2 There is no topographical notice here or elsewhere to indicate the position of Aphek. There was a village called Aphek in the plain of Esdraelon, not far from Jezreel, where the Philistines encamped, 1 Sa.29.1. It seems more probable, however, that the Aphek here mentioned was the large town in the territory of the half-tribe of Manasseh, on the plateau of Bashan east of the Sea of Galilee.—*P.*

3 Heb. *to the war with Israel.*

4 Probably meaning all the gallant band who fought at the former battle.—*C.*

5 Or, *were victualled.*

6 The sons of the princes, the bodyguard, encamped in front, ver.15; and the 7000 of the people who bravely followed them encamped in their rear, ver. 17–19. —*C.*

k Ju.6.5. Je.17.5. Ps. 33.10;20.7.

l ver.13,22. 2 Ch. 20 14–17,20.

m Ps. 7. 6;74. 10,11; 46.6,7. Is.37.4,17,23,29. Ho.7.16.

n Is 42.8;37.29. Eze. 36.21,22. Ps.50. 21, 22; 58.10,11.

o 1 Sa.17.3,16. Jos.6. 15.

p ver.20. Ps.107.42. Is.26.11. 1 Sa.2.3,4. Le. 26.8. Jos.23.10.

7 When the effeminate and dissolute character of Ben-hadad and his army, and the multitude of unarmed followers that encumber eastern armies, are considered, this number need not provoke incredulity, especially as the whole country would rise for the destruction of the Syrians so soon as the rout commenced. —*C.*

q Is.24.18. Je.48. 44. Am.5.19;2.14;9.1–4.

8 It is not said the wall *killed*, but *fell upon* 27,000; and yet, if crouching near the wall, as a screen from the sun, the destruction of so many at once might be effected by a small portion of a lofty wall.—*C.*

r Heb. *into a chamber within a chamber*, ch.22.25. Da.4.47. Job 40.11,12.1 Pe.5.5.

9 Or, *from chamber to chamber.*

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against a people. We may expect quickly to see or hear of instruments of God's wrath raised up to destroy them, for in his due time God will reward his people, and that speedily. Never can he want agents for his work, whether of mercy or judgment. All should hear his blessed and heart-touching call: no earthly cares should detain them from his service.

CHAPTER XX. [Ver. 33. 'And the men took it as an omen (for good), and they hastened and took it from him;' *i.e.* they made haste to let him explain his meaning fully, that they might know whether he spake this word of grace from his heart, or whether in dissimulation. They expected death, and they could scarcely credit. *P.*]

REFLECTIONS.—Weak and defenceless are those who have provoked God to forsake them, however former successes may make them proud or insolent. There is no satisfying the covetous mind: and mean spirits delight to tyrannize over those who they think dare not resist them. But pride and insolent boasting go before destruction. The greatest talkers are seldom the greatest actors. And the more secure men are, the more certain is their ruin. God often heaps mercies on his sinful people when they are almost ripe for destruction. Inadequate means must be used when God directs, but no means ever trusted to. By the weakest

32 So they girded [s]sackcloth on their loins, and *put* ropes on their heads,[9] and came to the king of Israel, and said, Thy [t]servant Ben-hadad saith, I pray thee, let me live. And he said, *Is* he yet alive? he *is* my brother.

33 Now the men did diligently observe whether *any thing would come* from him, and did hastily catch *it:* and they said, Thy brother Ben-hadad. Then he said, Go ye, bring him. Then Ben-hadad came forth to him; and he caused him to come up into the chariot.

34 And *Ben-hadad* said unto him, [u]The cities, which my father took from thy father, I will restore; and thou shalt make streets for thee in Damascus,[1] as my father made in Samaria. Then *said Ahab,* I will send thee away with this covenant. So [x]he made a covenant with him, and sent him away.

35 ¶ And a certain man of the [y]sons of the prophets said unto his neighbour in the word of the LORD, [z]Smite me, I pray thee.[2] And the man refused to smite him.

36 Then said he unto him, [a]Because thou hast not obeyed the voice of the LORD, behold, as soon as thou art departed from me, a lion shall slay thee. And as soon as he was departed from him, a lion found him, and slew him.

37 Then he found another man, and said, Smite[b] me, I pray thee. And the man smote him, so that in smiting he wounded *him.*[3]

38 So the prophet departed, and waited for the king by the way,[4] and [c]disguised himself with ashes[5] upon his face.

39 And as the king passed by, he cried unto the king: and he [d]said, Thy servant went out into the midst of the battle; and, behold, a man turned aside, and brought a man unto me, and said, Keep this man: if by any means he be missing, then shall thy life be for his life, or else thou shalt pay[6] a talent of silver.

40 And as thy servant was busy here and there, he was[7] gone.[8] And the king of Israel said unto him, [e]So *shall* thy judgment *be;* thyself hast decided *it.*

41 And he hasted, and took the ashes away from his face; and the king of Israel discerned him that he *was* of the prophets.

42 And he said unto him, Thus saith the LORD, Because [f]thou hast let go out of *thy* hand a man whom I appointed[9] to utter destruction,[1] therefore thy life shall go for his life, and thy people for his people.

43 And the king of Israel went to his house [g]heavy and displeased,[2] and came to Samaria.

A.M. 3104. B.C. 900.

s Ge.37.34. 2 Sa. 14. 2. Is.37.1.

9 Or, 'round their necks.' This is well illustrated by several Egyptian and Persian sculptures, which represent captives dragged before their kings by a rope that passes round the neck of each, and binds them to one another.—*Note,* What an appropriate emblem of the captive state of sinners—each a captive, and each bound to his companions in misery.—*C.*

t ver.3-6. Ps. 72. 2. Job 40.12;12.17,18. Da. 4.37.

u As ch. 5. 20. Or perhaps these are Ahab's words.

1 Authorize the establishment of a '*Jewish quarter* or *factory,*' for commercial purposes, as was, and in some degree still is, the case in some Christian European cities, and as still is the case in Constantinople and the principal cities of Asia where Jews reside—a rule of separation that likewise applies generally to Europeans, or Franks, as they are called. *C.*——To this day there is a *Jewish quarter* in the most ancient part of Damascus, and there is evidence to show that the Jews have occupied it since the Mahomedan conquest of the city in the 7th century.—*P.*

x ver. 42. Is. 26. 10; 28.15.

y 1 Sa.10.12. 2 Ki. 2. 3,5,7, 15. ver. 38. Is.8. 18.

z Is.20.3,4;8.18. Mat. 16.24. Pr.27.6. ver.37.

2 Knowing him as a neighbour to be a prophet, he should have obeyed 'in the word of the Lord.' —*C.*

a 1 Sa. 15. 22,23. ch. 13.21,22;22. 34,37. 2 Ki. 2.23.24. with ch.13.24.

b Ex.21.15,18. Pr.23. 13.

3 Heb. *smiting and wounding.*

4 As a prophet of the Lord, he could have no access to the idolatrous king; but as a wounded soldier, ver. 39, he was sure of a hearing.—*C.*

c ch.14.2;22.30.

5 According to Boothroyd and other eminent translators, 'a veil or bandage.' —*C.*

d 2 Sa.12. 1-7; 14. 5-7. Ju.9.7-20.

6 Heb. *weigh.*

7 Heb. *he was not.*

8 This being a parable, partook in no degree of the nature of an untruth, the essence of which always is an intention to *deceive,* that of the prophet was merely to *instruct.*—*C.*

e 2 Sa.12.5,6. Job 15. 6. Lu.19.22. Jn.11.48. Mat.21.41;25.24-28.

f 1 Sa.15.9. ch.20.34 17.2 Ki 13.2,19;20. 32,33;13.17,22.

9 Heb. *of my curse.*

A.M. 3104. B.C. 900.

1 God had righteously devoted him for his unprovoked invasion, which is but another word for intentional murder, as related in the beginning of the chapter.—*C.*

g ch.21.4;22.8. 2 Co. 7.10. Job 5.2.

2 Not displeased with himself—for that had been a sign of repentance—but with God and his prophet, by whom the sentence had been pronounced; see ch. 21.4.—*C.*

CHAP. XXI.

B.C. 899.

a ch. xviii. xx. Ezr. 9.13,14.

b Ju.6.33. 1 Sa.29. 1. ch.18.45. 2 Ki.9. 21, 30; 10.7,11.

c 1 Sa.8.14. 1 Jn.2.16. 1 Ti. 6. 9, 10, with Ex. 20.17. De.5.21.

1 Heb. be *good in thine eyes.*

d Le.25. 23. Nu. 36. 7. Eze.46.18.

2 Ahab seems to propose fairly and generously for the vineyard, but it is evident he wished Naboth to alienate his paternal property contrary to the law, Le. 25.14-28; which it was a sin in the one to desire, as it would have been in the other to concede.—*C.*

e ch.20.43. Es. 5. 13. Job 5. 2. 1 Ti. 6. 9, 10. ver.2.

f ver.5. 2 Sa.13.2,4.

3 The unmanly spirit of a pettish and spoiled child, unworthy of a man, unworthy of a king. The evidence of affections set upon 'things on the earth,' and consequently regardless of 'things above.'—*C.*

g ch.16.31;18.4;19.2; 11.4; ver. 25. Ge. 3. 6. Ec.7.26. Pr. 22. 14; 23. 27.

h ver.2. Job 5.2. Pr. 14.30. 1 Ti.6.9,10.

i 1 Sa.8.14. Da.5.19.

4 She can recommend mirth, while contemplating the subornation of perjury, and commission of murder. Such, alas! is the human conscience when perverted by idolatry and seared by the practice of sin.—*C.*

k Es.3.12.

l De. 21. 2. Ju. 8. 14. ch. 10. 1.

m Is.58.4. Lu.20.47. Jn.18.28. Mat.2.8.

5 Or, Call an assembly.

6 There were amongst the Jews some fasts fixed, Zec. 8. 19, others occasional, Joel 1. 14, but from Is. 58. 4 it is evident that these assemblies were grievously perverted as occasions of popular tumult and perversion of public justice—the fast being an occasion of exciting, not their religious, but their superstitious prejudices—prejudices which, like those of infidelity, are generally inexorable, cruel, and murderous.—*C.*

7 Heb. *in the top of the people.*

n De. 13. 13. 1 Sa. 2. 12. 2 Sa.23.6. ver.13.

CHAPTER XXI.

1 *Ahab being denied Naboth's vineyard is grieved.* 5 *Jezebel writing letters against Naboth, he is condemned of blasphemy.* 15 *Ahab taketh possession of the vineyard.* 17 *Elijah denounceth judgments against Ahab and Jezebel.* 27 *Wicked Ahab repenting, God deferreth the judgment.*

AND it came to pass after [a]these things, *that* Naboth the Jezreelite had a vineyard, which *was* in [b]Jezreel, hard by the palace of Ahab king of Samaria.

2 And Ahab spake unto Naboth, saying, [c]Give me thy vineyard, that I may have it for a garden of herbs, because it *is* near unto my house; and I will give thee for it a better vineyard than it; *or,* if it seem good to thee,[1] I will give thee the worth of it in money

3 And Naboth said to Ahab, The LORD forbid it me, that [d]I should give the inheritance of my fathers unto thee.[2]

4 And Ahab came into his house [e]heavy and displeased because of the word which Naboth the Jezreelite had spoken to him; for he had said, I will not give thee the inheritance of my fathers: and he [f]laid him down upon his bed, and turned away his face, and would eat no bread.[3]

5 ¶ But [g]Jezebel his wife came to him, and said unto him, Why is thy spirit so sad, that thou eatest no bread?

6 And he said unto her, [h]Because I spake unto Naboth the Jezreelite, and said unto him, Give me thy vineyard for money; or else, if it please thee, I will give thee *another* vineyard for it: and he answered, I will not give thee my vineyard.

7 And Jezebel his wife said unto him, [i]Dost thou now govern the kingdom of Israel? arise, *and* eat bread, and let thine heart be merry:[4] I will give thee the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite.

8 So she [k]wrote letters in Ahab's name, and sealed *them* with his seal, and sent the letters unto [l]the elders and to the nobles that *were* in his city, dwelling with Naboth.

9 And she wrote in the letters, saying, [m]Proclaim[5] a fast,[6] and set Naboth on high among the people:[7]

10 And set two men, [n]sons of Belial, before

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instruments God can abase the proud, and defeat the most powerful armies even when flushed with victory and success. But we must never on earth think the danger over. Earth and hell cannot long lie quiet. Atheistical apprehensions of God effectually plunge men headlong into misery. For they that fight against him will at last be covered with confusion and despair. Malicious persecutors are in general extremely indulgent to horrid murderers and blasphemers. But sinful indulgence issues in men's own ruin. God's servants have need of great boldness and zeal, that they may declare his mind to the most powerful transgressors. And it is peculiarly stinging when men are condemned out of their own mouth.

Learn, O my soul, notwithstanding all my emptiness, to be strong in the Lord and in the power of his might. If my spiritual enemies compass me about like bees, let me attack them in the name of the Lord. If I obtain one victory let me prepare for another assault. But let me never show mercy to the most humble and suppliant lust:—to pity those is to be careless of God's honour and cruel to myself.

reel and had his patrimony there. It therefore was his city. But though Ahab had a palace there, Jezreel was not his usual place of residence. Samaria was the capital of the kingdom, and he appears to have returned to it after vainly endeavouring to obtain possession of Naboth's vineyard while on a visit to Jezreel. The whole narrative shows that Naboth's accusation and death occurred at Jezreel, his native city, and that Ahab and Jezebel were then at a distance. *P.*]

REFLECTIONS.—Nearness to great men often exposes to oppression; and there is need of steadfast

AT THE WELL, SAMARIA—WHERE AHAB, KING OF ISRAEL, BUILT A TEMPLE TO BAAL, THE GOD OF THE SIDONIANS. [I. KINGS, xxi: 18.]—"Arise, go down to meet Ahab, king of Israel, which is in Samaria." The city of Samaria was built by Omri, king of Israel, and became the capital of the ten tribes until the captivity. Ahab built a temple to Baal here, which was destroyed by Jehu. "He reared up an altar for Baal in the house of Baal which he had built in Samaria. And Ahab made a grove: and Ahab did more to provoke the Lord God of Israel to anger than all the kings of Israel that were before him."—I. Kings, xvi: 32–33. We give above a picture of the well in Samaria taken Friday morning, May 4, 1894. We left our camp at Shechem at 7 o'clock and reached Samaria about 9. The prophecy uttered with reference to this place in Micah, i: 6, is literally fulfilled: "I will make Samaria as an heap of the field, and as plantings of a vineyard: and I will pour down the stones thereof into the valley, and I will discover the foundations thereof." This has literally come to pass.

him, to [c]bear witness against him, saying, Thou didst blaspheme God and the king:[8] and *then* carry[p] him out, and stone him, that he may die.[9]

11 And the men of his city, *even* the elders and the nobles who were the inhabitants in his city, [q]did as Jezebel had sent unto them, *and* as it *was* written in the letters which she had sent unto them:

12 They proclaimed a fast, and set Naboth on high among the people.

13 And there came in two men, children of Belial, and sat before him: and the men of Belial [r]witnessed against him, *even* against Naboth, in the presence of the people, saying, Naboth did [s]blaspheme God and the king. Then they carried him forth out of the city, and stoned him [t]with stones, that he died.

14 Then they sent to Jezebel, saying, [u]Naboth is stoned, and is dead.

15 ¶ And it came to pass, when Jezebel heard that Naboth was stoned, and was dead, that Jezebel said to Ahab, Arise, [z]take possession of the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite, which he refused to give thee for money: for Naboth is not alive, but dead.

16 And it came to pass, when Ahab heard that Naboth was dead,[1] that Ahab rose up to go down to the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite, to take possession of it.

17 ¶ And the [y]word of the LORD came to Elijah the Tishbite, saying,

18 Arise, go down to meet Ahab king of Israel, which *is* in Samaria: behold, *he is* in the vineyard of Naboth, whither he is gone down to possess it.

19 And thou shalt speak unto him, saying, Thus saith the LORD, [z]Hast thou killed, and also taken possession? And thou shalt speak unto him, saying, Thus saith the LORD, [a]In the place where dogs licked the blood[2] of Naboth shall dogs lick thy blood, even thine.

20 And Ahab said to Elijah, Hast thou found me, O [b]mine enemy?[3] And he answered, I have found *thee;* because thou hast [c]sold thyself to work evil[4] in the sight of the LORD.

21 Behold, [d]I will bring evil upon thee, and will take away thy posterity, and will cut off from Ahab him that pisseth against the [5]wall, and him that is shut up and left in Israel,[6]

22 And will make thine house like the house of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, and like the house of Baasha the son of Ahijah, for the provocation wherewith thou hast provoked *me* to anger, and made Israel to sin.

23 And [e]of Jezebel also spake the LORD, saying, The dogs shall eat Jezebel by the [7]wall of Jezreel.

24 Him[f] that dieth of Ahab in the city the dogs shall eat; and him that dieth in the field shall the fowls of the air eat.

25 (But there [g]was none like unto Ahab, which did sell himself to work wickedness in the sight of the LORD, whom [h]Jezebel his wife stirred up.[8]

26 And he did[9] very abominably in following idols, according to [i]all *things* as did the Amorites, whom the LORD cast out before the children of Israel.)

27 ¶ And it came to pass, when Ahab heard those words, that he [k]rent his clothes, and put sackcloth upon his flesh, and fasted, and lay in sackcloth, and went softly.[1]

28 And the word of the LORD came to Elijah the Tishbite, saying,

29 Seest[l] thou how Ahab humbleth himself before me? because he humbleth himself before me, I will not bring the evil in his days:[2] *but* in his [m]son's days will I bring the evil upon his house.

CHAPTER XXII.

1 *Ahab, seduced by false prophets, according to the word of Micaiah is slain at Ramoth-gilead.* 37 *The dogs lick up his blood, and Ahaziah succeedeth him.* 41 *Jehoshaphat's good reign.* 45 *His acts.* 50 *Jehoram succeedeth him.* 51 *Ahaziah's wicked reign.*

AND they continued [a]three years without war between Syria and Israel.

2 And it [b]came to pass in the third year, that Jehoshaphat the king of Judah came down to the king of Israel.

3 (And the king of Israel said unto his servants, Know ye that [c]Ramoth in Gilead *is* [1]ours, and we *be* still,[2] *and* take it not out of the hand of the king of Syria?)

4 And he said unto Jehoshaphat, [d]Wilt thou go with me to battle to Ramoth-gilead? And Jehoshaphat said to the king of Israel, I *am* as

A.M. 3105. B.C. 899.

o De.19.15.Le.24.14-16.Ac.6.11,13.

8 Or, the *gods* and the king, an accusation which was in part probably true. For if Naboth was a worshipper of the true God, it is not unlikely he might, as in duty and conscience bound, have spoken disrespectfully, and, in that sense, blasphemously of Jezebel's false gods. There would thus be a semblance of justice, by a perversion of law.—*C.*

p Jos.7.24. Mar. 15.20.

9 It was a preconcerted scheme for perjury and murder. The charge was false; but the two witnesses affirmed it, and therefore the elders of the city had a pretext for putting to death a man who was in reality innocent. Blasphemy was by Jewish law punishable with death. There was also an express statute against cursing a civil ruler, Ex. 22. 28. —*P.*

q Ex. 1. 17. 1 Sa. 22. 18,23.20. Pr.29.12. Ac. 5.20. Le.19.15. De. 27. 19.

r De.19.18,19. Pr.19. 9. Mar.14.56-58.

s Job 1.5; 2.9. Ac. 6. 11,13. Lu.23.2.

t And his sons, 2Ki. 9. 26. Jos.7.24, 25. Nu. 15.32,36;16.32,33.

u Ec.8.14;9.1,2.

x ver.7,13.

1 It is evident from 2 Ki. 9. 26 that Naboth's sons were, by some additional perjury, implicated in the charge against their father; for the one perjury was as easily purchased as the other, and that Ahab now thought the way clear for a possession, as by *attainder* for treason, or *forfeiture* to the crown.—*C.*

y 2 Ki.9.26. Ps.9. 12; 10.11-15. He.3.13.

z 2 Sa. 12.9. Ge.4.9-12. Hab.2.9-12.

a 2 Sa.12. 11. ch. 22. 38. 2 Ki. 9. 25,26. Ps. 9. 12,15,16;7.15,16.

2 It is in vain to look for a *literal* fulfilment of this prediction. Thus it would have been fulfilled, but the humiliation of Ahab induced the merciful God to say, 'I will not bring the evil in his days, but in the days of his son,' ver. 39. Now dogs did lick the blood of Ahab, but it was at the pool of Samaria. And how literally the prediction concerning his son was fulfilled, see 2 Ki.9.25.—*Clarke.*

b ch.18.17;22.8. Am. 5.10. Ga.4.16.

3 Elijah was his best, perhaps his only friend; yet, like all other thoughtless wicked men, he counts him his enemy 'because he tells him the truth.'—*C.*

c 2 Ki. 17. 17. Ep. 4. 19.Ge.13.13.ver.25.

d ch.14.10; 15.29; 16. 3,4.11; 22.34-38. 2 Ki.i. ix.x.

4 Every sinner seeks his price; and 'verily he has his reward.' Our first parents sinned, expecting to be 'as gods.' Ahab sinned, expecting first a vineyard; and, secondly, contentment; but in each case, the sale was a sale of holy liberty, and the consequence a slavery to the power of evil.—*C.*

5 The dog that roams at large without a master, as in some European and most eastern towns. —*C.*

6 Him that is fortified and secure as legitimate and acknowledged heir of the kingdom.—*C.*

e 2 Ki.9.36. Ps. 9. 15, 16;7.16;140.11. Pr.1.31; 5.22;13.21. Is.3.11. Ro. 3.8,9.

7 Or, *ditch.*

f ch.14. 11; 16. 4. Je. 15.3.ver.21,22.

g ch.16.33; ver. 20. 2 Ki.3.2.

h Ge.3.6; 6. 2, 5. ch. 11.1,4. 2 Co.6.14. Ec.7. 26. Pr.22.14;23.27.

8 This does not excuse Ahab. Jezebel's sin was that of *stirring up;* Ahab's that of *compliance;* their wickedness differs not in nature, but in order.—*C.*

9 Or, *incited.*

i Le. xviii. xx. 2 Ki. xvi.xxi.

k Ge.37.29, 34. 2 Ki. 18.37;22.11. Jonah 3. 6. Is. 36. 15; 37. 1. Ac. 24. 25. 2 Co.7.10.

1 The efforts of translators to expound this term have been various, yet concurrent. Yet is not the real meaning to be found in ver. 29, humbly? Mi.6.8.—*C.*

l Ps.78.34-37. Jonah 3.6-11.

2 God had said, ver. 21, 'I will bring evil upon thee.' How does he now transfer it to his posterity? He did bring evil upon him by his threatening the execision of his house; but lays upon him no more than the certain anticipation, and on his impenitent son the dreadful reality. —*C.*

m 2 Ki.i.vi.ix.x. ch. 11.12,35.

CHAP. XXII.

B.C. 897.

a From ch. 20. 29-34.

b 2 Ch.18. 2-34. Jehoshaphat's son had married Ahab's daughter.

c De.4.43. Jos. 20. 8; 21. 38. 2 Ki.8.28;9.1.ch. 4.13.

1 By God's donation as a city of refuge, Jos.21.3,8, and by the treaty of Benhadad, ch.20.34.—*C.*

2 Heb. *silent from taking it.*

d 2 Ch. 18. 3; 19. 2. 2 Ki.3.7.Pr.13.20. Ep.5. 11.1 Co.15.33.

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adherence to the Lord's command when we meet with strong temptations. How insatiable is a covetous heart! Many great men, in all that they have, can enjoy but small pleasure because of some fancied want: and proud and discontented spirits terribly torment themselves. What a plague to nations are covetous and tyrannical rulers! Having their heart set on wickedness, the devil quickly furnishes the means: and nothing is too base and hypocritical, or even horrid or blasphemous, for them to stick at. When sin has hardened their heart, men glory in their wickedness and are lost to shame. But that which is unlawfully gotten frequently proves a burden instead of a comfort. The very presence of faithful ministers, who cannot endure to see the wicked perishing in their iniquities, is a terror to such, and their faithful rebukes torment them: but how much more, and how often even in this life, does the eternal justice of God perplex and pursue them! Legal terrors may produce strong professions of repentance, but only a sense of God's pardoning love can convert the heart. And if God mark such regard to apparent repentance how great is his mercy, and how great is his regard to those who sorrow after a godly sort!

CHAPTER XXII. REFLECTIONS.—Wicked sovereigns pay little regard to the laws either of gratitude or of solemn treaties. It is taking hold of the opportunities which God puts in our hand, not leagues with perfidious princes, that will secure our rights; and least of all ought leagues extorted by distress to be trusted to. The worst of men from selfish motives will court the friendship of the godly; but whenever opportunity serves are sure to expose them to danger. The conscience, the life of saints, yea, and all that they have, are endangered by sinful compliances to evil men: but tender saints can never delight in evil and flattering ministers, nor fail to regard the faithful servants of God. Unity and multitude are poor proofs of a good cause. Nothing is a surer sign of an evil minister than his encouraging wicked and hypocritical men to sleep on in their sin: nor is anything a more dreadful plague to persons or nations than the united flattery of unfaithful ministers. When flatterers abound the men of God ought to be the more bold and faithful in opposition to them. Hardened sinners will indeed hate them for dealing faithfully with their conscience, but God will stand by them when he gives up the lovers of flattery to be imposed on by it to their own ruin; and multitudes of evil spirits are always awaiting his permission to delude into destruction their own

thou *art*, my people as thy people, my horses as thy horses.[3]

5 ¶ And Jehoshaphat said unto the king of Israel, [e]Inquire, I pray thee, at the word of the LORD to-day.[4]

6 Then the king of Israel gathered the [f]prophets together, about four hundred men,[5] and said unto them, Shall I go against Ramoth-gilead to battle, or shall I forbear? And they said, Go up; [g]for the Lord[6] shall deliver *it* into the hand of the king.

7 ¶ And Jehoshaphat said, [h]*Is there* not here a prophet of the LORD besides, that we might inquire of him?

8 And the king of Israel said unto Jehoshaphat, *There is* yet [i]one man (Micaiah the son of Imlah) by whom we may [k]inquire of the LORD: but [l]I hate him; for he doth not prophesy [m]good concerning me, but evil. And Jehoshaphat said, Let not the king say so.

9 Then the king of Israel called an officer,[7] and said, Hasten *hither* Micaiah the son of Imlah.

10 And the king of Israel, and Jehoshaphat the king of Judah, sat each on his throne, having [n]put on their robes, in a void place[8] in the entrance of the gate of Samaria; and all the prophets [o]prophesied before them.

11 And Zedekiah the son of Chenaanah made him [p]horns of iron; and he said, [q]Thus saith the LORD, With these shalt thou push the Syrians, until thou have consumed them.

12 And all the prophets prophesied so, saying,[r] Go up to Ramoth-gilead, and prosper: for the LORD shall deliver *it* into the king's hand.

13 And the messenger that was gone to call Micaiah spake unto him, saying, Behold now, the[s] words of the prophets *declare* good unto the king with one mouth: let thy word, I pray thee, be like the word of one of them, and speak *that which is* good.[9]

14 And Micaiah said, *As* the LORD liveth, what[t] the LORD saith unto me, that will I speak.

15 ¶ So he came to the king. And the king said unto him, Micaiah, shall we go against Ramoth-gilead to battle, or shall we forbear? And he answered him, [u]Go, and prosper: for the LORD shall deliver *it* into the hand of the king.[1]

16 And the king said unto him, How many times shall I [x]adjure thee that thou tell me nothing but *that which is* true in the name of the LORD?

17 And he said, [y]I saw all Israel [z]scattered upon the hills, as sheep that have not a shepherd: and the LORD said, These have no master; let them return every man to his house in peace.

18 And the king of Israel said unto Jehoshaphat, Did [a]I not tell thee that he would prophesy no good concerning me, but evil?

19 And he said, Hear thou therefore the word of the LORD: I saw the LORD [b]sitting on his throne, and all the [c]host of heaven standing by him on his right hand and on his left.

20 And the LORD said, Who shall [2]persuade Ahab, that he may go up and fall at Ramoth-gilead? And one said on this manner, and another said on that manner.

21 And there came [d]forth a spirit, and stood before the LORD, and said, I will persuade him.

22 And the LORD said unto him, Wherewith? And he said, I will go forth, and I [e]will be a lying spirit in the mouth of all his prophets. And he said, Thou [f]shalt persuade *him*, and prevail also:[3] go forth, and do so.

23 Now therefore, behold, the LORD hath put a lying spirit[4] in the mouth of all these thy prophets, and the LORD hath spoken evil concerning thee.

24 ¶ But Zedekiah the son of Chenaanah went near, and [g]smote Micaiah on the cheek, and said, Which way went the Spirit of the LORD from me to speak unto thee?

25 And Micaiah said, Behold, thou shalt see in that day, when thou shalt go into [h]an inner chamber[5] to hide thyself.

26 And the king of Israel said, Take Micaiah, and carry him back[6] unto Amon the governor of the city, and to Joash the king's son;

27 And say, Thus saith the king, [i]Put this *fellow* in the prison, and feed him with [k]bread of affliction, and with water of affliction, until I come in peace.

28 And Micaiah said, [l]If thou return at all in peace, the LORD hath not spoken by me. And he said, [m]Hearken, O people, every one of you.

29 ¶ So[n] the king of Israel, and Jehoshaphat the king of Judah, went up to Ramoth-gilead.[7]

30 And the king of Israel said unto Jehoshaphat, I will disguise myself,[8] and enter into the battle; [o]but put thou on thy [9]robes. And the king of Israel disguised himself, and went into the battle.

31 ¶ But the king of Syria commanded his [p]thirty and two captains that had rule over his chariots, saying, [q]Fight neither with

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3 We are all willing and ready.
e Nu. 27. 21. Ju. 1. 1; 20. 18, 23, 28. 1 Sa. 23. 4, 10, 11. 2 Sa. 2. 1; 5. 19, 23.

4 The inconsistency of Jehoshaphat appears in engaging in the war, ver. 4, and now proposing to ask counsel of the LORD. By this we are prepared for the further inconsistency of refusing God's counsel when given (ver. 29) by his true prophet.—*Note*, It is one thing humbly to seek counsel of God in our perplexities, another thing to search for his concurrence in our own previous determinations.—*C.*

f Of the groves, ch. 18. 19.

5 The prophets of Baal were 450, ch. 18. 19, and all these perished, ver. 40. But the prophets of the *groves* were 400, ch. 18. 40, and these still remained, and were most probably the false and flattering prophets now assembled.—*C.*

g Eze. 13. 7. Je. 28. 1–4; 9. 14. 13. 14. ver. 22, 23.

6 Their reply is, in the Hebrew, not JEHOVAH, but ADONAI, a word which would not offend Jehoshaphat as Baal would, but which enables them to avoid honouring Jehovah, the true God.—*Note*, Equivocal expressions are amongst the surest marks of heresy, whereas it ever stands self-condemned by avoiding to discover its real meaning, Tit. 3. 11.—*C.*

h 2 Ki. 3. 11. 2 Ch. 18. 6.

i ch. 18. 4; 19. 10; ver. 27. Re. 2. 10.

k Je. 42. 5, 6; 43. 2, 3.

l ch. 20. 43; 21. 20. Ge. 37. 8. Ps. 38. 19. Am. 5. 10. Jn. 7. 7; 15. 18, 19. Ga. 4. 16. 2 Ti. 4. 3.

m Je. 38. 4. Mi. 2. 11. Is. 58. 1. Ho. 8. 1. ch. 20. 35–42.

7 Or, *eunuch.*

n Ac. 12. 21. Es. 6. 8, 9. 2 Ch. 18. 9.

8 Heb. *floor.*

o ch. 29. 1 Sa. 18. 10. Eze. 13. 2–8. Is. 30. 10.

p Je. 27. 2; 28. 13. Zec. 1. 18, 19.

q Je. 14. 13, 14; 23. 25–32; 28. 2, 3; 29. 21. Eze. 13. 2–8.

r ver. 6, 15, 22, 23, 32–36.

s Ho. 7. 3. Is. 30. 10. Eze. 3. 19, 22. Mi. 2. 11.

9 Alas! for the lot of kings, for whom, and for all in authority, let us ever pray; for the object of many is not so much to counsel them as to please them, and if possible even the servants of the Lord will be seduced to flatter them.—*C.*

t Je. 23, 28; 42. 4. 1 Co. 11. 23; 14. 1, 2. Eze. 2. 7; 3. 17. Ac. 20. 27.

u ch. 18. 27. Ec. 11. 9. Ju. 14. Mat. 26. 45. 2 Ch. 18. 14.

x Mat. 26. 63. 1 Sa. 14. 24. I charge thee as thou shalt answer to God.

y Eze. 1. 4. Ac. 10. 11, 17. Je. 1. 11–15.

z Zec. 13. 7. Je. 23. 28. Mat. 9. 36. ver. 34, 36.

1 Was the Lord's prophet guilty of uttering an untruth? No; words are true or false, not according to the meaning they may or ordinarily do bear, but according to the meaning they are at any special time intended and known to bear. Ahab knew, probably by Micaiah's looking at or pointing to the false prophets, or by the tone of Micaiah's voice, that the words were not his own, but a quotation, and therefore he adjures him to deliver his own words. *C.*—Perhaps some ironical gesture accompanied Micaiah's words. Many instances of irony are to be found in Scripture, and that Micaiah spoke in irony is too manifest to escape the notice of the most cursory reader. His words are precisely those of the false prophets, ver. 6, 12, and were doubtless intended by him to reprove the king for his idolatry and impiety. That the design of the prophet was perceived by Ahab is evident from his *immediately* adjuring him to speak nothing but the truth, that is, to discover to him what really would be the result of the expedition, upon which the prophet assumed another tone, and related to him his vision.—*J.*

a ver. 8.
b Is. 6. 1; 66. 1. Re. 4. 2, 3. Da. 7. 9, 10.
c Ps. 103. 20, 21; 68. 17; 104. 4. Da. 7. 10. Job 1. 6; 2. 1.

2 Or, *deceive.* This is to be understood figuratively.

d ver. 22. Job 1. 6; 2. 1. 2 Th. 2. 11.
e Jn. 8. 44. 1 Jn. 4. 6. Re. 12. 9. 2 Th. 2. 11.
f Ju. 9. 23. Job 12. 16. Ps. 109. 17. Eze. 14. 9. 2 Th. 2. 11, 12.

3 This relation is either a parable or vision, representing, as by a picture, more vividly than by words, the utter falsehood of Ahab's prophets. No one ever mistakes a parable for a literal fact, or accuses the narrator of untruth; and infidels only stultify themselves when they accuse the Bible by applying a rule that, in no other case, is ever for a moment applied.—*C.*

4 This may be understood literally, for God by giving over liars to the guidance of a lying spirit is righteously adjudging them to the darkness they loved, and in that sense, and in that only, may he said not merely to permit a lying spirit to enter, but actually to put a lying spirit in their mouth.—*C.*

g 2 Ch. 18. 23. Je. 20. 2. Job 16. 2. La. 3. 30. Ac. 23. 2. Mar. 14. 65.

h Heb. *a chamber in a chamber*, ch. 20. 30. Nu. 31. 8. Je. 23. 15.

5 Or, *from chamber to chamber.*

6 The prophet had been in prison for his honest rebuking and warning of Ahab.—*C.*

i 2 Ch. 16. 10. Je. 20. 2; 29. 26; 32. 2; 37. 15.
k De. 16. 3. Ps. 80. 5; 127. 2. Is. 30. 20.
l Nu. 16. 29. Je. 28. 8, 9. De. 18. 18, 22. Is. 44. 26.
m Mi. 1. 2. Je. 22. 29. Is. 1. 2. Am. 3. 1; 4. 1. Ho. 8. 1.
n ver. 2. 2 Ch. 18. 28.

7 A distance of about 24 miles. Jehoshaphat goes up on the authority of 400 prophets against *one*. But neither truth nor its evidence should be tested by the numbers or concurrence of witnesses, but by their character, means of knowledge, object, corroborative circumstances, and the internal nature of the testimony itself.—*C.*

8 Or, *when he was to disguise himself and enter into the battle.*

o ch. 14. 2; 20. 38. Ps. 12. 2. ver. 31, 32.

9 Affecting to place or really placing him thus as a mere spectator.—*C.*

p ch. 20. 4.
q Je. 16. 6. 2 Ch. 35. 22, with ch. 20. 33, 42. So ungratefully Benhadad rewarded his sinful kindness.

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most hearty votaries. Faithful ministers are commonly rewarded with persecution and abuse: and none are more bitter enemies than the teachers of lies. But God will quickly vindicate his servants in accomplishing the threatenings which they have denounced. Such as are guileless themselves are unsuspicious of others: but wicked men, to compass their own ends, will not stick to betray their best friends. And indeed when the godly are out of the way of their duty they need

small nor great, save only with the king of Israel.

32 And it came to pass, when the captains of the chariots saw Jehoshaphat, that they said, Surely it *is* the king of Israel. And they turned[r] aside to fight against him; and Jehoshaphat [s]cried out.[9]

33 And it came to pass, when the captains of the chariots perceived that it *was* not the king of Israel, that they turned back from pursuing him.

34 ¶ And a *certain* man drew a bow [t]at a venture,[1] and smote the king of Israel between the joints[2] of the harness: wherefore he said unto the driver of his chariot, Turn thine hand, and carry me out of the host; for I am wounded.[3]

35 And [u]the battle increased[4] that day:[5] and the king was stayed up[6] in his chariot against the Syrians, and died at even: and the blood ran out of the wound into the midst[7] of the chariot.

36 And there went a proclamation throughout the host about the going down of the sun, saying, [x]Every man to his city, and every man to his own country.[8]

37 ¶ So the king died, and was brought[9] to Samaria; and they buried the king in Samaria.

38 And *one* washed the chariot in the pool of Samaria; and the dogs licked up his blood; and they washed his armour; [y]according unto the word of the LORD which he spake.

39 ¶ Now [z]the rest of the acts of Ahab, and all that he did, and the [a]ivory house[1] which he made, and all the cities that he built, *are* they not written in the book of the Chronicles of the kings of Israel?

40 So Ahab slept with his fathers; and Ahaziah his son reigned in his stead.

41 ¶ And [b]Jehoshaphat the son of Asa began to reign over Judah in the fourth year of Ahab king of Israel.

42 Jehoshaphat *was* thirty and five years old[2] when he began to reign; and he reigned [c]twenty and five years in Jerusalem: and his [d]mother's name *was* Azubah, the daughter of Shilhi.

43 And he [e]walked in all the ways of Asa his father; he turned not aside from it, doing *that which was* right in the eyes of the LORD: nevertheless [f]the high places were not taken away; *for* the people offered and burnt incense yet in the high places.[3]

44 And Jehoshaphat [g]made peace with the king of Israel.

45 Now [h]the rest of the acts of Jehoshaphat, and his might that he showed, and how he warred, *are* they not written in the book of the Chronicles of the kings of Judah?

46 And the [i]remnant of the sodomites, which remained in the days of his father Asa, he took out of the land.[4]

47 *There was* then [k]no king in Edom: a deputy *was* king.

48 Jehoshaphat made ships[5] of [6]Tharshish [l]to go to Ophir[7] for gold: but they went not; for the ships were broken[8] at [m]Ezion-geber.

49 Then said Ahaziah the son of Ahab unto Jehoshaphat, Let my servants go with thy servants in the ships: but [n]Jehoshaphat would [9]not.

50 ¶ And Jehoshaphat [o]slept with his [1]fathers, and was buried with his fathers in the city of David his father: and Jehoram his son reigned in his stead.

51 ¶ Ahaziah the son of Ahab began to reign[2] over Israel in Samaria the seventeenth year of Jehoshaphat king of Judah, and reigned [p]two years over Israel.

52 And he [q]did evil in the sight of the LORD, and walked in the way of his father, and in the way of his mother, and in the way of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who made Israel to sin:

53 For he served [r]Baal, and worshipped him, and provoked to anger the LORD God of Israel, according to all that his father had done.

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r 2 Ch.18.31. ver.31. Pr.13.20.

s 2 Ch.18. 31. ch. 17, 20,21. Ps.130.1;34.6;40. 17;142.4,5;140.1; 143. 7. Ex.14.15.

9 Not as a coward, but to inform them that he was a mere spectator, as at a public tournament, of which the royal robes instead of armour would afford a decisive evidence.—*C.*

t Heb. *in his simplicity*, 2 Sa.15.11.

1 Not at random, but with the utmost skill and strength, according to Frey, who translates it by 'perfection,' which these qualities constitute. *C.* —— The Hebrew word signifies 'in simplicity,' *i.e.* without any design of killing Ahab, without any knowledge that Ahab was before him. The word refers exclusively to the *intention*, and not to the physical power put forth. The man saw the enemy, shot at them, and the arrow pierced the armour of Ahab.—*P.*

2 Heb. *joints and the breastplate.*

3 Heb. *made sick.*

u ch.20. 42. ver. 17, 28.2 Ch.18.34.

4 Heb. *ascended.*

5 The army would be little affected by the wound and temporary retirement of the king; for on comparing ver. 34, 35, he seems to have retired and returned, as his disguise would prevent them from knowing his disaster, which might have dispirited his army. —*C.*

6 Dathe has, 'was compelled to remain in his chariot,' the Syrians pressing him so sore that he could not quit the field.—*I.*

7 Heb. *bosom.*

x ver.17. 2 Ki.14. 12. 2 Sa.18.16.ch.12.16.

8 When Ahab's death was known, those who succeeded in command issued this proclamation, which was a complete accomplishment of Micaiah's vision, ver. 17.—*I.*

9 Heb. *came.*

y ch.21.19.

z ch.14.19;15.31;16. 5,20,27. 2 Ki. 1. 18; 10. 34; 13.8,9,12, 13; 14. 15, 16,28,29.

a Am.3.15. Ps.45.8. ch.10.18.

1 Inlaid with ivory, or with much furniture, ornamented with ivory, as tables, couches, throne, ch. 10.18, &c.—*C.*

b 2 Ch.20.31.

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2 B.C. 914.

c 2 Ki.1.17;8.16.

d Ch.14.21;15.2,10.

e 2 Ch.15. 10; 17. 3. 2 Ch.xvii.-xx., with xiv xv.

f ch.15.14 2 Ki.14.3, 4;15.3,4,34, 35. Le. 26. 30. But it was to God, not to idols.

3 This statement is reconciled with 2 Ch. 17, 6, by observing that it is there said, 'he took away the high places and groves,' which shows they were the seats of idolatry; while the high places, where, in unsettled times, the true God was wont to be served, were still, through some neglect or difficulty, permitted to remain.—*C.*

g 2 Ch.19. 2. 2 Co. 6. 14. He.12.14. Ep.5.11. 2 Co.15.33.

h ch.11.41;14.29; 15. 7, 23. 2 Ki. 8, 23, 24; 12. 19; 14. 18; 15. 6,7,36,38; 16. 19, 20; 20.20, 21; 21. 17,18,25;23.28.

i ch.15.12. Ge.13.13. Jude 7. Ro. 1. 26, 27. De.23.17.

4 By banishment, or even death, as the law of God directed, a law still in force in these lands.—*C.*

k Ge.25. 23; 27. 40. 2 Sa.8.14.2 Ki.3.9;8.20.

5 Or, had *ten ships.*

6 See note on ch. 10.22.—*C.*

l 2 Ch. 20. 35, 36. ch. 10.22;9.28.

7 See note on ch. 9.28.—*C.*

8 Or, according to Parkhurst, merely injured, and capable of repair, and to sail, as proposed by Ahaziah. It appears from 2 Ch. 20. 36 that Jehoshaphat and Ahaziah had been joined in building the fleet, but that after the storm, Jehoshaphat, warned by Eliezer, refused to make any farther attempt.—*C.*

m ch.9.26. Nu.33.35, 36.

n 2 Ch. 20. 37; 25. 7. Pr.9.6;13.20;1.10,14.

9 In 2 Ch.20.36 it is said he *did* join Ahaziah in a nautical expedition; but perhaps the reference here is to a second proposal which he rejected. Some, however, by changing one Hebrew letter (of similar sound), instead of 'would not,' translate 'consented to him.' This would harmonize the two narratives better still. The order of events would then be (1) The alliance with Amaziah, ver.44. (2) His proposal, ver.49. (3) The destruction of the combined fleet, ver.48. Eziongeber was at the head of the north-east arm of the Red Sea, and there is a dangerous ridge of rocks there, where Tarshish ships (*i.e.* large vessels) might easily be wrecked.—*I.*

o ch.2.10;11.43;14.24. Is.57.2. Re.14.13. Phi.1.23. 1 B.C. 889. 2 B.C. 897. *p* ch.15.25. 2 Ki.1.17. *q* ch.16.30–32;21.25;12.26–33;13.33. *r* Ju.2.11.ch.16.31;21.25.

not wonder that they fall into mischief. But if they cry unto the Lord they will find him a present help in the time of trouble. When the hour of men is come there is no avoiding their destiny. By events which to us are purely accidental, God can execute his purpose and accomplish his word. No character on earth except Christ's is perfectly spotless. Even good men are apt to indulge long-rooted customs of sinning. But how unwise is it for them to cultivate familiarity with the wicked, even after they have smarted for it! and it is a mercy if repeated strokes make them amend their error at the last.

AHAB'S WELL IN JEZREEL, WHERE AHAB BUILT HIS IVORY PALACE. [II. KINGS, xxii: 39.]—"Now the rest of the acts of Ahab, and all that he did, and the ivory house which he made, and all the cities that he built, are they not written in the book of the Chronicles of the kings of Israel?" Jezreel, now known by the name of Zerin, lies at the base of the Gilboa mountain, 10 miles southeast of Nazareth. There are about 20 houses here now and a square tower. It is a beautiful site for a city, and is conspicuous for many miles around. The historic well, which we give in the above picture, is at the bottom of the hill to the north of the city. To this place the women from Jezreel still come, as in Bible times, with their earthen jars to get water. It was in Jezreel that Ahab lived with Jezebel, his heathen wife, and it is in evidence that here he built his ivory house, and here there was a temple and grove of Astarte, with his establishment of 400 priests of Baal supported by Jezebel.

THE SECOND BOOK OF

KINGS.

The Second Book of Kings is but a continuation of the former, from the death of Ahab to the death of Jehoiachin, which is about three hundred and forty years. The principal events recorded are, (1) The miracles of Elijah and Elisha, i.–vii. xiii. (2) The destruction of the family of Ahab by Jehu, viii.–x. (3) The misery of Israel under Jehu and Jehoahaz, from the oppressions of the Syrians, and their restoration by Joash and Jeroboam, xiii. xiv.; and in fine, their civil wars, harassment and captivity by the Assyrians, xv. xvii. (4) The history of Judah under fifteen kings; of whom Jehoram, Ahaz, Manasseh, and Amon were most wicked, and Hezekiah and Josiah most pious and reforming: and in fine, of their harassment and captivity by the Chaldeans, viii.–xxv.

CHAPTER I.

1 Moab rebelleth. 2 Ahaziah, sending to Baalzebub, hath his judgment by Elijah. 5 Elijah twice bringeth fire from heaven upon those whom Ahaziah sent to apprehend him. 13 He pitieth the third captain, and, encouraged by an angel, telleth the king of his approaching death. 17 Jehoram succeedeth Ahaziah.

A.M. 3108. B.C. 896.

THEN Moab[a] rebelled against Israel after the death of Ahab.

2 And Ahaziah fell down through a lattice[1] in his upper chamber that *was* in Samaria, and was [b]sick: and he sent messengers, and said unto them, Go, inquire of [c]Baal-zebub,[2] the god of [d]Ekron,[3] whether I shall recover of this disease.

3 But the angel of the LORD said to [e]Elijah the Tishbite, Arise, go up to meet the messengers of the king of Samaria, and say unto them, [f]*Is it* not because *there is* not a God in Israel, *that* ye go to inquire of Baal-zebub the god of Ekron?

4 Now therefore thus saith the LORD, [4]Thou shalt not come down from that bed on which thou art gone up, [g]but shalt surely die. And Elijah departed.

5 ¶ And when the messengers turned back unto him, he said unto them, Why are ye now turned back?

6 And they said unto him, There came a man up to meet us, and said unto us, Go, turn again unto the king that sent you, and say unto him, Thus saith the LORD, [h]*Is it* not because *there is* not a God in Israel, *that* thou sendest to inquire of Baal-zebub the god of Ekron? therefore thou shalt not come down from that bed on which thou art gone up, but shalt surely die.

7 And he said unto them, [i]What manner of man *was he* which came up to meet you, and told you these words?

8 And they answered him, *He was* an [k]hairy man,[5] and girt with a girdle of leather about his loins.[6] And he said, It *is* Elijah the Tishbite.

A.M. 3108. B.C. 896.

CHAP. I.

a 2 Sa. 8. 2. 1 Ki. 12. 19, ch. 3. 3–5; 8. 20, 22.

1 Either a latticed window, or from a balustrade or railing around the battlements of the flat roof.—*C.*

b 1 Ki. 22. 34. 2 Ch. 21. 14, 15.

c Master of flies, Mat. 12. 24–27.

2 'The fly-god,' either because worshipped under that form, or as protecting from the annoyance of flies. The Greeks worshipped *Jupiter Apomyius*, or the fly-expeller. The Hindoo *Vrayavar* is represented as assuming the form of a wasp, for annoyance of his enemies; and, like Baalzebub, is applied to in time of sickness.—*C.*

d Jos. 15. 45. 1 Sa. 5. 10.

3 Ekron was one of the five royal cities of Philistia, and stood on the northern border of the land where it joined the plain of Sharon. It is now a poor village of some fifty mud houses, which are built on the accumulated rubbish of ages. With the exception of one or two wells and cisterns, there is not a vestige of antiquity remaining.—*P.*

e 1 Ki. 17. 1; 18. 1; 21. 17–19; 14 5, 12.

f Je. 2. 10–13. Jonah 2. 8. Is 8. 19.

4 Heb. *The bed whither thou art gone up, thou shalt not come down from it.*

g Is. 14. 20, 21. Pr. 11. 19; 13. 21; 1. 31; 14. 32. Job 18. 11–19. ver. 6, 16, 17.

h ver. 3, 4, 16, 17.

i Heb. *What was the manner of the man*, Ju. 8. 18.

k 1 Sa. 28. 14. Mat. 3. 4. Zec. 13. 4.

5 Most probably a reference, not to his person, but his raiment. See Is. 20. 2. Zec. 13. 4. Mat. 2. 4. He. 11. 37.—*C.*

6 '*A man lord of hair, and girt with a leather girdle about his loins.*' Elijah was a native of Gilead, where the whole people seem to have adopted to a large extent the habits and costume of the nomad tribes. All the nomad Arabs wear a full beard, and allow the hair to grow very long, arranging it in plaits or ringlets down the back and chest. Such a man, when contrasted with the Jew of western Palestine, with trim beard and close-cut hair, would naturally be described as 'lord of hair.' The costume of the nomad Arab, too, has ever been a loose mantle girt about the waist by a girdle of leather. It is a remarkable fact that the personal appearance and costume of the whole inhabitants of Gilead are to this day what they were in the days of Elijah.—*P.*

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l 1 Ki. 19. 2. Mat. 14. 8. Ac. 23. 12, 13. 2 Ki. 6. 13, 14.

m Ju. 15. 11. 1 Ki. 18. 42. ch. 4. 25.

7 Probably Carmel, which was his usual place of abode. See ch. 2. 25 and 1 Ki. 18. 42.—*P.*

n In derision. Mat. 27. 29. 1 Ch. 16. 22. Ps. 105. 15.

8 Spoken, not in acknowledgment, but in contempt of his character, and derision of his alleged commission from God.—*C.*

o Nu. 11. 1, 1 Ki. 18. 38. Job 1. 16. Lu. 9. 54. Ac. 5. 3–10. Re. 11. 5. 2 Co. 10. 6. Ja. 5. 17. Ps. 106. 18.

9 Amongst apostates prone to the worship of Baal, or the sun, the appeal to the judgment of fire was the most appropriate. That the prophet prayed, not out of personal resentment, but by divine inspiration, is evident from the event: the lightning descended and smote the mockers of Jehovah—an emblem of the judgment at the end of the world. See 2 Th. 1. 18.—*C.*

p Nu. 11. 4. Is. 26. 11. 2 Ti. 3. 13. Je. 5. 3.

q ch. 13. 6. Je. 9. 3.

r ver. 10. This fearful punishment they deserved, as they were idolaters, murderers of the saints, and insulters of a prophet whom God had marked with singular authority.

s ver. 9–12. Je. 5. 3. Is. 1, 5; 26. 11.

t Heb. *bowed*, Ac. 10. 25. 1 Th. 5. 13.

u Ps. 72. 14; 102. 17; 10. 17. Lu. 14. 11; 18. 13.

x Je. 1. 17. Eze. 2. 6. Is. 41. 10, 14, 15. Ro. 8. 31. He. 13. 6; 11. 27.

y Ex. 4. 22. 1 Sa. 2. 27. 2 Sa. 12. 11. 1 Ki. 12. 24; 14. 6, 7. ver. 3, 4, 6. Eze. 2. 7; 3. 17. Je. 23. 28.

9 Then the king [l]sent unto him a captain of fifty with his fifty: and he went up to him: (and, behold, he sat [m]on the top of an hill:[7]) and he spake unto him, [n]Thou man of [8]God, the king hath said, Come down.

10 And Elijah answered and said to the captain of fifty, If I *be* a man of God, then [o]let fire come down from heaven,[9] and consume thee and thy fifty. And there came down fire from heaven, and consumed him and his fifty.

11 Again[p] also he sent unto him another captain of fifty with his fifty: and he [q]answered and said unto him, O man of God, thus hath the king said, Come down quickly.

12 And Elijah answered and said unto them, [r]If I *be* a man of God, let fire come down from heaven, and consume thee and thy fifty. And the fire of God came down from heaven, and consumed him and his fifty.

13 ¶ And he sent [s]again a captain of the third fifty with his fifty: and the third captain of fifty went up, and came and [t]fell on his knees before Elijah, and besought him, and said unto him, [u]O man of God, I pray thee, let my life, and the life of these fifty thy servants, be precious in thy sight.

14 Behold, there came fire down from heaven, and burnt up the two captains of the former fifties with their fifties: therefore let my life now be precious in thy sight.

15 And the angel of the LORD said unto Elijah, Go down with him; [x]be not afraid of him. And he arose, and went down with him unto the king.

16 And he said unto him, [y]Thus saith the LORD, Forasmuch as thou hast sent messengers to inquire of Baal-zebub the god of Ekron, (*is it* not because *there is* no God in Israel to inquire of his word?) therefore thou shalt not come down off that bed on which thou art gone up, but shalt surely die.

CHAPTER I. REFLECTIONS.—If we apostatize from God we need not wonder that our inferiors revolt from or rebel against us. Death often apprehends men when and where they least expected it. And much more ready are men curiously to inquire when they shall die, than to prepare for a happy death. Many choose rather to risk their expense and toil, nay their damnation, in consulting the devil, than to consult God freely, to their present and eternal advantage.

17 ¶ So he died, according to the word of the LORD which Elijah had spoken: and [z]Jehoram reigned in his stead, in the second year of Jehoram[1] the son of Jehoshaphat king of Judah; because he had no son.[2]

18 Now [a]the rest of the acts of Ahaziah which he did, *are* they not written in the book of the Chronicles of the kings of Israel?

CHAPTER II.

1 Elijah, taking his leave of Elisha, with his mantle divideth Jordan, 9 and, granting Elisha his request, is taken up by a fiery chariot into heaven. 12 Elisha, dividing Jordan with Elijah's mantle, is acknowledged his successor. 16 The young prophets, with difficulty obtaining leave to seek Elijah, could not find him. 19 Elisha with salt healeth the unwholesome waters. 23 Bears destroy the children that mocked him.

AND it came to pass, when the LORD would take[a] up Elijah into heaven[1] by a whirlwind, that Elijah went [b]with Elisha from [c]Gilgal.

2 And Elijah said unto Elisha, [d]Tarry here, I pray thee;[2] for the LORD hath sent me to Beth-el. And Elisha said *unto him*, [e]*As* the LORD liveth, and *as* thy soul liveth, [f]I will not leave thee. So they went down to [g]Beth-el.

3 And the [h]sons of the prophets that *were* at Beth-el came forth to Elisha, and said unto him, Knowest thou that the LORD will take away thy master [i]from thy head to-day? And he said, Yea, I know *it;* hold ye your peace.

4 And Elijah said unto him, Elisha, tarry here, I pray thee; for the LORD hath sent me to [k]Jericho.[3] And he said, *As* the LORD liveth, and *as* thy soul liveth, I will not leave thee. So they came to Jericho.

5 And the sons of the prophets that *were* at Jericho came to Elisha, and said unto him, Knowest thou that the LORD will take away thy master from thy head to-day? And he answered, Yea, I know *it;* hold ye your peace.[4]

6 And Elijah said unto him, [l]Tarry, I pray thee, here; for the LORD hath sent me to Jordan. And he said, *As* the LORD liveth, and *as* thy soul liveth, I will not leave thee. And they two went on.

7 And fifty men of the sons of the prophets went, and stood [m]to view afar off: and they two stood by Jordan.

8 And Elijah took [n]his mantle, and wrapped *it* together, and smote the waters, and they were [o]divided hither and thither; so that they two went over on dry ground.

9 ¶ And it came to pass, when they were gone over, that Elijah said unto Elisha, [p]Ask what I shall do for thee, before I be taken away from thee. And Elisha said, I pray thee, let a [q]double portion of thy spirit be upon me.

10 And he said, Thou[5] hast asked a hard[6] thing:[7] *nevertheless*, if thou [r]see[8] me *when I am* taken from thee, it shall be so unto thee; but if not, it shall not be *so*.

11 And it came to pass, as they still went on and talked, that, behold, *there appeared* [s]a chariot of fire, and horses of fire, and parted them both asunder; and Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven.

12 ¶ And Elisha saw *it;* and he cried, [t]My father, my father! the chariot of Israel, and the horsemen thereof.[9] And he [u]saw him no more: and he took hold of his own clothes, and [x]rent them in two pieces.

13 He [y]took up also the mantle of Elijah that fell from him, and went back, and stood by the bank[1] of Jordan;

14 And he took the mantle of Elijah that fell from him, and [z]smote the waters, and said, Where *is* the LORD God of Elijah? And when he also had smitten the waters, they parted hither and thither; and Elisha went over.

15 And when the sons of the prophets which *were* [a]to view at Jericho saw him, they said, The spirit of Elijah doth rest on Elisha. And they came to meet him, and [b]bowed themselves to the ground before him.

16 ¶ And they said unto him, Behold now, there be with thy servants fifty strong men;[2] let them go, we pray thee, and seek thy master: lest peradventure the Spirit of the LORD hath taken him up, and cast him upon [c]some mountain, or into some valley. And he said, Ye shall not send.

17 And when they [d]urged him till he was ashamed,[3] he said, Send. They sent therefore fifty men; and they sought three days, but found him not.

18 And when they came again to him, (for he tarried at Jericho,) he said unto them, Did I not say unto you, Go not?

19 ¶ And the men of the city said unto Elisha, Behold, I pray thee,[4] the situation of this city *is* pleasant, as my lord seeth; but the [e]water *is* naught, and the ground [5]barren.[6]

20 And he said, Bring me a new cruse, and put [f]salt therein: and they brought *it* to him.

21 And he went forth unto the spring of the waters, and cast the salt in there, and said, Thus saith the LORD, [g]I have healed these waters; there shall not be from thence any more death or barren *land*.

22 So the waters were healed unto this day, according to the saying of Elisha which he [7]spake.[8]

23 ¶ And he went up from thence unto [h]Beth-el: and as he was going up by the way, there came forth little children out of the city, and [i]mocked him, and said unto him, Go [k]up, thou bald-head; go up, thou bald-head.[9]

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z The second year that *Jehoram* was *pro-rex*, and the eighteenth of *Jehoshaphat*, ch.3.1. 1 Ki. 22.51.

1 The apparently discordant accounts, 1 Ki. 22. 51, that in the text, and that in 2 Ki. 3. 1, may be easily reconciled by Johoram the son of Ahab having been made regent during the illness of Ahaziah, in the 18th of Jehoshaphat, 2 Ki. 3. 1, and the 2d year of the regency of Jehoram, the son of Jehoshaphat, 2 Ki. 1. 17.—*C.*

2 Ahaziah had no son, and Jehoram was his brother, ch.3.1.—*C.*

a 1 Ki. 14. 19; 15. 31; 16. 5, 14, 20, 27; 22. 39.

CHAP. II.

a Ge.5.24. He. 11. 5. Ac.1.9.

1 The time and event had been predicted, ver. 3, for the distinctive characteristic of a miracle is the prophecy preceding, and fulfilment succeeding, De.18.21, 22. Re.19.10.—*C.*

b 1 Ki.19.21.

c Jos.4.19; 5. 9. 1 Sa. 11.15.

d Ru.1.15. Jn. 6. 67. Lu.24.28.

2 Not spoken with a desire to evade his company, but to spare him the journey and the pain of a more formal parting, while he went to give a last advice and blessing to the school of the prophets in Bethel.—*C.*

e Ju.8.19. Ru.3.13. 2 Sa.15.21.ver.4,6; ch. 4. 30.

f ch.4.30. Ru. 1. 16, 17. Jn.6.68. Ac. 11. 23. Lu.24.29.

g Ge.28.19; 12. 8; 13. 3; 31. 13; 35. 1, 3,6,7,15. Jos.8.9. 1 Ki.12. 29; 13. 11.

h 1 Ki.18.4; 20. 35. 1 Sa. 19. 20. ver. 5, 7, 15; ch.4.19.1.Is.8.18.

i De.33.3. Ac.20.23.

k Jos.2.1; vi.1;18.21.1 Ki. 16. 34. Which it was lawful to inhabit, though not to rebuild.

3 Jericho was in Benjamin, and Bethel was in Ephraim, and there being a school of the prophets in each, patronized by Elijah, demonstrates that, in the midst of apostasy and idolatry, a religious education still formed a salt, Mat. 5. 13, resisting the corruption of both the kingdom of Judah and Israel.—*C.*

4 Lest a crowd, impelled by idle curiosity, should assemble to distract the parting scene of the prophet.—*C.*

l ver. 2.

m Heb. *in sight*, or *over against*, Ac.1.9.

n Ki.19.13,19.

o Ex.14.21,22. Jos.3. 17.ver.14.

p ch.13.14–19.1 Ki.8. 5. Mat.7. 7. Jn. 16. 24; 14.13,14; 15. 7. Mar.11.24.

q Nu. 11. 17, 25. Jn. 16.7,14.

5 Elijah's reply is in the usual style of the prophet, brief but clear and pointed—'Thou hast asked a difficult thing. If thou shalt see me being taken from thee, it shall be to thee so; but if not, it shall not be.'—*P.*

6 Heb. *Thou hast done hard in asking.*

7 Not hard to be obtained or bestowed—for neither was in the power of Elijah—but an office of difficulty and danger, where much 'hardness' was to be endured, 2 Ti.2.3,11.—*C.*

r Ac.1.10.

8 Seeing or not seeing was the sign of his appointment to, or rejection from, the prophetical succession.—*C.*

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s ch 6. 17. Ps. 68. 17; 104.4. He. 1. 14. Mar. 16.19. Lu.24.51. Ac.1. 9.

t ch.5.13;8.9;6.20;13. 14. Job 22.30. Pr.11.11; 8.15,19. Ps.106.23. Eze. 22.30.

9 Not, we think, that Elijah was the 'chariot and horsemen,' the defences 'of Israel;' but as evidence that he saw the ascent of his master, he gives this description of the means of his translation.—*C.*

u He.11.5. Ac.1.3,9.

x Ge.37.29,34. Jos.7. 6.1 Sa.4.12.

y 1 Ki.19.13,19.ver.8.

1 Heb. *lip.*

z ver.8. Ju.14.12.

a ver.7.

b Ge.18.2;19.1. ch.4. 37.

2 Heb. *sons of strength.*

c Heb. *one of the mountains*, 1 Ki. 18. 12. Eze.8.3. Ac.8.39.

d Ro.10.2. Ga. 4. 18. 1 Co. 9. 24. Tit. 3. 14.2 Ti.2.14.

3 Either of their childish importunity, or of himself being the object of so much urgency and deference.—*C.*

4 The whole community spoke by a single representative.—*C.*

e Jos.6.26.1 Ki.16.34.

5 Heb. *causing to miscarry.*

6 Probably, as in the margin, 'causing (seed) to miscarry,' when used for irrigation—a fact respecting several mineral waters that yet might be tolerable, though not agreeable to the inhabitants. And strange to say, commercial convenience and interests still found and maintain cities where the water or marsh *miasmata* are still as disagreeable and deadly as the waters of Jericho, ver. 21.—*C.*

f Ju.9.45. Zep.2.9. 2 Ch.13.5.

g Ex.15.25,26. ch. 4. 41;6.6. Pr.10.22.

7 He chooses a material rather calculated to render the water more offensive, to show that the power was no chemical agency, but a miraculous interposition of mercy. The whole is a beautiful illustration of the power of the word of God to purify the fountain of life, and cause the barren 'earth to yield her increase,' Ps.67.6.—*C.*

8 The fountain beside the site of ancient Jericho still bears the name of the prophet who wrought the miracle. It is called 'The fountain of Elisha.' The valley of the Jordan abounds in fountains, many of which are strongly impregnated with sulphur and iron, and many are so intensely salt and bitter as to destroy vegetation. This was probably the case with the fountain at Jericho until Elisha 'healed it' by a miracle.—*P.*

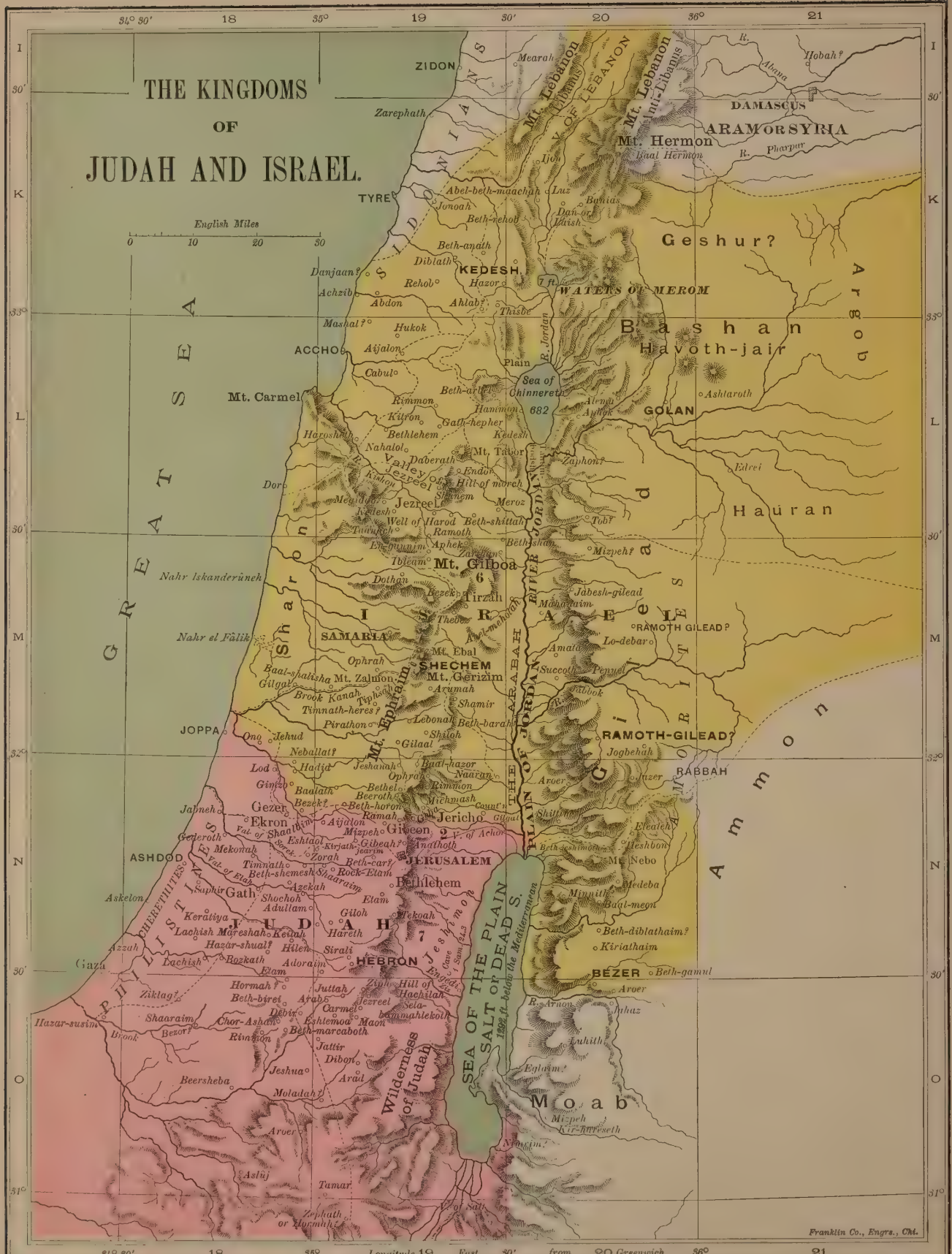
h ver.2. 1 Ki. 12. 29. Am.5.5. Ho.4. 15. Pr. 20. 11; 22.6,15.

i Ge.21.9. Ga. 4. 29. He.11.36.1 Ch.16.22. 2 Ch.30.10.

k ver.11.

9 The Hebrew words translated 'little children' ought rather to be rendered 'young men' or 'youths.' The mode in which they mocked Elisha was equivalent to blasphemy, for they mocked him as a much 'greater one' than Elijah, and as the prophet of the Lord; and in contemptuous allusion to the translation of Elijah, of which they had heard, but which they do not seem to have believed, they said, 'Go up, bald head!'—*P.*

Persecutors and mockers of God's faithful prophets and messengers shall not escape unpunished. Such as have turned aside to idolatry, even after miraculous demonstrations of the wickedness of it, richly deserve death for their punishment: and if they will harden their heart against the terrors of God, it is just that their destruction be uncommonly terrible. The way to prevail with God is not to insult him, but humbly to bow before him; and the sufferings of others should be our


THE KINGDOMS
OF
JUDAH AND ISRAEL.
English Miles
0 10 20 30
GREAT SEA
PHILISTINES
SIDONIANS
ZIDON
TYRE
ACCHO
Mt. Carmel
JOPPA
ASHDOD
Gaza
Mt. Lebanon
Anti-Libanus
VALLEY OF LEBANON
DAMASCUS
ARAM OR SYRIA
Mt. Hermon
Baal Hermon
Geshur?
Argob
KEDESH
WATERS OF MEROM
Bashan
Havoth-jair
GOLAN
Sea of Chinnereth
Plain
Valley of Jezreel
Jezreel
Sharon
SAMARIA
Mt. Gilboa
Tirzah
Mt. Ephraim
SHECHEM
Mt. Gerizim
Mt. Ebal
Mt. Zalmon
Brook Kanah
Timnath-heres?
Pirathon
Lebonah
Shiloh
Gilgal
Ophrah
Baal-shalisha
Nahr Iskanderûneh
Nahr el Fâlik
Dothan
Jezreel
Ramoth
Aphek
Ibleam
Beth-shittah
Zaretan
Succoth
Penuel
Peniel
Jabesh-gilead
Mahanaim
RAMOTH GILEAD?
Lo-debar
Amal
Tob?
Mizpeh?
Edrei
Hauran
Gilead
Ammon
RABBAH
Aroer
Nebo
Medeba
Minnith
Baal-meon
Beth-diblathaim?
Kiriathaim
BEZER
Beth-gamul
Jahaz
Luhith
Eglaim?
Moab
Mizpeh
Kir-hareseth
Nimrim?
Wilderness of Judah
SEA OF THE PLAIN
SALT or DEAD S.
1292 ft. below the Mediterranean
THE ARABAH
PLAIN OF JORDAN
R. Jordan
JERUSALEM
Bethlehem
Jericho
Gilgal
Michmash
Ramah
Gibeah?
Anathoth
Beth-horon
Gezer
Ekron
Gideon
Mizpeh
Aijalon
Zorah
Eshtaol
Timnath
Beth-shemesh
Rock-Etam
Azekah
Shochoh
Adullam
Keilah
Hareth
Hebron
Jeshimon
Ziph
Hill of Hachilah
Maon
Carmel
Juttah
Arab
Debir
Eshtemoa
Beth-marcaboth
Jattir
Dibon
Arad
Jeshua
Beersheba
Moladah?
Aroer
Aslûj
Tamar
Zephath or Hormah?
Salt
Franklin Co., Engrs., Cin.
Longitude East from Greenwich

24 And he turned back, and looked on them, and [l]cursed them in the name of the LORD:[1] and there came forth two she-bears out of the wood, and tare[2] forty and two children of them.

25 And he went from thence to [m]mount Carmel; and from thence he returned to [n]Samaria.

CHAPTER III.

1 Jehoram's evil reign. 4 Mesha rebelleth. 6 Jehoram, with Jehoshaphat, and the king of Edom, being distressed for want of water, by Elisha obtaineth water, and promise of victory. 21 The Moabites, deceived by the colour of the water, coming to spoil, are overcome. 26 The king of Moab sacrificeth his eldest son, and raiseth the siege.

NOW Jehoram the son of Ahab began to reign over Israel in Samaria the [a]eighteenth year[1] of Jehoshaphat king of Judah, and reigned twelve years.

2 And he [b]wrought evil in the sight of the LORD, but [c]not like his father, and like his mother; for he put away the [d]image[2] of Baal[3] that his father had made.

3 Nevertheless [e]he cleaved unto the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, which made Israel to sin; he departed not therefrom.

4 ¶ And Mesha king of Moab was a [f]sheepmaster, and rendered unto the king of Israel an hundred thousand lambs, and an hundred thousand rams, with the wool.

5 But it came to pass, when [g]Ahab was dead, that the king of Moab rebelled against the king of Israel.

6 ¶ And king Jehoram went out of Samaria the same time, and [h]numbered all Israel.

7 And he went[4] and sent to Jehoshaphat the king of Judah, saying, The king of Moab hath rebelled against me: [i]wilt thou go with me against Moab to battle? And he said, I will go up: I *am* as thou *art*, my people as thy people, *and* my horses as thy horses.[5]

8 And he said, Which way shall we go up? And he answered, The way through the [k]wilderness of Edom.[6]

9 So the [l]king of Israel went, and the king of Judah, and the king of Edom; and they fetched a compass of seven days' journey: and there was no water for the host, and for the cattle [m]that followed them.

10 And the king of Israel said, [n]Alas, that the LORD hath called[7] these three kings together, to deliver them into the hand of Moab!

11 But Jehoshaphat said, [o]*Is there* not here a prophet of the LORD, that we may inquire of the LORD by him? And one of the king of Israel's servants answered and said, Here *is* Elisha the son of Shaphat, which [p]poured water on the hands of Elijah.

12 And Jehoshaphat said, [q]The word of the LORD is with him. So the king of Israel, and Jehoshaphat, and the king of Edom, [r]went down to him.

13 And Elisha said unto the king of Israel, [s]What have I to do with thee? get thee to the prophets of thy father, and to the prophets of thy mother. And the king of Israel said unto him, Nay; [t]for the LORD hath called these three kings together, to deliver them into the hand of Moab.[8]

14 And Elisha said, [u]*As* the LORD of hosts

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l 2 Ch. 14. 11; 20. 12; 36. 15, 16. ch. 1. 10, 12. 2 Co. 10. 6. Ac. 13. 3; 13. 9–11. Je. 20. 2–6; xxviii.; 29. 24–32; 36. 29–31; 11. 21–23.

1 Not an angry imprecation, but pronounced a prophetic sentence upon them 'in the name of the Lord.'—*C.*

2 It may be questioned whether this denotes any thing more than severe lacération; it does not necessarily mean destruction, for then the phrase would have been 'tare in pieces.'—*I.*

m 1 Ki. 18. 19. ch. 4. 25. Je. 46. 18. Jos. 19. 26.

n 1 Ki. 16. 24, 29. ch. 3. 1; 17. 9, 10.

CHAP. III.

a 1 Ki. 22. 51. ch. 1. 17; 8. 16.

1 See note on ch. 1. 17. *C.*—According to the adjustment of Hales, this should be in the 'twenty-second year.'—*I.*

b ch. 6. 31; ver. 3.

c 1 Ki. 16. 33; 21. 20, 25. ch. 9. 22.

d 1 Ki. 16. 31, 32.

2 Heb. *statue.*

3 See note on ch. 1. 10.—*Note*, Change is not necessarily reformation. The 'evil spirit' may, for a time, 'go out of a man,' only to prepare for a return with 'seven spirits worse than himself.'—*C.*

e ch. 10. 28–31. Mar. 6. 20, 27. 1 Ki. 12. 28–33; 13. 33; 16. 29.

f Is. 16. 1. Job 1. 3. Ge. 13. 2. 1 Ch. 27. 29–31.

g ch. 1. 1. 2 Ch. 21. 8–10.

h 1 Sa. 11. 8; 15. 4. 2 Sa. 24. 1. 1 Ki. 20. 15.

4 B.C. 895.

A.M. 3109. B.C. 895.

i 1 Ki. 22. 4. 2 Ch. 18. 3, 29, 31.

5 We are all as one nation, and equally hearty in the work.

k Nu. 21. 4. ver. 9. Mal. 1. 2, 3.

6 That is, round the southern end of the Dead Sea. 'The wilderness (*midbar*) of Edom' appears to have been the broad valley of the Arabah. This route, though longer for the northern tribes, was shorter and easier for the people of Judah.—*P.*

l ver. 6, 7. 1 Ki. 22. 47. Ge. 27. 40. 2 Sa. 8. 14.

m Heb. *at their feet*, Ex. 11. 8. Ju. 4. 10.

n ver. 9. Ge. 4. 13. Ps. 78. 34–38. Pr. 19. 3. Jude 16. Ex. 15. 24; 16. 2; 17. 2, 3. Re. 21. 8.

7 God had not called them by any revelation or order. Indeed he had never yet been consulted; but the king may mean that God had called them to be judged and punished for their national sins.—*Note*, The eyes of men that will not see God in the day of prosperity, are sometimes opened to see him in the hour of adversity. See also note on ver. 13.—*C.*

o Jos. 9. 14. Am. 3. 7. 1 Ki. 22. 7.

p Ge. 18. 4. Jn. 13. 5, *i.e.* served him.

q 1 Sa. 3. 20. ch. 2. 14, 21, 24.

r Ps. 78. 34–38. Je. 22. 23. ch. 5. 9; 8. 7–9; 13. 14. 1 Sa. 2. 30.

s Jn. 2. 4. Ju. 10. 14. 1 Ki. 18. 19. Eze. 14. 3.

t De. 32. 39. Ho. 6. 1. ver. 10.

8 Not an acknowledgment of the sole and supreme Godhead of Jehovah, but of such rivalry with the images of Jeroboam as Homer ascribes to his weak and passional gods and goddesses.—*C.*

u 1 Ki. 17. 1; 18. 15. ch. 5. 16.

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warning. God can endow his servants with such honourable boldness, that captains and kings look contemptible before them. And those who consult the devil, if superabounding mercy prevent not, may expect soon to have their lodging with him in hell.

CHAPTER II. [Ver. 1. This was not the Gilgal in the Jordan valley near Jericho, where the Israelites first encamped, but a city in Mount Ephraim, north of Bethel. The statement in verse 2 proves this, for it is said 'they *went down* to Bethel;' whereas Gilgal in the plain of Jericho is more than 3000 ft. *below* Bethel. There is a village called *Jiljilia*, six miles north of Bethel, on the top of the mountain ridge, which is probably the same as the Gilgal here mentioned. *P.*]

Ver. 8. [At, or close to, the same spot where the waters of the river had been dried up, six centuries before, to let the Israelites pass over; at, or close to, the same spot where our Lord was baptized, nine centuries later. *P.*]

Ver. 9. [*Let a double portion of thy spirit be upon me.* If the translation fully represent the original, it may be a reference to the double portion of the first-born, De. 21. 17. And if it were so, it was no vain ambition that dictated the desire; for if the spirit of Elijah was a spirit of power, it was also a spirit of much affliction, which no worldly mind can desire. But it has been translated 'a repetition,' or continuance, a sense that seems to be favoured by ver. 15. *C.*]

Ver. 23. [*There came forth little children.* Not necessarily little children, but young persons. Isaac was so called (in the Hebrew) when twenty-eight, and Joseph when thirty-nine, Ge. 25. 6; 45. 9. See also Ge. 14. 24; 18. 7.—*Go up, thou bald head.* Marking the idea of Elijah's ascent into heaven in a manner that proves they were not 'little children,' in the literal sense, but infidel sons of Belial, with thoughts only for earth, and contempt of eternity and glory. *C.*]

Ver. 24. [*There came forth two she-bears out of the wood, and tare forty and two.* It is not said whether any were killed, or how much they were torn. The bears were probably mothers 'robbed of their whelps,' Pr. 17. 12, whose maternal fondness is a lesson to humanity; but whose fierceness would be immeasurably increased by the destruction of their young. *C.*]

REFLECTIONS.—What honour God delights to put upon his faithful servants! The least of them shall lack nothing of Elijah's happiness, but that they must lodge a little in the grave on their way to the perfect felicity above. Faithful saints have the good of the rising generation much on their heart; and we should make the most of their conversation while we can have it. It is very distressing, though hopeful, to part with dear friends, high in favour with God. And how easy and majestic is their composed retirement to the heavenly state, even in their passage through Jordans of trouble and of death! The removal of such is indeed a great loss to churches and nations, especially if iniquity be come to a great height. But when God removes one eminent servant, he can raise up another equally endowed with the Holy Ghost. And when an animating pattern, a powerful prayer of faith, and the distinguished presence of God concur, there is great ground of hope. They whom God honours ought to be honoured; and the strong must bear with the infirmities of the weak. A people ought to make all the profitable improvement of their ministers they can while they have them: for what bitterness, barrenness, and death can God cure by their gospel ministrations! They often bring, even to accursed places, the most distinguished mercies where Providence orders their lot. But how terrible are the consequences of idolatry, and of careless education of children! For parents are often punished for their neglect, or bad example, in the loss, the wretchedness, or ruin of their seed.

But stop, thou ascending Elijah, till in thy character and work I contemplate the glories of my Redeemer. His call to his mediatorial office was solemn; and was remarkably confirmed by miracles of mercy and judgment. His condition on earth was mean, afflicted, and persecuted. His holy zeal was ardent; his rebukes pungent; his denunciations of wrath terrible and effective: his prayers for mercy to his friends, or destruction to his foes, were always prevalent; his fast was long and afflicting; his great sacrifice was inflamed by infinite and unquenchable love from within, and by infinite wrath from above: and by means of it he showed the Lord to be God, restored the true worship of God in the world, and made the unclean spirits and false prophets to pass out of the land. By him kings are appointed to death or dominion; and prophets, apostles, and ministers called to, and furnished for, their office. In infinite wisdom he removed his ordinances from the Jews, that he might dwell with raven-like publicans and sinners; dwell with long-widowed Gentiles, and restore to life their children, dead in trespasses and sins. Baptized in Jordan, and travelling through trouble and death, he ascended to heaven without seeing corruption. In vain have the Jews ever since searched for a promised Messiah. And dreadful and lasting justice has, or shall overtake his Jewish, heathen, antichristian, or other obstinate enemies, according to the predictions of his mouth.

CHAPTER III. [Ver. 11. *Poured water on the hands of Elijah.* In most eastern countries they eat with the fingers; and pouring water on the hands after meals is an act which, in what Europeans would call 'the learned professions,' indicates not a servant, but a disciple. The orientals have a great objection to washing the hands in a basin, holding the water polluted after one contact; the hands are therefore held over the basin, while the water is poured out of a ewer with a narrow neck, but otherwise much like an ordinary British coffee-pot. *C.*]

REFLECTIONS.—To be better than monsters in crimes is no evidence of real goodness: and a partial reformation is often made without real conversion. To forbear the sins which we no longer love, while we cleave to those which are more pleasing and profitable,

liveth, before whom I stand, surely, were it not that[x] I regard the presence of Jehoshaphat the king of Judah, I would not look toward thee, nor see thee.

15 But now [y]bring me a minstrel.[9] And it came to pass, when the minstrel played, that the [z]hand of the LORD came upon him.

16 And he said, Thus saith the LORD, [a]Make this valley full of ditches:

17 For thus saith the LORD, [b]Ye shall not see wind,[1] neither shall ye see rain; yet that valley shall be filled with water, that ye may drink, both ye, and your cattle, and your beasts.[2]

18 And this [c]is *but* a light thing in the sight of the LORD: he will deliver the Moabites also into your hand.

19 And ye shall [d]smite every fenced city, and every choice city, and shall fell every good tree,[3] and stop all wells of water, and mar[4] every good piece of land with stones.

20 ¶ And it came to pass in the morning, when[e] the meat-offering was offered, that, behold, there came water by the way of Edom, and the country [f]was filled with water.[5]

21 And when all the Moabites heard that the kings were come up to fight against them, they gathered[6] all that were able to put on armour,[7] and upward, and stood in the border.

22 And they rose up early in the morning, and the sun shone upon the water, and the Moabites saw the water on the other side *as* red as blood:[8]

23 And they said, This *is* blood: the kings are surely slain,[9] and they have smitten one another: now therefore, Moab, to the spoil.

24 And when they came to the camp of Israel, the Israelites rose up and smote the Moabites, so that they fled before them: but they went forward smiting[1] the Moabites, even in *their* country.

25 And[g] they beat down the cities, and on every good piece of land cast every man his stone, and filled it; and they stopped all the wells of water,[2] and felled all the good trees: only[h] in Kir-haraseth left they the stones thereof; howbeit the slingers went about *it*, and smote it.

26 ¶ And when the king of Moab saw that the battle was too sore for him, he took with him seven hundred men that drew swords, to break through *even* unto the king of Edom: but they could not.

27 Then he took [i]his eldest son, that should have reigned in his stead, and offered him *for* a burnt-offering upon the wall. And there was great indignation against Israel:[3] and they departed from him, and returned[4] to *their own* land.[5]

A.M. 3109. B.C. 895.

x 2 Ch.17.3–9; 19. 3–11. Ps.15.4.
y 1 Sa. 10. 5; 16. 23. Ep.5.18.
z Eze.1.3; 3. 22; 8. 1. 1 Ki.18.46. Da.2.19.
a ch.4.3. Ge.14.10.
b 1 Ki.18.38. Ps.36.6; 84.6.

1 That is, any of the effects of wind, as hurrying the racking clouds, or agitating the dust, or bending the trees, &c.—*C.*

2 The 'valley' or 'torrent-bed' in which the Israelites were encamped, was probably that now called Wady el-Ahsy, which descends from the highlands north of Edom to the southern end of the Dead Sea. It would appear that heavy rain suddenly fell among the mountains; the water filled the torrent-bed, previously dry, swept down the valley, and was collected in the trenches prepared for it by the prophet's command. The storm took place at such a distance from the camp, that the Israelites saw neither wind nor rain.—*P.*

c 1 Ki.3.13. Ep.3.20.
d 1 Sa.15.3. 1 Ki. 20. 28. De.20.19. ver.25.

3 Contrary to the law, De. 20. 19, but the prophet neither approves nor commends the act, he merely foretels what would be done.—*C.*

4 Heb. *grieve.*

e Ex.29. 39. 1 Ki. 18. 36.
f Is.35.6; 41.17, 18; 48. 21. Ps.78.15, 16, 20; 105. 41; 114.8; 107.35.

5 Edom was a mountainous country, and the rain falling there in torrents, soon found its way to the hollow ground where the armies lay. The trenches were to retain the water, and give it time to settle and purify.—*C.*

6 Heb. *were cried together.*

7 Heb. *gird himself with a girdle.*

8 In particular states of the atmosphere the sun looks very red, and now communicates its own tinge to the water.—*C.*

9 Heb. *destroyed.*

1 Or, *they smote in it even smiting.*

g ver.19.

2 Which being very deep, it would require great labour to clear, or which in a short time, in a devastated country, would not be discovered.—*C.*

h Heb. *until he left the stones thereof in Kir-haraseth,* Is. 16.7, 11. Je.48.36.

A.M. 3109. B.C. 895.

i Perhaps the king of Edom's son, Am. 2.1.

3 Or, 'great repentance in Israel,' that they had driven the Moabites to such wretched extremity. —*Note,* Men do often repent of an evil deed done in passion, and would give a world to cancel one evil deed.—*C.*

4 As they saw the Moabites desperately resolute.

5 This passage is obscure. The meaning seems to be that the Moabite king, driven to despair by the cruelties of the conquerors, offered up his son a sacrifice to Chemosh, on the wall of Kir-haraseth, in sight of the Israelites. This barbarous act, to which the unfortunate monarch was driven by the Israelites, drew down upon them the divine displeasure, so that they abandoned the siege, and returned home. The Hebrew phrase rendered 'there was great indignation,' is always employed to denote the anger or displeasure *of God* on account of sin.—*P.*

CHAP. IV.

a 1 Ki.20. 22, 39, ch. 2.3, 5, 7, 15; ver.38. Is.8. 18.

1 Though the servant of the Lord may not 'leave the word of God and serve tables,' yet he should be ever even forward to attend to the poor, Ac.6.2. Ga. 2.10.—*C.*

b 1 Ki.18.3. Ne. 7. 2. Ec.9.2. Mal. 3. 16. Ps. 111.10. Pr.1.7. De.6.13.
c Mat.18.25. Ne.5.2, 5. Le.25.39.

2 According to the law of Moses, if the debtor could not meet the just claims upon him, then his creditor had power to seize him and his children, and compel them to labour until such time as by the value of their labour they had paid their debts, or at most to the year of jubilee, when all were set free.—*P.*

d ch.2.9; 6.26, 27. Ac. 3.6.
e Fit to be sold. ver.7.
f 1 Ki.17.12. Ja. 2. 5. De.32.36.
g ch 3.16. 2 Co.6.12. Mat.7.7. Ep.3.20.

3 Or, *scant not.*

h Mat. 6. 6. Mar. 5. 40. Ac. 9. 40. ver. 33. 1 Ki.17.20.
i Not as ch. 5. 11, but 1 Ki.17.15, 16.
k Mat.14.20; 15.32.
l Jn.6.12. 1 Ki.17.14. Jos.5.12.
m Lu.17.15, 18.

n Or, *creditor,* Ro. 13.7, 8. 1 Th. 2. 10; 4.6. He.13.18. Ps.37.21.

4 Heb. *there was a day.*

5 A city of Issachar, about five miles south of Tabor, Jos.19.18. 1 Sa.28.4. *C.*—It stood at the western base of the 'hill of Moreh,' looking out over the great plain of Esdraelon. The fields around Shunem are to this day among the most fertile in Palestine.—*P.*

CHAPTER IV.

1 Elisha multiplieth the widow's oil. 8 He giveth a son to the good Shunammite. 18 He raiseth again her dead son. 38 At Gilgal he healeth the deadly pottage. 42 He miraculously satisfieth an hundred men with twenty barley loaves.

NOW there cried a certain woman of the wives of the [a]sons of the prophets unto Elisha,[1] saying, Thy servant my husband is dead; and thou knowest that thy servant did [b]fear the LORD: and the creditor is come to take unto him my two sons to [c]be bondmen.[2]

2 And Elisha said unto her, [d]What shall I do for thee? tell me, what hast thou [e]in the house? And she said, Thine handmaid hath not any thing in the house, [f]save a pot of oil.

3 Then he said, [g]Go, borrow thee vessels abroad of all thy neighbours, *even* empty vessels; borrow not a few.[3]

4 And when thou art come in, thou shalt [h]shut the door upon thee and upon thy sons, and shalt pour out into all those vessels, and thou shalt set aside that which is full.

5 So she [i]went from him, and shut the door upon her and upon her sons, who brought *the vessels* to her; and she poured out.

6 And it came to pass, when the vessels were [k]full, that she said unto her son, Bring me yet a vessel. And he said unto her, *There is* not a vessel more. And the oil [l]stayed.

7 Then she came and [m]told the man of God: and he said, Go, sell the oil, and pay thy [n]debt, and live thou and thy children of the rest.

8 ¶ And it fell on a day,[4] that Elisha passed to [o]Shunem,[5] where *was* a great woman; and she [p]constrained him[6] to eat bread. And *so* it was, *that* as oft as he passed by, he turned in thither to eat bread.

a Jos.19.18. 1 Sa.28.4. *p* Lu.24.29. Ac.16.15. Ge.19.3.

6 Heb. *laid hold on him.*

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shows the insincerity of our pretended repentance. Sinners prefer the recovery of outward losses to all the advantages of real godliness; and they readily court the friendship of such saints as are remarkably prosperous in outward things. Rash counsels generally drive men into great straits; and these into murmuring against the providence of God. And if we keep company with sinners, we are in danger of smarting under their rod. Afflictions often drive those to God who in their prosperity neglected him. His mercies are not only beyond our desert, but beyond our expectation; and others fare the better for their connections with his people: for he will not leave his own who cry unto him: even in the straits into which their folly has plunged them. What a remarkable blessing are pious commanders and faithful ministers to armies! and the effectual fervent prayer of a religious man availeth much. How composed ought our minds to be in all our approaches to God! and never must we expect a gracious answer to our requests, but only through Jesus' offering of himself a sacrifice for sins. How strangely men fancy what they wish! for God often infatuates those whom he intends to destroy, and makes them to rush headlong upon their own destruction. What inhuman and bloody courses will people take to procure the favour of their idol, or to mark themselves desperately obstinate.

CHAPTER IV. REFLECTIONS. — Parents ought carefully to avoid dying in debt, as it may render their children miserable. Yet when persons are involved in debt, not by their own rashness, prodigality, or sloth, but by the afflicting providence of God, they deserve our pity, not our censure. Unforeseen providences may involve the most honest man in debts which he cannot pay. And how grievous is it (though not unjust) when Providence obliges a faithful minister to die indebted to rigid creditors! But if providence distress a good man, it will also relieve him. Let husbands then fear God, and he will take care of their widows and children. Let poor distressed widows and fatherless children cast all their care upon him: he is ready to relieve them in the most destitute case. And if we wish or expect God to do for us, we must do all that is in our own power. It is only in our diligent endeavours that we can rightly expect his blessing: and then let us believe, and we shall quickly find that God is more ready to give than we are to receive. To our utmost let us endeavour to clear our debts, though what remains should prove a very scanty livelihood: for nothing is properly our own till this be done. Ac-

GARDENS OF SHUNEM—WHERE ELISHA RESTORED THE WOMAN'S SON TO LIFE. [II. KINGS, iv:8.]—"And it fell on a day that Elisha passed to Shunem, where was a great woman; and she constrained him to eat bread. And so it was, that as oft as he passed by, he turned in thither to eat bread. And she said unto her husband, Behold now, I percieve that this is a holy man of God, which passeth by us continually. Let us make a little chamber, I pray thee, on the wall; and let us set for him there a bed and a table and a stool and a candlestick; and it shall be, when he cometh to us, that he shall turn in thither." Shunem literally means "two resting places." It is a city in the territory of Issachar. It is in the plain of Jezreel. Here lived the worthy woman who built a room for Elisha, and whose son the Prophet restored to life. It is now the village on the declivity of the western extremity of Little Hermon.

9 And she [q]said unto her husband, Behold now, I perceive that this *is* an [r]holy man of God,[7] which passeth by us continually.[8]

10 Let[s] us make a little chamber, I pray thee, on the wall;[9] and let us set for him there a bed, and a table, and a stool, and a candlestick: and it shall be, when he cometh to us, that he shall turn in thither.

11 And it fell on a day, that he came thither, and he turned into the chamber, and lay there.

12 And he said to Gehazi his servant, Call this Shunammite. And when he had called her, she stood before him.

13 And he said unto him, Say[t] now unto her, Behold, thou hast been [t]careful for us with all this care; what *is* to be done for thee? wouldest thou be spoken for [u]to the king, or to the captain of the host? And she answered, I[x] dwell among mine own people.[1]

14 And he said, What then *is* to be done for her? And Gehazi answered, Verily [y]she hath no child, and her husband is old.

15 And he said, Call her. And when he had called her, she stood in the door.

16 And he said, [z]About this season,[2] according to the time of life, thou shalt embrace a son. And she said, Nay, my lord, *thou* man of God, do not lie unto thine handmaid.[3]

17 And the woman [a]conceived, and bare a son[4] at that season that Elisha had said unto her, according to the time of life.

18 ¶ And when the child was grown, it fell on a day, that he went out to his father to the reapers.

19 And he said unto his father, [b]My head, my head![5] And he said to a lad, Carry him to his mother.

20 And when he had taken him, and brought him to his [c]mother, he sat on her knees till noon, and *then* [d]died.

21 And she went up, and laid him [e]on the bed of the man of God, and shut *the door* upon him, and went out.

22 And she called unto her husband, and said, Send me, I pray thee, one of the young men, and one of the asses, that I may [f]run to the man of God, and come again.

23 And he said, Wherefore wilt thou go to him to-day? *it is* neither [g]new-moon, nor sabbath. And she said, *It shall be* [h]well.[6]

24 Then she [i]saddled an ass, and said to her servant, Drive, and go forward; [k]slack not *thy* riding for me, except I bid thee.

25 So she went, and came unto the man of

A.M. 3709. B.C. 895.

q Pr.31. 10, 11. 1 Pe. 3.1.

r Ju.13.6, 2 Co.1.12. Ac.22.12. 1 Th.2.10. 1 Ti.6.11,12.

7 It has often been remarked that women more speedily, and often more accurately, judge of character than men do—an observation that is verified in the hospitable woman of Shunem.—*C.*

8 This sentence gives us much insight into the office and labour of a prophet in Israel. He was, in point of fact, a laborious and untiring itinerant, inspecting the schools of the prophets, expounding and enforcing the law of God, and performing such offices of mercy and power as the circumstances of the times required.—*C.*

s Jos.2.15. Ro.12,13. He.13.1,2 Pe.4.9. Mat. 10.40,41;25.40.

9 Not *build*, but *fit up* one of the little chambers projecting from the inner wall of the outer court next the street, according to the manner of eastern houses, in which, and not in the inner court, strangers are entertained, and where they can go out and in without ever disturbing the family whose hospitality they enjoy.—*C.*

t Lu.10. 40. 1 Th. 5. 12,13. Ro.16.2,6. Mat. 10.40,41.

u As ch.3.15–18;8.5.

x 1 Ti.6.8. He.13. 5. I am content with my station.

1 My own relations and servants; for she was a 'great woman,' ver. 8, but greater in contentment with the lot God had given than in possession of all ambition could seek, patronage obtain, or munificence bestow.—*C.*

y Ge.15.2;30.1;17.17; 25.21. 1 Sa.1.2,6. Lu.1. 7.

z Ge. 18. 10–14. ver. 28.

2 Heb. set time, *i.e.* nine months after this.

3 Do not jest—deceive.—*C.*

a 1 Sa.1.17,19. Mat. 10.41. He.11.11. Ge.25. 21. Ju.13.3,24. Lu.1.7,57.

f B.C. 892.

b Job 14.1;5.7. Je. 4. 19.

5 A severe and sudden fever, the *synocha* of Cullen, in the most aggravated form, frequently brought on by exposure to the hot rays of the sun. In a battle fought by Baldwin IV., on the border of the Lake of Tiberias, William of Tyre relates that more perished by the sun than by the sword.—*C.*

c 1 Ti.5.10,14.

d Ge. 22.21;37.3,35. 1 Ki.17. 17. Eze. 24. 16, 21.

e 1 Ki.17. 19. ver. 10.

f 1 Ki.17.21. ver. 26. Je.51.31.

g Nu.28.9,11. Ps.81. 3. 1 Ch.23.31. Fr.8.34. 2 Ti.4.2.

h Heb. *peace*, ver. 26.

6 There is an hospitable considerateness, a maternal tenderness, a manlike decision, an untiring perseverance, and an unshaken faith, that concentrate in this woman's character, and form a perfect study of instruction and imitation for every child of God.—*C.*

i Ex. 4. 20. Ju.5. 10; 10.4. 1 Ki.13.13,23. 1 Sa. 25.20.

k Heb. *restrain not for me to ride*, Ec. 9.10.

A.M. 3112. B.C. 892.

l Jos.19.26, ch.2. 25. 1 Ki. 18. 19–43. Je. 46. 18. Is.35.2;33.9.

7 It was a ride of about fifteen miles across the plain of Esdraelon. The range of Carmel is clearly seen from Shunem.—*C.*

m ver. 22. Zec. 2. 4. Mat.15.21,22.

n Heb. *by his feet*, Mat.28.9.

8 Kissing the feet or knees is an ordinary mode of doing homage and making supplication, Mat.28. 9. Lu.7.38.—*C.*

o Mat.15. 23. Lu. 7. 38,39. Jn.4.27.

p Heb. *bitter*, 1 Sa. 1.10. Pr.14.10;18.14.

q 2 Sa.7. 3, with ch. 6.12.

9 God does not endow his prophets with a species of omniscience, but occasionally leaves them in the dark to remind them that he is the 'Father of lights,' and sends them many afflictions lest they should be tempted to pride, 2 Co.12.7.—*C.*

r Ge.30.1.ver.16.

s Ex.12.11. 1 Ki. 18. 46.ch.9.1.

1 Bind up the outer flowing garment so that there be nothing to entangle by the way.—*C.*

t Ex.4.17. ch.2.8,14. Ac.19.12.

u Lu. 10. 4. ver. 24, *i.e.* run with all possible speed.

2 Eastern salutations are often tedious ceremonies.—*C.*

x 1 Sa.1.26. Ru.1.16 –18. Ge.19.3. Lu.24.29. Ex.33.13–17.ch.2.2.

y Mat. 17. 19, 20. Is. 26.18.

3 Heb. *attention.*

4 God, who knew the worldly and covetous heart of Gehazi, refuses to work the miracle of restoration by him.—*C.*

5 The young, for a considerable time after death, have much the appearance of sleep. The rude and officious character of Gehazi, ver. 27, would scarcely lead him to speak thus in tenderness; he, most probably, paying little attention to anything but his own interests, ch. 5. 20, took the calm look of the boy for a lethargic sleep.—*C.*

z ver.4,5. 1 Ki.17.20. Mar.5.40. Ja. 5. 13–18. Ac.9.40;20.10.

a Ac. 9. 40; 20. 10. 1 Ki.17.21.

b Ro.12.11,15. Ep.4. 32.

6 Heb. *once hither and once thither*

c ch.8.1. 1 Ki.3.21. 2 Ki. 17.22. Lu.7.15;8.55. Jn. 11.44. Ac.9.40;20.11.

7 'Seven,' as representing the week, stands in Scripture for progress and perfection, completeness. The *seven* ears of corn, and the *seven* kine, Gen. xli., represented respectively seven years of plenty and famine. May not this precise number, which seems at first sight a note of no special importance, have been understood by the prophet as likewise representative, and led him to inquire of God, and anticipate the seven approaching years of famine, ch.8.1,2, of which he was sent to warn this Shunammite, as his master had been sent to preserve the Sarepta, Lu.4.25.—*C.*

d 1 Ki. 17. 23. Lu. 7. 15. He.11.35.

e ch.2.15. 1 Ki. 1. 23. ver.27.

f He.11.35. 1 Ki. 17. 23.

God [l]to mount Carmel.[7] And it came to pass, when the man of God saw her afar off, that he said to Gehazi his servant, Behold, *yonder is* that Shunammite:

26 Run[m] now, I pray thee, to meet her, and say unto her, *Is it* well with thee? *is it* well with thy husband? *is it* well with the child? And she answered, *It is* well.

27 And when she came to the man of God to the hill, she caught [n]him by the feet:[8] but Gehazi came near to [o]thrust her away. And the man of God said, Let her alone; for her soul *is* [p]vexed within her: and the LORD hath [q]hid *it* from me, and hath not told me.[9]

28 Then she said, [r]Did I desire a son of my lord? did I not say, Do not deceive me?

29 Then he said to Gehazi, [s]Gird up thy loins,[1] and take [t]my staff in thine hand, and go thy way: if thou meet any man, [u]salute him not; and if any salute thee, answer him not again:[2] and lay my staff upon the face of the child.

30 And the mother of the child said, [x]*As* the LORD liveth, and *as* thy soul liveth, I will not leave thee. And he arose, and followed her.

31 And Gehazi passed on before them, and laid the staff upon the face of the child; but [y]*there was* neither voice, nor [3]hearing:[4] wherefore he went again to meet him, and told him, saying, The child *is* not awaked.[5]

32 And when Elisha was come into the house, behold, the child was dead, *and* laid upon his bed.

33 He went in therefore, [z]and shut the door upon them twain, and prayed unto the LORD.

34 And he went up, and [a]lay upon the child, and put his mouth upon his mouth, and his eyes upon his eyes, and his hands upon his hands; and he stretched himself upon the child, and the flesh of the child waxed warm.

35 Then he returned, and [b]walked in the house to and fro;[6] and went up, and stretched himself upon him: and the [c]child sneezed seven times,[7] and the child opened his eyes.

36 And he called Gehazi, and said, Call this Shunammite. So he called her: and, when she was come in unto him, he said, [d]Take up thy son.

37 Then she went in, and [e]fell at his feet, and bowed herself to the ground, and [f]took up her son, and went out.

38 ¶ And Elisha [g]came again to [8]Gilgal: and *there was* a [h]dearth in the land; and the [i]sons of the prophets *were* [k]sitting before him:

l Jos.19.26, ch.2. 25. 1 Ki. 18. 19–43. Je. 46. 18. Is.35.2;33.9.

7 It was a ride of about fifteen miles across the plain of Esdraelon. The range of Carmel is clearly seen from Shunem.—*C.*

m ver. 22. Zec. 2. 4. Mat.15.21,22.

n Heb. *by his feet*, Mat.28.9.

8 Kissing the feet or knees is an ordinary mode of doing homage and making supplication, Mat.28. 9. Lu.7.38.—*C.*

o Mat.15. 23. Lu. 7. 38,39. Jn.4.27.

p Heb. *bitter*, 1 Sa. 1.10. Pr.14.10;18.14.

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9 God does not endow his prophets with a species of omniscience, but occasionally leaves them in the dark to remind them that he is the 'Father of lights,' and sends them many afflictions lest they should be tempted to pride, 2 Co.12.7.—*C.*

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1 Bind up the outer flowing garment so that there be nothing to entangle by the way.—*C.*

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u Lu. 10. 4. ver. 24, *i.e.* run with all possible speed.

2 Eastern salutations are often tedious ceremonies.—*C.*

x 1 Sa.1.26. Ru.1.16 –18. Ge.19.3. Lu.24.29. Ex.33.13–17.ch.2.2.

y Mat. 17. 19, 20. Is. 26.18.

3 Heb. *attention.*

4 God, who knew the worldly and covetous heart of Gehazi, refuses to work the miracle of restoration by him.—*C.*

5 The young, for a considerable time after death, have much the appearance of sleep. The rude and officious character of Gehazi, ver. 27, would scarcely lead him to speak thus in tenderness; he, most probably, paying little attention to anything but his own interests, ch. 5. 20, took the calm look of the boy for a lethargic sleep.—*C.*

z ver.4,5. 1 Ki.17.20. Mar.5.40. Ja. 5. 13–18. Ac.9.40;20.10.

a Ac. 9. 40; 20. 10. 1 Ki.17.21.

b Ro.12.11,15. Ep.4. 32.

6 Heb. *once hither and once thither*

c ch.8.1. 1 Ki.3.21. 2 Ki. 17.22. Lu.7.15;8.55. Jn. 11.44. Ac.9.40;20.11.

7 'Seven,' as representing the week, stands in Scripture for progress and perfection, completeness. The *seven* ears of corn, and the *seven* kine, Gen. xli., represented respectively seven years of plenty and famine. May not this precise number, which seems at first sight a note of no special importance, have been understood by the prophet as likewise representative, and led him to inquire of God, and anticipate the seven approaching years of famine, ch.8.1,2, of which he was sent to warn this Shunammite, as his master had been sent to preserve the Sarepta, Lu.4.25.—*C.*

d 1 Ki. 17. 23. Lu. 7. 15. He.11.35.

e ch.2.15. 1 Ki. 1. 23. ver.27.

f He.11.35. 1 Ki. 17. 23.

g ch.2.1. Ac.10.38;15.36. 8 B.C. 891. *h* De.28.22–24,38–40. Le.26.26. Je.14.1–6. Is.3.1. ch.8.1. *i* ver.1. *k* Lu.10.39. Ac.22.3. ch.2.3. Pr 8.34.

quaintance and friendship with God's servants is a principal ornament of the great: and happy are those families where both heads agree in it. Happy and wise those rich persons who desire no advancement. And nothing is more comely than for those who receive favours to be earnest in expressing their gratitude: but effectual fervent prayers are the best returns that we can make. How welcome and dear are children to such as have long wanted them! and yet how quickly they may be lost! We need always to stand ready for a sudden stroke. Death often seizes at a short warning. But in every affliction the view of God's hand should silence us. If he who gives takes away, we are called to be thankful for the length of the loan; and not to murmur that God resumes his gift. And we have need to be careful attendants on the ordinances of God, and to secure abiding comforts there, since the joys of earth so ebb and flow, and are but born and die.

HOUSE OF NAAMAN, THE LEPER—WHERE THE CAPTAIN OF THE KING OF SYRIA LIVED. [II. KINGS, v:1.]—"Now Naaman, Captain of the host of the King of Syria, was a great man with his master * * * but he was a leper." There is a house outside of the east gate of Damascus on the banks of the Abana River, that is said to stand upon the site of Naaman, the leper's house. This is now a leper hospital, and there are about thirty-five or forty of as wretched looking human beings in this hospital and strolling about the premises, as are to be found perhaps on the face of the earth. They seem to do their own cooking, go and come at will, and make a living by begging backsheesh in the most pitiable tones, from travelers. It is not surprising that Naaman, the proud Captain who resided at Damascus, should have refused to wash in the River Jordan, when he remembered the beautiful Abana that flowed by his house.

and he said unto his servant, Set on the great pot, and seethe pottage for the sons of the prophets.

39 And one went out into the field to gather herbs, and found a wild vine, and gathered thereof wild gourds[9] his lapfull, and came and shred *them* into the pot of pottage: for they knew[1] *them* not.

40 So they poured out for the men to eat: and it came to pass, as they were eating of the pottage, that they cried out, and said, O [m]*thou* man of God, *there* [n]*is* death in the pot: and they could not eat *thereof*.

41 But he said, Then bring meal: and he cast[o] *it* into the pot; and he said, Pour out for the people, that they may eat: and there was no harm[1] in the pot.[2]

42 ¶ And there came a man from [p]Baal-shalisha, and [q]brought the man of God bread of the first-fruits, twenty loaves of barley, and full ears of corn in the husk[3] thereof: and he said, Give unto the people, that they may eat.

43 And his servitor said, What! [r]should I set this before an hundred men? He said again, Give the people, that they may eat: for thus saith the LORD, [s]They shall eat, and shall leave *thereof*.

44 So he set *it* before them, and they did eat, and left *thereof*, according to the word of the LORD.

CHAPTER V.

1 Naaman, by the report of a captive maid, is sent to Samaria to be cured of his leprosy. 8 Elisha, sending him to Jordan, cureth him. 15 He refusing Naaman's gifts, granteth him some of the earth. 20 Gehazi, abusing his master's name unto Naaman, is smitten with leprosy.

NOW Naaman,[a] captain of the host of the king of Syria, was a [b]great man with[1] his master, and [2]honourable,[3] because by him the LORD had given [c]deliverance unto Syria: he was also a mighty man in valour;[4] *but he was* a[d] leper.[5]

2 And the Syrians had gone out [e]by companies,[6] and had brought away captive out of the land of Israel a little maid; and she [f]waited[7] on Naaman's wife.

3 And she [g]said unto her mistress, Would God my lord *were* [h]with[8] the prophet that *is* in Samaria! for he would [i]recover him of his leprosy.

4 And *one*[9] went in, and told his lord, saying, Thus and thus said the [k]maid that *is* of the land of Israel.

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[9] The Hebrew name is derived from a word that signifies to *crack noisily*, and by this circumstance it may with considerable confidence be identified with the *Cucumis Colocynthis*, of which the seed-case, when ripe, bursts with a loud crackling sound. The fruit when ripe, and before complete dryness, is beautiful and inviting to an inexperienced stranger, but tasted, is intensely bitter; and though capable of being usefully employed in medicine, is nevertheless justly ranked among vegetable poisons.—*C.*

l 1 Ti. 1. 7. Mat. 15. 14.

m Ju.13.6,8.1 Ki.12. 22;13.1;17.24.

n Ex.10.17.

o Ex.15. 25. Jn. 9. 6. ch.2.20;5.10.

1 Heb. *evil thing.*

2 This was no chemical action of the meal, but a miracle, of which the use of the meal was the evidence.—*C.*

p 1 Sa.9.4.

q ver. 38. 1 Co. 9. 11. Ga.6.6. Pr. 3. 9. Ex.23. 16.

3 Or, *in his scrip* or *garment.*

r Lu. 9. 13. Jn. 6. 9. Nu. 11. 13, 22. Mat. 14. 31. Mar. 6. 36-44.

s ver.44. Mat. 14.20. Jn.6.11,13.

CHAP. V.

B.C. 894.

a Lu.4.27.

b Ex.11.3.ch.4.8.Pr. 22.29;14.35;17.2.

1 Heb. *before.*

2 Or, *gracious.*

3 Heb. *lifted up*, or *accepted in countenance.*

c Or, *victory*, Is.10. 5.

4 The Jews have a tradition that he shot Ahab at the battle of Ramoth-gilead.—*C.*

d Le.13. 8. Nu. 5. 2. ch.7.3. Mat.8.2. Lu.17. 12.2 Co.12.7.

5 Every man has some *but* or other in his character, something that blemishes and diminishes him, some alloy to his grandeur, some damp to his joy. He may be very happy, very good; yet in something or other not so good as he should be, happy as he would be. Naaman was as great as the world could make him, and yet, as Bishop Hall remarks, the basest slave in Syria would not change skins with him.—*J.*

e ch.6.23. Ju.9.34.

6 The African slave-stealers still go out in such companies, and the young are, of course, as of old, Joel iii., not their sole, but their principal objects. (See Denham and Clapperton's *Travels.*)—*C.*

f Ps.123.2.

7 Heb. *go before.*

g 1 Co. 1.27,28.

h 1 Ki.16. 24, 29. ch. 3.1.

8 Heb. *before.*

i Heb. *gather in*, Le. xiii. xiv. Mat. 8. 3; 11.5. Lu.17.14.

k Job 31. 13. Ro. 10. 16. Pr.25.25.

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l Nu.22.7. 1 Sa. 9. 8. 1 Ki.13.7;14.3.ch.8.9.

1 Heb. *in his hand.*

2 About £16,400 sterling.

m Ge. 45. 22. Ju. 14. 12. Great men had many suits of apparel, as they used to clothe all their guests at their feasts, Mat.22.12.

3 This whole narrative concerning the king of Syria is most graphically characteristic, not of a great man—for the great in name and rank are often truly great—but of a great man spoiled by prosperity. He does not take time to inquire till he decides. He consequently mistakes the king for the prophet, and is in danger of a quarrel where he intended a compliment, or of exposing the life of a servant he wished to save.—*C.*

n Ge.30.2.De.32.39. 1 Sa.2.6.Ho.6.1,2. Ro. 4.17.

o 1 Ki.20.7.

p Ge.37.29, 34. 2 Sa. 3.31. ch.19.1.

q Lu.4.27. Ex. 4. 30, 31. ver.15;ch.1.6.

r ch.6.32;3.12.

s Mat.8.13. Jn.4.50.

4 Thus treating him as an equal, or rather as a very inferior person. It is plain that Elisha acted toward Naaman on the principle that he was not fully prepared to receive divine favours, or that he considered rank, and wealth, and dignity somewhat deserving the notice of the God of Israel. To produce genuine humility and submission to the sovereign pleasure of the true God was evidently the design and tendency of the prophet's conduct; and happy was it for the Syrian general that he submitted to be taught.—*Davidson.*

t Ju.9. 7. ch. 2. 21; 4. 41;13.19,21.

5 Or the number prescribed by the law for him who was cured of the disease. See Le.14.7.—*Davidson.*

u Ro.8.7. 1 Co. 2.14; 3.18, 19. Is. 55. 8. Mat. 16.24. Pr.3.5,6

6 Heb. *I said.*

7 Or, *I said with myself, He will surely come out*, &c.

8 Heb. *move up and down.*

9 This is a curious and ancient instance of a very prevalent superstition, which ascribed extraordinary healing powers to the *touch* of persons of high rank or of real or reputed sanctity.—*J.*

1 Or, *Amana.*

2 Among the many streams in the Damascene territory, the *Fijeh* is still in high repute for purity and salubrity.—*J.*

x Ec.7.9; 11. 10. Ep. 4.31. Job 18.4. Pr.14.17; 21.19;22 24;29.22.2 Ch. 16.10. Jonah 4.1,4,9.

y Ge.41.43. ch. 2. 12; 13.14. Pr.15.1. 1 Ti.5.1.

z Job 31.13. 2 Ch.20. 20. Lu.4.27.

a Lu.17.15-17.

b Ro.10.10. Lu. 7. 9. Ex. 18. 11. De. 32. 31. Jos.2.9-11. Da.2.47.

5 And the king of Syria said, Go to, go, and I will send a letter unto the king of Israel. And he departed, and [l]took with him[1] ten talents of silver, and six thousand *pieces* of gold,[2] and [m]ten changes of raiment.

6 And he brought the letter to the king of Israel, saying, Now when this letter is come unto thee, behold, I have *therewith* sent Naaman my servant to thee, that thou mayest recover him of his leprosy.[3]

7 And it came to pass, when the king of Israel had read the letter, that he rent his clothes, and said, [n]*Am* I God, to kill and to make alive, that this man doth send unto me to recover a man of his leprosy? wherefore consider, I pray you, and [o]see how he seeketh a quarrel against me.

8 ¶ And it was *so*, when Elisha the man of God had heard that the king of Israel had [p]rent his clothes, that he sent to the king, saying, Wherefore hast thou rent thy clothes? let him come now to me, and he shall [q]know that there is a prophet in Israel.

9 So Naaman came with his horses and with his chariot, and [r]stood at the door of the house of Elisha.

10 And Elisha [s]sent a messenger unto [4]him, saying, Go and [t]wash in Jordan seven [5]times, and thy flesh shall come again to thee, and thou shalt be clean.

11 But Naaman was [u]wroth, and went away, and said, Behold, I thought,[6] He will surely come out[7] to me, and stand, and call on the name of the LORD his God, and strike[8] his [9]hand over the place, and recover the leper.

12 *Are* not Abana[1] and Pharpar, rivers of Damascus,[2] better than all the waters of Israel? may I not wash in them, and be clean? So he turned, and [x]went away in a rage.

13 And his servants came near, and spake unto him, and said, [y]My father, *if* the prophet had bid thee *do some* great thing, wouldest thou not have done *it?* how much rather then, when he saith to thee, Wash, and be clean?

14 Then [z]went he down, and dipped himself seven times in Jordan, according to the saying of the man of God: and his flesh came again like unto the flesh of a little child, and he was clean.

15 ¶ And he [a]returned to the man of God, he and all his company, and came and stood before him: and he said, Behold, [b]now I know

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What sympathy do tender mothers, bereaved of their children, need at our hand! But the effectual fervent prayers of faith are prevalent even over death; for in his wisdom God lets die and makes alive. Such as God sends to awaken dead sinners had need to be men of prayer and patience. Prophets should be content with common fare—examples of mortification, while they preach it to others; and they should be ready to communicate to others who are in need. But, alas! how sin has rendered our tables snares and traps, and our provision poisonous! It is of the Lord's mercies that our meat nourisheth us. And he can easily make a little coarse, or even bitter food, a plentiful and pleasant feast.

CHAPTER V. [Ver. 11. *Strike his hand over the place, and recover the leper.* A superstition still common in the East, where even a European physician is expected to pass his hand over a diseased part. In England the royal touch was held to be a remedy for *scrofula* so late as the days of Queen Anne. The light, not of philosophy—for philosophy never grappled with a popular superstition—but the light of the Bible in the hands of Protestantism, has banished these fond imaginations, and led the sick to the throne of grace alone, He. 4. 16; but similar or identical superstitions are still fostered as instruments of popular control by the votaries of Romanism. And even while this is being written (March, 1841), persons of all forms of disease are being *touched* for healing by a Romish priest, who, while he in words denies any miraculous power, in acts lays claim to it by sinful compliance with the popular fanaticism. *C.*]

ROADWAY ALONG THE ABANA, DAMASCUS. [II. KINGS, v:12.]—"Are not Abana and Pharpar, rivers of Damascus, better than all the waters of Israel? may I not wash in them, and be clean? So he turned and went away in a rage." In reality the Pharpar River does not come up as far as Damascus. This ancient city is watered by the Abana alone, and the Abana has four sources; one is from Fijeh, under the Lebanon Cliff; another from near Amri el-hamah, north of Zebdany; another west of Zebdany, and the fourth west of Ruklah and Hermon. The trees and flowers along the banks of this river are beautiful beyond description. The shrubbery grows down to the very water's edge. The leaves are so green they are almost black. As Egypt is the gift of the Nile, so Damascus is the gift of the Abana River. It really creates an island in a desert.

that *there is* no God in all the earth but in Israel; now therefore, I pray thee, take [c]a blessing[8] of thy servant.

16 But he said, [d]*As* the LORD liveth, before whom I stand, I [e]will receive none. And he urged him to take *it;* but he refused.

17 And Naaman said, Shall there not then, I pray thee, be given to thy servant two mules' burden of earth?[9] for thy servant [f]will henceforth offer neither burnt-offering nor sacrifice unto other gods, but unto the LORD.

18 In this thing the LORD pardon thy servant, *that* when my master goeth into the house of Rimmon to worship there, and he leaneth on my hand, and[1] I bow[2] myself in the house of Rimmon: when I bow down myself in the house of Rimmon, the LORD pardon thy servant in this thing.

19 And he said unto him, [g]Go in peace.[3] So he departed from him [h]a little way.

20 ¶ But Gehazi, the servant of Elisha the man of God, said, Behold, my master hath spared Naaman this Syrian, in not receiving at his hands that which he brought; but, *as* the LORD liveth, [i]I will run after him, and take somewhat of him.

21 So Gehazi followed after Naaman: and when Naaman saw *him* running after him, he lighted down from the chariot to meet him, and said, [k]*Is* all well?

22 And he said, All *is* well. [l]My master hath sent me, saying, Behold, even now there be come to me from mount Ephraim two young men of the sons of the prophets: give them, I pray thee, a talent of silver, and two changes of garments.

23 And Naaman said, Be content, take two talents. And he urged him, and bound two talents of silver[4] in two bags, with two changes of garments, and laid *them* upon two of his servants; and they bare *them* before him.

24 And when he came to the tower,[5] he took *them* from their hand,[6] and bestowed *them* in the house; and he let the men go, and they departed.

25 But he went in, and stood before his master: and Elisha said unto him, Whence *comest thou,* Gehazi? And he said, Thy servant went [m]no whither.

26 And he said unto him, Went [n]not mine heart *with thee,* when the man turned again from his chariot to meet thee? [o]*Is it* a time to receive money, and to receive garments, and oliveyards, and vineyards, and sheep, and oxen, and men-servants, and maid-servants?

27 The [p]leprosy therefore of Naaman shall cleave unto thee, and unto thy seed for [7]ever. And he went out from his presence a leper [q]*as white* as snow.[8]

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c Ge. 33. 11. Jos. 15. 19. 1 Sa. 25. 27. ver. 5.
[8] A present.—*C.*
d ch. 2. 2[13]. 14.
e Ge. 14. 23. 1 Ki. 13. 8. Mat. 10. 8. Ac. 20. 33. 2 Co. 11. 9; 12. 13. 1 Co. 6. 12; 10. 32. Re. 22. 17.
[9] Naaman came a heathen, and though now a convert, is a young and childish one. He, therefore, still retains his original ideas of 'holy earth,' an opinion still prevalent among the Jews, with whom, in Europe, 'Jerusalem earth' is a considerable article of import. The same superstition prevails amongst Mahometans, who carry into all countries 'the holy earth' of Mecca; and amongst Romanists, whom we have seen dig up, and carry to great distances, similar 'holy earth' from the reputed grave of their so-called patron saint at Down, in Ireland. O! when will all called Christians cease to be children, and become men in understanding, 1 Co. 14. 20, separate error from truth, and superstition from piety. —*C.*
f Ge. 49. 10. 1 Th. 1. 9. Ho. 14. 3, 8.
[1] This seems to respect what he had formerly done.
[2] 'Hath gone,' 'leaned,' 'bowed'—asking pardon for the past, not indulgence for the future.—*C.*
g Ex. 4. 18. Ju. 18. 6. 1 Sa. 1. 17; 20. 42; 25. 35; 29. 7. 2 Sa. 15. 9. Lu. 7. 50.
h A little piece of ground, Ge. 35. 16.
i 1 Ti. 6. 10. 2 Pe. 2. 3, 14, 15. 2 Ti. 4. 10. Eze. 33. 31. Col. 3. 5. Phi. 3. 18, 19.
k Heb. Is there peace? ch. 9. 17–22; 4. 26.
l 1 Ki. 13. 18. Je. 9. 3, 5. 1 Ti. 6. 10, 11.
[3] Not necessarily sanctioning any outward conformity to the Syrian religion, but not forcing 'strong meat' on him as a child, 1 Co. 3. 2, and leaving his present hopeful convictions to work by the Spirit of God. *C.*—This is the usual form of leave-taking in the East—the parting salutation. The prophet certainly did not sanction any sacrifice of principle on the part of Naaman; he did not bid him do as he had suggested. Yet still, in the mouth of Elisha, this parting salutation was more than a mere conventional form. It was a blessing, and embodied a prayer that the peace of God might fully rest upon the awakened and partially enlightened Syrian. —*P.*

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[4] £684, 7*s.* 6*d.*
[5] Or, *secret place.*
[6] Another covetous Judas—he seems to have kept the store-house, as his antitype, the bag, Jn. 12. 6.—*C.*
m Heb. *not hither* or *thither,* ver. 22.
n 1 Th. 2. 17. 1 Co. 5. 3. Col. 2. 5. ch. 6. 12.
o Je. 20. 10; 45. 5. Mat. 5. 14, 16. 1 Co. 9. 12. 2 Co. 11. 12.
p 1 Sa. 2. 29, 30. 2 Sa. 3. 29. Je. 20. 4. Am. 7. 17. 1 Ti. 6. 9, 10. Pr. 28. 22.
[7] That is, as long as his family should continue. So far as diseases are hereditary, either by mere predisposition or otherwise, this would be the natural consequence; and, if Gehazi's avaricious spirit had respect to providing for his children, it was the most grievous temporal judgment, and well calculated to cure his spiritual malady.—*C.*
q Ex. 4. 6. Nu. 12. 10. Le. 13. 13.
[8] 'Alas! what a price do men pay for outward advantages when they are connected with such consequences to themselves, and such misery is entailed on their posterity. Let us beware of hypocrisy and covetousness, and dread above all things the curse of spiritual leprosy remaining upon our souls living and dying, and for ever.'—*Scott.*

CHAP. VI.

B.C. 893.

a 1 Ki. 18. 4, 35. ch. 2. 3, 5, 7, 15; 4. 1. Is. 8. 18.
b Heb. *before,* ch. 2. 3[14]. 38. 1 Sa. 19. 20.
[1] A curious example of the low state to which architecture had fallen by the hostile invasions since the days of Solomon. Permanent buildings were, most probably, confined to towns and castles. The prophets were evidently constructing a *log-house* like the forest settlers in America.—*C.*
c 1 Ti. 6. 6; 5. 8. 1 Th. 4. 11, 12.
d Ju. 4. 8. Ex. 4. 10.

CHAPTER VI.

1 Elisha, giving leave to the young prophets to enlarge their dwellings, causeth iron to swim. 8 He discloseth the king of Syria's counsel. 13 The army which was sent to Dothan to apprehend Elisha is smitten with blindness. 19 Being brought into Samaria, they are dismissed in peace. 24 The famine in Samaria causeth women to eat their own children. 30 The king sendeth to slay Elisha.

AND the [a]sons of the prophets said unto Elisha, Behold now, the place where we [b]dwell with thee is too strait for us.

2 Let us go, we pray thee, unto Jordan, and take thence every man a beam,[1] and [c]let us make us a place there where we may dwell. And he answered, Go ye.

3 And one said, [d]Be content, I pray thee, and go with thy servants. And he answered, I will go.

4 So he went with them. And when they came to Jordan, they cut down wood.

Ver. 12. [The *Abana,* now called *Barada,* rises in a beautiful plain in the very heart of the range of Anti-lebanon, and cuts its way through a sublime ravine down to the plain of Damascus. Before entering the plain, and also after entering it, a number of canals are led off from the river at different elevations, and are carried along the higher parts of the plain for purposes of irrigation. By this means an immense extent of country, which would otherwise be a parched desert, is converted into a paradise. The Abana flows through the city and across the plain eastward for 20 miles, and then falls into a lake. The *Pharpar,* now called *Awaj,* rises high up on the eastern side of Mount Hermon, flows through the plain south of Damascus, at the distance of about 7 miles from the city, and falls into a separate lake or marsh. Numerous canals are also led off from the Pharpar for purposes of irrigation; and some of them are carried within a mile of the city. By means of these two rivers the plain of Damascus is made the richest and most beautiful in the world. There was much truth, therefore, in the haughty exclamation of Naaman: 'Are not Abana and Pharpar, rivers of Damascus, better than all the waters of Israel?' *P.*]

REFLECTIONS.—Greatness and wealth avail so little to make men happy, that they cannot preserve them from the sorest and most loathsome calamities. God can make the captivity and distress of his people a useful mean for spreading the knowledge of himself, and even out of the mouths of babes and sucklings he can perfect praise. It is a great privilege to have servants who know God and seek the welfare of the family. Men are generally willing to try every expedient, and bestow the utmost expense and trouble, to obtain a cure of their bodily distempers: but how few regard the worth or welfare of their souls! and how readily carnal men fancy that supernatural benefits must be purchased by carnal profits! Men who are conscious of their ill deserts often tremble at every shadow, and disquiet their minds by misinterpreting the most innocent intentions of their neighbours. But God in mercy oftentimes helps the wicked far beyond what they have reason to expect. And ministers ought to seize upon every opportunity of manifesting the power and grace of God: but never ought they to sully their character by a complaisant crouching to the pride of great men. Proud spirits readily interpret the least suspected slight into a heinous affront: and the wise in their own conceit often ruin themselves by contempt of the simple dictates and ordinances of God. But O the riches of his grace, that stops our course when we forsake our own mercy! It is happy for proud and passionate masters to have servants faithful, calm, and prudent, to offer them an advice: and we see here the happy consequences of sometimes attending to it. Hopeful is our case if we once submit to God's method of relief: for by what simple means can he effect the most wonderful deliverance! Never then let me, through the pride of my heart, reject his means of salvation, or stumble at the simplicity of a crucified Redeemer: his blood and spirit can cleanse the foulest leprosy of sin and restore the most diseased sinner; and I am bid only to wash and be clean. Never let me wish to prescribe to him in the paths of his providence, who can thus, by the weakest means, produce the greatest ends, and manifest his power and glory. That knowledge of God which is obtained by such an experience of his goodness, will always be most fruitful, while holy gratitude disposes us to a careful performance of duty both towards God and men, leads us to regard the prayers of God's people, to remember past transgressions with grief, and to resolve for the future to abstain from all appearance of evil. But, alas! that those who have most and best instructions and examples should have all lost upon them! Parents and masters cannot convert their children or servants. Covetousness tempts to lying and almost every other evil: and one sin always leads on to another. Hope of concealment and impunity is a great encouragement to do evil. But short-lived, transitory, and bitter in the end, is prosperous wickedness: and how often men, by their covetousness and falsehood, entail plagues on themselves and their posterity!

CHAPTER VI. REFLECTIONS.—It is comfortable to see Christ's disciples increase in the worst of times; but often faithful people are in very poor outward circumstances. Nor in evil times ought a minister to grudge if his own hands must minister to his necessities: but it ill becomes him to be an idle vagabond or slothful loiterer. Things borrowed ought to be carefully preserved. And it is extremely galling to an honest or generous mind to hurt his neighbour. How restless are the enemies of God's people! But it is easy for God, who knows all things, to frustrate their counsels by warning his servants of them; and it is

MILL AT DOTHAN—WHERE THE HORSES AND CHARIOTS OF FIRE WERE SEEN ABOUT ELISHA. [II. KINGS, vi: 13.]—"And he said, Go and spy where he is, that I may send and fetch him. And it was told him, saying, Behold, he is in Dothan." Here in this place, near where Joseph was cast into a pit by his brethren, and where Elisha's young man saw the mountain full of horses and chariots of fire round about Elisha, we saw the only steam mill that we observed in Palestine. It is rather a crude affair, but shows that the material elements of modern civilization are gradually penetrating this, one of the oldest countries. The civilization of Palestine in the days of David and Solomon, and even down to the coming of Christ, was far higher than what it is to-day. It was not only arrested by Moslem religion, but has been set back and degraded to a degree lower almost than any other civilization in the world, above that of the barbarian.

5 But as one was felling a beam, the axe-head[2] fell into the water: and he cried, and said, [e]Alas, master![3] for it was borrowed.

6 And the man of God said, Where fell it? And he showed him the place. And he cut[f] down a stick, and cast *it* in thither; and the iron did swim.

7 Therefore said he, Take *it* up to thee. And he put out his hand, and took it.

8 ¶ Then the king of Syria warred against Israel, and [g]took counsel with his servants, saying, In such and such a place *shall be* my [4]camp.[5]

9 And the man of God sent unto the king of Israel, saying, [h]Beware that thou pass not such a place; for thither the Syrians are come down.

10 And the king of Israel [i]sent to the place which the man of God told him and warned him of, and saved himself there, not once nor twice.[6]

11 ¶ Therefore the heart of the king of Syria was [k]sore troubled for this thing; and he called his servants, and said unto them, [l]Will ye not show me which of us *is* for the king of Israel?

12 And one of his servants said, None,[7] my lord, O king: but [m]Elisha, the prophet that *is* in Israel, telleth the king of Israel the words that thou speakest [n]in thy bed-chamber.

13 And he said, Go and [o]spy where he *is*, that I may send and fetch him. And it was told him, saying, Behold, *he is* in [p]Dothan.[8]

14 Therefore sent he thither [q]horses, and chariots, and a great[9] host: and they came by night, and compassed the city about.

15 ¶ And when the [r]servant of the man of God was risen early, and gone forth, behold, an host compassed the city, both with horses and chariots: and his servant[1] said unto him, Alas,[s] my master! how shall we do?

16 And he answered, [t]Fear not: for they that *be* with us *are* more than they that *be* with them.

17 And Elisha [u]prayed, and said, LORD, I pray thee, open his eyes, that he may see. And the LORD opened the eyes of the young man; and he saw: and, behold, the mountain[2] *was* full[x] of horses and chariots[3] of fire round about Elisha.

18 ¶ And when they came down to him, Elisha prayed unto the LORD, and said, Smite this people, I pray thee, with [y]blindness.[4] And he smote them with blindness, according to the word of Elisha.

19 And Elisha said unto them, This *is* not the way,[5] neither *is* this the city:[6] follow me, and I will bring you to the man whom ye seek. But he led them to Samaria.

20 And it came to pass, when they were come into Samaria, that Elisha said, LORD, open the eyes of these *men*, that they may see. And the LORD [z]opened their eyes, and they saw; and, behold, *they were* in the midst of Samaria.

21 And the king of Israel said unto Elisha, when he saw them, [a]My father, shall I smite *them?* shall I smite *them?*

22 And he answered, [b]Thou shalt not smite *them:* wouldest thou smite those whom thou hast taken captive with thy sword and with thy bow? Set bread and water[7] before them, that they may eat and drink, and go to their master.

23 And he prepared great provision for them: and when they had eaten and drunk, he sent them away, and they went to their master. So the [c]bands of Syria[8] came no more into the land of Israel.

24 ¶ And it came to pass after this, that Ben-hadad king of Syria gathered [d]all his host, and went up,[9] and besieged [e]Samaria.

25 And there was [f]a great famine in Samaria: and, behold, they besieged it, until an ass's head[1] was *sold* for fourscore *pieces* of silver,[2] and the fourth part of a cab[3] of dove's dung[4] for five *pieces* of silver.[5]

26 ¶ And as the king of Israel was passing by upon the wall, there cried a woman unto him, saying, [g]Help, my lord, O king!

27 And he said, [h]If the LORD do not help thee,[6] whence shall I help thee? out of the barn-floor, or out of the wine-press?

28 And the king said unto her, [i]What aileth thee? And she answered, This woman said unto me, Give thy son, that we may [k]eat him to-day, and we will eat my son to-morrow.

29 So we boiled my son, and did eat him: and I said unto her on the next[7] day, Give thy son, that we may eat him:[8] and she hath hid her son.

30 ¶ And it came to pass, when the king heard the words of the woman, that he [l]rent his clothes; and he passed by upon the wall,

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A.M. 3111. B.C. 893.

2 Heb. *iron.*
e ver. 15; ch. 3. 10. Re. 18. 10, 16, 19.
3 In such a state of the arts as is indicated by ver. 2, the loss of an axe would be very great, because nearly irreparable.—*C.*
f Ex. 15. 25. ch. 2. 21; 4. 41. Ju. 9. 0.
g Pr. 24. 6; 20. 18; 21. 30.
4 Or, *encamping.*
5 The appointed mustering place for his military retainers.—*C.*
h Am. 3. 7. ch. 2. 12; 13. 14. Is. 63. 12. Ps. 25. 14.
i Ju. 4. 41. Ac. 17. 11.
6 The Syrians evidently gathered secretly in some pass of the woods or rocks, and lay in ambush to take the king.—*C.*
k Is. 57. 20. Job 18. 7, 11; 20. 20, 22; 15. 20.
l 1 Sa. 22. 8.
7 Heb. *No.*
m ch. 5. 8, 10; ver. 9, 10.
n Ec. 10. 20. Ps. 25. 14. Am. 3. 7.
o 1 Sa. 23. 22. Ps. 37. 12, 14, 32; 10. 8, 9.
p Ge. 37. 17.
Dothan signifies 'two wells;' the town, though only twice mentioned in the Bible, has thrown around it much of romantic interest as having been the scene of Joseph's sale by his brethren, and of Elisha's miraculous deliverance. Among the wooded hills of Ephraim, about eight miles north of Samaria, is a beautiful upland plain. On its southern side is a large mound covered with ruins. This is the site of Dothan, and it is still called by its ancient name. Beside it are several deep wells or cisterns.—*P.*
q Is. 8. 9, 10. 1 Sa. 23. 25. ch. 3. 21; 18. 10–22.
9 Heb. *heavy.*
r Or, *minister*, Ex. 24. 13. Mat. 20. 26.
1 Of course not Gehazi, for he, as a leper, was, as an unclean, excommunicated from society.—*C.*
s ver. 5. Ps. 53. 5.
t Is. 43. 1, 2; 41. 10, 14, 13, 27. 1–3. Ex. 14. 13. 2 Ch. 32. 7. Ro. 8. 31. He. 13. 6.
u Ps. 50. 15; 91. 15. Eze. 36. 37. Is. 58. 9; 65. 24.
2 The 'hill' on which the town was built. The troops of the Syrian king were drawn up in the plain round the site of Dothan, so as to cut off all possibility of escape. The 'horses and chariots of fire' stood in glorious array 'round about Elisha,' between him and the enemy.—*P.*
x Ps. 34. 7; 68. 17; 91. 11. Mat. 26. 53. ch. 2. 11. Zec. 1. 8; 6. 1–7. He. 1. 14.
3 Of the invisible world we know nothing but what God is pleased to discover; but it is a dangerous style of interpretation to resolve all such things into mere assumed appearances. Better to rest upon the letter of the word, and what we are now ignorant of God will, in his own time, reveal.—*Note,* Providence never wants its visible or invisible agents for deliverance. Our Lord assures us that a prayer would have collected around him more than twelve legions of angels, Mat. 26. 53.—*C.*

A.M. 3111. B.C. 893.

y Ge. 19. 11. Job 5. 14. La. 24. 16. Mar. 8. 24. Ac. 13. 11.
4 Confusion of sight.—*C.*
5 It is not here that you can see Elisha.
6 'Not the way' where you will find him, nor 'the city' where you will see him. The prophet therefore spoke the literal truth.—*C.*
z Mat. 7. 7. Is. 58. 9; 45. 11; 65. 24. Ja. 5. 16–18.
a ch. 2. 12; 8. 9; 13. 14; 5. 13.
b Pr. 25. 21. Ro. 12. 20. Mat. 5. 44. 2 Ch. 28. 11, 15. If you would not kill such as you had taken prisoners, how much less those whom God hath made his prisoners.
7 By comparing the phrase 'bread and water,' with ver. 23, it will be seen that it was equivalent to abundant provisions of all kinds.—*C.*
c ch. 5. 2; 24. 2, but the whole army did, ver. 24.
8 The predatory bands, for carrying off cattle and slaves, which, in a difficult country, were of easiest conveyance.—*C.*
d 1 Ki. 20. 1; 22. 31.
9 B.C. 892.
e The chief city of Israel, 1 Ki. 16. 21, 29, 32. ch. 10. 1; 17. 5, 6.
f Le. 26. 26. De. 28. 52.
1 This was an unclean animal, Le. 11. 26; but in a siege, in which mothers devoured their children, ver. 29, and amongst such a people, all law would give way to necessity. Some, however, understand it to be a local name for 'a pile of bread,' or the measure called a *homer.* But for the first we can see no authority, and for the last no meaning.—*C.*
2 £9, 7*s.* 6*d.*
3 About three gills of vetches.
4 A kind of dried pulse, much used by the Arabs, is still called by this name, and it is largely stored at Cairo and Damascus; and this is the interpretation of Bochart and many others. The literal article is, according to Morier, largely used for manure for melons, and sold at a high price; he concludes, therefore, that it was used for this purpose in the siege. In whatever sense, however, we understand the phrase 'ass's head,' it means plainly an article of *food:* we can therefore see no reason for supposing the 'doves' dung' to be a *manure,* and for no other purpose could the literal article be used; we therefore adopt the opinion that it was a kind of dried pea.—*C.*
5 11*s.* 5*d.*
g Is. 10. 3. Mat. 8. 25.
h Ps. 127. 1, 2; 60. 11; 146. 3; 124. 1.
6 Or, *let not the LORD save thee.*
i Ju. 18. 23. 2 Sa. 14. 5.
k Le. 26. 29. De. 28. 53–55. La. 4. 10. Eze. 5. 10. Is. 9. 20.
7 Heb. *others.*
8 This was foretold by Moses, De. 28. 53, and occurred likewise at Jerusalem, Eze. 5. 10, and again, as related by Josephus, in the siege by Titus.—*C.*
l ch. 5. 7; 18. 37; 19. 1. Ge. 37. 34. 1 Ki. 21. 27.

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salutary to attend exactly to his admonitions. On the contrary, it is mad impiety for the mightiest to attempt fighting against God and his servants. When there is at best but little faith, the mind is easily overwhelmed with consternation and tempted to despair of divine protection. But they who are strong ought to pray for the weak and bear with their infirmities. Clear views of God's goodness, power, and kindness, and of his angelic guards, can effectually remove our slavish fear of temporal calamities. How often they who fight against God are given up to stupidity and strong delusions; and find themselves conquered or ruined where they hoped to triumph! But if we have our enemies at our mercy it is best to render them good for evil, and thus soften and captivate their hearts. But no kindness will long impress a hardened and obstinate foe. And how dreadful is the scourge of a furious war! It may quickly render us destitute of our necessary food; and raging hunger may prevail against the strongest natural affections. None know what miseries await them before they die. And in our distresses, particularly those of our soul, if God be not our friend, vain is the help of man. Unhumbled sinners are apt to attribute their troubles to any cause but the real one, their sins; and to turn that revenge on the innocent which is due to their sinful self. The sole suspenders of God's judgments are often calumniated and persecuted as if they were the guilty cause thereof: and the most useful are reckoned the very pests of society. But dreadful is the case when disappointments render men desperate with rage against God; the view of whose hand should make them resigned, and whose abundant mercy should encourage their patience and hope.

PART OF OUR CARAVAN AT DOTHAN, WHERE ELISHA'S YOUNG MAN SAW THE MOUNTAINS FULL OF HORSES AND CHARIOTS. [II. KINGS vi:17.]—"And Elisha prayed, and said, Lord, I pray thee, open his eyes, that he may see. And the Lord opened the eyes of the young man; and he saw: and, behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire round about Elisha." The scene which is described in this picture was at Dothan. Dothan lay upon the highway which the Ishmaelite merchants were compelled to travel, and it was during one of their regular marches along this way that they bought Joseph from his brethren, as we are told in Genesis xxxvii:17. Here we know it was that the Lord opened the eyes of Elisha's young man, because when the King of Syria warred against Israel, he wanted to know of the whereabouts of Elisha, the man of God. In the 13th verse of the 6th chapter of II. Kings we are told: "And he said, Go and spy where he is, that I may send and fetch him. And it was told him, saying, Behold, he is in Dothan."

and the people looked, and, behold, *he had* sackcloth within upon his flesh.[9]

31 Then he said, [m]God do so and more also to me, if the head of Elisha the son of Shaphat shall stand on him this day.

32 But Elisha [n]sat in his house, and the elders sat with him; and *the king* sent a man from before him: but [o]ere the messenger came to him, he said to the elders, See ye how this son[p] of a murderer[1] hath sent to take away mine head? look, when the messenger cometh, shut the door, and hold him fast at the door; *is* not the [q]sound of his master's feet behind him?

33 And while he yet talked with them, behold, the messenger came down unto him: and [r]he[2] said, Behold, this evil *is* of the LORD; what should I wait for the LORD any longer?[3]

CHAPTER VII.

1 Elisha prophesieth incredible plenty in Samaria. 3 Four lepers, venturing into the host of the Syrians, bring tidings of their flight. 12 The king, finding by spies the news to be true, spoileth the tents of the Syrians. 17 The lord who would not believe the prophecy of plenty, having the charge of the gate, is trodden to death in the press.

THEN Elisha [a]said, Hear ye the word of the LORD; Thus saith the LORD, [b]To-morrow about this time [c]*shall* a measure[1] of fine flour *be sold* for a shekel,[2] and two measures of barley for a shekel, in the gate[3] of Samaria.

2 Then a lord, [d]on whose hand the king leaned,[4] answered the man of God, and said, Behold, [e]*if* the LORD would make windows in heaven, might this thing be?[5] And he said, Behold, thou shalt see *it* with thine eyes, but shalt [f]not eat thereof.

3 ¶ And there were four leprous men [g]at the entering in of the gate: and they said one to another, Why sit we here until we die?

4 If we say, We will enter into the city, then the famine *is* in the city, and we shall die there; and if we sit still here, we die also. Now therefore come, and let us fall unto the host of the Syrians: [h]if they save us alive, we shall live; and if they kill us, we shall but die.

5 And they rose up in the [i]twilight, to go unto the camp of the Syrians: and when they were come to the uttermost part of the camp of Syria, behold, *there was* no man there.

6 For the LORD had made the host of the Syrians to [k]hear a noise of chariots, and a noise of horses, *even* the noise of a great host: and they said one to another, Lo, the king of Israel hath hired against us the kings of the Hittites,[6] and the kings of the Egyptians, to come upon us

7 Wherefore they arose and [l]fled in the twilight, and left their tents, and their horses, and their asses, even the camp as it *was*, and fled for their life.[7]

A.M. 3112. B.C. 892.

9 Alas! what trust can be placed in superstitious penances! They may macerate the flesh, but neither rend nor improve the heart. Jehoram has sackcloth on his flesh, the token of deep mourning before God, but (ver. 31) murder in his heart against an innocent godly man. —*C.*

m 1 Ki. 19. 2; 20. 17. Ac. 23. 12, 14. As he was thought to have brought on, or at least did not remove the famine.

n Ps. 118. 6. Eze. 9. 4. Mal. 3. 16.

o ver. 12; ch. 5. 26. Am. 3. 7.

p 1 Ki. 18. 4; 21. 10.

1 Jezebel, his mother, murdered Naboth and the prophets, and his father Ahab consented to the doings of his imperious wicked wife. —*C.*

q 1 Ki. 14. 6. Ge. 31. 29.

r Jehoram, Re. 16. 9. Ge. 4. 13.

2 Not the servant, but his master Jehoram. Ch. 7. 1, 2. —*C.*

3 The prophet, it would seem, had encouraged him to hold out, waiting for deliverance from God. —*C.*

CHAP. VII.

a ch. 6. 33.

b Ps. 46. 1, 5. ver. 18, 19. Is. 58. 8.

c ch. 6. 25.

1 A peck and pint.

2 For about 2*s.* 7½*d.*

3 It is still not unusual in the East for the wholesale market for country produce and cattle to be held (for a short time in the early morning) at the gates of towns. Manufactured goods and fruits are sold in the bazaars within the town. —*J.*

d ch. 5. 18.

4 Heb. *a lord who* belonged *to the king, leaning upon his hand.*

e Ge. 7. 11; 8. 2, 13. Mal. 3. 10. Ps. 78. 19–21.

5 An infidel he must have been, else he had remembered the manna in the wilderness, which came down from heaven without man's labour, and supplied, not merely a city, but a nation, for nearly forty years. —*C.*

f De. 3. 27. He. 3. 17. ver. 20.

g Le. 13. 46. Nu. 5. 2. ch. 5. 27.

h Es. 4. 16. Lu. 15. 17–19.

i 1 Sa. 30. 17. ver. 7, 9. Ps 11?. 147

k 2 Sa. 5. 24. ch. 19. 7. Job 15. ver. 21.

6 We learn from Jos. 11. 3, 4. that the northern nations of Canaan had multitudes of horses and chariots in the days of Joshua, and from 1 Ki. 10. 29 we discover that an extensive transit trade in horses was carried on with them in the days of Solomon. It is farther evident from the text, that notwithstanding their expulsion from Palestine, they were still in great force on the borders, probably towards the south-east, as they are mentioned in conjunction with the Egyptians. —*C.*

l Ps. 53. 5; 48. 4–6. Pr. 28. 1. Job 15. 21; 18. 11.

7 Such *panics*, as they are called, have often occurred in armies. This is attributed directly to the Lord; but, if men saw aright, and acknowledged aright, all events, whether natural or supernatural, are alike under his guidance, and alike contribute to effect his purposes. —*C.*

A.M. 3112. B.C. 892.

m Je. 41. 8. Jos. 7. 21. Mat. 13. 44; 25. 18.

n Ju. 19. 30. ver. 6. Eze. 18. 14. Hag. 1. 5. He. 10. 24. Ga. 6. 2.

o Phi. 2. 4. Mat. 7. 24; 10. 16.

p Nu. 32. 23. Pr. 5. 25.

8 Heb. *we shall find punishment.*

q ver. 6, 7.

r Ge. 20. 8; 41. 38. ch. 6. 8; 5. 13.

9 This was a sagacious, and no improbable conjecture of the king; the search suggested by his servant, however, was better. —*Note*, Caution is most commendable; but separate from judgment, activity, and courage, may soon degenerate into timidity. —*C.*

1 Heb. *in it.* They are as few and lean as ourselves.

2 There is considerable variety in the MSS. in recording this text, part of which is also wanting, both in the Septuagint and Syriac versions. But as we can discover no special difficulty in understanding the meaning of the text, so we can see little necessity in searching for a varied edition; and, unless where authority is paramount, are not disposed to receive emendations however plausible. Boothroyd translates it thus; '*Two* of the *five* horses which remain—for, behold, they only remained of all the multitude that were in Israel unconsumed.' Dr. Clarke renders the last word 'fit for service.' —*C.*

3 The construction of this passage as it now stands is very difficult, and the meaning obscure. Many attempts appear to have been made both in ancient and modern times to modify the text; but they have not been successful. The various readings were probably occasioned by a desire to overcome the difficulty of interpretation. The sentence is somewhat prolix, but the meaning seems to be this: Let them take five horses of those that remain in the city. Behold, they are as all the rest of the Israelites which remain in it (*i.e.* their lot, even should they perish on the expedition, is no worse than that of those who are perishing in the city with famine); behold, they are as all the rest of Israel which perished (*i.e.* at the worst they shall but perish like the thousands that have perished already). The sending of the horses implies the sending of men with them; and to the men is the special reference made here. This explains the parallel drawn between them and the other Israelites. —*P.*

4 Heb. *chariots of horses.*

5 We prefer the text here to the marginal translation, for certainly *chariots* would not suit the purpose of the spies so well as horses. —*C.*

s Or, *furniture*, Ex. 35. 16. Es. 1. 7. Is. 22. 21.

t Job 27. 16, 17. 2 Ch. 20. 25. Ps. 68. 12. Is. 33. 23.

u ver. 1. Is. 44. 26. He. 10. 23. Nu. 23. 19. 1 Sa. 15. 29. 2 Ti. 2. 13. Tit. 1. 2.

x ver. 1, 2, 16. Is. 44. 26.

6 About a peck of fine flour for 2*s.* 6*d.*, and two pecks of barley for the same. —*C.*

8 And when these lepers came to the uttermost part of the camp, they went into one tent, and did eat and drink, and carried thence silver, and gold, and raiment, and went and [m]hid *it;* and came again, and entered into another tent, and carried thence *also*, and went and hid *it.*

9 Then they [n]said one to another, We do not well: this day *is* a [o]day of good tidings, and we hold our peace: if we tarry till the morning light, [p]some mischief will come upon us:[8] now therefore come, that we may go and tell the king's household.

10 So they came and called unto the porter of the city: and they told them, saying, We came to the camp of the Syrians, and, behold, [q]*there was* no man there, neither voice of man, but horses tied, and asses tied, and the tents as they *were.*

11 And he called the porters; and they told *it* to the king's house within.

12 ¶ And the king arose in the night, and said unto his [r]servants, I will now show you what the Syrians have done to us: they know that we *be* hungry, therefore are they gone out of the camp to hide themselves in the field, saying, When they come out of the city, we shall catch them alive, and get into the city.[9]

13 And one of his servants answered and said, Let *some* take, I pray thee, five of the horses that remain, which are left in the city, (behold, they *are*[1] as all the multitude of Israel that are left in it; behold, *I say*, they *are* even as all the multitude of the Israelites that are consumed,)[2] and let us send and see.[3]

14 They took therefore two [4]chariot [5]horses; and the king sent after the host of the Syrians, saying, Go and see.

15 And they went after them unto Jordan; and, lo, all the way *was* full of garments and [s]vessels, which the Syrians had cast away in their haste: and the messengers returned, and told the king.

16 And the people went out, and [t]spoiled the tents of the Syrians. So a measure of fine flour was *sold* for a shekel, and two measures of barley for a shekel, [u]according to the word of the LORD.

17 ¶ And the king appointed the lord on whose hand he leaned to have the charge of the gate: and the people trode upon him in the gate, and he died, as the man of God had said, who spake when the king came down to him.

18 And it came to pass as the man of God had spoken to the king, [x]saying, Two measures of barley for a shekel, and a measure of fine flour for a shekel,[6] shall be to-morrow about this time in the gate of Samaria:

CHAPTER VII. REFLECTIONS.—Remarkable relief is often near when there is no appearance of it. But sinners, and especially infidel courtiers, are bent to discredit and ridicule God's promises and purposes to their own ruin. Nothing more provokes God against men than an unbelieving contempt of his gifts and promises. But the terrors of God can soon make the stoutest to tremble, and to flee when no man pursueth, in order to work deliverance for his people.

MAT-WEAVERS, SYRIA—CHARACTERISTIC OF SYRIA IN ALL AGES. [II. KINGS, vii: 15.]—"And they went after them unto Jordan; and lo, all the way was full of garments and vessels, which the Syrians had cast away in their haste." There are a great many Bedouins in Syria who live in tents. These tents are woven of black goats' hair, and are carpeted with thick, heavy mats. We see in the above picture a rude contrivance the natives use for weaving these mats. They cut the rushes of which the mats are woven from the Jordan. The native Bedouins when aroused or threatened are full of hate, but when approached in their tents by foreigners and addressed kindly they appear to be very polite and gentle. Our party spent a night camping within the confines of a Bedouin village, and they treated us with the greatest respect and kindness, brought us milk, assisted our cook in the preparation of our food, and our muleteers in feeding and tying our horses.

19 And that lord answered the man of God, and said, Now, behold, *if* the LORD should make windows in heaven, might such a thing be? And he said, Behold, thou shalt see it with thine eyes, but shalt not eat thereof.

20 And [y]so it fell out unto him: for the people trode[7] upon him in the gate, and he died.

CHAPTER VIII.

1 The Shunammite, having left her country seven years, to avoid the forewarned famine, for Elisha's miracle sake hath her land restored by the king. 7 Hazael, being sent with a present by Benhadad to Elisha at Damascus, after he had heard the prophecy, killeth his master, and succeedeth him. 16 Jehoram's wicked reign in Judah. 20 Edom and Libnah revolt. 23 Ahaziah succeedeth Jehoram. 25 Ahaziah's wicked reign. 28 He visiteth Jehoram wounded, at Jezreel.

THEN spake Elisha unto the woman, [a]whose son he had restored to life, saying, Arise, and go thou and thine household, and [b]sojourn wheresoever thou canst sojourn: for [c]the LORD hath called for a famine; and it shall also come upon the land seven years.

2 And the woman arose, and did after the saying of the man of God: and she went with her [d]household, and sojourned in the [e]land of the Philistines seven years.[1]

3 And it came to pass at the seven years'[2] end, that the woman returned out of the land of the Philistines: and [f]she went forth to cry unto the king for her house, and for her land.

4 And the [g]king talked with [h]Gehazi, the servant of the man of God, saying, Tell me, I pray thee all the great things that Elisha hath done

5 And it came to pass, as he was telling the king how he had restored a dead body to life, that, behold, the woman, whose son he had restored to life, cried to the king for her house, and for her land. And Gehazi said, My lord, O king, this *is* [i]the woman, and this *is* her son, whom Elisha restored to life.

6 And when the king asked the woman, she told him. So the king appointed unto her a certain officer,[3] saying, [k]Restore all that *was* her's, and all the fruits[4] of the field since the day that she left the land, even until now.

7 ¶ And Elisha came[5] to [l]Damascus;[6] and Ben-hadad[m] the king of Syria was sick: and it was told him, saying, The [n]man of God is come hither.

8 And the king said unto Hazael, [o]Take a present in thine hand, and go, meet the man of God,[7] and inquire [p]of the LORD by him, saying, Shall I recover of this disease?

A.M. 3112. B.C. 892.

y Job 20.23. Is.42.25; 7.9. Nu.20.12. 2 Ch.20. 20. Je.17.6. 1 Jn. 5. 10. ver.2. He.3.18,19.

7 He that limited the Almighty God now finds himself unable to control the hungry multitude.—*C.*

CHAP. VIII.

a ch.4.35.

b Ge.12.10; 26.1. Ru. 1.1.

c Ps.105.16. Je.25.29. Hag.1.11. Ge.41.27. 2 Sa.24.13. 1 Ki.18.2. Le. 26.19,20,26. De.28.22-24.

d 1 Ti.5.8. Ro.12.17.

e 1 Sa.27.1. Ge.26.1. Ju.11.3.

1 It appears strange to many that there could be a famine in Israel and plenty in Philistia, countries between which there was no difference of soil or climate, and that lay so contiguous to each other. Those who either wonder or object show little knowledge or observation in agriculture. Such occurrences are common in all countries, and arise from various causes, such as (1) Diversity of agricultural skill. (2) Variety in the staple crop, which people are not easily induced to change to suit seasons. (3) From the local nature of drought and rain, which, though generally equalized, are sometimes very unequal. (4) From the destructive powers of insects, generated at particular degrees of temperature and moisture. (5) From facilities of import—which last was altogether in favour of the Philistines, who dwelt along the borders of the Mediterranean.—*C.*

2 B.C. 889.

f ver.6. 2 Sa.14.4. Ps. 82.3. Pr.22.16.

g Pr.25.19. Mi.7.5,6.

h ch.iv.v. Pr.16.1,9; 21.1.

i ch.4.8-37.

3 Or, *eunuch.*

k De.22.2. 2 Sa.9.7. Ju.11.13.

4 The income which either her relatives had drawn, or which, probably, had escheated to the crown.—*C.*

5 About 885.

l Ge. 14. 15. 1 Ki.11. 24. Is.7.8.

6 Not as a curious traveller, but in his wonted vocation as itinerant instructor and superintendent of the schools of the prophets—and, not unlikely, to visit Naaman.—*C.*

m 1 Ki. 15. 18; 20. 1; 22.31. ch.6.24.

n ch.2.15; 6.12,17,18.

o 1 Sa.9.7. 1 Ki.13.7; 14.3. ch.5.5,15.

7 He calls him 'the man of God,' because he never doubted the deity of Jehovah as the tutelary God of Judea, but associated in sovereignty with him his own tutelary god Rimmon. Judaism and scriptural Christianity reject this amalgamation, and refuse to acknowledge any God but Jehovah; and hence the antipathy which heathenism has always, when in power, shown to both.—*C.*

p With ch.1.2; 5.15; 3.11.

A.M. 3119. B.C. 885.

q 1 Ki.19.15.

r ch.5.5,16.

8 Heb. *in his hand.*

9 Probably not the full load, but partially laden for display. Remembering that camels differ in size and strength, like horses, the average burden may be stated from 500 to 800 cwts., and some carry so high as 1500 cwts.; but when the journey is long the burden is diminished, sometimes to about 250 cwts.—*C.*

s ch.6.21; 13.14.

1 *i.e.* the disease is not mortal.

t By Hazael's means, ver.15.

2 Heb. *and set it.*

3 Hazael.

u Je.4.19; 9.1; 14.17. Lu.19.41.

x ch.10.32,33; 12.17; 13.3.7.

y Ps. 137. 9. Ho. 13. 16. Am.1.13. ch.15.16.

z Ps.22.16,20. Je.17. 9. 2 Sa.3.8; 8. Mat.7.6.

4 'How can you suppose me so brutal?' is the sense of Henry, Poole, and Scott. 'What is thy servant? a dog! (one so mean), that he should attain this great power?' according to Gill and Patrick; and this interpretation seems most congenial to Hazael's character and eastern phraseology.—*C.*

a 1 Ki. 19. 15. And so thou wilt be powerful and wicked enough.

5 This was untrue, being a total perversion of the words of the prophet.—*C.*

b ver.13. Ec.8.16. Pr. 4.16; 1.16. Ps.36.4.

c Ju.4.19-21. Je.41.1, 2. Mat.26.16.

6 There is a difficulty in deciding whether Benhadad took the cloth or Hazael. But had Benhadad taken the wet cloth as a means of cure, he would scarcely have waited till next day; it seems much more probable that Hazael took that time to prepare for the succession by the murder.—*C.*

d ver.13. 1 Ki.19.15.

f 2 Ch. 21. 1, 4, 5, 20. ch.1.17.

g Heb. *reigned*, 1 Ch.3.11. Mat.1.8.

7 He began to reign in that year, in conjunction with his father, as lord-lieutenant in some of the tribes, or as it might be called in modern language, 'lord of the marches;' but he reigned after his father's death eight years as sole monarch in Jerusalem.—*C.*

h 1 Ki. 22.52, 53. ch. 3.2,3. 2 Ch.21.6.

i ver.26. 2 Ch. 21. 6; 22.3. 1 Ki.21.25.

k 2 Sa.7.12. 1 Ki. 11. 36; 15.4. 2 Ch.21.7. Lu. 1.32,33. Is.7.14. Tit.1. 2.

8 Heb. *candle* or *lamp.*

l 2 Ch.21.8-10. 2 Sa. 8.14. 1 Ki.22.47. Ge.27. 40.

9 Most probably the same as Mount Seir.—*C.*

m Jos.10.9. 1 Sa.11. 11. 1 Ki.20.29.

9 So [q]Hazael went to meet him, and took [r]a present with him,[8] even of every good thing of Damascus, forty camels' burden,[9] and came and stood before him, and said, Thy [s]son Ben-hadad king of Syria hath sent me to thee, saying, Shall I recover of this disease?

10 And Elisha said unto him, Go, say unto him, Thou mayest certainly recover:[1] howbeit the LORD hath showed me that he shall [t]surely die.

11 And he settled his countenance [2]stedfastly, until he[3] was ashamed: and the man of God [u]wept.

12 And Hazael said, Why weepeth my lord? And he answered, Because I know [x]the evil that thou wilt do unto the children of Israel: their strong holds wilt thou set on fire, and their young men wilt thou slay with the sword, and wilt [y]dash their children, and rip up their women with child.

13 And Hazael said, But what! *is* thy servant [z]a dog, that he should do this great [4]thing? And Elisha answered, The LORD [a]hath showed me that thou *shalt be* king over Syria.

14 So he departed from Elisha, and came to his master; who said to him, What said Elisha to thee? And he answered, He told me *that* thou shouldest surely recover.[5]

15 And it came to pass [b]on the morrow, that he took a thick cloth, and dipped *it* in water, and [c]spread *it* on his face,[6] so that he died: and [d]Hazael reigned in his stead.

16 ¶ And in the [f]fifth year of Joram the son of Ahab king of Israel, Jehoshaphat *being* then king of Judah, Jehoram the son of Jehoshaphat king of [g]Judah began to reign.

17 Thirty and two years old was he when he began to reign; and he reigned eight years in Jerusalem.[7]

18 And he walked [h]in the way of the kings of Israel, as did the house of Ahab; for [i]the daughter of Ahab was his wife: and he did evil in the sight of the LORD.

19 Yet[k] the LORD would not destroy Judah for David his servant's sake, as he promised him to give him alway a light,[8] *and* to his children.

20 ¶ In his days Edom [l]revolted from under the hand of Judah, and made a king over themselves.

21 So Joram went over to Zair,[9] and all the chariots with him; and he rose [m]by night, and

Hard necessity will compel men to the most dangerous adventures; and if God grant us relief, we ought to publish our mercies, that others may share with us in our comforts. But how terrible is their destruction who have contemned the promises of God! The means of deliverance to others prove ruinous to them. No human greatness or favour of kings can protect them from the arm of God; nay, nor even from being victims of popular rage. Stand in awe, my soul; always believe that it shall be unto thee as God hath said: for is there anything too hard for the Lord? In depths of distress cast thyself on his mercy. None perish that trust in him. Comfort others with the consolations wherewith thou art comforted of Christ. And God forbid that I should see the glories of redemption and yet never share thereof.

CHAPTER VIII. [Ver. 10. *Thou mayest certainly recover.* These words in the Hebrew may be rendered either of two ways, according as they are pointed. If pointed as in the Masoretic text their literal translation is—'Go, say to him, Thou shalt surely live.' But if pointed as the letters seem naturally to require, then they must be translated—'Go, say, Thou shalt not surely live;' and the prophet explains this to Hazael by the statement made to himself:—'For Jehovah hath shown me that he shall surely die.' *P.*]

Ver. 15. [Crafty though Hazael was, Elisha, by divine inspiration, read his wicked designs; and his searching look brought a blush to the traitor's face. The whole circumstances of this tragic episode in sacred history are thoroughly oriental; the forty camels' burden of every good thing of Damascus; the accomplished duplicity and cruelty of the confidential servant; the ease with which the murderer mounted the throne of his victim; and the subsequent barbarity of the usurper.

smote the Edomites which compassed him about, and the captains of the chariots: and the people fled into their tents.

22 Yet Edom revolted from under the hand of Judah unto this day. Then [m]Libnah revolted at the same time.[1]

23 ¶ And the [o]rest of the acts of Joram, and all that he did, *are* they not written in the book of the Chronicles of the kings of Judah?

24 And [p]Joram slept with his fathers,[2] and was buried with his fathers in the city of David: and Ahaziah his son reigned in his stead.

25 ¶ In the [q]twelfth year of Joram the son of Ahab king of Israel did [r]Ahaziah the son of Jehoram king of Judah begin to reign.

26 Two and twenty years old *was* Ahaziah when he began to reign;[3] and he reigned one year in Jerusalem: and his mother's name *was* Athaliah, the [s]daughter of Omri king of Israel.

27 And he [t]walked in the way of the house of Ahab, and did evil in the sight of the LORD, as *did* the house of Ahab: for he *was* the son-in-law of the house of Ahab.

28 ¶ And he [u]went with Joram the son of Ahab, to the war against [x]Hazael king of Syria in [y]Ramoth-gilead; and the Syrians wounded Joram.

29 And king Joram went back to be healed in [z]Jezreel of the wounds [a]which the Syrians had given him at Ramah, when he fought against Hazael king of Syria: and Ahaziah the son of Jehoram king of Judah went down to see Joram the son of Ahab in Jezreel, because he was [b]sick.

CHAPTER IX.

1 Elisha sendeth a young prophet with instructions to anoint Jehu at Ramoth-gilead. 4 The prophet having done his message fleeth. 11 Jehu, being made king by the officers, killeth Joram in the field of Naboth. 27 Ahaziah is slain at Gur, and buried at Jerusalem. 30 Proud Jezebel is thrown down out of a window, and eaten by dogs.

AND Elisha the prophet called one of [a]the children of the prophets, and said unto him, [b]Gird up thy loins, and take this [c]box of oil in thine hand, and go to Ramoth-gilead.

2 And when thou comest thither, look out there [d]Jehu the son of Jehoshaphat, the son of Nimshi, and go in, and make him arise up from among his brethren, and carry him to an inner chamber.[1]

3 Then take the box of oil, and pour *it* on his head, and say, Thus saith the LORD, [e]I have anointed thee king over Israel: then open the door, and [f]flee, and tarry not.[2]

4 ¶ So the young man, *even* the young man the prophet, went to Ramoth-gilead.

5 And when he came, behold, the captains of the host *were* sitting; and he said, [g]I have an errand to thee, O captain. And Jehu said, Unto which of all us? And he said, To thee, O captain.

6 And he [h]arose, and went into the house; and he poured the oil on his head, and said unto him, Thus saith the LORD God of Israel, I have anointed thee king over the people of the LORD, *even* over Israel.

7 And thou [i]shalt smite the house of Ahab thy master, that I may avenge the blood[3] of my servants the prophets, and the blood of all the servants of the LORD, at the hand of Jezebel.

8 For the whole house of Ahab shall perish: and [k]I will cut off from Ahab him that pisseth against the wall, and him that is [l]shut up and left in Israel.[4]

9 And I will make the house of Ahab like the house of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, and like the house of Baasha the son of Ahijah.

10 And [m]the dogs shall eat Jezebel in the portion of Jezreel, and *there shall be* none to bury *her*. And he [n]opened the door, and fled.

11 ¶ Then Jehu came forth to the servants of his lord: and *one* said unto him, *Is* all well? wherefore came this [o]mad *fellow* to thee? And he said unto them, Ye know the man, and his communication.

12 And they said, *It is* false;[5] tell us now. And he said, Thus and thus spake he to me, saying, Thus saith the LORD, I have anointed thee king over Israel.

13 Then they hasted, and took every man his garment,[6] and put *it* [p]under him on the top of the stairs,[7] and [q]blew with trumpets, saying, Jehu is king.[8]

14 So Jehu the son of Jehoshaphat, the son

A.M. 3113. B.C. 891.

n Jos.21.13,2 Ch.21. 10.

1 Libnah was an ancient royal city of the Canaanites, Jos. 12.15, situated in the plain of Philistia, between Makkedah and Lachish. It was taken by Joshua after the defeat of the confederate kings at Gibeon. The reason of its revolt at this particular period was its connection with the Edomites, who were attending their conquests over the southern border of Philistia, and were anxious to stir up revolt against Israel wherever it was possible. The site of the city is unknown, and the name has perished. —*P.*

o 1 Ki.11.41;14.29;15. 7,23;22.45.

p 1 Ki. 11. 43; 14. 31; 15,24;22.50,2 Ch.21.19.

2 B.C. 884.

q ver.16–18,2 Ch.22. 1–3.

r Azariah or Jehoahaz, 2 Ch.22.1; 21.17. 1 Ch.2.11.ch.9.29.

3 Ahaziah, 2 Ch. 22. 2, begins to reign at forty-two, and as Jehoram appears from ver. 17 to have lived but forty years, this would seem to make the son two years older than his father. MSS. and translations are adduced accordingly to pronounce the forty-two incorrect. But may not the discrepancy be reconciled thus:—(1) Jehoram was thirty-two when he began to reign as co-regent with Jehoshaphat, who reigned twenty-five years. If co-regent during twenty years, and then sole monarch for eight, he died not at forty, but sixty. (2) Suppose Ahaziah admitted to the co-regency at twenty-two, 2 Ki.8.26, and to continue in that office twenty years, he comes to the sole monarchy at forty-two, 2 Ch. 22. 2, in which he reigns one year. The co-regency was early adopted by David to secure the succession to Solomon, and one emperor and two Cæsars were sometimes judged necessary to secure the tranquility of Rome.—*C.*

s Grand-daughter, ver.18.

t ver.18. 2 Ch.22.3,4. 1 Ki. 11. 4. 2 Co. 6. 14. Ec.2.26. Pr.23.27.

u 1 Ki.22.4.ch.3.7. 2 Ch.21.5,6. Pr.13.20.

x ver.12,13,15.

y 1 Ki4.13;22.3. Jos. 21.38.

z Ju.6.33.1 Sa.25.43; 29.1. 2 Sa.2.9. 1 Ki.18. 45,46;21.1,23.

a Heb. *wherewith the Syrians had wounded*, 2 Ch.22. 6.

b Heb. *wounded*, 1 Ki.22.34.

CHAP. IX.

a 1 Ki.18.4;20.35.ch. 4.1;6.1;2.3,5,7,15.

b ch.4.29.1 Ki.18.46. Je.1.17.1 Pe.1.13.

c 1 Sa.10.1;16.1.

d 1 Ki.19.16.

A.M. 3120. B.C. 884.

1 Heb. *chamber in a chamber.*

e 1 Ki.14.7;16.2. Ps. 75.7. Da.2.21,4.35.

f Ju.3.26. Ps. 112. 5. Pr. 22. 3. Mat. 10. 16. He.11.7.ver.10.

2 The prophet orders his envoy to flee, as having no business with the secular part of the ceremony, but merely to announce the divine commission and inaugurate the king. Perhaps he also wished him to escape from any insults from the soldiery, a thing probable enough from their officers' estimate of the prophetic character.—*C.*

g Ju.3.19.

h ver.2,3.1 Ki.19.16.

i 1 Ki. 14. 10; 15. 29; 19.17;21.10,21–24; 18.4; 21.5–15. Ps.116.15. Lu. 18.7. Re.18.20,24; 19. 2; 16.6;13.10.

3 Infidels frequently assail such passages, but therein they but display their ignorance as well as their causeless enmity against the truth. There is a vengeance of passion which the Lord abhors, there is a vengeance of justice which he will assuredly enforce. Murderers must be punished that the innocent may be protected.—*C.*

k 1 Ki. 14. 10, 11; 15. 29;16.2–4,11;21.21–24.

l De. 32. 36, *i.e.* all the males however hidden or obscure.

4 From the dog without master or home—as eastern dogs usually are—to him that is most fortified and secure in his possessions and honours. Boothroyd translates it, 'shut up and secure.'—*C.*

m 1 Ki.21.23.ver.35, 36. Je.22.19. Mat. 7. 2. Ja.2.13.

n ver.3. Ju.3.26.

o Is.8.18; 59. 15. Je. 29.26. Ho.9.7. Jn.10.20. Ac.26.24;17.18.1 Co.4. 10. 2 Co. 5. 13. Mar. 3. 21.

5 Not an uncommon example of human rashness and instability. They pronounce the prophet a liar before they knew what he said, and the moment they hear his message they implicitly follow it.—*C.*

6 A token of honour amongst many nations, and as an emblem of respect highly expressive. Our Lord, though meek and lowly, did not condemn it, Mat. 21.8.—*C.*

p Mat.21.7,8.

7 Or, top of the tower in sight of the army and people.—*C.*

q 2 Sa.15. 10. 1 Ki. 1. 39.

8 Heb. *reigneth.*

A dozen illustrations of the acts and character of Hazael might be deduced from the modern history of Syria. *P.*]

REFLECTIONS.—How severely God corrects apostate professors. His providences make us sometimes glad to leave the most commodious settlement on earth. And how ready are most to take advantage against, and to seize on, the property of the absent or distressed! But it is a mercy if we have magistrates to whom we may safely appeal from the injustice of friends or neighbours. God in his providence remarkably connects things for the welfare of those who fear him and have shown kindness to his servants. He can raise up friends in our difficulties where we least expected them. And it is the glory of a government to administer justice impartially to the oppressed. Diseases and death, without ceremony, attack the most great and powerful: and affliction often changes men's minds, and makes them to regard ministers and prayers which they had formerly contemned and hated. But, ah! the bloody and barbarous rage of war! Enraged pride sticks at nothing. In high stations men will, without remorse, perpetrate what would have shocked them when in low conditions: and nothing is too horrid for the human heart left to itself and violently tempted. Few courtiers report the naked truth to their sovereigns: and flatterers are most to be suspected for enemies. They who flatter us with hopes of life hinder our serious preparation for death. The inordinate desire of power will prompt men to villany and murder. And the sinful indulgence of children, or too early trusting them with power, and especially their unequal marriages with wicked women, entail upon families and nations the most certain misery. But death and hell infallibly meet with tyrants at last. And, alas! in their way to it, how often are the wounds of their body taken care of while those of their soul are neglected!

CHAPTER IX. [Ver. 27. 'He fled by the way of Beth-haggan.' This is the literal translation, and so it is in the Septuagint. *Beth-haggan*, or without the article *Beth-gan*, is identical with *En-gannim*, a town of Issachar, seven miles south of Jezreel, on the direct road to Jerusalem. Ahaziah met Jehu in the valley of Jezreel, below the town on the north. When he saw the fate of Joram he turned and fled southward along the highroad to Jerusalem, which ran past En-gannim. Between the account of his death as given here, and as given in 2 Ch. 22. 8, 9, there is an apparent discrepancy. From the narrative given here it would seem as if he had been overtaken immediately after the death of Joram, wounded in his chariot, and that turning aside he had died at Megiddo; while from 2 Chron. it appears he was discovered in Samaria and slain by Jehu. The solution seems to be this: Only the leading facts are recorded in 2 Kings. The fuller details may be gathered from a comparison and combination of the two accounts. Ahaziah after the death of Joram fled southwards and reached Samaria. His hiding-place there was discovered; he fled again; Jehu

TOWER OF JEZREEL—WHERE THE WATCHMAN STOOD AND SPIED THE COMPANY OF JEHU. [II. KINGS, ix:17.]—"And there stood a watchman on the Tower of Jezreel, and he spied the company of Jehu as he came, and said, I see a company. And Joram said, Take a horseman and send to meet them, and let him say, Is it peace?" The modern name of the City of Jezreel is Zerin. It is but a village and is in decay. It consists of only a few houses which stand among the ruins, and it commands a view of the Beisan Plain on the east and the plain of Esdraelon on the west. The Jezreel of the Hebrews was known as Esdraelon among the Greeks, and as Stradela in the Middle Ages. There is a fountain here, and the Israelites are represented as pitching their tents by a fountain which is in Jezreel. Ahab and Jezebel once had their royal residence here. Here was the vineyard of Naboth. We are in full view from this point of Mount Carmel.

of Nimshi, [r]conspired against Joram: (now Joram had [s]kept Ramoth-gilead,[1] he and all Israel, because of Hazael king of Syria:

15 But [t]king Joram[2] was returned to be healed in Jezreel of the wounds which the Syrians had given him, when he fought with Hazael king of Syria:) and Jehu said, If it be your minds, *then* [u]let none go forth *nor* escape out of the city, to go to tell *it* in Jezreel.

16 ¶ So Jehu rode in a chariot, and went to Jezreel; (for Joram lay there:) and [x]Ahaziah king of Judah was come down to see Joram.

17 And there stood [y]a watchman on the tower in Jezreel, and he spied the company of Jehu as he came, and said, I see a company. And Joram said, Take an horseman, and send to meet them, and let him say, *Is it* peace?[3]

18 So there went one on horseback to meet him, and said, Thus saith the king, *Is it* peace? And Jehu said, What hast thou to do with peace?[4] turn thee behind me. And the watchman told, saying, The messenger came to them, but he cometh not again.

19 Then he sent out a second on horseback, which came to them, and said, Thus saith the king, *Is it* peace? And Jehu answered, What hast thou to do with peace? turn thee behind me.

20 And the watchman told, saying, He came even unto them, and cometh not again: and the driving[5] *is* like the driving of Jehu the son of Nimshi; for he [z]driveth [6]furiously.[7]

21 And Joram said, Make ready.[8] And his chariot was made ready. And Joram king of Israel, and Ahaziah king of Judah, went [a]out, each in his chariot, and they went out against Jehu, and met[9] him [c]in the portion of Naboth the Jezreelite.

22 And it came to pass, when Joram saw Jehu, that he said, [b]*Is it* peace, Jehu? And he answered, What peace, so long as the [c]whoredoms of thy mother Jezebel and her witchcrafts[1] *are so* many?

23 And Joram [d]turned his hands, and fled, and said to Ahaziah, *There is* treachery, O Ahaziah.

24 And Jehu drew a bow with his full strength,[2] and [e] smote Jehoram between his arms, and the arrow went out at his heart, and he sunk[3] down in his chariot.

25 Then said *Jehu* to Bidkar his captain, Take up, *and* cast him in the portion of the field of Naboth the Jezreelite: for remember how that, when I and thou rode together after Ahab his father, [f]the LORD laid this burden upon him;[4]

26 Surely I have seen yesterday the [5]blood of Naboth, and the blood of his [g]sons,[6] saith the LORD; and I will requite thee in this [7]plat, saith the LORD. Now therefore take *and* cast him into the plat *of ground*, according to the word of the LORD.

27 ¶ But when [h]Ahaziah the king of Judah saw *this*, he fled by the way of the garden-house: and Jehu followed after him, and said, Smite him also in the chariot. *And they did so* at the going up to Gur, which *is* by [i]Ibleam: and he [k]fled to Megiddo, and died there.

28 And his [l]servants carried him in a chariot to Jerusalem, and buried him in his sepulchre with his fathers in the city of David.

29 And in the [m]eleventh[8] year of Joram the son of Ahab began Ahaziah to reign over Judah.

30 ¶ And when Jehu was come to Jezreel, Jezebel heard *of it;* and she [n]painted[9] her face,[1] and tired her head, and looked out at a window.

31 And as Jehu entered in at the gate, she said, *Had* [o]Zimri peace, who slew his master?

32 And he lifted up his face to the window, and said, Who *is* on my side? who? And there looked out to him two *or* three eunuchs.[2]

33 And he said, Throw her down. So they threw her down: and *some* of her blood was sprinkled on the wall, and on the horses: and he [p]trode her under foot.

34 And when he was come in, he did eat and drink,[3] and said, Go, see now this [q]cursed *woman*, and [r]bury her: for she *is* [s]a king's daughter.

35 And they went to bury her: but they found no more of her than the skull, and the feet, and the palms of *her* hands.

36 Wherefore they came again, and told him: and he said, This *is* the word of the LORD, which he spake by[4] his servant Elijah the Tishbite, saying, [t]In the portion of Jezreel shall dogs eat the flesh of Jezebel:[5]

37 And the carcass of Jezebel shall be as [u]dung upon the face of the field in the portion of Jezreel; *so* that they shall not say, This *is* Jezebel.[6]

A.M. 3120. B.C. 884.

r 1 Ki.15.27,16.9.ch. 15.10,25,30.

s 1 Ki.22.3.Ps.127.1.

1 Had kept it strongly garrisoned as a frontier town, having recovered it from the Syrians. It lay in the tribe of Gad, and on the east of Jordan. It was notorious for its idolatry, on account of which the divine vengeance was threatened prophetically, and has been inflicted historically, Ho. 6. 8; 12. 11. *C.*—*Ramoth-gilead* was one of the chief strongholds east of the Jordan, and was appointed a city of refuge in the tribe of Gad. Its site has been identified in the modern town of *Salt*. The situation is strong and picturesque. It stands on a hill, which is separated by deep ravines from the loftier mountains that encompass it. On the summit is the castle or citadel, a rectangular building with massive walls and a deep moat. In the cliffs and ravines round it are great numbers of tombs and grottoes.—*P.*

t ch.8.28,29.2 Ch.22. 6.

2 Heb. *Jehoram.*

u Heb. *let no escaper go*, Ex. 32. 27. Lu. 16.8.

x 2 Ch.22. 6, 7. ch. 8. 29.

y 2 Sa. 13. 34; 18. 24. Is.21.5;62.6.

3 That is, at Ramoth-gilead, where the army lay.—*C.*

4 Heb. *What is it to thee and peace?* 1 Ki.17, 18. ver. 19, 22. Is.48.22;59. 8. Je.16.5. Ro.3.17.

5 Or, *marching.*

z ch.10.16.Ec.10.18; 9.10.Ro.12.11.

6 Heb. *in madness.*

7 The Targum reads 'quietly, slowly;' Josephus has it 'slowly, and in good order.' This sense we are disposed to adopt; for, if driving *furiously*, how could the dialogues recorded have passed, or the watchman have so distinctly reported? Besides, Jehu, as politic as determined, would wish to avoid giving alarm, and take Joram unawares. *C.*—The literal meaning is 'in madness,' 'madly.' Slow driving would scarcely be characteristic of any man. The position of Jezreel was such, on a projecting spur of Mount Gilboa, that the watchman could see far down the valley of Jezreel on the way to Gilead.—*P.*

8 Heb. *bind.*

9 Heb. *found.*

a 1 Ki.21.1-3.

b 2 Ch.22.7.ver.17.

c Na.3.4.1 Ki.16.30-33;18.4;21.8-10,25. Re. 17.1;18.23.

1 Idolatries and deceptions.—*C.*

d 1 Ki.22.34.

2 Heb. *filled his hand with a bow.*

e Ps.50.21,22. Pr. 21. 30.Ec.8.12,13. 1 Ki.22. 34.

3 Heb. *bowed.*

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f 1 Ki. 21. 19, 24, 29. Is.13.1;14.20-22. Na.1. 1. Ex. 20. 5. Job 18. 17, 19;20.27.

4 Judgment. Thus Cain said, 'My punishment is greater than I can bear,' Ge. 4.13. Is.13.1.—*C.*

5 Heb. *bloods.*

g De.24.16. 1 Ki. 21. 13.2 Ch.25.4.

6 When Naboth was accused his sons had been accused with him, as principals or accomplices; for, otherwise, they would have inherited his property, which, on their death, seems to have been considered as forfeited to the crown. Jezebel was contriver and agent, Ahab the consenting party, and Joram the recipient: therefore he underlies the guilt and punishment.—*C.*

7 Or, *portion.*

h 2 Ch.22.7-9.Pr.13. 20.Re.18.4.

i Jos.17.11. Ju.1.27.

k In his wounds, 2 Ch.22.9.

l 2 Ch.22.9.ch.8.24.

m Then he began to reign as viceroy to his father in his sickness, 2 Ch. 21. 18, 19; but in Joram's twelfth year he began to reign alone, ch.8.25.

8 In ch. 8. 25 it is called the twelfth. The two statements are reconciled by the two modes of calculating time, common to all countries, the *inclusive* and the *exclusive*. The one mode always counts *one* beyond the other. —*C.*

n Je.4.30.Eze.23.40. Re.2.20.

9 Heb. *put her eyes in painting.*

1 Not to attract Jehu's attention, else she had spoken with affected mildness and flattery; but to show her coolness, her confidence in the popular favour, which her flatterers had no doubt assured her of, and to express her proud contempt of Jehu's conspiracy and party.—*C.*

o 1 Ki.16.9-19.

2 Or, *chamberlains.*

p ch. 7. 20; ver. 26. Mal.4.3.

3 As taking a master's possession of the royal residence. —*C.*

q Pr.10.7.Is.65.15.

r Ec. 6. 3. Je. 22. 19; 36.30.

s 1 Ki.16.31.

4 Heb. *by the hand of.*

t 1 Ki. 21. 23. Job 31. 3.Ac.12.23.

5 The readiness of Jehu in repeating these prophecies gives strong indication that he had been contemplating the revolution he had now completed.—*C.*

u Ps. 83. 10. Je. 8. 2; 16.4.

6 Her body will be so much mutilated that no one will be able to recognize her. I have more than once seen the dogs tearing dead bodies in the ill-kept cemeteries of the East. During the terrible massacre of 1860 in Damascus, hundreds of corpses of victims were devoured by the street dogs.—*P.*

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saw him as he was driving rapidly off in his chariot; he gave orders to smite him, and he was shot with an arrow. His charioteer succeeded in driving him to Megiddo, where he died. Then he was taken up and buried in Jerusalem. *P.*]

REFLECTIONS.—God's ministers must communicate their labours and honours one with another; and must discharge their office in a faithful, prudent, active, and disinterested manner, let men account them mad or anything they please. To what terrible lengths professors of the true religion go before God entirely rejects them from being his people! But such as rule ought to consider God as the source of their power, and to use it humbly for his glory. To what fearful work God sometimes appoints magistrates! and there is need of great singleness and steadiness in executing it. To ask advice from our equals or inferiors is the most effectual method to procure their consent; and matters of importance ought to be transacted with proper secrecy and despatch. Tottering is the throne of wicked kings; and terrible destruction hangs over the sinner's head! But persecutors of God's people are reckoned by him the most heinous offenders; and they who persist in their impenitence shall be rooted out at last; and companions of fools shall be destroyed along with them. Solid peace can never consist with wilful sinning, let sinners wish and expect it as they will; and whoredoms, which are now men's pleasure, will shortly issue in everlasting pain. Providence strangely connects the circumstances of men's punishment with those of their crimes and his own threatenings; and all things work for their overthrow who give themselves up to wilful sin. Themselves are made to rush on their ruin: and God's infinite justice may be insulted, but will not be intimidated. Wickedness and wretchedness are really inseparable, and at last meet in fearful

CHAPTER X.

1 Jehu, by his letters, causeth seventy of Ahab's children to be beheaded. 8 He excuseth the fact by the prophecy of Elijah. 12 At the shearing house he slayeth two and forty of Ahaziah's brethren. 15 He taketh Jehonadab into his company. 18 By subtlety he destroyeth at once all the worshippers of Baal. 29 Jehu followeth Jeroboam's sins. 32 Hazael oppresseth Israel. 34 Jehoahaz succeedeth Jehu.

AND Ahab had [a]seventy sons[1] in Samaria. And Jehu wrote letters, and sent to Samaria, unto [b]the rulers of Jezreel,[2] to the elders, and to them that brought up[3] Ahab's *children*, saying,

2 Now, [c]as soon as this letter cometh to you, seeing your master's sons *are* with you, and *there are* with you chariots and horses, a fenced city also, and armour,

3 Look even out [d]the best and meetest of your master's sons, and set *him* on his father's throne, and fight[4] for your master's house.[5]

4 But they were exceedingly afraid, and said, Behold, [e]two kings stood not before him; how then shall we stand?

5 And he that *was* over the house, and he that *was* over the city, the elders also, and the bringers-up *of the children*, sent to Jehu, saying, [f]We *are* thy servants, and will do all that thou shalt bid us; we will not make any king: do thou *that which is* good in thine eyes.

6 Then he wrote a letter the second time to them, saying, If ye *be* mine,[6] and *if* ye will hearken unto my voice, take ye [g]the heads of the men your master's sons, and come to me to Jezreel by to-morrow this time. (Now the king's sons, *being* seventy persons, *were* with the great men of the city, which brought them up.)

7 And it came to pass, when the letter came to them, that they took the king's sons, and slew[h] seventy persons, and put their heads in baskets, and sent him *them* to Jezreel.

8 ¶ And there came a messenger, and told him, saying, They have brought the heads of the king's sons. And he said, [i]Lay ye them in two heaps[7] at the entering in of the gate until the morning.

9 And it came to pass in the morning, that he went out, and stood, and said to all the people, Ye *be* [k]righteous:[8] behold, I conspired against my master, and slew him; but who slew all these?

10 Know now, [l]that there shall fall unto the earth nothing of the word of the LORD, which the LORD spake concerning the house of Ahab: for the LORD hath done *that* which he spake by[9] his servant Elijah.

11 So Jehu slew [m]all that remained of the house of Ahab in Jezreel, and all his great men, and his kinsfolks,[1] and [n]his priests, until he left him none remaining.

12 ¶ And he arose, and departed, and came to Samaria: *and* as he *was* at the [2]shearing-house[3] in the way,[4]

13 Jehu met [5]with [o]the brethren of Ahaziah king of Judah, and said, Who *are* ye? And they answered, We *are* the brethren of Ahaziah; and we go down to salute[6] the children of the king, and the children of the queen.

14 And he said, [p]Take them alive. And they took them alive, and slew them at the [7]pit of the shearing-house, *even* two and forty men; neither left he any of them.

15 ¶ And when he was departed thence, he lighted [8]on [q]Jehonadab the son of Rechab *coming* to meet him: and he [r]saluted him, and said to him, [s]Is thine heart right, as my heart *is* with thy heart? And Jehonadab answered, It is. If it be, give *me* thine hand. And he gave *him* his hand; and he took him up to him into the chariot.[9]

16 And he said, Come with me, and see [t]my zeal for the LORD. So they made him ride in his chariot.

17 And when he came to Samaria, he slew all that remained unto Ahab in Samaria, till he had [u]destroyed him, according to the saying of the LORD, which he spake to Elijah.

18 ¶ And Jehu gathered all the people together, and said unto them, [x]Ahab served Baal a little,[1] *but* Jehu shall serve him much.

19 Now therefore call unto me all [y]the prophets of Baal, all his servants, and all his priests, let none be wanting; for I have a great sacrifice *to do* to Baal: whosoever shall be wanting, he shall not live. But Jehu did *it* [z]in subtilty, to the intent that he might destroy the worshippers of Baal.

20 And Jehu said, [a]Proclaim a solemn assembly for Baal. And they proclaimed *it*.

21 And Jehu sent through all Israel; and all

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CHAP. X.

a 1 Ki.21.21.

1 The practice of having many wives will account for this great family. Priam of Troy had 50 sons and 12 daughters; Artaxerxes Mnemon of Persia had 118; and the emperor of Morocco, in 1720, is said to have had 700 sons all alive at one time.—*C.*

b De.16.18. 1 Ki. 21. 8-14.

2 Some copies, instead of Jezreel, read 'Samaria,' others 'the city.' Jezreel seems the true reading, the authorities having fled to Samaria for safety.—*C.*

3 Heb. *nourishers.* [It is still usual in eastern countries for the king to relieve himself from the charge of maintaining his children, by consigning one to the care of one great person, and another to another, to be maintained and educated at their expense.—*J.*]

c ch.5.6.Ec.9.10. Jn. 13.27.

d De.17.14,15. 1 Sa. 11.15.2 Sa.2.8,9.1Ki.2. 24.

4 This was an offer very unlikely to be accepted,as Jehu was supported by the army, and Ahab's wicked family could have few sincere friends.—*C.*

5 No reader need be told that these letters were all ironical. It was the same as if he had said, Ye have no means of defence; Israel is with me; if you yield not up yourselves and the city, I will put you all to the sword.' —*Clarke.*

e ch.9.24,27. Lu. 14. 31.

f 1 Ki.20.4. Jos.9.11, 24,25. ch.18. 14. Je. 38. 17.Ec.10.4.

6 Heb. *for me.*

g Ex.20.5. Jos. 7.24. Re. 2. 23. 1S.14.20.21. 1 Ki.21. 21. Je. 48.10. Job 18.17,19;20.27;21.19.

h Re.2.23. Mat.14.8, 11.ver.6.

i De.22.15. Ps. 9. 15, 16;50.21,22.

7 Most probably one on each side—a custom still prevailing even at the palace gates in the Turkish and Persian empires — empires that, like Jehu, profess great zeal for God, but demonstrate their insincerity by injustice and cruelty to men.—*C.*

k 1 Sa.25.22.1 Ki.21. 21.Pr.21.3.ch.9.14.

8 Not ironical, but in approbation of their zeal, not only like, but beyond, his own. He slew *one* of the devoted house; they *seventy.*—*C.*

l Zec.1.6. 1 Sa.3. 19; 15.29.ch.9.7,8. 1 Ki.21. 21–24,29.

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9 Heb. *by the hand of.*

m 1 Ki.21.21–24. ch. 9.7–10.

1 Or, *acquaintance.*

n Chaplains, 1 Ki. 18.17.Ca.2.15.

2 Heb. *house of shepherds binding sheep.*

3 Some public place constructed near a running stream, where the sheep could be washed previous to shearing. In a pastoral country, where running water was scanty, such a place would be of some public importance.—*C.*

4 The Hebrew word *Beth-eked*, here translated 'shearing-house,' is most probably the proper name of a village between Jezreel and Samaria, and not far from the latter.—*F.*

5 Heb. *found.*

o Ge.13.8. 2 Ch.22.8; 21.17, *i.e.* cousins or nephews.

6 Heb. *to ask the peace of,* &c.

p ver.6, 10, 11. 2 Ch. 22.8.Ps.50.21,22.Pr.13. 20,21.

7 The place, it may be presumed, where the sheep were washed, by passing them towards the shearing-house, from one shepherd to another, all standing in the water, and each washing the sheep as it passed.—*C.*

8 Heb. *found.*

q 1 Ch.2.55.Je.35 6.

r Heb. *blessed,* Ge. 31.55.

s 1 Ch.12.17, 18. Ga. 2.9,1 2.

9 That the sin of drunkenness had made considerable progress in Israel, appears probable from 1 Ki. 4. 20 and 16.9; and the notice of the Syrian king, 1 Ki.20.12,16. Of this sin, Jehonadab, the son of Rechab, an Arabian (whose posterity abide till this day, Je.35.19), was a vigorous opponent—a notable reformer of his country's dissolute manners. Honest and self-denying himself, he thinks Jehu so likewise, and therefore goes out to meet him, while the shrewd, cunning, and reckless zealot takes advantage of his popularity to countenance and aid him in his selfish proceedings.—*C.*

t 1 Ki.19.17. ch.9. 7–9.Pr.27.2.Mat.6.2.Ro. 10.2,3.

u 1 Ki.21.21. Mal. 4. 1,3. 2 Ch.22.8.ver.6,11.

x 1 Ki 16.31,32. Job 13.7.Ro.3.8.Phil.4.8.

1 Jehu had determined to have no worship in Israel but that of the golden calves at Dan and Bethel; therefore he purposes to destroy all the worshippers of Baal; and, that he might do it without suspicion, he claims a great sacrifice; and, that he may do it the more easily, he gathers them all together into one place.—*I.*

y 1 Ki.22.6. ch. 3.13; ver.21.

z 2 Co. 12. 16; 4. 2. Mat.10.16.

a Heb. *sanctify,* 1 Ki.21.12;18.19.

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forms. Painting and pampering do but ripen for tremendous woe. And though for a time sinners may lift their heads high, they will shortly be brought low in death and still lower in hell: and not only their corpse, but their memory, shall rot and perish. And whether instruments intend it or not, the word of the Lord shall have its full accomplishment.

CHAPTER X. REFLECTIONS. — Obstinate sinners lay up terrible judgments for themselves and their seed: and loads of guilt extirpate numerous and flourishing families. But none are more ready to imbrue their hands in the blood of a sovereign's children than those who have been his instruments in murdering the innocent. No regard to their prince will afterwards restrain those whose hands have by his order been drenched in blood. They who debauch men's consciences will find the effects of it return on their own heads. Guilt makes men spiritless cowards when brought to a trial: they will be always ready to side with the strongest: and when they want an excuse to cover their shame, any shadow of argument will stand. It is common for wicked men to lessen their guilt by comparing it with that of others. But friendship and intimacy with sinners involves us in their punishment: and such as have been instruments in wickedness share in the ruin of their wicked encouragers. How righteous are the judgments of God, even when the executors act wickedly! But it is ill-boding when pretended reformers are proud of their work, and indulge themselves in hypocrisy and falsehood to accomplish it. They who boast of their zeal give ground to suspect their sincerity. And though the godly, whom they caress for their selfish interests, cannot but approve what is apparently good, the Lord will at last discover their hypocrisy and evil. False religion ought to be extirpated, and wicked men overcome: and if men overlook them, Jesus will at last convene them to execute his justice upon them. It shows the great evil of the heart when the wisdom of the serpent meets with its poison in our work; and when with severity we extirpate one form of false worship, yet cleave at the same time to another. Real converts must put away all sin without reserve. For how awful will be our state, if, when we have done good to the souls of others, we should lose our own by our negligence in the service of God! If hypocrites receive their temporary reward of good deeds on earth, how much more glorious the reward of the diligent saint! And while God rewards men for what they do well, it is just that he should severely punish them for what they do amiss.

the worshippers of Baal came, so that there was not a man left that came not: and [b]they came into the house of Baal; and the house of Baal was full from one end to another.[1]

22 And he said unto him that *was* over the vestry, Bring forth [c]vestments for all the worshippers of Baal. And he brought them[2] forth vestments.[3]

23 And Jehu went, and Jehonadab the son of Rechab, into the house of Baal, and said unto the worshippers of Baal, Search, and look that there be here with you none of the servants of the LORD, but the worshippers of Baal only.

24 And when they went in to offer sacrifices and burnt-offerings, Jehu appointed fourscore men without, and said, [d]*If* any of the men whom I have brought into your hands escape, *he that letteth him go*, his life *shall be* for the life of him.

25 And it came to pass, as soon as he had made an end of offering the burnt-offering, that Jehu said to the guard and to the captains, Go in, [e]*and* slay them; let none come forth. And they smote them with the edge[4] of the sword; and the guard and the captains cast *them* out, and went to the city[5] of the house of Baal.

26 And they brought forth the images[6] out of the house of Baal, and burned them.

27 And they [f]brake down the image of Baal, and brake down the house of Baal, and made it a draught-house[7] unto this day.

28 Thus Jehu destroyed Baal out of Israel.

29 ¶ Howbeit[9] *from* the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who made Israel to sin, Jehu departed not from after them,[8] *to wit*, the golden calves that *were* in Beth-el, and that *were* in Dan.

30 And the LORD said unto Jehu, [h]Because thou hast done well in executing *that which is* right in mine eyes, *and* hast done unto the house of Ahab according to all that *was* in mine heart, thy children of the [i]fourth *generation* shall sit on the throne of Israel.[9]

31 But Jehu took no [k]heed[1] to walk in the law of the LORD God of Israel with all his heart: for he [l]departed not from the sins of Jeroboam, which made Israel to sin.[2]

32 ¶ In those days[3] the LORD [m]began to cut[4] Israel short:[5] and Hazael smote them in all the coasts of Israel;

33 From Jordan eastward,[6] all [n]the land of Gilead, the Gadites, and the Reubenites, and the Manassites, from Aroer, (which *is* by the river Arnon,) even Gilead and Bashan.[7]

34 ¶ Now[o] the rest of the acts of Jehu, and all that he did, and all his might, *are* they not written in the book of the Chronicles of the kings of Israel?

35 And Jehu slept with his fathers;[8] and they buried him in Samaria: and Jehoahaz his son reigned in his stead.

36 And the time[9] that Jehu reigned over Israel in Samaria *was* twenty and eight years.

CHAPTER XI.

1 Jehoash, being saved by Jehosheba his aunt from Athaliah's massacre of the seed royal of Judah, is hid six years in the house of God. 4 Jehoiada, giving order to the captains, in the seventh year anointeth him king. 13 Athaliah is slain. 17 Jehoiada restoreth the worship of God.

AND when [a]Athaliah,[1] the mother of Ahaziah, saw that her son was dead, she arose, and [b]destroyed all the seed royal.[2]

2 But [c]Jehosheba, the daughter of king Joram, sister of Ahaziah, took Joash the son of Ahaziah, and stole him from among the king's sons *which were* slain; and they hid[3] him, *even* him and his nurse, in the [d]bed-chamber from Athaliah, so that he was not slain.

3 And he was with her hid in the house of the LORD six years: and Athaliah[4] did [e]reign over the land.[5]

4 ¶ And the seventh year[6] Jehoiada sent and fetched the [f]rulers over hundreds, with the captains and the guard, and brought them to him into the house of the LORD, and made a [g]covenant with them, and took an oath of them in the house of the LORD, and showed them the king's son.

5 And he commanded them, saying, This *is* the thing that ye shall do; A third part [h]of you that enter in on the sabbath shall even be keepers of the watch of the king's house;

6 And a third part *shall be* at [i]the gate of Sur; and a third part at the gate behind the guard:[7] so shall ye keep the watch of the house, that it be not broken down.[8]

7 And two [9]parts[1] of all you that [k]go forth on the sabbath, *even* they shall keep the watch of the house of the LORD about the king.[2]

8 And ye shall compass the king round about, every man with his weapons in his hand; and he that cometh within the ranges,[3] let[l] him be slain: and be ye with the king as he goeth out, and as he cometh in.

9 And the captains over the hundreds did according to all *things* that Jehoiada the priest commanded: and they took every man his men that were to come in on the sabbath, with them that should go out on the sabbath, and came to Jehoiada the priest.

10 And to the captains over hundreds did

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b Joel 3.2,11,12. Re. 16,16. ver. 19.

1 Or, so *full*, that they stood *mouth to mouth*.

c Ex. 28. 2. 2 Co. 11. 14,15.

2 Not merely for the priests, but all the worshippers. Every Jew in the synagogue wears a kind of scarf around his shoulders, during the time of worship. Such would seem to have been the practice with the Baalites.—*C.*

3 Sacred robes.

d 1 Ki. 20. 39, 40.

e Eze. 9. 5, 6. 1 Ki. 18. 40.

4 Heb. *the mouth.*

5 The 'inner sanctuary;' the worshippers were merely in the court. *C.*—Dathe conjectures that the word translated 'city' should be rendered 'inner sanctuary.' No 'city of the house of Baal' is elsewhere mentioned.—*I.*

6 Heb. *statues.*

f 1 Ki. 16. 31, 32. De. 7. 5, 25. Ezr. 6. 11. Da. 2. 35, 29. Le. 26. 30.

7 To disgrace it to the utmost, by putting it to the vilest uses, Mat. 15. 17. *C.*—This was an ancient mode of degradation, which still continues in the East. We are informed that Abbas the Great, king of Persia, having conquered Bagdad, treated the tomb of Hanifah, one of the fathers of the church among the Turks, in a similar way.—*I.*

g Mar. 6. 20; 12. 34. Ho. 1. 4; 13. 1, 2. 1 Ki. 12. 28, 29. ch. 3. 3; 13. 2, 11; 14. 24; 15. 9, 18, 24; ver. 31.

8 'Woe be to us, O God, if we are not all thine. We cannot but everlastingly depart from thee, if we depart not from every sin. Thou hast cleansed our hearts from the bane of gross idolatries; O clear us from the golden calves of our petty corruptions.'—*Bishop Hall.*

h Nu. 25. 11–13. 1 Ki. 21. 29. ch. 9. 7. Mat. 6. 2; 10. 42.

i ver. 35; ch. 13. 10; 14. 23; 15. 8, 12.

9 God had sentenced Ahab, Jezebel, and Joram as murderers, and approves of Jehu so far as he executed that sentence; but sanctions neither the cruel spirit nor perfidious and hypocritical manner in which it was accomplished, Ho. 1. 4.—*C.*

k Pr. 4. 23. Ps. 39. 1. Ec. 5. 1.

1 Heb. *observed not.*

l 1 Ki. 12. 28–33; 15. 26, 30; 16. 19, 26. ch. 3. 3; ver. 29.

2 Here his thorough hypocrisy appears: he followed God with flaming zeal so far as it served his purposes. He immediately stops short when self-interest directs him to prefer Jeroboam to Moses—to the law—to God.—*C.*

3 cir. 860.

m ch. 8. 12; ver. 33.

4 Heb. *to cut off the ends.*

5 Cut off their frontier towns and settlements.—*C.*

6 Heb. *toward the rising of the sun.*

n Nu. xxxii. De. 3. 12–17. Jos. 13. 9–12.

7 Or, *even to Gilead and Bashan.*

o 1 Ki. 11. 41, 43; 14. 19, 20, 29, 31; 15. 23, 24, 31; 16. 5, 6, 15, 27, 28; 22. 45, 50. ch. 12. 19; 13. 8, 9, 12, 13.

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8 B.C. 856.

9 Heb. *the days* were.

CHAP XI.

a ch. 8. 26; 9. 27. 2 Ch. 22. 10, 11.

1 Daughter of Ahab, king of Israel, and wife of Joram, king of Judah, so that she had strong claims on the royal authority.—*C.*

b 2 Ch. 22. 6. Eze. 16. 44. Re. 17. 6. Pr. 1. 16; 4. 16. Is. 59. 7.

2 Heb. *seed of the kingdom.*

c 2 Ch. 22. 11, 12. Ge. 22. 14. De. 32. 36.

3 The more easily accomplished, because none but the priests had access to the interior of the temple.—*C.*

d 1 Ki. 6. 8; 11. 36. Je. 35. 2. Eze. 40. 45. Pr. 21. 30.

4 She fulfilled a part of the mission against the house of Ahab, which Jehu could not execute; for through herself the taint of Ahab's blood had been given to the house of David.—*I.*

e Ps. 12. 8. Mal. 3. 15. Re. 17. 1, 7.

5 It is evident from the whole narrative that Jehoiada the high-priest was the moving spirit in this whole transaction. Jehosheba may have first discovered the infant, still alive among the bodies of the slain; but the high-priest must at once have been made acquainted with the discovery, and must have advised the placing of the child in his own apartments in the temple. Jehoiada was evidently a man distinguished for sagacity, courage, and faithfulness to God. He was thus qualified for taking a leading part in the affairs of the kingdom in a time of great danger. All his plans were laid with skill, and carried out with success.—*I.*

6 B.C. 878.

f Levites, ver. 9. 2 Ch. 23. 1, 2, 6. 1 Ch. 9. 17.

g Ge. 21. 32; 26. 28; 31. 44. 1 Sa. 18. 3. He. 6. 16.

h 1 Ch. 23. 3–6; 24–31; 9. 25. Lu. 1. 8, 9.

i 2 Ch. 23. 4, 5. 1 Ch. 26. 16, 17. Ac. 4. 1.

7 The temple had three gates: that of Sur is supposed to have been the east; on the west there was none.—According to this, it was determined that the partisans of the young prince should be divided into three bodies: one of which was to guard him in the temple, the second to keep all the avenues, and the third was placed at the gate leading to the royal palace.—*I.*

8 Or, *from breaking up.*

9 Or, *companies.*

1 Heb. *bands.*

k ver. 5. 1 Ch. 26. 28. 2 Ch. 23. 6.

2 The outgoing weekly guard, instead of returning home, were to form two bands for a body-guard to the young king.—*C.*

3 Within the ranks of the guard.—*C.*

l Ex. 21. 14. 1 Ki. 2. 31. 2 Ch. 23. 7–21.

CHAPTER XI. REFLECTIONS.—Mad ambition to reign steels the heart against the most natural affections: and men would be devils incarnate, were it not for the restraining grace of God. Even women would do everything horrid to secure their unlawful power, or wreak their malice against God and his people. What terrible bloodshed, and ruin to a family, does the introduction of one wicked woman produce! [Comp. 2 Ch. 21. 4; 22. 1; 2 Ki. 10. 14; 11. 1.] But however sinners triumph in their wickedness, their judgment lingers not; and believers shall be plucked as brands out of the burning. The promise of God shall be fulfilled, let Satan and his agents do their worst: and all the activity of sinners shall but hasten their own ruin. Evil shall hunt out the remains of accursed families till they be utterly destroyed: and neither wicked calumnies nor loud cries shall avail them. But what a blessing is one great man to a

the priest give king [m]David's spears and shields,[3] that *were* in the temple of the LORD.

11 And the guard stood, every man with his weapons in his hand, round about the king, from the right corner[4] of the temple[5] to the left corner of the temple, *along* by the [n]altar and the temple.

12 And he brought forth [o]the king's son, and put the crown upon him, and *gave him* the [p]testimony;[6] and they made him king, and anointed[q] him; and [r]they clapped their hands, and said, [s]God save the king.

13 ¶ And [t]when Athaliah heard the noise of the guard *and* of the people, she came to the people into the temple of the LORD.

14 And when she looked, behold, the king stood by a [u]pillar,[7] as the manner *was*, and the princes and the trumpeters by the king; and all[x] the people of the land rejoiced, and blew with trumpets: and Athaliah rent her clothes, and cried, [y]Treason, Treason!

15 But Jehoiada the priest commanded the captains[z] of the hundreds, the officers of the host, and said unto them, Have her forth without the ranges; and him that [a]followeth her kill with the sword. For the priest had said, Let her not be slain in the house of the LORD.[8]

16 And they laid hands on her: and she went by the way by the which the horses came into the king's house; and there [b]was she slain.

17 ¶ And Jehoiada [c]made a covenant between the LORD and the king and the people, that they should be the LORD's people; between the[d] king also and the people.[9]

18 And all the people of the land [e]went into the house of Baal, and brake it down; his altars and his images brake they in pieces thoroughly, and slew Mattan the priest of Baal before the altars: and the priest appointed officers[1] over the house of the LORD.[2]

19 And he took the rulers over hundreds, and the captains, and the guard, and all the people of the land; and they brought down the king from the house of the LORD, and came by the way of the [f]gate of the guard to the king's house: and he sat on the throne of the kings.

20 And all the people of the land [g]rejoiced, and the city was in quiet: and they slew Athaliah with the sword *beside* the king's house.

21 Seven[h] years old *was* Jehoash when he began to reign.

A.M. 3126. B.C. 878.

m 1 Sa. 21. 9. 2 Sa. 8. 7.

3 The guards were most probably not soldiers, but the *Levitical courses*, 2 Ch. 23. 1, 2. They were consequently unarmed, but now are furnished either from the trophies deposited by David, or from an arsenal in the temple called by his name.—*C.*

4 Heb. *shoulder.*

5 Great court.

n 2 Ch. 3. 1.

o ver. 2. 2 Ch. 23. 11.

p Ex. 25. 16. Ps. 78. 5. Is. 8. 16, 20. De. 17. 18–20.

6 The words 'gave him' being supplied, the word translated 'testimony' should rather be referred to the word 'put,' and seems therefore to signify not the book of the law, but some part of the regalia or royal ornaments. *C.*—The testimony, says Scott, signifies the book of the law; and Joash was instructed by this significant action that he received his authority from God, and was accountable to him for it.—*I.*

q 1 Sa. 10. 1; 16. 13. 1 Ki. 1. 39. La. 4. 20.

r Ps. 47. 1.

s Heb. *let the king live*, 1 Ki. 1. 34. 2 Sa. 16. 16. Ps. 72. 15, 17. [This seems to have been the usual shout of loyalty among the Hebrews. In personally addressing the king we find the expression put superlatively, as, 'let the king live for ever.' The same style of address was used to the Babylonian and Persian kings.—*J.*]

t 2 Ch. 23. 12–15.

u 2 Ch. 6. 13; 34. 31. ch. 23. 3.

7 On a rostrum beside a pillar (2 Ch. 6. 13), for, had the child not been raised up, the queen could not have seen or distinguished him.—*C.*

x 1 Ki. 1. 39, 40. 1 Ch. 12. 40. ver. 13. Pr. 29. 2.

y ver. 1, 2. 1 Ki. 18. 17, 18. Mat. 7. 5. Ro. 2. 1–3.

z ver. 4, 9, 10. 2 Ch. 23. 9, 14.

a Eze. 30. 8. Re. 19. 20. ch. 10. 21–25. Je. 48. 10.

8 She was a murderer, ver. 1, and as such was righteously condemned.—*C.*

b ver. 1. Ju. 1. 7. Mat. 7. 2. Re. 16. 5–7; 18. 6.

c De. 5. 2, 3; 29. 1, 12. Jos. 24. 25. 2 Ch. 15. 12, 14; 29. 10; 34. 31. Ezr. 10. 3. Ne. 5. 12; 9. 38.

d De. 17. 16. 2 Sa. 23. 3. Ps. 122. 9. Ro. 13. 1–5.

9 The true model of a national constitution. First, so far as it may be attained, securing the honour of God's law. Secondly, the co-relative rights and privileges of king and people.—*C.*

e ch. 10. 25–27. 2 Ch. 23. 17. 1 Is. 2. 18. Zec. 13. 2. 1 Th. 1. 9.

1 Heb. *offices.*

2 The high-priest, as natural, from the care he had taken of Joash, was appointed regent.—*C.*

f ver. 5. 2 Ch. 23. 5, 19.

g Pr. 11. 10. ver. 14.

h 2 Ch. 24. 1. ver. 4; ch. 22. 1; 21. 1; 15. 2.

A.M. 3126. B.C. 878.

CHAP. XII.

a 2 Ch. 24. 1. ch. 11. 1; 1 Ch. 3. 11.

b Ge. 21. 14, 31–33. Ju. 20. 1.

c 1 Sa. 10. 9. 2 Ch. 24. 2, 17–25.

d 1 Ki. 15. 4; 22. 43. ch. 14. 4; 15. 4, 35. 2 Ch. 33. 17, *i.e.* high-places where God was worshipped.

1 Private altars on high places, where sacrifices were offered, and, no doubt, generally endeared by some interesting recollection of Joshua, Samuel, or some of the prophets or judges. They were not taken away, either for want of power, or from the unsettled state of the country, or were permitted to remain out of deference to popular prejudice, or the neighbourhood and interests of Levitical cities. Still, as they were contrary to the law, testimony continues to be borne against them.—*Note*, If you cannot reform sinners, at least testify against their sin. Your testimony may be unavailing now, it will work hereafter.—*C.*

e Heb. *holinesses*, ver. 18; ch. 22. 4.

2 Or, *holy things.*

f Ex. 30. 12.

3 Heb. *the money of the souls of his estimation.*

g Le. xxvii.

h Ex. 35. 5; 25. 2. 1 Ch. xxii. xxix.

4 Heb. *ascendeth upon the heart of a man.*

i 2 Ch. 24. 5. 1 Ch. 29. 6–9. Ezr. 7. 16; 8. 25.

5 He had assigned the following revenues: (1) Things dedicated by the king or others. (2) The half-shekel for every one who 'passed the account,' the muster or number from twenty years, Ex. 30. 13. (3) The estimation money for every man who had dedicated himself to God, I.e. 27. 2. Ex. 35. 5. (4) Such voluntary contributions as came into any man's heart.—*C.*

k ver. 4, 5. 2 Ch. 24. 5, 6; 29. 4, 5.

l Phi. 2. 21, 22 Ti. 4. 10.

6 The revolt of the ten tribes had greatly diminished the revenues of the Levitical priests, who seem all to have adhered to the throne of Judah and service of Jehovah. The money received had therefore been applied to their support, which they now generously resign, only bargaining that they are not to be held accountable for the repairs of the temple.—*C.*

m 2 Ch. 24. 8. Mat. 12. 41.

n Of burnt-offering, 2 Ch. 4. 1. Ex. 40. 6.

o Heb. *threshold*, Ps. 84. 10.

p Or, *secretary*, 2 Sa. 8. 17; 20. 25. ch. 19. 2.

7 Heb. *bound up.*

8 Bags or purses of money sealed and labelled at a certain value still pass current in the East, unopened and uncounted.—*C.*

q 2 Ch. 24. 12. ch. 22. 5; 1 Is. 58. 12.

CHAPTER XII.

1 *Jehoash reigneth well all the days of Jehoiada.* 4 *He giveth order for the repair of the temple.* 17 *Hazael is diverted from his design against Jerusalem by a present of the hallowed treasures.* 19 *Jehoash being slain by his servants, Amaziah succeedeth him.*

IN the[a] seventh year of Jehu Jehoash began to reign; and forty years reigned he in Jerusalem: and his mother's name *was* Zibiah of [b]Beer-sheba.

2 And Jehoash did *that which was* [c]right in the sight of the LORD all his days wherein Jehoiada the priest instructed him.

3 But [d]the high places were not taken [1]away; the people still sacrificed and burnt incense in the high places.

4 ¶ And Jehoash said to the priests, All the money of the dedicated [2]things that is brought into the house of the LORD, *even* the money of every one that [f]passeth *the account*, the money that every man[3] is [g]set at, *and* all the money that [h]cometh into any man's heart[4] to bring into the house of the LORD,

5 Let the [i]priests take *it* to them, every man of his acquaintance: and let them repair the breaches of the house, wheresoever any breach shall be found.

6 But it was *so*, *that*, in the three and twentieth year of king Jehoash, the priests had not repaired the breaches of the house.

7 Then king Jehoash called for Jehoiada the priest, and the *other* priests, and said unto them, Why repair ye not the breaches of the [5]house? Now therefore [k]receive no *more* money of your acquaintance, but deliver it for the breaches of the house.

8 And the priests [l]consented to receive no *more* money of the people, neither to repair the breaches of the house.[6]

9 But Jehoiada the priest [m]took a chest, and bored a hole in the lid of it, and set it beside the [n]altar, on the right side as one cometh into the house of the LORD: and the priests that kept the [o]door put therein all the money *that was* brought into the house of the LORD.

10 And it was *so*, when they saw that *there was* much money in the chest, that the king's [p]scribe and the high priest came up, and they put up[7] in bags,[8] and told the money *that was* found in the house of the LORD.

11 And they [q]gave the money, being told, into the hands of them that did the work, that

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church and nation, when he is active, prudent, and pious! They who first give themselves to the Lord, may comfortably hope for his blessing upon their undertakings: and civil establishments are best founded in a due care of true religion. That kingdom will be truly happy where God's word is made the rule of the monarch's government and of the people's obedience: and when religion comes in fashion, every man will appear zealous; and religion, liberty, and order will support one another.

CHAPTER XII. [Ver. 4. The first clause of this verse contains a general command that all the money which was wont, according to law, to be given to the temple, should be applied by the priests for repairs. This money, or sacred tax, was of three kinds, and these are enumerated in the succeeding clauses of the verse, as follows:—1. 'The money of the numbered,' *i.e.* of those who, as ordered in Ex. 30. 13, give on being registered half a shekel as an offering to the Lord. 2. 'The money at which each man is estimated,' *i.e.* the money which was to be paid to the Lord for redemption by any one who by a special vow had devoted himself, or any portion of his property, to God. 3. All money of a free-will offering. *P.*]

REFLECTIONS.—Old and evil customs are hard to root out: and rarely is the reformation of religion exactly answerable to the divine standard of God's word. Fear of men, or hopes that corruptions will die away of their own accord, often make good men to stop short. What a mercy it is for youth, particularly princes, to have pious, prudent, and faithful tutors! And often young hypocrites, under such care, manifest for a time more forwardness in the work of reformation than the aged servants of God. How hopeful it is when liberality in contributing for sacred purposes meets with prudence and fidelity in the disposal! But when men are only restrained from evil by the influence of others, their wickedness readily breaks out at last, and they destroy what they have built. Hypocrites will not always call on God, but will become foolish in their imaginations, and hasten their own ruin by

had the oversight of the house of the LORD: and they laid it out[9] to the carpenters and builders that wrought upon the house of the LORD,

12 And to masons, and hewers of stone, and to buy timber and hewed stone to repair the breaches of the house of the LORD, and for all that was laid out[1] for the house to repair *it*.

13 Howbeit [r]there were not made for the house of the LORD bowls[2] of silver, snuffers, basons, trumpets, any vessels of gold, or vessels of silver, of the money *that was* brought into the house of the LORD:[3]

14 But they gave that to the workmen, and repaired therewith the house of the LORD.

15 Moreover, [s]they reckoned not with the men into whose hand they delivered the money to be bestowed on workmen; for they dealt faithfully.[4]

16 The 'trespass-money and sin-money was not brought into the house of the LORD: it was the priests'.

17 ¶ Then[5] Hazael[u] king of Syria went up and fought against [x]Gath,[6] and took it: and Hazael [y]set his face to go up to Jerusalem.

18 And Jehoash king of Judah [z]took all the hallowed things that Jehoshaphat, and Jehoram, and Ahaziah, his fathers, kings of Judah, had dedicated, and his own hallowed things,[7] and all the gold *that was* found in the treasures of the house of the LORD, and in the king's house, and sent *it* to Hazael king of Syria: and he went away[8] from Jerusalem.

19 ¶ And[a] the rest of the acts of Joash, and all that he did, *are* they not written in the book of the Chronicles of the kings of Judah?

20 And [b]his servants arose, and made a conspiracy,[9] and slew Joash[1] in [c]the house of Millo, which goeth down to Silla.

21 For Jozachar the son of Shimeath, and Jehozabad the son of Shomer, his servants, smote him, and he died; and they buried him with his fathers in the city of David:[2] and Amaziah his son reigned in his stead.

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IN the[a] three and twentieth year of Joash the son of Ahaziah king of Judah, Jehoahaz

A.M. 3149. B.C. 855.

9 Heb. *brought it forth.*

1 Heb. *went forth.*

r 2 Ch.24.14. 1 Ki.7. 50. Nu. 10. 2, *i.e.* they were not made then, but afterwards, made.

2 That is, there were no vessels made for the service of the temple till all the outward repairs were completed. 'Hence we may learn in all our expenses to give that the preference which is most needful, and in dealing for the public to deal as we would for ourselves.'—*J.*

3 They sought first to finish the house before providing the furniture of the altar, trumpets, and lavers. —*Note*, Attend first to the essentials of religion, 'the kingdom of God (Ro. 14. 17), and his righteousness,' Mat. 6. 33; and if God see it good, then 'all other things will be added unto you.'—*C.*

s ch.22.7. Phi.4.8. 1 Th.2.10.Ne.7.2.

4 See note on ver. 10. Christian, 'whatsoever things are honest' (honourable), 'think on these things,' Phi.4.8.—*C.*

t Le.5.15,18; 4.3;7.7. De.14.25. Nu.18.9.

5 B.C. 840.

u ch.8.12;10.32;13.3, 7.1 Ki.19.17.

x 1 Ch.8.13. 1 Sa.27. 1,2.

6 A Philistine city twenty-three miles west of Jerusalem.—*C.*

y 2 Ch.24. 23. Je. 42. 15. Lu.9.51.

z 1 Ki.15.18.ch.16.8; 18.15,16.

7 He dearly bought a peace which was of short duration; for the next year Hazael returned, and Jehoash, having no more treasures, was obliged to hazard a battle, which he lost along with the principal part of his nobility), so that Judah was totally ruined, and Jehoash shortly after slain in his bed by his own servants. —*J.*

8 Heb. *went up.*

a 1 Ki. 11. 41; 14. 29; 15.23;22.45.ch.8.23.

b 2 Ch.24. 25, 26. ch. 14.5.

9 The cause of the conspiracy is traced, 2 Ch. 24. 22–25, to resentment against him for the ungrateful murder of the sons of Jehoiada, the friend and protector of his youth.—*C.*

1 B.C. 838.

c Or, *Beth-millo*, 2 Sa.5.9. 1 Ki.11. 27, not Ju.9.6.

2 But not in the 'sepulchres of the kings,' a circumstance which is supposed to express disapprobation of his conduct. Thus ended a reign full of hope in the beginning but of misery in the end. Many a promising youth turns aside to folly when his monitors are removed, as did this Joash after the death of Jehoiada the priest, ver. 2. —*J.*

CHAP. XIII.

a ch.8.26; 10. 36; 11. 21;ver.10.

A.M. 3166. B.C. 838.

1 This verse is reconciled with ver. 10 by supposing, as in some other cases, that Jehoash, ver. 10, had become co-regent with his father, Jehoahaz, three years before his death—a circumstance most probable in such miserable and unsettled times. *C.*——As sons frequently reigned with their fathers during the Hebrew monarchy, their reigns are made in some instances to commence from their partnership with their fathers in the throne, and in others from the commencement of their governing alone, after their fathers' decease. Thus we read here that Jehoahaz of Israel began to reign in the twenty-third year of Joash of Judah, and in ver. 10 we read it was in the thirty-seventh of Joash that Jehoash of Israel began to reign, though his father Jehoahaz reigned seventeen years, which would make it about the fortieth of Joash. This is explained by supposing his father admitted him to the government two or three years before his death.—*T. H. Horne.*

b ch. 10. 29. 1 Ki. 12. 26–33.13.33;14.8,9.

2 Heb. *walked after.*

c De.4.24;9.10;32.21, 22. Ju.2. 14. Is. 10. 5, 6. ch.8.12.He.12.29.

d Ju.10.10. Ps.78.34; 50.15. Is. 26. 16. Je. 22. 23.1 Ki.21.29.

3 B.C. 842.

4 Though his repentance is not mentioned, it is implied, for the Lord heard him in mercy. If so, and there seems no cause to question it, his calamities, though great, both to himself and his country, were happily overruled for good.—*C.*

e Ex.3.7. Ge. 31. 42. Is.63.9.ver.23.

f ver.25;ch.14.25,27. Is.19.20. Ne.9.27. Ob. 21.

5 Not in the days of Jehoahaz, but of Jeroboam the son of Jehoash, ch. 14. 27. —*C.*

6 Without fleeing to fenced cities, strongholds, dens, and caves.—*C.*

7 Heb. *as yesterday and the third day.*

g ch.17.7–17. De.32. 15–18.

8 Heb. *he walked.*

9 Heb. *stood.*

h 1 Ki.16.33. De.7.5.

i ch.8.12;10.32. Am. 1.3. 1 Ki.20.15,27, with 1 Ch.21.5.

k 1 Ki.14. 19, 20. ch. 10.34,35.

l 1 Ki. 14. 13. Job 3. 14.

1 Alone.

2 See note on ver. 1.—*C.*

3 B.C. 841.

m In concert with his father, ch.14.1.

n ver.2. 1 Ki.12. 26–33;13.33.ch.3.3;10.29.

o ver.8,9,25;ch.14.8–16.2 Ch.25.17–24.

4 The same as Jehoash, ver. 10.—*C.*

p ver.9;ch.10.35; 14. 29.

5 B.C 825.

q 1 Ki.1.13;2.24.

had the oversight of the house of the LORD: and they laid it out[9] to the carpenters and builders that wrought upon the house of the LORD,

12 And to masons, and hewers of stone, and to buy timber and hewed stone to repair the breaches of the house of the LORD, and for all that was laid out[1] for the house to repair *it*.

13 Howbeit [r]there were not made for the house of the LORD bowls[2] of silver, snuffers, basons, trumpets, any vessels of gold, or vessels of silver, of the money *that was* brought into the house of the LORD:[3]

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19 ¶ And[a] the rest of the acts of Joash, and all that he did, *are* they not written in the book of the Chronicles of the kings of Judah?

20 And [b]his servants arose, and made a conspiracy,[9] and slew Joash[1] in [c]the house of Millo, which goeth down to Silla.

21 For Jozachar the son of Shimeath, and Jehozabad the son of Shomer, his servants, smote him, and he died; and they buried him with his fathers in the city of David:[2] and Amaziah his son reigned in his stead.

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IN the[a] three and twentieth year of Joash the son of Ahaziah king of Judah, Jehoahaz the son of Jehu began to reign over Israel in Samaria, *and reigned* seventeen years.[1]

2 And he [b]did *that which was* evil in the sight of the LORD, and followed[2] the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, which made Israel to sin; he departed not therefrom.

3 ¶ And [c]the anger of the LORD was kindled against Israel; and he delivered them into the hand of Hazael king of Syria, and into the hand of Ben-hadad the son of Hazael, all *their* days.

4 And Jehoahaz [d]besought the LORD,[3] and the LORD hearkened unto him:[4] for he [e]saw the oppression of Israel, because the king of Syria oppressed them.

5 (And the LORD gave Israel a [f]saviour, so that they went out from under the hand of the Syrians:[5] and the children of Israel dwelt in their tents,[6] as beforetime.[7]

6 Nevertheless [g]they departed not from the sins of the house of Jeroboam, who made Israel sin, *but* walked[8] therein: and there [9]remained the [h]grove also in Samaria.)

7 Neither did he leave of the people to Jehoahaz but fifty horsemen, and ten chariots, and ten thousand footmen; for the king of Syria [i]had destroyed them, and had made them like the dust by thrashing.

8 ¶ Now [k]the rest of the acts of Jehoahaz, and all that he did, and his might, *are* they not written in the book of the Chronicles of the kings of Israel?

9 And Jehoahaz slept with his fathers; and [l]they buried him in Samaria: and Joash his son reigned[1] in his stead.

10 ¶ In the thirty and seventh [2]year of Joash king of Judah began[3] Jehoash the son of Jehoahaz [m]to reign over Israel in Samaria, *and reigned* sixteen years.

11 And [n]he did *that which was* evil in the sight of the LORD; he departed not from all the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who made Israel sin, *but* he walked therein.

12 And[o] the rest of the acts of Joash,[4] and all that he did, and his might wherewith he fought against Amaziah king of Judah, *are* they not written in the book of the Chronicles of the kings of Israel?

13 And Joash [p]slept with his fathers;[5] and Jeroboam [q]sat upon his throne: and Joash was buried in Samaria with the kings of Israel.

A.M. 3149. B.C. 855.

9 Heb. *brought it forth.*

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r 2 Ch.24.14. 1 Ki.7. 50. Nu. 10. 2, *i.e.* they were not made then, but afterwards, made.

2 That is, there were no vessels made for the service of the temple till all the outward repairs were completed. 'Hence we may learn in all our expenses to give that the preference which is most needful, and in dealing for the public to deal as we would for ourselves.'—*J.*

3 They sought first to finish the house before providing the furniture of the altar, trumpets, and lavers. —*Note*, Attend first to the essentials of religion, 'the kingdom of God (Ro. 14. 17), and his righteousness,' Mat. 6. 33; and if God see it good, then 'all other things will be added unto you.'—*C.*

s ch.22.7. Phi.4.8. 1 Th.2.10.Ne.7.2.

4 See note on ver. 10. Christian, 'whatsoever things are honest' (honourable), 'think on these things,' Phi.4.8.—*C.*

t Le.5.15,18; 4.3;7.7. De.14.25. Nu.18.9.

5 B.C. 840.

u ch.8.12;10.32;13.3, 7.1 Ki.19.17.

x 1 Ch.8.13. 1 Sa.27. 1,2.

6 A Philistine city twenty-three miles west of Jerusalem.—*C.*

y 2 Ch.24. 23. Je. 42. 15. Lu.9.51.

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b 2 Ch.24. 25, 26. ch. 14.5.

9 The cause of the conspiracy is traced, 2 Ch. 24. 22–25, to resentment against him for the ungrateful murder of the sons of Jehoiada, the friend and protector of his youth.—*C.*

1 B.C. 838.

c Or, *Beth-millo*, 2 Sa.5.9. 1 Ki.11. 27, not Ju.9.6.

2 But not in the 'sepulchres of the kings,' a circumstance which is supposed to express disapprobation of his conduct. Thus ended a reign full of hope in the beginning but of misery in the end. Many a promising youth turns aside to folly when his monitors are removed, as did this Joash after the death of Jehoiada the priest, ver. 2. —*J.*

CHAP. XIII.

a ch.8.26; 10. 36; 11. 21;ver.10.

A.M. 3166. B.C. 838.

1 This verse is reconciled with ver. 10 by supposing, as in some other cases, that Jehoash, ver. 10, had become co-regent with his father, Jehoahaz, three years before his death—a circumstance most probable in such miserable and unsettled times. *C.*——As sons frequently reigned with their fathers during the Hebrew monarchy, their reigns are made in some instances to commence from their partnership with their fathers in the throne, and in others from the commencement of their governing alone, after their fathers' decease. Thus we read here that Jehoahaz of Israel began to reign in the twenty-third year of Joash of Judah, and in ver. 10 we read it was in the thirty-seventh of Joash that Jehoash of Israel began to reign, though his father Jehoahaz reigned seventeen years, which would make it about the fortieth of Joash. This is explained by supposing his father admitted him to the government two or three years before his death.—*T. H. Horne.*

b ch. 10. 29. 1 Ki. 12. 26–33.13.33;14.8,9.

2 Heb. *walked after.*

c De.4.24;9.10;32.21, 22. Ju.2. 14. Is. 10. 5, 6. ch.8.12.He.12.29.

d Ju.10.10. Ps.78.34; 50.15. Is. 26. 16. Je. 22. 23.1 Ki.21.29.

3 B.C. 842.

4 Though his repentance is not mentioned, it is implied, for the Lord heard him in mercy. If so, and there seems no cause to question it, his calamities, though great, both to himself and his country, were happily overruled for good.—*C.*

e Ex.3.7. Ge. 31. 42. Is.63.9.ver.23.

f ver.25;ch.14.25,27. Is.19.20. Ne.9.27. Ob. 21.

5 Not in the days of Jehoahaz, but of Jeroboam the son of Jehoash, ch. 14. 27. —*C.*

6 Without fleeing to fenced cities, strongholds, dens, and caves.—*C.*

7 Heb. *as yesterday and the third day.*

g ch.17.7–17. De.32. 15–18.

8 Heb. *he walked.*

9 Heb. *stood.*

h 1 Ki.16.33. De.7.5.

i ch.8.12;10.32. Am. 1.3. 1 Ki.20.15,27, with 1 Ch.21.5.

k 1 Ki.14. 19, 20. ch. 10.34,35.

l 1 Ki. 14. 13. Job 3. 14.

1 Alone.

2 See note on ver. 1.—*C.*

3 B.C. 841.

m In concert with his father, ch.14.1.

n ver.2. 1 Ki.12. 26–33;13.33.ch.3.3;10.29.

o ver.8,9,25;ch.14.8–16.2 Ch.25.17–24.

4 The same as Jehoash, ver. 10.—*C.*

p ver.9;ch.10.35; 14. 29.

5 B.C 825.

q 1 Ki.1.13;2.24.

the means which they use to prevent it. And upon none does God more readily imprint distinguished marks of his justice than upon apostate hypocrites, who chiefly dishonour his cause.

CHAPTER XIII. REFLECTIONS.—How obstinately do men cleave to that which is evil! When idolatry is once rooted in a nation, nothing but the power of God can extirpate it: and when men make themselves wicked, they also become base and miserable. But he is ready to hear the prayer of distress. His mercy abounds even to the chief of sinners. But they who, after both judgments and mercies, continue in their sin, may expect to have at last judgment without mercy. How wisely God magnifies his servants, or renders them obscure, as is best. In what diversified forms they leave this world! Evident marks of God's favour and image are impressed upon some ministers and saints, that even wicked magistrates or others are in conscience constrained to honour them, and lament the loss of them; and what instruction, deliverance, and victory might kings obtain by an intimacy with such! The death-beds of noted ministers are useful schools of important wisdom: but the removal of the few faithful is a great weakening to the defence of a nation. Their loss is felt in death, who when alive were neglected. God himself, however, liveth as our protector and deliverer; and when his everlasting arms are employed in our favour, nothing can detain or withstand us. But, alas! our confined desires and expectations often cramp our distinguished mercies. We improve not the offers and advantages which God puts into our hands, and often we grieve him and his servants by losing our mercies for want of desire to obtain them. The death of God's eminent servants is frequently marked with tokens of wrath against their nation or

14 ¶ Now Elisha was fallen sick of his sickness whereof [r]he died. And Joash the king of Israel came down unto him, and wept over his face, and said, [s]O my father, my father! the chariot of Israel, and the horsemen thereof![6]

15 And Elisha said unto him, Take bow and arrows. And he took unto him bow and arrows.

16 And he said to the king of Israel, Put thine hand[7] upon the bow. And he put his hand *upon it:* and Elisha [t]put his hands upon the king's hands.

17 And he said, Open the window eastward:[8] and he opened *it.* Then Elisha said, Shoot:[9] and he shot. And he said, [u]The arrow of the LORD's deliverance, and the arrow of deliverance from Syria: for thou shalt smite the Syrians in [x]Aphek, till thou have consumed *them.*

18 And he said, Take the arrows: and he took *them.* And he said unto the king of Israel, Smite[y] upon the ground: and he smote thrice, and stayed.

19 And the man of God was wroth[1] with him, and said, Thou shouldest have smitten five or six times; then hadst thou smitten Syria till thou hadst consumed *it:* whereas now thou shalt [z]smite Syria *but* thrice.

20 ¶ And Elisha[2] died,[3] and they buried him. And the [a]bands of the Moabites invaded the land at the coming in of the year.

21 And it came to pass, as they were burying a man,[4] that, behold, they spied a band[5] *of men;* and they cast the man into the sepulchre of Elisha: and when the man was let down,[6] and [b]touched the bones of Elisha, he revived,[7] and stood up on his feet.[8]

22 ¶ But [c]Hazael king of Syria oppressed Israel all the days of Jehoahaz.

23 And [d]the LORD was gracious unto them, and had compassion on them, and had respect unto them, because of his covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob,[9] and would not destroy them, neither cast he them from his presence[1] as yet.

24 So [e]Hazael king of Syria died; and Benhadad his son reigned in his stead.[2]

A.M. 3165. B.C. 839.

r Ps.12.1; 89. 47. Is. 57.1. Zec. 1.5.

s ch.2. 12; 6. 21. Job 22.30. Pr.11.11. Eze.20. 30. Is.6.13. Ps. 106. 23, 30.

6 Equivalent, the rabbins and others think, to *protector*, being to Israel better than chariot and horsemen. They rather hold it to signify, 'Are you also, like Elijah your master, to be taken thus away from us in our day of necessity.'—*C.*

7 Heb. *Make thine hand to ride.*

t Ge.49.24. Ps.127.1, 2;144.1. Jn.15.5. Is. 26. 12.

8 The Syrians had seized upon the country east of Samaria.—*C.*

9 It was an ancient custom to shoot an arrow into the country it was intended to invade. When Alexander the Great reached the coast of Ionia, 'he threw a dart into it.' The recent conquests of Syria were to the *east* of Judea,—*I.*

u Ex.4.2-9. Ju. 7. 9-15.2 Sa.5.24.

x 1 Ki.20.26-30.1Sa. 4.1.ver.19,25.

y Ex.17.11. ch.20.8-11. Is.20.2-4;38.21,22.

1 Or was grieved. Why? He had told the king, 'Thou shalt smite the Syrians till thou have consumed them.' He must therefore have understood the smiting as symbolical, and should therefore have proceeded till ordered to desist.—*C.*

z ver.25.

2 He prophesied about 60 years.

3 B.C. 839.

a ch.5. 2; 6. 23; 24. 2. Is.57.1. Ps.12.1.

4 B.C. 838.

5 A Moabitish band of plunderers.—*C.*

6 Heb. *went down.*

b ver. 23, 25; ch. 14. 25-27. Eze. 37. 10. Re. 11.11. Jn.11.:5;5.25.

7 So Christ chiefly quickened sinners after his death.

8 Elisha having been the principal witness to the ascension of Elijah, and that ascension being an important evidence of immortality, this additional testimony both to Elisha's character and that vital doctrine is thus miraculously furnished.—*C.*

c ch.8.12; 10.32; ver. 5-7. Ps.106. 40-42. De. 28.48.

d Eze 20.9,14,17,22. Ju.10.10. Ex.2.24,25; 3. 6,7; 32.11,13. Le.26.42. De.32.36. Ps.105.8;106. 45,46.

9 Not for *their* sakes, but for the sake of the covenant which promised Christ.—*C.*

1 Heb. *face.*

e Ps.125.3. Lu. 18. 7, 8.

2 Benhadad the second.—*C.*

A.M. 3166. B.C. 838.

f ver.5,18,19; ch. 14. 25. De.32.35,36. Ge.22 14.

CHAP. XIV.

1 Of his reign alone.

a 2 Ch.25. 1. 1 Ch. 3. 12.

b ch.12.2. 2 Ch.25.2; 24.17,18.2 Ti.3.5. He reigned hypocritically.

2 Some things right, that is, as God had commanded in the law, or prescribed by his prophets.—*C.*

3 We see here the influence of personal parental example. Let fathers who have successfully trained up their children to serve God, be thankful for the honour thus conferred on them.—*I.*

c 1 Ki.15.4;22.43.ch. 12. 3; 15. 4, 35. 2 Ch.21. 17.

d 1 Ki.2.12, with ch. 12.20,21.

e ch. 12. 20. Ge. 9. 6. Nu.35.33.2 Ch.25.3,4.

4 B.C. 827.

5 This is mentioned as a commendation, for in those barbarous times vengeance often extended to the children. Low must be the state of morals when obedience to a simple command of God is noted as a rare virtue.—*I.*

f De.24. 16. Eze. 18. 4-20.

g ch. 8. 20, 22. 2 Ch. 25.11. 2 Sa.8.13. Ps. 60. title.

6 Or, *the rock.*

7 Situated about 90 miles south-east of Jerusalem. It was surrounded by precipitous rocks, and its name signifies a *rock*, as also did its subsequent name, *Petra.* It was a place of such strength, that it more than once set the Roman armies at defiance. When subdued by that *iron* power, it became the capital of a province; afterwards, the metropolitan see of the surrounding Greek churches, but finally became, as was foretold by the prophet, a total 'desolation.' Its ruins are at present the most remarkable in the world, and furnish the most abiding evidences of prophetic inspiration.—*C.*

8 B.C. 826.

9 'Obedience of God,' in testimony of his confidence in the word of the prophet, 2 Ch.25.8,9.—*C.*

h 1 Sa. 14. 12. 2 Ch. 25. 17. ch.23.29. Je. 11. 12. Pr. 17. 14;18.6,12; 23. 10;16.18.

1 To face an enemy, is still a common phrase for fighting.—*C.*

i Ju.9.8-15. 2 Sa. 12. 1-4. Is. 55. 13. The thistle denotes Amaziah as weak and contemptible, though mischievous; and the cedar Joash, powerful and peaceable.

25 And Jehoash the son of Jehoahaz [f]took again, out of the hand of Ben-hadad the son of Hazael, the cities which he had taken out of the hand of Jehoahaz his father by war: three times did Joash beat him, and recovered the cities of Israel.

CHAPTER XIV.

1 *Amaziah's good reign.* 5 *His justice on the murderers of his father.* 7 *His victory over Edom.* 8 *Amaziah, provoking Jehoash, is overcome and spoiled.* 15 *Jeroboam succeedeth Jehoash.* 17 *Amaziah is slain by a conspiracy.* 21 *Azariah succeedeth him.* 23 *Jeroboam's wicked reign.* 28 *Zachariah succeedeth him.*

IN the second year of Joash[1] son of Jehoahaz king of Israel reigned [a]Amaziah the son of Joash king of Judah.

2 He was twenty and five years old when he began to reign, and reigned twenty and nine years in Jerusalem: and his mother's name *was* Jehoaddan of Jerusalem.

3 And he did *that which was* [b]right[2] in the sight of the LORD, yet not like David his father: he did according to all things as Joash his father did.[3]

4 Howbeit [c]the high places were not taken away: as yet the people did sacrifice and burnt incense on the high places.

5 ¶ And it came to pass, as soon as the kingdom [d]was confirmed in his hand, that he [e]slew[4] his servants which had slain the king his father.

6 But the children[5] of the murderers he slew not: according unto that which is written in the book of the law of Moses, wherein the LORD commanded, saying, [f]The fathers shall not be put to death for the children, nor the children be put to death for the fathers; but every man shall be put to death for his own sin.

7 ¶ He slew of [g]Edom in the valley of Salt ten thousand, and took [6]Selah[7] by war,[8] and called the name of it Joktheel unto this day.[9]

8 ¶ Then Amaziah sent messengers to Jehoash, the son of Jehoahaz, son of Jehu, king of Israel, saying, Come, [h]let us look one another in the face.[1]

9 And Jehoash the king of Israel sent to Amaziah king of Judah, saying, [i]The thistle that *was* in Lebanon sent to the cedar that *was*

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church. And even a prospect of victory over one enemy is attended with trouble from another. But what blessings are good men, by their former examples, instructions, and prayers, even after they are dead! And quickly is the fate of the most powerful and conquering nations reversed when God pleases.—But does not this Elisha present before us a figure of the great God our Saviour? How abundant his fitness for his work! He was endowed with the Spirit above measure. Ardent was his zeal for God, and tender his compassion towards destitute, grieved, fainting, and endangered men. How express and solemn was his call to his offices, which was confirmed by numerous and diversified miracles! Coming after the New Testament Elijah, John Baptist, he was solemnly initiated to his work on Jordan's bank. By his complete robe of righteousness he divided the depths of wrath and Jordans of trouble. By his new covenant of salt, and the grace thereof, he rectifies the bitter waters and barren soil of law precepts and curses and of multiplied troubles. By him streams of gospel truths, ordinances, and influences break forth in the wilderness for perishing sinners; and the barren Gentile world he makes a joyful mother of Christians, and these fruitful in good works. To destitute souls and churches he multiplies their oil of grace, till there be no more room to receive it. By his word he often quickened the dead; and many such his death discharged from their graves. By his death and intercession he quickens millions dead in trespasses and sins. By his word he sweetens our bitter lots of temptations and troubles; he restores our sinking spirits, and supplies our famished souls. Multitudes of Gentile sinners he freely cures of their sinful leprosy, by complete purification in the river of his blood and Spirit; and renders them hearty worshippers of the true God. He is the strength and protector of his church, who gives his people victories, ruins their enemies, and manages the nations around for their good. How terrible is the resentment of Heaven against his injurers! They that mock him are rent in pieces, while there is none to deliver them. Those ministers who preach for filthy lucre, or who, by error and falsehood, wound his honour, shall infamously perish in their sin. They who attend his ordinances with malignant intentions, shall be smitten with spiritual blindness and delusion. They who discredit his word, or despise his promised fulness, shall see it with their eyes, but never share of its benefits. Tremendous judgment befell Judas, who betrayed him: and awful is the curse that has fallen on the Jews, who reviled, disbelieved, and persecuted him; and which shall at last fall on all his obstinate despisers.

CHAPTER XIV. REFLECTIONS.—It is an easy thing to be a formalist in religion—but God tries the heart. How short-lived is the prosperity of traitors and murderers! Vain minds are proud of little, and are obstinate against good advice. But others will be found proud enough to mortify them, and strong enough to render them miserable. It is madness for the people of God to weaken themselves before their common

FOUNTAIN AT CANA OF GALILEE—NEAR THE BIRTH-PLACE AND BURIAL OF JONAH—ALSO THE SCENE OF THE FIRST MIRACLE. [II. KINGS, xiv: 25.]—"He restored the coast of Israel from the entering of Hamath unto the sea of the plain, according to the word of the Lord God of Israel, which he spake by the hand of his servant Jonah, the son of Amittai, the prophet, which was of Gath-hepher." Gath-hepher is upon the top of a rocky hill to the west of and in sight of Kefr Kenna, or Cana in Galilee. The prophet Jonah was born here and is also said to be buried here. Cana of Galilee occupies the site upon which Ittah-kazin was situated in Old Testament history, referred to in Joshua, xix: 13. Cana of Galilee was also the scene of the first miracle. The Greeks have the jars here in which they claim the water was turned into wine. It is upon the Roman road from Sephoris to Tiberias, between Nazareth and the Sea of Galilee.

in Lebanon, saying, Give thy daughter to my son to wife: and there passed by a wild beast that *was* in Lebanon, and trode down the thistle.

10 Thou [k]hast indeed smitten Edom, and thine heart hath lifted thee up: glory *of this*, and tarry at home;[1] for why shouldest thou meddle[l] to *thy* hurt, that thou shouldest fall, *even* thou, and Judah with thee?

11 But Amaziah [m]would not hear: therefore Jehoash king of Israel went up;[2] and he and Amaziah king of Judah [n]looked one another in the face at [o]Beth-shemesh,[3] which *belongeth* to Judah.

12 And Judah [p]was put to the worse before Israel, and they fled every man to their tents.

13 And Jehoash king of Israel [q]took Amaziah king of Judah,[4] the son of Jehoash, the son of Ahaziah, at Beth-shemesh, and came to Jerusalem, and brake down the wall of Jerusalem, from[r] the gate of Ephraim unto the corner-gate, four hundred cubits.

14 And he took [s]all the gold and silver, and all the vessels that were found in the house of the LORD, and in the treasures of the king's house, and hostages,[5] and returned to Samaria.

15 ¶ Now[t] the rest of the acts of Jehoash which he did, and his might, and how he fought with Amaziah king of Judah, *are* they not written in the book of the Chronicles of the kings of Israel?

16 And Jehoash slept with his fathers,[6] and was buried in Samaria with the kings of Israel; and [u]Jeroboam[7] his son reigned in his stead.

17 ¶ And Amaziah the son of Joash king of Judah [x]lived after the death of Jehoash son of Jehoahaz king of Israel fifteen years.

18 And the [y]rest of the acts of Amaziah, *are* they not written in the book of the Chronicles of the kings of Judah?

19 Now [z]they made a conspiracy[8] against him in Jerusalem; and he fled to [a]Lachish:[9] but they sent after him to Lachish, and slew him there.

20 And they brought him on horses: and he [b]was buried at Jerusalem with his fathers in the city of David.

21 ¶ And all the people of Judah took [c]Azariah,[1] which *was* sixteen years old, and made him king instead of his father Amaziah.

22 He built [d]Elath,[2] and restored it to Judah, after that the king slept with his fathers.

23 ¶ In the fifteenth year[3] of Amaziah the son of Joash king of Judah, Jeroboam the son of Joash king of Israel began to reign[4] in Samaria, *and reigned* forty and one years.

A.M. 3178. B.C. 826.

k ver. 7. 2 Ch. 32. 25; 25. 19. Hab. 2. 4. Pr. 16. 18.

1 Heb. *at thy house.*

l Lu. 14. 31. Pr. 26. 17; 17. 14; 18. 6; 20. 3. 2 Ch. 35. 21, 22.

m 2 Ch. 25. 20. Ex. 14. 4. 1 Sa. 2. 25.

2 The ground being higher in Judah than in Samaria—a curious internal proof of the history having been written on the spot.—*C.*

n ver. 8. 2 Sa. 2. 14. 1 Sa. 14. 12.

o Jos. 21. 16, not 19. 38, nor Je. 43. 13.

3 There were several cities of this name. This one was situated about 13 miles west of Jerusalem.—*C.*

p Heb. *was smitten*, 2 Ch. 25. 22.

q Pr. 16. 18; 18. 12; 29. 23. Lu. 14. 11. Job 40. 11, 12. 1 Pe. 5. 5.

4 Self-conceit, ver. 8; senseless idolatry imported from the country he had conquered, and contempt of good advice, 2 Ch. 25. 14–16, led first to the alienation of his subjects, ver. 27, and then to the judgments with which God punished him, 2 Ch. 25. 15.—*C.*

r Ne. 8. 16; 12. 39. Je. 31. 38. Zec. 14. 10. 2 Ch. 25. 23.

s 1 Ki. 7. 41, 51; 14. 26; 15. 18. ch. 18. 15. 2 Ch. 25. 24.

5 Took some of the chief men with him, as security for the quiet behaviour of king Amaziah and the rest of their countrymen.—*C.*

t 1 Ki. 14. 19, 20; 16. 5, 6, 14, 20, 27, 28. ch. 10. 34, 35; 13. 8, 9, 13.

6 B.C. 825.

u ch. 13. 13. Ho. 1. 1 Am. 1. 1; 7. 9.

7 Jeroboam the second.—*C.*

x 2 Ch. 25. 25. ch. 13. 10; ver. 1, 2.

y ch. 16. 6; 10. 34.

z 2 Ch. 25. 14, 27. ch. 12. 20, 21; 15. 10, 14, 25, 30; 21. 23.

8 B.C. 810.

a Jos. 10. 1, 31. Is. 36. 2. Mi. 1. 13.

9 Lachish was in the plain of Philistia, on the road to Gaza, 35 miles south-west of Jerusalem. It was then a strong city; it is now a desolate ruin.—*P.*

b 1 Ki. 2. 10; 11. 43; 14. 31; 15. 8, 24; 22. 50. ch. 8. 24, 29; 12. 21.

c 1 Ch. 3. 12, or *Uzziah*, 2 Ch. 26. 1, or *Ozias*, Mat. 1. 8.

1 Called Uzziah, ver. 13, and Ozias by Matthew, ch. 1. 8. There is no reason, however, to pronounce 'Azariah' an error, for nothing is more common than to find the same person having more names than one at one time, or called by different names at different times.—*C.*

d De. 2. 8. 1 Ki. 9. 26. ch. 16. 6. 2 Ch. 26. 2. It was a port on the Red Sea.

2 On the north point of the eastern gulf of the Red Sea. It was the entrepot for the East Indian commerce in the days of Solomon, and retained its commercial importance till the 6th century of our era. It is now called Ælah, and is totally in ruins.—*C.*

3 B.C. 825.

4 Now he began to reign alone, having reigned twelve years with his father.

A.M. 3179. B.C. 825.

e ch. 10. 31; 13. 2, 11; 3. 3. 1 Ki. 12. 26–33; 15. 26, 34; 16. 26.

f Nu. 34. 7, 8. Eze. 47. 16–18. De. 3. 17. Ge. 14. 3; 15. 18. Ex. 23. 31. Am. 6. 14. 1 Ki. 8. 65.

5 The pass from the coast of the Mediterranean, between the ranges of Lebanon and Bargylus, into the great plain of Hamath.—*P.*

g Mat. 12. 39, 40. Jonah 1. 1.

h ch. 13. 4. De. 32. 36. Ex. 3. 7; 4. 25. Ps. 12. 5; 106. 44, 46. Ju. 10. 16. Ho. 11. 8.

6 Protected by any sufficient fortress, nor secure from depredations.—*C.*

i As yet, ch. 13. 23, but soon after did, Ho. 1. 6, 9. ch. 17. 18.

7 See note on ch. 13. 5.—*C.*

k ver. 15, 16, 18.

8 The passage is somewhat obscure, but the meaning seems to be that Jeroboam reduced to subjection the territories of Damascus and Hamath, which David had originally conquered, and which in the time of Solomon remained part of the Jewish monarchy. They were therefore said to belong to Judah.—*P.*

9 B.C. 784.

l After an interregnum of eleven if not twenty-two years, ch. 15. 8.

CHAP. XV.

B.C. 810.

1 Perhaps the twenty-seventh year of Jeroboam's partnership in the kingdom with his father, who made him consort at his going to the Syrian wars; but the sixteenth year of Jeroboam's monarchy.

2 Dr. Kennicott complains of the corruption in the name of this king of Judah, which is expressed in four different ways in this chapter—Ozriah, Oziah, Ozrihu, and Ozihu. But the oldest Hebrew MS. reads here and in ver. 6, 7, *Uzziah*, which is supported by the Syriac and Arabic versions, by the parallel place in Chronicles, by Josephus, and by St. Matthew's genealogy, where it is Ozias, not Azarias. This is also the reading at ver. 32, 34 of the present chapter.—*A.*

a 2 Ch. 26. 1, 3, 4. ch. 14. 21; 1–2, 3. Is. 59. 9, 10.

3 That is, he obeyed the divine commands as far as Amaziah, who at first reigned well, but lapsed into pride through success, and then into idolatry, wherefore God gave him up to foreign and domestic enemies. See notes on ch. 14. 3, 13.—*C.*

b 1 Ki. 15. 14; 22. 43. ch. 12. 3; 14. 4; ver. 35.

c 2 Ch. 26. 16–21. Job 34. 19. Le. 13. 46. Nu. 12. 10.

4 B.C. 763.

5 For his proud and presumptuous intrusion into the sanctuary, 2 Ch. 26. 16–21.—*Note*, We may neither seek to be wise above what is written, nor worship God but as he himself has authorized and required.—*C.*

6 A house separate from intercourse with others, according to the law, Le. 13. 46.—*C.*

d 1 Ki. 22. 41, 43; 14. 29; 15. 7, 8, 23, 24; 22. 45, 50. ch. 8. 23, 24.

7 B.C. 758.

24 And [e]he did *that which was* evil in the sight of the LORD: he departed not from all the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who made Israel to sin.

25 He restored the coast of Israel, [f]from the entering of Hamath[5] unto the sea of the plain, according to the word of the LORD God of Israel, which he spake by the hand of his servant [g]Jonah, the son of Amittai, the prophet, which *was* of Gath-hepher.

26 For the LORD [h]saw the affliction of Israel, *that it was* very bitter: for *there was* not any shut up, nor any left,[6] nor any helper for Israel.

27 And the LORD said not that he would [i]blot out the name of Israel from under heaven: but he saved them by the hand of Jeroboam the son of Joash.[7]

28 ¶ Now [k]the rest of the acts of Jeroboam, and all that he did, and his might, how he warred, and how he recovered Damascus, and Hamath, *which belonged* to Judah, for [e]Israel, *are* they not written in the book of the Chronicles of the kings of Israel?

29 And Jeroboam slept with his [g]fathers, *even* with the kings of Israel; and Zachariah his [l]son reigned in his stead.

CHAPTER XV.

1 Azariah's good reign. 5 He dying a leper Jotham succeedeth. 8 Zachariah, the last of Jehu's generation, reigning ill, is slain by Shallum. 13 Shallum, reigning a month, is slain by Menahem. 16 Menahem strengtheneth himself by Pul. 21 Pekahiah succeedeth him. 23 Pekahiah is slain by Pekah. 27 Pekah is oppressed by Tiglath-pileser, and slain by Hoshea. 32 Jotham's good reign. 36 Ahaz succeedeth him.

IN the twenty and seventh year[1] of Jeroboam king of Israel began Azariah[2] son of Amaziah king of Judah to reign.

2 Sixteen[a] years old was he when he began to reign; and he reigned two and fifty years in Jerusalem: and his mother's name *was* Jecholiah of Jerusalem.

3 And he did *that which was* right in the sight of the LORD, according to all that his father Amaziah had done;[3]

4 Save that the [b]high places were not removed: the people sacrificed and burnt incense still on the high places.

5 ¶ And the LORD [c]smote[4] the king,[5] so that he was a leper unto the day of his death, and dwelt in a several house:[6] and Jotham the king's son *was* over the house, judging the people of the land.

6 And the [d]rest of the acts of Azariah, and all that he did, *are* they not written in the book of the Chronicles of the kings of Judah?

7 So Azariah slept with his fathers;[7] and

enemy by their mutual contentions. They who are least fond of war have ordinarily the best success in it: and they who govern ill raise discontents among their subjects, that issue in their ruin. But whatever refuge sinners flee to, it will be found incapable to protect them. God will take care that his providence shall exactly correspond with his purpose and word. Often indeed wicked persons, families, or nations are allowed a transient blaze of prosperity just before their final fall into lasting misery and ruin: but death and hell shall quickly overtake the most prosperous transgressors.

CHAPTER XV. [Ver. 19. It appears from the narrative that the kings of Israel had been accustomed to acknowledge in some form the supremacy of the rulers of Assyria. Menahem neglected to do so; and perhaps proceeded to a more overt act of defiance in capturing Tiphsah, on the very borders of Assyria. Thus provoked, the Assyrian monarch marched against Palestine, and the kingdom was saved only by the payment of an enormous ransom. *P.*]

REFLECTIONS.—Formality in religion, and imperfections in reformation, continue often from generation to generation: and even the best of periods are

they buried him with his fathers in the city of David: and Jotham his son reigned in his stead.

8 ¶ In the [e]thirty and eighth year[8] of Azariah king of Judah did Zachariah the son of Jeroboam reign over Israel in Samaria six months.

9 And he [f]did *that which was* evil in the sight of the LORD, as his fathers had done: he departed not from the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who made Israel to sin.

10 And Shallum the son of Jabesh conspired[9] against him, and [g]smote him before the people,[1] and slew him, and reigned in his stead.

11 And the rest of the acts of Zachariah, behold, they *are* written in the book of the Chronicles of the kings of Israel.

12 This *was* [h]the word of the LORD which he spake unto Jehu, saying, Thy sons shall sit on the throne of Israel unto the fourth *generation.* And so it came to pass.

13 ¶ Shallum the son of Jabesh began to reign in the nine and thirtieth year of Uzziah king of Judah; and he reigned [i]a full[2] month[3] in Samaria.

14 For Menahem the son of Gadi went up from [k]Tirzah, and came to [l]Samaria, and smote Shallum the son of Jabesh in Samaria, and slew him, and reigned in his stead.

15 And the rest of the acts of Shallum, and his conspiracy which he made, behold, they *are* written in the book of the Chronicles of the kings of Israel.

16 ¶ Then Manahem smote Tiphsah, and all that *were* therein, and the coasts thereof from Tirzah:[4] because they [m]opened not *to him,* therefore he smote *it; and* all the women therein that were with child he [n]ripped up.

17 ¶ In the nine and thirtieth year[5] of Azariah king of Judah began Menahem the son of Gadi to reign over Israel, *and reigned* ten years in Samaria.[6]

18 And [o]he did *that which was* evil in the sight of the LORD: he departed not all his days from the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who made Israel to sin.

19 ¶ *And* [p]Pul the king of Assyria[7] came[8] against the land: and Menahem gave Pul a thousand talents of silver,[9] that his hand might be with him to [q]confirm the kingdom in his hand.

20 And Menahem exacted[1] the money of Israel, *even* of all the mighty men of wealth, of each man fifty shekels of silver,[2] to give to the king of Assyria: so the king of Assyria turned back, and stayed not there in the land.

A.M. 3246. B.C. 758.

e There having been an interregnum of eleven years, ch. 14.29.

8 B.C. 773.

f ch.10.31; 13.2, 11; 14.24; 3.3. 1 Ki. 12.26-33; 15.26,34; 16.26.

9 B.C. 772.

g As prophesied, Am.7.9. Ho. 1.4. 1 Ki. 16.9. 2 Ch.21.20.ver.14, 25,30.

1 Not in public as a criminal, and with full consent and approbation of the people, to whom he had become obnoxious.—*C.*

h ch.10.30; 13.1, 10; 14.23,29. Tit.1.2. 2 Ti. 2.13. He.10.23. Nu.23. 19.

i 1 Ki. 16. 15. Ps. 55. 23. Pr.28.2.

2 Heb. *a month of days.*

3 An instructive example of the brief period allotted to the successful sinner.—*C.*

k 1 Ki. 14. 17; 15.21, 33; 16.8,9,15.

l 1 Ki. 16. 24, 28, 29. ch.13.1,9,10; ver.8,13.

4 We have no reason to believe that there were two cities of the name Tiphsah. The city here referred to was situated on the Euphrates, at a ford. It was called by the Greeks *Thapsacus.* The English version would here convey the impression that Tiphsah must have been near Tirzah, and consequently in the tribe of Ephraim; but the Hebrew may be rendered thus:—'Setting out from Tirzah Menahem smote Tiphsah,' &c.—*P.*

m Ju.8.5-17.

n ch.8.12. Am. 1.13. Ho.13.16.

5 B.C. 772.

6 So far as we learn from the record, he was more wicked than Shallum, yet Providence grants him a longer reign. Is this just? Rather, are we able to judge of Providence? We see what Shallum was; do we know what he might have become? God giveth account of none of his ways. Here we see that Menahem, who came to riches and power by domestic treason and cruelty, was soon plundered by a foreign invader.—*C.*

o 1 Ki. 12. 26-33; 13. 33; 15.26; 16.2,9. ch.3.3; ver.9,28.

p 1 Ch.5.26. De. 28. 25-52. Is.9.1.

7 By heathen authors called Pul Belochus. By aid of Arbaces the Mede he vanquished Sardanapalus, the last monarch of Assyria, and was the first king of Babylon and Assyria. As this was in the time of Jonah, ch. 14. 25, it has been conjectured that he was the unnamed monarch who repented at his preaching.—*C.*

8 B.C. 769.

9 About £342,185, 15*s.* sterling.

q ver.14; ch.14.5. Je. 17.5.

1 Heb. *caused to come forth.*

2 £5. 4*s.* [This was a poll-tax of about £6, 5*s.* a head to 60,000 of his subjects. It is the first instance, either in Israel or Judah, of money raised by taxation for a public object. In Judah, at least, such exigencies were met from the treasuries of the temple or the crown.—*J.*]

A.M. 3235. B.C. 769.

r 1 Ki. 14. 19, 20; 15. 31; 16.5,6,20,27,28; 22. 39,40. ch.1.18; 10.34,35; ver.11,15,26,31.

8 B.C. 761.

s Job 20. 5. 1 Ki. 15. 25; 16.8; 22.51. Pr.28.2.

t Is.7.1.2 Ch.28.6.

u 1 Ki.15.27; 16.9. ch. 9.14; ver.10,30.

4 B.C. 759.

5 It seems most probable, from the construction of the Hebrew, that Argob and Arieh were slain with the king, and that the fifty Gileadites were Pekah's assistants in the conspiracy. Boothroyd, however, thinks that Argob, Arieh, and the Gileadites were all agents in the conspiracy. Some think that Argob, Arieh, and the Gileadite guard of fifty, were all slain.—*Note,* From the difficulty of decision we learn that minute and accurate knowledge of such villanies, matters little. Sinners are the ignorant but willing instruments of divine justice in punishing one another.—*C.*

x ver.21.

y 1 Ki. 12. 26-33; 13. 33; 15.26; 16.2,9. ch.3.3; ver.9,18,24.

6 B.C.740.

z 2 Ch. 28. 16, 20. 1 Ch.5.26, with 1 Ki.15. 20. Le.26.25. De.xxviii. Is.i.-iv.vii.-ix.

7 The second word (Pileser) added to the original name is, according to Lorsbach's probable conjecture, equivalent to the Persian *balasar,* 'great and exalted prince,' from *bala,* high, exalted, and *sar,* chief, prince.—*J.*

8 The son of Pul. This is the first captivity, in which half the tribes were carried away as a warning to the rest.—*Note,* It is thus diseases invade the body and carry away health and vigour, and enjoyment, thus warning of the final captivity of death, if so be that men will 'lay it to heart,' and turn to the Lord.—*C.*

9 These towns were all situated in the north of Palestine, in the territory of Naphtali. Galilee was also at this early period the name of a small district in Naphtali. It is difficult to account for the name Gilead, except on the supposition that it too was the name of a territory in Naphtali. As there employed it can scarcely mean the country east of the Jordan.—*P.*

a ver.25.

1 B.C. 739.

2 He made the conspiracy in the twentieth of Jotham, and fourth of Ahaz, and held the government as a military chief, but was not crowned king till the twelfth of Ahaz, eight years after, ch.17.1.—*C.*

b After an anarchy of nine years, ch. 17. 1. Ho.10.3,7,15.

3 In the fourth year of Ahaz, in the twentieth year after Jotham had begun to reign.

4 From ver. 33 we learn that Jotham reigned but sixteen years; it is therefore clear that he must have reigned four years in subordination to his father, during the continuance of the malady described, ver. 5.—*C.*

5 Or Azariah, ch. 14.21.—*C.*

c 2 Ch.27.1,8. Mat.1. 9. 1 Ch.3.12.

d ver.3,4. 2 Ch.26.4, 5,27,28.

21 ¶ And[r] the rest of the acts of Menahem, and all that he did, *are* they not written in the book of the Chronicles of the kings of Israel?

22 And Menahem slept with his [3]fathers, and Pekahiah his son reigned in his stead.

23 ¶ In the fiftieth year of Azariah king of Judah Pekahiah the son of Menahem began to reign over Israel in Samaria, *and reigned* [s]two years.

24 And he did *that which was* evil in the sight of the LORD: he departed not from the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who made Israel to sin.

25 But [t]Pekah the son of Remaliah, a captain of his, [u]conspired[4] against him, and smote him in Samaria, in the palace of the king's house, with Argob and Arieh, and with him fifty men of the Gileadites:[5] and he killed him, and reigned in his room.

26 And[x] the rest of the acts of Pekahiah, and all that he did, behold, they *are* written in the book of the Chronicles of the kings of Israel.

27 ¶ In the two and fiftieth year of Azariah king of Judah, Pekah the son of Remaliah began to reign over Israel in Samaria, *and reigned* twenty years.

28 And[y] he did *that which was* evil in the sight of the LORD: he departed not from the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who made Israel to sin.

29 ¶ In the days of Pekah king of [6]Israel [z]came [7]Tiglath-pileser[8] king of Assyria, and took Ijon, and Abel-beth-maachah, and Janoah, and Kedesh, and Hazor,[9] and Gilead, and Galilee, all the land of Naphtali, and carried them captive to Assyria.

30 ¶ And Hoshea the son of Elah made a [a]conspiracy[1] against Pekah the son of Remaliah, and smote him, and slew him,[2] and reigned in his stead, [b]in the twentieth[3] year of [4]Jotham the son of Uzziah.[5]

31 And the rest of the acts of Pekah, and all that he did, behold, they *are* written in the book of the Chronicles of the kings of Israel.

32 ¶ In the second year of Pekah the son of Remaliah king of Israel began [c]Jotham the son of Uzziah king of Judah to reign.

33 Five and twenty years old was he when he began to reign; and he reigned sixteen years in Jerusalem: and his mother's name *was* Jerusha, the daughter of Zadok.

34 And[d] he did *that which was* right in the sight of the LORD: he did according to all that his father Uzziah had done.

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marked with some token of the Lord's displeasure. He abases them that walk in pride; and by one stroke of disease can make the mightiest monarchs loathsome to others, and a burden to themselves; and after all their glory, bring them with shame to the grave. For the transgression of a land, how many are the princes thereof! But few traitors and murderers die in their beds. Wicked men are generally fond of power; and in the worst of times will push themselves into it by perjury and murder, and to the perpetual hazard of their own life. And often the most cruel are the most cowardly. But what a mercy is it to enjoy religion, liberty, peace, and safety, under a mild government! By civil wars, by murders of princes, and by occasional ravages, God hurries wicked nations into lasting ruin. And often they who were most forward in securing their settlements, share with the first in desolating judgments. And no less frequently godly magistrates

CHURCH OF ST. JOHN, SAMARIA—WHERE THE KINGS OF ISRAEL ARE BURIED. [II. KINGS, xv: 17.]—"In the nine and thirtieth year of Azariah king of Judah began Menahem the son of Gadi to reign over Israel, and reigned ten years in Samaria." Samaria was a hill and city in Ephraim. It was the capital of the ten tribes of Israel, 42 miles north of Jerusalem. It was built 925 B. C. by Omri, the sixth king of Israel. Its inhabitants were carried away to Assyria by Shalmanezer in 720 B. C., and their place was supplied by persons from Babylon who brought their gods with them. It is six miles northwest of Shechem and nineteen miles east of the Mediterranean. Omri, Ahab, Ahaziah, Jehu, Jehoahaz, Joash, and some of the other kings of Israel were buried in Samaria. Elijah the prophet lived here. The church of Saint John was erected during the crusades between 1150 and 1180, over the traditional grave of John the Baptist.

35 Howbeit[e] the high places were not removed: the people sacrificed and burnt incense still in the high places. He built the higher gate of the house of the LORD.

36 ¶ Now[f] the rest of the acts of Jotham, and all that he did, *are* they not written in the book of the Chronicles of the kings of Judah?

37 (In those days[6] the [g]LORD began to send[7] against Judah Rezin the king of Syria, and Pekah the son of Remaliah.)

38 And Jotham slept with his fathers,[8] and was buried with his fathers in the city of David his father: and Ahaz his son reigned in his stead.

CHAPTER XVI.

1 Ahaz's wicked reign. 5 Ahaz, assailed by Rezin and Pekah, hireth Tiglath-pileser against them. 10 Ahaz, sending a pattern of an altar from Damascus to Urijah, diverteth the brazen altar to his own devotion. 17 He spoileth the temple of its ornaments. 19 Hezekiah succeedeth him.

IN the seventeenth year of Pekah the son of Remaliah, Ahaz the son of Jotham king of Judah began to reign.

2 Twenty[a] years old *was* Ahaz[1] when he began to reign, and reigned sixteen years in Jerusalem, and did not *that which was* right in the sight of the LORD his God, like David his father.

3 But he walked in the way of the kings of Israel, yea, and made his son to pass through the fire,[2] according to the abominations of the heathen, whom the LORD cast out from before the children of Israel.

4 And he sacrificed and burnt incense in the high places, and on the hills, and under every green tree.[3]

5 ¶ Then[b] Rezin king of Syria, and Pekah son of Remaliah king of Israel, came up to Jerusalem to war: and they besieged Ahaz, but could not overcome *him*.

6 At that time Rezin king of Syria recovered Elath[c] to Syria, and drave the Jews[4] from Elath: and the Syrians came to Elath, and dwelt there unto this day.[5]

7 ¶ So Ahaz sent messengers to [d]Tiglath-pileser king of Assyria, saying, I *am* thy servant and thy son: come up, and save me out of the hand of the king of Syria, and out of the hand of the king of Israel, which rise up against me.

8 And [e]Ahaz took the silver and gold *that was* found in the house of the LORD, and in the treasures of the king's house, and sent *it for* a present to the king of Assyria.[6]

9 And the king of Assyria hearkened unto him: for the king of Assyria [f]went up against Damascus, and took it, and carried *the people of* it captive to [g]Kir,[7] and slew Rezin.

A.M. 3265. B.C. 739.

c ver.4;ch.12.3;14.4. 1 Ki.15.14; 22.43. 2 Ch. 27.2.

f ver.6,7. 1 Ki.11.41, 43; 14.29.31.ch.8.23,24; 12.19.2 Ch.27.7.

6 At the end of Jotham's reign.

g Is.7.1; 9.21. Ho.5. 12,14. Am.4.13. 2 Ch. 28.6.ch.16,5.

7 Does God *send* wicked men to effect his purposes? Yes. They go for their own wicked purposes of covetousness or ambition; God sends them by means of these very propensities to execute his judgments.—*C.*

8 B.C. 742.

CHAP. XVI.

a 2 Ch. 28. 1-4. 1 Ki. 11.4-8; 15.3; 12.28-33; 13.33; 16.25-33. Le.18. 21. De.12.2. Ps.106.37.

1 See note on ch. 18.2.—*C.*

2 Imitating the horrible sacrifices of Canaan, De. 12. 31, in which he actually burned his children, 2 Ch. 28. 3; though this was expressly enumerated as one of the sins on account of which God cast out the Canaanites. —*C.*

3 Not every green tree throughout the land, but every green tree where he paused to worship — most probably the *sykan latifes* of heathenism, to whom trees were dedicated.—*C.*

b Is.7.1-9,14; 8.9,10; 9.6,7. 2 Ch.28.5-15.ch. 15.37.1 Ki.11.36.

c ch.14.22. De.2.8. 1 Ki.9.26.2 Ch.26.2.

4 The first time they are so named—it signifies the *Judæans*, of which it is an abbreviation. They were now so called to distinguish the people of Judea from the ten tribes of Israel who had revolted with Jeroboam.—*C.*

5 A large number of ancient manuscripts, with the Septuagint and Vulgate versions, read *Edomites* instead of *Syrians* or *Aramæans*. The difference between the two words in the original is very slight. I prefer the reading Edomites. *P.* ——Instead of 'Syrians,' in the second clause of this verse, the marginal Masoretic reading has 'Edomites,' which is also found in many MSS., and in the Sept. and Vulg. That this is the correct reading can scarceiy be doubted, and in that case we must follow Le Clerc and Houbigant in reading in the *first* clause 'to Edom,' instead of 'to Syria.' Though there is no critical evidence for this, historical consideration seems to require it, for Elath had never belonged to Syria.—*I.*

d ch. 15. 29. 1 Ch. 5. 26. 2 Ch.28.16,20. Is.7. 17,18. Je.17.5.

e 1 Ki. 15. 18-20. ch. 12.17,18.2 Ch.28.21.

6 B.C. 740.

f 2 Ch.28.5. Mat.7.2. Ju.1.7. Ps.7.15,16.

g Is. 22. 6. Am. 9. 7, *i.e.* Media.

7 The position of Kir is uncertain. The most probable view is that it was a district of Media, called by the Greeks *Kyrsa*, and situated beside Elam.—*P.*

A.M. 3264. B.C. 740.

h 2 Ch. 28.20. Je.17. 5.

f Ge. 3. 6. Jos. 7. 21, Ec.2.14;11.9.

8 This was some idolatrous altar, the shape and workmanship of which pleased Ahaz so much that he determined to have one like it at Jerusalem. For this he had no divine authority; and the compliance of Urijah was both mean and sinful. That Ahaz did this for an idolatrous purpose is evident from 2 Ch.28.21-25.—*I.*

k Is. 8. 2. Mal. 2. 7. Ho.7.7; 4.6. 2 Ti.4.10. Ga.1.10.

9 Ahaz would foolishly ornament and enrich the temple to please his own fancy, and soon after, ver. 17,18, he is compelled to disfigure and rob the temple to satisfy the fancy of his heathen auxiliary.—*C.*

l 2 Ch. 28. 23; 26. 16-19.2 Ti.3.13.

m Le.i.-iii.

1 Heb. *which* were *his*.

n 2 Ch.4.1. Ex. 40.6, 29.

2 He seems to have intended to conform every thing in the Lord's house as much as possible to the idolatrous temples which he saw at Damascus, and to model the divine worship in the same way; in a word, to honour and worship the gods of Syria, and not the God of heaven and earth.—*I.*

3 Which Urijah had made.

o Newly-made, Ex. 29.39,40. Eze.43.8. Ps. 106.39.

p Is.2.6. Ho. 4. 12, a means of divination.

4 For myself to worship at. *C.*—— 'And the brazen altar (*i.e.* the original altar of the temple) shall be for me to consider about;' *i.e.* the king had not yet resolved what was to be done with it. He reserved that for future consideration. The original conveys no idea of worship or offering at it on the part of the king.—*P.*

q Ac.5.29;4.19.1 Th. 2.4.Ga.1.10.Jude 11.

r 1 Ki.7.23,25,27,28.

5 Probably a shade where the royal family attended at public worship in the court of the temple.

6 It would appear to have been a royal seat, covered with a canopy, in which the king and his family sat on the Sabbath. During most part of the worship of the Sabbath the Jews still sit, in emblem of rest—a practice most probably derived from the earliest times.—*C.*

7 Ahaz had little cause to congratulate himself on his policy, the result of which, in reference to Judah, was similar to the result of the *protection* afforded to the Britons by the Saxons. 'Instead of two petty princes whom he had before for his neighbours, and with either of whom he was able to cope; he had now for his neighbour this mighty king' (*Prideaux*).—*I.*

s ch.15.6,7,36,38:20, 21, 22;21.17, 18, 25; 23. 28;24.5.

CHAP. XVII.

B.C. 730.

a After an interregnum of nine years. ch.15.30;18.9. Ho.10.5, -.15;8.4;13.10,11.

10 ¶ And king Ahaz went to Damascus [h]to meet Tiglath-pileser king of Assyria, and [i]saw an altar[8] that *was* at Damascus: and king Ahaz sent to Urijah the priest the fashion of the altar, and the pattern of it, according to all the workmanship thereof.

11 And [k]Urijah the priest built an altar according to all that king Ahaz had sent from Damascus: so Urijah the priest made *it* against king Ahaz[9] came from Damascus.

12 And when the king was come from Damascus, [l]the king saw the altar: and the king approached to the altar, and offered thereon.

13 And [m]he burnt his burnt-offering and his meat-offering, and poured his drink-offering, and sprinkled the blood of his[1] peace-offerings, upon the altar.

14 And he brought also [n]the brazen altar, which *was* before the LORD, from the forefront of the house, from between the altar and the house of the LORD, and put it on the north[2] side of the altar.[3]

15 And king Ahaz commanded Urijah the priest, saying, Upon the [o]great altar burn the morning burnt-offering, and the evening meat-offering, and the king's burnt-sacrifice, and his meat-offering, with the burnt-offering of all the people of the land, and their meat-offering, and their drink-offerings; and sprinkle upon it all the blood of the burnt-offering, and all the blood of the sacrifice: and the brazen altar shall be for me to [p]inquire *by*.[4]

16 Thus did Urijah the priest, [q]according to all that king Ahaz commanded.

17 ¶ And king Ahaz [r]cut off the borders of the bases, and removed the laver from off them; and took down the sea from off the brazen oxen that *were* under it, and put it upon a pavement of stones:

18 And the covert[5] for the sabbath[6] that they had built in the house, and the king's entry without, turned he from the house of the LORD for the king of Assyria.[7]

19 ¶ Now[s] the rest of the acts of Ahaz which he did, *are* they not written in the book of the Chronicles of the kings of Judah?

20 And Ahaz slept with his fathers, and was buried with his fathers in the city of David: and Hezekiah his son reigned in his stead.

CHAPTER XVII.

1 Hoshea's wicked reign. 3 Being subdued by Shalmaneser, he conspireth against him with So king of Egypt. 5 Samaria for their sins is carried captive. 24 The strange nations, which were transplanted in Samaria, being plagued with lions, make a mixture of religions.

IN the twelfth year of Ahaz king of Judah began [a]Hoshea the son of Elah to reign in Samaria over Israel nine years.

2 And he did *that which was* evil in the

and ministers are taken away from the evil to come, just when the storm is gathering against hypocritical professors.

CHAPTER XVI. REFLECTIONS. — What monsters of children have some of the best of saints! Grace must be infused by God, not conveyed by parents. Who can know the desperate wickedness of the human heart if left to itself? It can extinguish natural affections and turn men into monsters: it can make them

CHURCH OF SAINT JOHN, SAMARIA—WHERE HOSHEA REIGNED OVER ISRAEL NINE YEARS. [II. KINGS, xvii: 1.] –"In the twelfth year of Ahaz king of Judah began Hoshea the son of Elah to reign in Samaria over Israel nine years. And he did that which was evil in the sight of the Lord." We learn from I. Kings, xvi: 23, 24, that the hill upon which Samaria was situated, was bought from Shemer by King Omri. Before the purchase of the hill by Omri, Tirzah had been the capital of Israel and before Tirzah, Shechem had been the capital. Jeroboam transferred his royal residence to Tirzah, as we learn from Solomon's Song, vi: 4, and I. Kings, xiv: 17, and because of the fertility of the soil about Samaria, Omri was led to purchase it. The Church of Saint John was erected between the years 1150 and 1180, over the traditional grave of Saint John the Baptist. It is now a complete ruin, and was when this picture was taken, being torn down to make room for a mosque.

sight of the LORD, [b]but not as the kings of Israel that were before him.[1]

3 ¶ Against him came up [2]Shalmaneser [c]king of Assyria; and Hoshea became his servant, and gave[3] him presents.[4]

4 And the king of Assyria found [d]conspiracy in Hoshea: for he had sent messengers to So[5] king of Egypt, and brought no present to the king of Assyria, as *he had done* year by year: therefore the king of Assyria shut him up, and bound[e] him in prison.

5 ¶ Then [f]the king of Assyria came up throughout all the land, and went up to Samaria, and besieged it three years.

6 In[g] the ninth year of Hoshea the king of Assyria took Samaria, and carried Israel[6] away into Assyria, and placed them in Halah and in Habor *by* the river of Gozan, and in the cities of the [h]Medes.

7 For *so* it was, [i]that the children of Israel had sinned against the LORD their God, which had[k] brought them up out of the land of Egypt, from under the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt, and had feared other gods,

8 And [l]walked in the statutes of the heathen, (whom the LORD cast out from before the children of Israel,) and of the kings of Israel, which they had made.[7]

9 And the children of Israel did [m]secretly *those* things that *were* not right against the LORD their God, and they built them high places in all their cities, [n]from the tower of the watchmen to the fenced city.[8]

10 And they [o]set them up images and groves[9] in every high hill, and under every green tree:

11 And there they burnt incense in all the high places, as *did* the heathen whom the LORD carried away before them; and wrought wicked things to provoke the LORD to anger:

12 For they served idols, [p]whereof the LORD had said unto them, Ye shall not do this thing.

13 Yet the LORD testified against Israel, and against Judah, [q]by all[1] the prophets, *and by* all the seers,[2] saying, Turn ye from your evil ways, and keep my commandments *and* my statutes, according to all the law which I commanded your fathers, and which I sent to you by my servants the prophets.

14 Notwithstanding they would not hear, but [r]hardened their necks, like to the neck of their fathers, that did not believe in the LORD their God.

15 And they rejected his statutes, and his covenant that he made with their fathers, and his testimonies which he [s]testified against them; and [t]they followed vanity, and became vain,[3] and went after the heathen that *were* round about them, *concerning* whom the LORD had charged them, that they should not do like them.

16 And they left all the commandments of the LORD their God, and [u]made them molten images, *even* two calves, and made a grove,[4] and worshipped all the host of heaven, and served Baal.

17 And they caused their sons and their daughters to pass through the fire,[5] and used [x]divination and enchantments, and [y]sold themselves to do evil in the sight of the LORD, to provoke him to anger.

18 Therefore the LORD was very angry with Israel, and removed them [z]out of his [6]sight: there was none left but [a]the tribe of Judah only.

19 Also [b]Judah kept not the commandments of the LORD their God, but walked in the statutes of Israel which they made.

20 And the LORD rejected all the seed of Israel, and afflicted them, and delivered them into the hand of [c]spoilers, until he had cast them out of his sight.

21 For he [d]rent Israel from the house of David; and they made Jeroboam the son of Nebat king: and Jeroboam drave Israel from following the LORD, and made them sin a great sin:

A.M. 3283. B.C. 721.

b ch.3.2, with 10,31; 13.2,11.15,9,18,24.

1 He did not proceed to the same extent in idolatry and wickedness.—*C.*

2 Some conceive him to be Tiglath-pileser, 1 Ch. 5. 26, others take him to be his son. The ancient Hebrew writers think him the same as Sennacherib. But we are mainly concerned with the act of judgment inflicted on an idolatrous people, rather than with the man who inflicted it.—*C.*

c ch. 15. 19, 29; 16. 7; 18.13; 19. 36. Ho. 5. 13; 12.1.

3 Heb. *rendered.*

4 Or, *tribute.*

d ch.24. 20. Eze. 17. 13–15. Ho.12.1.

5 The Sua, Sabachon, or Sabachus of heathen historians.—*C.*

e 2 Ch.33.11. Ps.149.

f ch.18.9. Le. 26. 17, 25,31. De.4.26;8.19; 28. 49–57, Is. 7. 18–20; 8.7; 10.5,6; 37. 3–5. Mi.1.5–7. Am.iii.–ix., with Ex. 34.24.

g ch.18. 10, 11. 1 Ch. 5.26. Le.26.32. Ho.1.6, 9. De.4.27,28;28.25,36, 41,64, 65. Am. 3.11,12; 5.27.

6 Not only the people of Samaria, but all the ten tribes, Jos. *Ant.* l.ix.sec.1. Thus ended the idolatrous kingdom of Israel, after 254 years of warnings, judgments, and neglected mercies.—*C.*

h ch.16. 9. Ge. 10. 2. Is.13.17; 21.2; 22.6. Je. 51.27,28.

i De.32.15–21;31.16; 4.25;8.19. Le.18.26–28. Ju. i.–xxi. 1 Ki. xi.–xxii. ch. i.–xv. Ho. i.–xiii. Am. ii.–ix. Mi. i.–iii.

k Ex.i.–xiv.

l Le.18. 3, 26, 30; 20. 23; 26.3. 1 Ki. 12.28–33; 16. 25, 30–33. Mi. 6. 16.

7 Statutes which the idolatrous kings of Israel, and not God, had made.—*C.*

m Eze.8.12. 1 Pe. 2. 16.Re.17.4.

n i.e. through the whole country, ch.18. 8. Je.3.2. Eze.7.23;9.9.

8 From the watch-tower in gardens to the fortified city—in town and country.—*C.*

o Ex.34.13. Le.26.1; 18 27,28. Ju. 2.11–19;iii. –xix. De.29.25–28. Ho. iv.–xiii. Am.4.4,5; 5.5, 26. Mi.1.5–7. 1 Ki. xi.–xxii.ch.i.–xv.

p De.5.7,8;4.19; 12.2 –4. Ex.20.3,4,23; 23.24; 34.12–16. Le.26.1. Jos. 24.14,20.1 Sa. 12.21.

9 *Asherah*, when the context requires it, is translated *grove;* but frequently it is applied to the emblems of the Phœnician Venus. So it must be taken here, as a 'grove' under "every green tree' is unintelligible.—*C.*

A.M. 3283. B.C. 721.

q Je.18.11;25.5;26.4, 5;44.4;35 15. Ho.14.1;[1] –xiv. Ec.26.18. 1.1 Sa ii. iii. vii. xii. Jos. 23. 7. 1 Ki.11.9–11,31–38; 13.1, 2; 14. 7–15; 16. 1–4. xvii. xxi. Mi. i.–viii. Am. ii. ix. Joel 1 iii. Is. i.–xxxii.xxxiv.

1 Heb. *by the hand of all.*

2 All the prophets of those days. Hosea, Amos, Micah, whose prophecies remain; and, no doubt, many of their contemporaries, whose words, like those of many of our Lord's apostles, were not committed to writing.—*C.*

r De.31.27; 1. 32.32. 15–21; 29.18,19,25,26. 1 Ki. 9. 6–9. 2 Ch. 30. 13. Pr.29.1. Is. 48. 4. Je. 7. 26,Ps.78.22,32;106.24.

s Ne.9.26, 29. Je. 44. 4.2 Ch.36.15.

t 1 Ki. 16. 13. Ro. 1. 21. Jonah 2.8. Je. 2.13. ver.7,10,12.

3 This is a statement worthy of special note:—*They went after vanity, and became vain.* Everything which man sets before him as the object of life, except God's glory, is *vain.* It is idolatry; it draws the mind away from God. It prevents man from preparing for his eternal home. It fills man with vain thoughts, vain aspirations, and vain hopes.—*P.*

u Ex. 32. 8. 1 Ki. 12. 28;14.15,23;15.13; 16.31 –33. De.4.19. ch.11.28. Je.8.2.

4 See note on ver. 10.—*C.*

5 See note on ch. 16.3.—*C.*

x Is.8.19; 2. 6. Mi. 5. 12.

y 1 Ki. 21. 20, 25. Is. 50.1.

z De.32.21–28; 29.20 –28;11.12;4.25 27;8.19, 26. 28. 25, 36, 41. 48–68. Le. 26. 17, 25, 28–39. 1 Sa. 12. 25. 1 Ki. 9. 6–9; 14.15. Ho.9.3.

6 Out of the sight of his temple and sacrifices, by which their covenant God looked upon them.—*C.*

a Ho.11.12. 1 Ki.11. 13,36.

b Je. 3. 8. Ho. 4. 15. Eze.viii.xiv.–xvi. xxii. –xxiv. Is. i.–iii. v. ix. xxiv.lvi.lix. Je.ii.–xvii. Zep.i.–iii. ch. viii. xvi. xxi.xxiv.

c ch.13.3,7; 15.19,20, 29; 18.9. 2 Ch. 28. 5; 33. 11. De.32.30.

d 1 Ki. 11. 11, 31; 12. 19,20. Ho.8.4;13.10,11. 1 Sa.viii.

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rush headlong into the very sins which ruined their neighbours before their eyes. In the day of distress sinners are bent upon turning themselves every way for relief, but from God alone can they have it. They will stick at nothing slavish, dishonest, or shameful, to obtain that from men which they might have from him in the most honourable manner. Yea, they will choose those very idols for saviours whose insufficiency to save has been manifested as with a sunbeam. What a plague to princes are those ministers who flatter them in their impiety, and readily comply therewith! And the most abandoned profligates are often very fond of that devotion which themselves have devised.

CHAPTER XVII. [Ver. 6. The Israelites when taken captive were settled 'in Halah, and in Habor, the river of Gozan, and in the cities of the Medes.' Gozan was a province of Mesopotamia, called by Ptolemy *Gausanitis.* It lay along the southern base of Mount Masius, and embraced the regions watered by the upper Khabûr and Jerujer rivers, to the ranges of Sinjar and Hamma. The province of *Halah* lay along the banks of the upper Khabûr, extending from its source at Ras el-Ain, to its junction with the Jerujer. One of the mounds on the bank of this river, marking the site of an ancient city, bears the name of *Kalah.* '*Habor*, the river of Gozan,' is identical with the modern Khabûr, which rises in lat. 36° 40′, lon. 40°, and flows eastward to its junction with the Jerujer. The united streams form the lower Khabûr. It is a remarkable fact that down as late as the 12th century there were large Jewish communities dwelling on the banks of the Khabûr. *P.*]

Ver. 16. [The word rendered 'grove' in this verse and verse 10 is *Ashara*, and is generally the proper name of the Phœnician goddess *Astarte*, sometimes called Ashtoreth, the companion and consort of Baal. But the word is also frequently employed to signify the *image* of the goddess (in the plural *images*), which was set up either in a temple or on some sacred hill. The meaning *grove*, which has been adopted from the Septuagint and Vulgate versions, is altogether unsuitable here. The signification is 'an image of Astarte.' *P.*]

Ver. 17. [*Divination.* Various pretended methods of prying into futurity, such as an examination of the entrails of sacrificed animals, the flight of birds, palmistry.—*Enchantments.* The various impostures in which the eyes are deceived by great dexterity, or the mind subdued by the wonderful effects produced by the concealed knowledge of natural causes, also various pretended secret means of acquiring affection or inflicting revenge.—*Sold themselves to do evil.* These pretended arts were, and even in Christian lands still are, practised for money, especially by the people called Gipsies, whom happily, at last, Christian care is beginning to reach and settle in fixed habitations and useful employments. *C.*——*Sold themselves.* We find the same kind of expression in Ro. 7. 14: 'I am carnal, *sold* under sin.' Now the Hebrew and Greek words in these places signify primarily 'to sell;' but according to the idiom of these languages, a man who gave himself up to any course of action, or to any form of sin, was said *to sell himself.* But the English word *to sell* can have no such latitude of meaning. The proper rendering therefore would be, 'they gave themselves up to do evil.' *P.*]

Ver. 29. [It has been generally supposed that the Samaritans were a mixed race of Jews and Gentiles. Such was not the case. They were wholly of Gentile origin. Strangers in blood, they were merely instructed in some of the leading points of the Jewish religion, which they observed while they retained their own national deities. They received the Pentateuch as their revelation; and their reverence for this sacred book eventually led them to renounce their idolatry. In after-times the Jews refused to acknowledge them in any way, and would not permit them to assist in building the second temple. Being cast off by the

22 For the children of [c]Israel walked in all the sins of Jeroboam which he did; they departed not from them;

23 Until the LORD removed Israel out of his sight, as he had said by [f]all his servants the prophets. So was Israel carried away out of their own land to Assyria unto this day.

24 ¶ And the king of Assyria brought[7] *men* from[g] Babylon, and from Cuthah, and from Ava, and from Hamath, and from Sepharvaim, and placed *them* in the cities of Samaria instead of[h] the children of Israel; and they possessed Samaria, and dwelt in the cities thereof.

25 And *so* it was, at the beginning of their dwelling there, *that* [i]they feared not the LORD: therefore the LORD sent [k]lions[8] among them, which slew *some* of them.[9]

26 Wherefore they spake to the king of Assyria, saying, The nations which thou hast removed, and placed in the cities of Samaria, know not the manner of the God of the land: therefore he hath sent lions among them, and, behold, they slay them; because they know not the manner of the God of the land.

27 Then the king of Assyria commanded, saying, Carry thither one of the [l]priests whom ye brought from thence; and let them go and dwell there, and let him teach them the manner of the God of the land.[1]

28 Then one of the priests, whom they had carried away from Samaria, came and dwelt in Beth-el,[m] and taught them how they should fear the LORD.

29 Howbeit every nation [n]made gods of their own, and put *them* in the houses of the high places which the [o]Samaritans had made, every nation in their cities wherein they dwelt.

30 And[p] the men of Babylon made Succoth-benoth,[2] and the men of Cuth made Nergal, and the men of Hamath made Ashima,[3]

31 And the Avites made Nibhaz and Tartak, and the Sepharvites burnt their children in fire to Adrammelech and Anammelech,[4] the gods of Sepharvaim.

32 So they [q]feared the LORD,[5] and made unto themselves of the [r]lowest of them priests of the high places, which sacrificed for them in the houses of the high places.

33 They feared the LORD, and served their own gods, after the manner of the nations whom they carried away from thence.[6]

34 Unto this day they do after [s]the former manners: they fear not the LORD, neither do they after their statutes, or after their ordinances, or after the law and commandment which the LORD commanded the children of Jacob, [t]whom he named Israel;

35 With whom the LORD had [u]made a covenant, and charged them, saying, Ye shall not fear other gods, nor bow yourselves to them, nor serve them, nor sacrifice to them:

36 But the LORD, [x]who brought you up out of the land of Egypt with great power, and a stretched-out arm, him shall ye [y]fear, and him shall ye worship, and to him shall ye do sacrifice.

37 And[z] the statutes, and the ordinances, and the law, and the commandment, which he wrote for you, ye shall observe to do for evermore; and [a]ye shall not fear other gods.

38 And the covenant that I have made with you ye shall not forget; neither shall ye fear other gods.

39 But the LORD your God ye shall fear; and he shall deliver you out of the hand of all your enemies.

40 Howbeit [b]they did not hearken, but they did after their former manner.

41 So these nations [c]feared the LORD,[7] and served their graven images, both their children, and their children's children: as did their fathers, so do they unto this day.[8]

A.M. 3283. B.C. 721.

c Ho.5.11. Mi.6.16. 1 Ki.15.26, 34; 16.7, 13, 19, 25, 26, 30–33. ch.3.3; 10.29, 31; 13.2, 11; 14.24; 15.9, 18, 24, 28.

f 1 Ki.13.32; 14.15, 16; 9.6–9. ch.8.12. Ho.1.4–9. Am.5.27. Mi.1.6. ver. 5, 6, 13, 18.

7 B.C. 678.

g Ezr.4.2, 9, 10. ver. 30, 31. ch.18. 34; 19.12, 13.

h Ge. 47.21. ver. 6. Mat.10.5.

i 1 Sa.29.13. Mat.15.8. Ep.2.21.

k 1 Ki.13.24; 20.36. ch.2.24. Je.15.3; 16.4. Is.15.9.

8 This influx of lions would naturally, as men speak, arise from the depopulated state of the country, which presented an inviting residence; but God, who rules over all things, declares they were *sent* as a judgment.—*C.*

9 Those parts of Syria and Palestine which are now left without inhabitants—such as the heights of Lebanon and Hermon, the jungles of the Jordan valley, the woods and marshes of Bashan and Gilead, and even the desolate ruins of Caesarea and Ascalon—are infested with bears, panthers, wolves, wild swine, jackals, and hyenas.—*P.*

l Ju.17.13. 1 Ki.12.31. *c* Ch.11.13. Ro.16.18.

1 The heathen all believed, and still do believe, in local and tutelary gods; nay, in gods opposing one another in favour of one place, and seeking or effecting the destruction of another. Accordingly, the king of Assyria does not deny the deity of Jehovah, but sends a priest to propitiate him by sacrifice, and instruct the people in the rites of his worship, not believing him to be alone God, but admitting him as the local and tutelary God of Palestine.—*C.*

m 1 Ki.12.29, 32. Am. 7.13; 4.4; 5.5. Ge. 12.8. Jos.8.9.

n ver.30, 31. Ro.1.23. 1 Co.8.5. Is.44.9–20. Ps. 115.4–8. Mi.4.5.

o Mat.10.5. Lu.9.52. Jn.4.9.

p ver.24; ch.18.34.

2 'Tents of the daughters,' for the licentious worship of the Babylonian Mylitta, to whom, according to Herodotus, prostitution was an acceptable service. Such was, such is, heathenism.—*C.*

3 Nergal, Ashima, Nibhaz, Tartak. Nothing certain is known but the names of these abominations; but conjoined with what is known of others, the impure nature of their worship may be certainly inferred.—*C.*

4 Molech under two names, the first signifying 'mighty, illustrious,' the second most probably the 'answerer.'—*C.*

q Zep.1.5. Is.29.13.

r 1 Ki.12.31; 13.33.

5 Not with the *filial fear* which arises from the knowledge of God's mercy, Ps. 130.4; but with *slavish fear*, which arises from a feeling of his judgments. Thus they *feared* Jehovah, but *served* their false gods, ver. 33.—*C.*

v Or, *who carried them away from thence.*

s De.28.64. ver.8, 12, 16, 17, 41.

t Ge.32.28; 35.10. 1 Ki.18.31.

u Ge.17.1, 7. Ex.19.5, 6; 20.3, 4, 23; 23.32; 34.12–16. Ju.6.10. ver.12.

x 1 Ki.8.9. Ex.6.6; vii.–xiv. Ne.9.10, 11. De.5.15. Je.32.21.

y De.6.13; 10.12. Le. 19.32. Ju.3.7; 6.3, 4, 7, 8.

z Ex.xx.–xxiv. Le.i.–xxvii. Nu.iv.–vii. viii. ix. xv. xviii. xix. xxviii. –xxx. xxxv. De. iv.–xxvii.

a ver.12. Le. xxvi. De. iv. v.–xvii. xxvi.–xxix. 1 Ki.9.4–9. 2 Ch. xiv. xv.

b ver.14. 2 Ch.36.16.

c ver.25, 32. Zep.1.5. Jos.24.19. Re.3.15, 16.

7 These nations formed the people afterwards called Samaritans. When Cyrus permitted the Jews to return, these mixed and commingled people wished to join with Zerubbabel in building the temple, and his refusal, together with the heathenism the Samaritans still retained, laid the foundations of that national enmity which subsisted in the time of our Lord, and only ceased when Jews and Samaritans were alike swept from the land they had defiled.—*C.*

8 B.C. 450.

CHAP. XVIII.

B.C. 726.

a 2 Ch.28.27; 29.1. 1 Ch.3.13. Mat.1.9, 10.

1 Ahaz is said, ch. 16. 2, to have lived 36, and if Hezekiah ascends the throne at 25, he must have been born when his father was but 11 years of age. Calculating, however, that Ahaz was 20 complete, and nearly 21 when he came to the throne, and that though he reigned but 16 complete, he had reigned nearly 17 years, then Ahaz might be 13 years complete at the birth of Hezekiah, an age of which the early marriages of the East remove the difficulty.—*C.*

2 Most probably the pious man who exercised such happy influence in the days of Uzziah, 2 Ch.26.5, and whose pious daughter might preserve her son from the idolatry of his father Ahaz.—*Note.* All history attests the incalculable blessing of a pious mother. 'A woman that feareth the Lord, she shall be praised,' and her acts shall be read in the life and prosperity of her children.—*C.*

b 1 Ki.15.5, 11; 22.43. ch.20.3. 2 Ch.xvii.xix.

c De.7.5. 1 Ki.15.12, 14. ch.23.4–20.

A.M. 3326. B.C. 678.

CHAPTER XVIII.

1 *Hezekiah's good reign.* 4 *He aboliseth idolatry, and prospereth.* 9 *Samaria is carried captive for their sins.* 13 *Sennacherib invading Judah is pacified by a tribute.* 17 *Rabshakeh, sent by Sennacherib again, revileth Hezekiah, and by blasphemous persuasions soliciteth the people to revolt.*

NOW it came to pass in the third year of Hoshea son of Elah king of Israel, *that* [a]Hezekiah the son of Ahaz king of Judah began to reign.

2 Twenty and five years old[1] was he when he began to reign; and he reigned twenty and nine years in Jerusalem: his mother's name also *was* Abi, the daughter of Zachariah.[2]

3 And he did *that which was* right in the sight of the LORD, [b]according to all that David his father did.

4 ¶ He [c]removed the high places, and brake

Jews, the Samaritans erected a temple of their own on Mount Gerizim about the year B.C. 420. Shechem became the metropolis of the sect, and was for a time an asylum for all apostate Jews. Enmity was thus fostered between Jews and Samaritans, which has survived the lapse of ages, and is at this day almost as strong as ever. *P.*]

REFLECTIONS.—God tries men with lesser judgments before he strikes the final blow. But such as continue selling themselves to the service of sin will at last share its wages in ruin. How wisely God times his tremendous judgments!—In the days of a king better than his fellows, and even by his treachery to a tyrant, the nation is plunged into misery and ruin.

What an exact account God keeps of men's sin and every aggravation of it! He marks against what mercies, warnings, and judgments it has been committed; and in what different forms: and what influence it has had in the seduction of others. And certain, however slow, is the destruction of apostates from God; and even at distant periods God is preparing for it. Great is the instability of earthly settlements: and who knows whither the Lord may toss us in life? Yet men carry their sins closely with them, go where they will. And easily can God punish those who pollute what belongs to him with their wickedness. Lions and all other creatures are at his call. Satan and men's lusts often quit a part that they may not be obliged to give up their whole power and honour. But no external instructions, warnings, mercies, or judgments will reform sinners from the false or medley religions which themselves have invented. While the religion of Jesus scarcely continues pure for an age, the religion of the devil can flourish with most for many ages together.

CHAPTER XVIII. REFLECTIONS.—God never makes a full end of his people, however sinful; but provides them relief in one part of the world when he almost extirpates them in another. Nay, in the darkest times he can raise up the most burning and shining lights. His grace can enable them to overcome the strongest obstacles, and to persevere to the end. Never, therefore, need they fear who boldly trust on God in the path of duty. No length of custom can ever consecrate an evil practice. If our parents have

the images,[3] and cut down the groves, and brake in pieces the [d]brazen serpent that Moses had made: for unto those days the children of Israel did burn incense to it: and he called it Nehushtan.[4]

5 He [e]trusted in the LORD God of Israel; so that after him was [f]none like him among all the kings of Judah, nor *any* that were before him.

6 For he [g]clave to the LORD, *and* departed not from following him,[5] but kept his commandments, which the LORD commanded Moses.

7 And the LORD was [h]with him; *and* he prospered whithersoever he went forth: and he rebelled[i] against the king of Assyria,[6] and served him not.

8 He [k]smote the Philistines, *even* unto Gaza,[7] and the borders thereof, [l]from the tower of the watchmen to the fenced city.[8]

9 ¶ And [m]it came to pass in the fourth year[9] of king Hezekiah, which *was* the seventh year of Hoshea son of Elah king of Israel, *that* Shalmaneser king of Assyria came up against Samaria, and besieged it.

10 And at the [n]end of three years they took it; *even* in the sixth year of Hezekiah, (that *is*, the ninth year of Hoshea king of Israel,) Samaria was taken.

11 And the king of Assyria did carry away Israel unto Assyria, and [o]put them in Halah and in Habor *by* the river of Gozan, and in the cities of the Medes;

12 Because[p] they obeyed not the voice of the LORD their God, but transgressed his covenant, *and* all that Moses the servant of the LORD commanded, and would not hear *them*, nor do *them*.[1]

13 ¶ Now [q]in the fourteenth year of king Hezekiah did Sennacherib[2] king of Assyria come[3] up against all the fenced cities of Judah, and took them.[4]

14 And Hezekiah king of Judah sent to the king of Assyria to Lachish, saying, [r]I have offended; return from me: that which thou puttest on me will I bear. And the king of Assyria appointed unto Hezekiah king of Judah three hundred talents of silver, and thirty talents of gold.[5]

15 And Hezekiah [s]gave *him* all the silver *that was* found in the house of the LORD, and in the treasures of the king's house.

16 At that time did Hezekiah cut off *the gold* [t]*from* the doors of the temple of the LORD, and *from* the pillars which Hezekiah king of Judah had overlaid, and gave it[6] to the king of Assyria.[7]

A.M. 3278. B.C. 726.

3 Heb. *statues.*

d Nu.21.9. Je.10.5.

4 Brass-work.

e ch.19.10. Job 13.15. Ps.13.5; 2.12; 84.12. Is. 26.4.

f ch.19.15; 20.3.

g De.6.4; 10. 12, 20. Jos.23.8. Ac.11.23; 24. 16. Lu.1.6. 2 Co.1.12. 1 Th.2.10.

5 Heb. *from after him.*

h Ge 21. 22. Nu. 24. 18. 1 Sa.18.14. Ps.50.12. Is.41. 10, 14–16. Ro. 8. 31. He.13.6.

i ch.16.7. To whom Ahaz had made the kingdom tributary.

6 Had the kingdom been his own by any principle of right, Ahaz might have alienated or rendered it tributary. But it belonged not to man, but to God, and therefore God, who had given it to Abraham, had a right to resume it from the idolatrous and persecuting usurper.—*C.*

k Is.14. 29. 2 Ch. 28. 18.

7 Heb. *Azzah.*

l ch. 17. 9. Eze. 9. 9, *i.e.* both villages and cities.

8 See note on ch. 17.9.—*C.*

m ch.17.3,4 Pe.2.9.

9 B.C. 723.

n ch.17.6. Hos.13.16. Am.3.12; 4. 1, 2,4; 6.7. Mi.1.6–9.

o 2 Ch.5.26. ch. 17.6. Ho.8.9;9.3. Am.5.27. 1 Ki.9.7;14.15,16.

p ch. 17. 7–23. Is. i.–iii.v.ix.xxiv.xxviii.24. 5. 6. Am. ii. ix. Mi. i.–iii. Ho. i.–xiii. 1, 2. De.29.24–28. 1 Ki. 9.6–9;14.15,16. Je.22.7–9.

1 National defection is here assigned as the cause of national calamities—a circumstance which many are inclined to think peculiar to the Jews, dwelling under what is commonly called 'a theocracy.' But all nations are immediately under the divine government, and will, as assuredly as ever did the Jews, suffer the divine judgment for every national sin.—*Note*, Let Britain—long privileged with the *Bible*, with *commerce*, with *riches*, and *power*—beware, lest for neglect of the first, or abuse of the others, the Lord should 'remove her candlestick out of its place.'—*C.*

q 2 Ch.32.1. Is.36.1.

2 Heb. *Sanherib.*

3 B.C. 713.

4 Compare what follows in this and the next two chapters with Is. xxxvi.–xxxix., where the parallel texts are more largely quoted.

r ver.7. Pr.29.25.

5 In all £266,906, 5*s.* sterling.

s Ki.15. 18. ch. 12. 18; ver.17.

t 1 Ki.6.35. 2 Ch. 29. 3.

6 Heb. *them.*

7 A most remarkable confirmation of this narrative has recently been discovered on one of the historical tablets of Nineveh. The tablet records the expedition of Sennacherib in his own words as follows:—'Because Hezekiah king of Judah would not submit to my yoke, I came up against him, and by force of arms and by the might of my power I took 46 of his strong fenced cities; and of the smaller towns which were scattered about I took and plundered a countless number. And from these places I captured

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and carried off as spoil 200,150 people, old and young. . . . And Hezekiah himself I shut up in Jerusalem, his capital city, like a bird in a cage, building towers round the city to hem him in. . . . Then upon this Hezekiah there fell the fear of my arms, and he sent out to me the chiefs of the elders of Jerusalem with 30 talents of gold and 800 talents of silver, and divers treasures, a rich and immense booty.'—*P.*

u Mar.6.26. Pr.6.35. 2 Ch.32.9–20. Is.36.2.

8 B.C. 710.

9 Some consider these not as proper names, but as titles of office. Rabsaris, *master of the eunuchs*, would be equivalent to the modern term comptroller of the household. Tartan, *keeper of the tribute*, would signify first lord of the treasury; and Rabshakeh is equivalent to the office of chief butler, now held in Europe by an upper servant, but formerly, in royal courts, by one of much higher rank.—*C.*

1 Heb. *heavy.*

x Is.7.3; 22. 9. Ne.3. 15,16. 2 Ch.32.4,30. ch. 20.20.

y Is.22.20–24;36.3.

2 Or, *secretary.*

z Jude 16. ch.19.23–26. Is.17. 10–14; 37. 10–13, 23–27. 2 Ch. 32. 10–16.

3 A title equivalent to *majesty.*—*Note*, Titles of office and honour are not sinful when legitimately employed; they are only to be condemned when they originate in flattery, or degenerate into pride.—*C.*

a Is.36.4,5.ver.5. Ps. 42.3;17. 11;78.19.

4 Or, *talkest.*

5 Heb. *word of the lips.*

b Pr.21.30. Job 20.5.

6 Heb. *trustest thee.*

c Is.36.6;30.1–7; 31.1–3. Eze.29.6,7.

d ver. 4. 2 Ch. 31. 1; 32.12. Is.36.7–10.

7 Or, *hostages.*

e 1 Ki.13.18. ch.19.6, 7, 32–37, with Is. 10. 5, 6;7.17,18;8.6–8.

8 He speaks as by the authority and mission of God; but because he speaks boastingly (ver. 24) and idolatrously (ver. 22, 33–35), we therefore infallibly conclude, that, though daring to speak in God's name, he speaks falsely, and by his own spirit.—*C.*

9 Perceiving that the object of this blasphemous railer was to stir up the people to sedition, they mildly and reasonably required him to make his proposals in the Syrian language.—*I.*

f ch.6. 25. De.28.53–57. Ex.15.9. 1 Ki.20.10. Ps.73.8. Is.36.10–13.

1 Heb. *the water of their feet.*

2 In the brutal vulgarity of Rabshakeh there is a curious internal note of the truth of the record, the figure is taken immediately from his own office of butler.—*C.*—Hyperbolical expressions, denoting the utmost extremities of famine, which the people must expect to endure, in case they dared to resist the king of Assyria.—*I.*

g ver.19. Is.36.13–20. 2 Ch.32.16,18,19.

17 ¶ And[u] the king of Assyria sent[8] Tartan, and Rabsaris, and Rab-shakeh,[9] from Lachish to king Hezekiah with a great[1] host against Jerusalem: and they went up, and came to Jerusalem. And when they were come up, they came and stood by the [z]conduit of the upper pool, which *is* in the highway of the fuller's field.

18 And when they had called to the king, there came out to them [y]Eliakim the son of Hilkiah, which *was* over the household, and Shebna the scribe,[2] and Joah the son of Asaph the recorder.

19 And Rab-shakeh said unto them, Speak ye now to Hezekiah, [z]Thus saith the great king,[3] the king of Assyria, [a]What confidence *is* this wherein thou trustest?

20 Thou sayest,[4] (but *they are but* vain words,[5]) [b]*I have* counsel and strength for the war. Now on whom dost thou trust,[6] that thou rebellest against me?

21 Now, behold, thou trustest upon [c]the staff of this bruised reed, *even* upon Egypt, on which if a man lean, it will go into his hand, and pierce it: so *is* Pharaoh king of Egypt unto all that trust on him.

22 But if ye say unto me, We trust in the LORD our God: *is* not that he whose high places and whose altars Hezekiah hath [d]taken away, and hath said to Judah and Jerusalem, Ye shall worship before this altar in Jerusalem?

23 Now therefore, I pray thee, give [7]pledges to my lord the king of Assyria, and I will deliver thee two thousand horses, if thou be able on thy part to set riders upon them.

24 How then wilt thou turn away the face of one captain of the least of my master's servants, and put thy trust on Egypt for chariots and for horsemen?

25 Am I now come up without the LORD against this place to destroy it? The LORD [e]said to me, Go up against this land, and destroy [8]it.

26 Then said Eliakim the son of Hilkiah, and Shebna, and Joah, unto Rab-shakeh, Speak, I pray thee, to thy servants in the Syrian[9] language; (for we understand *it*;) and talk not with us in the Jews' language in the ears of the people that *are* on the wall.

27 But Rab-shakeh said unto them, Hath my master sent me to thy master, and to thee, to speak these words? *hath he* not *sent me* to the men which sit on the wall, that they may [f]eat their own dung, and drink their own [1]piss with you?[2]

28 ¶ Then[g] Rab-shakeh stood and cried with

dishonoured God it is our honour to be unlike *him*. And fidelity in God's service will be ever accompanied with his blessing. And yet, to prove their faith and constancy, and to punish a hypocritical generation, they who are most zealous for God may be reduced to such difficulties as will make them stagger and sinfully yield. But fleeing to human confidences instead of God will but bring on us the ruin which we seek to avoid. The most solemn treaties or largest ransoms make little impression on conquering tyrants. Never then let any rob God to procure temporal advantages. What an unruly evil is an insolent tongue! It casts forth firebrands, arrows, and death, against God and men: and readily it upbraids the people of God with their greatest honours. Little reason has one power to vaunt against another; for soon may they be equally weak as well as equally treacherous. Great boasters are seldom even ordinary actors; and flattering tongues

a loud voice in the Jews' language, and spake, saying, Hear the word of the great king, the king of Assyria:

29 Thus saith the king, Let not Hezekiah deceive you; for [h]he shall not be able to deliver you out of his hand:

30 Neither let Hezekiah make you trust in the LORD, saying, The LORD will surely deliver us, and this city shall not be delivered into the hand of the king of Assyria.

31 Hearken not unto Hezekiah: for thus saith the king of Assyria, [i]Make *an agreement* with me by a present, and come out to me, and *then* eat ye [k]every man of his own vine, and every one of his fig-tree, and drink ye every one the waters of his cistern;[3]

32 Until I come and take you away to a land like your own land, [l]a land of corn and wine, a land of bread and vineyards, a land of oil-olive and of honey, that ye may live, and not die: and hearken not unto Hezekiah, when he persuadeth[4] you, saying, The LORD will deliver us.

33 Hath any of the [m]gods of the nations delivered at all his land out of the hand of the king of Assyria?[5]

34 Where *are* the gods of Hamath,[6] and of Arpad? where *are* the gods of Sepharvaim,[7] Hena, and Ivah? have they delivered Samaria out of mine hand?

35 Who *are* they among all the gods of the countries [n]that have delivered their country out of mine hand, that the LORD should deliver Jerusalem out of mine hand?

36 But the people held their peace, and answered him not a word:[8] for the king's commandment was, saying, [o]Answer him not.

37 Then came Eliakim the son of Hilkiah, which *was* over the household, and Shebna the scribe, and Joah the son of Asaph the recorder, to Hezekiah, with *their* [p]clothes rent, and told him the words of Rab-shakeh.

CHAPTER XIX.

1 *Hezekiah mourning sendeth to Isaiah to pray for them.* 6 *Isaiah comforteth them.* 8 *Sennacherib, going to encounter Tirhakah, sendeth a blasphemous letter to Hezekiah.* 14 *Hezekiah's prayer.* 20 *Isaiah's prophecy of the pride and destruction of Sennacherib, and the good of Zion.* 35 *An angel slayeth the Assyrians.* 36 *Sennacherib is slain at Nineveh by his own sons.*

AND it[a] came to pass, when king Hezekiah heard *it*, that he rent his clothes, and covered himself with sackcloth, and went into the house of the LORD.

2 And he sent [b]Eliakim, which *was* over the household, and Shebna the scribe, and the elders of the priests, covered with sackcloth, to Isaiah[c] the prophet, the son of Amoz.

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h Da. 3. 15, 17 *i*. 6. 27. Jn. 19. 10, 11. Ro. 13. 6.

i Heb *Make with me a blessing*, Ge. 33. 11. ver 14. 10.

k 1 Ki. 4. 25. Is. 36. 16. Mi. 4. 4. Zec. 3. 10.

3 Or, *pit.*

l Ex. 3. 8. De. 32. 13. 1 Ki. 4. 20. Job ... 17

4 Or, *deceiveth.*

m Is. 36. 18–20; 37. 10–12, 16–20. 2 Ki. 17. 7–11, 24–41. 19. De. 32. 31. ver. 34, 35. Ps. 115. 3–8. Je. 10. 2–16. ch. 19. 10–13; 17. 6, 7, 24, 30, 31.

5 He does not question the godhead of Jehovah; but considering him merely as a local and inferior deity, he calls in question his power to protect Hezekiah and his people against his master, his armies, and his triumphant deities.—*C.*

6 Hamath on the Orontes still bears the same name; it was on the northern border of Israel Argad is always spoken of along with Hamath, it probably adjoined it on the east beyond the Orontes. According to the probable conjecture of Busching, Hena is the town which is still called by the Arabs Anah. It lies on both sides of the Euphrates, amid rich gardens.—*I.*

7 This was one of the places whence Salmanassar sent a colony into Israel, ch 17. 24. That it was a small state under its own king appears from ch 29. 13. We include it in Mesopotamia, because it is mentioned along with other places of that province; and Ptolemy speaks of a town of a similar name, *Sipphara*, as the southernmost city of Mesopotamia. Below it the Euphrates divided into two branches, one going to Seleucia, the other to Babylon. *Ivah* is probably the same as *Avva*, ch. 17. 24. Michaelis places it between Berytus and Tripoli.—*I.*

n Je. 49. 23 ch. 17. 24, 30, 31; 19. 12, 13. Is. 10. 7–11.

8 There are times when it is wise not to answer a fool according to his folly. An especial instance here occurs, when there was danger lest the answer should have been 'railing for railing,' an answer which Michael would not give even to Satan, and which Christians must never employ in reply to their revilers, Jude 9.—*C.*

o Mat. 7. 6. Pr. 26. 4. Am. 5. 13. Ps. 38. 13, 14; 39. 1, 2.

p ver. 18. Ge. 37. 29, 34. Mat. 26. 65. 2 Sa. 4. 12. 2 Sa. 1. 11.

CHAP. XIX.

a Is. 37. 1. 2 Ch. 32. 20; 20. 3–97. 15.

b Is. 22. 20–24; 37. 2–5. ch. 18. 18, 37. Jonah 3. 5.

c Is. 1. 1; 13. 1. Lu. 3. 4. ch. 3. 11. 2 Ch. 32. 20.

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d Ps. 50. 15; 30. 11; 123. 3. Ho. 5. 9, 15. ch. 18. 29, 30.

1 Or, *provocation.*

e Is. 26. 17, 18. De. 32. 18. Ho. 13. 13.

f Nu. 22. 33. Je. 24. 1. 1 Sa. 14. 6. 2 Sa. 16. 12. Ps. 50. 21.

2 Not doubting that God would *hear*, in the sense of *knowing* they were spoken—but *hear*, in the sense of *regarding*, to punish their insolence and blasphemy.—*C.*

g Ja. 5. 16. Ps. 50. 15; 106. 23, 30. Is. 37. 4; 45. 11. 1 Sa. 12. 19, 23.

3 True prayer is a *lifting up*, as it raises the thoughts above all earthly objects, and fixes its desires, and its hopes, and its confidence upon God.—*C.*

h ch. 17. 5, 6; 18. 13. 2 Ch. 28. 5, 6.

i Is. 14. 13. ch. 6. 16. 2 Ch. 15. 17. Mar 5. 36. M. t 14. 31. Is. 37. 6, 7.

k Ps. 11. 6; 48. 5, 7; 50. 3. ver. 35, 37; ch. 7. 6.

4 Some think this refers to the pestilential wind, the *simoom*, by means of which they suppose the host of Sennacherib was destroyed. Others think it signifies that God would fill his heart with terror: 'I will infuse a spirit into him.' The phrase never signifies anything but putting a spirit into a person; this was a spirit of fear (*Lemik*) Boothroyd has, will 'I put another spirit in him.' The *rumour* was, that Tirhakah was about to invade Assyria.—*I.*

5 Not by prompting or causing his assassination—that were to make God the author of sin; but by adjudging him for his crimes, to have the passions of the wicked men he has cherished in an ambitious wickedness let loose against him.—*C.*

l Is. 37. 8. ch. 8. 22; 14 9 Jos. 10. 17, 15.

m 1 Sa. 2. 27. Is. 37. 9 *n* ch. 18. 29, 30. 2 Ch. 32 15–19. Is. 37 10.

o Is 37. 11; 10. 7–14. ch. 18. 33, 34 2 Ch 32. 13.

p ch. 17. 6; 18. 11. Is. 37 12.

q Ge 11. 31; 29. 4.

r Ge. 2. 8. Eze. 27. 23.

s 2 Sa. 8. 9. Nu. 13. 21. ch. 18. 34. Is 36. 19; 37. 13.

t 1 Ki. 8. 28. Ps. 123. 1. 2 Ch. 20. 4, 9. Is. 37. 14–20.

6 Before the mercy-seat, which was to the believer a visible sign and seal of providence and grace, a memorial to sense and an encouragement to faith. *C.*—By this action Hezekiah referred the matter entirely to God, intimating that as his honour was immediately assailed, he was chiefly concerned to defend it; and by this appeal the king meant to shelter himself and his people under the shadow of the Almighty.—*Scott.*

u 2 Sa. 7. 18. Eze. 36. 37. Da. 9. 2, 3. Ps. 50. 15; 91. 15; 109. 4. Ja. 5. 13.

x Ps. 80. 1. 1 Sa. 4. 4. Ex. 25. 22.

7 Not as confined locally, but dwelling visibly 'between the cherubims;' and thence, from 'the mercy-seat,' as the emblem of Christ, Ro. 3. 25 answer the prayer of faith and the cry of distress.—*C.*

y Is. 44. 6; 45. 22. Je. 10. 11, 12. Da. 4. 34, 35.

z Is. 37. 17. Ps. 31. 2; 86. 1; 88. 2; 130. 2; 141. 1; 142. 1, 6; 143. 1, 7. Da. 9. 17–19.

3 And they said unto him, Thus saith Hezekiah, This day *is* [d]a day of trouble, and of rebuke, and blasphemy:[1] for the [e]children are come to the birth, and *there is* not strength to bring forth.

4 It [f]may be the LORD thy God will [2]hear all the words of Rab-shakeh, whom the king of Assyria his master hath sent to reproach the living God; and will reprove the words which the LORD thy God hath heard: wherefore [g]lift up *thy* prayer[3] for the remnant that are [h]left.

5 So the servants of king Hezekiah came to Isaiah.

6 ¶ And Isaiah said unto them, Thus shall ye say to your master, Thus saith the LORD, [i]Be not afraid of the words which thou hast heard, with which the servants of the king of Assyria have blasphemed me.

7 Behold, I will send a [k]blast[4] upon him, and he shall hear a rumour, and shall return to his own land; and I will cause him to [5]fall by the sword in his own land.

8 ¶ So Rab-shakeh returned, and found the king of Assyria warring against [l]Libnah: for he had heard that he was departed from Lachish.

9 And when [m]he heard say of Tirhakah king of Ethiopia, Behold, he is come out to fight against thee; he sent messengers again unto Hezekiah, saying,

10 Thus shall ye speak to Hezekiah king of Judah, saying, [n]Let not thy God in whom thou trustest deceive thee, saying, Jerusalem shall not be delivered into the hand of the king of Assyria.

11 Behold,[o] thou hast heard what the kings of Assyria have done to all lands, by destroying them utterly; and shalt thou be delivered?

12 Have the gods of the nations delivered them which my fathers have destroyed; *as* [p]Gozan, and [q]Haran, and Rezeph, and the children of [r]Eden which *were* in Thelasar?

13 Where *is* the king of [s]Hamath, and the king of Arpad, and the king of the city of Sepharvaim, of Hena, and Ivah?

14 ¶ And Hezekiah received the letter of the hand of the messengers, and read it: and Hezekiah went up into the house of the LORD, and [t]spread it before the LORD.[6]

15 And Hezekiah [u]prayed before the LORD, and said, O LORD God of Israel, which [x]dwellest *between* the cherubims,[7] thou art [y]the God, *even* thou alone, of all the kingdoms of the earth; thou hast made heaven and earth.

16 LORD, [z]bow down thine ear, and hear;

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and pompous promises ought never to be trusted. How affecting is it to hear, though often improper to answer, virulent reproaches of God and his people! Silence is the best answer to insolent abuse. It but exasperates a fool to answer him according to his folly.

CHAPTER XIX. REFLECTIONS. — Sore troubles should deeply affect us, and render us earnest in calling upon God for relief. But while our helper is almighty we ought never to despair. Let us, however, always interest in our behalf the prayers of Jesus Christ and his ministers and people. Thus trusting in God we shall never be confounded; while those who lift up their tongues against him shall bring down swift vengeance on their own heads. Wicked men dare to defy God, and are fond of trumpeting forth their own praise. Just before their ruin their blasphemy and pride ordinarily swell to the highest. But while we have a prayer-hearing God to address in our trouble let us always be confident. If the great object of our requests be the manifestation of his glory, we shall certainly be heard; and often God's returns to the prayers of faith are speedy as well as comfortable. How honourable, in God's view, are his people in their

open, LORD, thine eyes, and see; and hear the words of Sennacherib, which hath sent him to reproach the living God.

17 Of a truth, LORD, the kings of Assyria have [c]destroyed the nations and their lands;

18 And have cast their gods into the fire: for they [b]*were* no gods, but the work of men's hands, wood and stone: therefore they have destroyed them.

19 Now therefore, O [c]LORD our God, I beseech thee, save thou us out of his hand, that all the kingdoms of the earth may know that thou *art* the LORD God, *even* thou only.

20 ¶ Then Isaiah the son of Amoz sent to Hezekiah, saying, [d]Thus saith the LORD God of Israel, *That* which thou hast prayed to me against Sennacherib[8] king of Assyria I have heard.

21 This *is* the word that the LORD hath spoken concerning him; [e]The virgin, the daughter of Zion, hath despised thee, *and* laughed thee to scorn; the daughter of Jerusalem hath shaken her head at thee.

22 Whom [f]hast thou reproached and blasphemed? and against whom hast thou exalted *thy* voice, and lifted up thine eyes on high? *even* against [g]the Holy *One* of Israel.

23 By thy messengers thou hast reproached the LORD, and hast said, [h]With the multitude of my chariots I am come up to the height of the mountains, to the sides of Lebanon, and will cut down the tall cedar-trees thereof, *and* the choice fir-trees thereof;[9] and I will enter into the lodgings of his borders, *and into* [i]the forest of his Carmel.

24 I have digged and drunk strange waters, and with the sole of my feet have I dried up all the rivers of besieged[1] places.

25 Hast thou not heard long ago [k]*how* I have done it, *and* of ancient times that I have formed it? now have I brought it to pass, that thou shouldest be to lay waste fenced cities *into* ruinous heaps.[2]

26 Therefore their inhabitants were of [l]small power, they were dismayed and confounded; they were *as* the grass of the field, and *as* the green herb, *as* the grass on the house-tops, and *as corn* blasted before it be grown up.

27 But [m]I know thy abode, and thy going out, and thy coming in, and thy rage against me.

28 Because [n]thy rage against me and thy tumult is come up into mine ears, therefore [o]I will put my hook in thy nose,[3] and my bridle in thy lips, and I will turn thee back by the way by which thou camest.

29 And this *shall be* a [p]sign unto thee, Ye shall eat [q]this year such things as grow of themselves,[4] and in the second year that which springeth of the same; and in the third year sow ye, and reap, and plant vineyards, and eat the fruits thereof.

30 And [r]the remnant that is escaped of the house of Judah shall yet again take root downward, and bear fruit upward.

31 For [s]out of Jerusalem shall go forth a remnant, and they that escape out of mount Zion: [t]the zeal of the LORD *of hosts* shall do this.

32 Therefore thus saith the LORD concerning the king of Assyria, He shall not come into this city, nor shoot an arrow there, nor come before it with shield, nor cast a bank against it.

33 By[u] the way that he came, by the same shall he return, and shall not come into this city, saith the LORD.

34 For[x] I will defend this city, to save it, [y]for mine own sake,[5] and for my servant David's sake.[6]

35 ¶ And [z]it came to pass that night, that the angel of the LORD went out,[7] and smote in the camp of the Assyrians an hundred fourscore and five thousand: and when they arose early in the morning, behold, they *were* all dead corpses.[8]

36 So Sennacherib king of Assyria departed, and went and [a]returned, and dwelt at [b]Nineveh.

37 And it came to [9]pass, [c]as he was worshipping in the house of Nisroch his god, that Adrammelech and Sharezer his sons smote him with the sword; and they escaped into the land of [d]Armenia: and Esarhaddon his son reigned in his stead.

CHAPTER XX.

1 *Hezekiah, having received a message of death, by prayer hath his life lengthened.* 8 *The sun goeth ten degrees backward for a sign of that promise.* 12 *Berodach-baladan sending to visit Hezekiah, because of the wonder, hath notice of his treasures.* 14 *Isaiah understanding thereof foretelleth the Babylonian captivity.* 20 *Hezekiah dieth: Manasseh succeedeth him.*

IN those[a] days was Hezekiah sick unto death; and the prophet Isaiah the son of Amoz came to him, and said unto him, Thus saith the LORD, [b]Set thine house in order; for [c]thou shalt die, and not live.[1]

2 Then he [d]turned his face to the wall, and prayed unto the LORD, saying,

3 I beseech thee, O LORD, [e]remember now how I have walked before thee in [f]truth, and with a perfect heart, and have done *that which*

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a Nu.14.9.2 Sa.5.21.

b Ps.115.4-7. Je.10.2-16. Is.44.9-20; 45.21; 46.1,2,6,7;40.19,20.

c 1 Ki.8.28. Da.9.15-19. Ps.83.13-18. Jos.7.9. Is.37.20.

d Is. 37. 21-29; 58. 9. Da.9.20-23. Ps.65.2.

8 The Old Testament authorizes prayer *against* an enemy: the New Testament commands us to pray *for* him. Are these contradictory? are they of different spirits? Is the New Testament a new law? By no means. The command that enjoins us to pray *for* our enemies, requires us to pray for his conversion: the example that authorizes us to pray *against* him, is not against *him* personally, but against his wicked designs and plans. We pray *for* the spiritual welfare of the most wicked enemy, but we pray *against* the diabolical plots, and plans, and combinations of his subtlety, malice, and cruelty. —*Note*, To pray for the conversion of a sinner, is to pray with God—to pray for the success of a sinner in his sinful purposes, would be to pray against God.—*C.*

e Is. 37, 22. Ps. 22.7; 44.13.

f Ps.73.8,9,11; 74.10, 18;89.51. Ex.5.2. Pr.21.4. ch.18.28-35.

g Ps.71.22. Is.5.24.

h Ps. 20. 7. ch.18.11, 33,34. Is.10.7-14;37.24, 25. 2 Ch.32.13-17.

9 These formed a most valuable article of internal consumption and foreign trade, as is manifest from 1 Ki. 5.6. Their destruction, either for the mere wantonness of invasion, or for the necessary camp-fires, would inflict a deep injury upon the resources and beauties of the kingdom. Industry may soon repair the ravaging of a city: it requires centuries to restore the beauty and grandeur of a forest.—*C.*

i Or, *the forest* and *his fruitful field*, Is. 10.18. My forces have drunk up or turned aside whole rivers.

1 Or, *fenced.*

k Is.10.5,6; Je.51.20-23.

2 Or, *Hast thou not heard* how *I have made it long ago, and formed it of ancient times? Should I now bring it to be laid waste,* and *fenced cities* to be *ruinous heaps?*

l Ps. 127. 1, 2; 129. 6; 92.7,9; 76.5,6; 83.13-15; 75.5-7; 48.5,6; 46.8,9. Je.5.10. Da.4.34,35; 2.21.

m Ps.139.2,3; 10.11-14. De.28.6,19.

n Ps.76.10; 7.6; 2.1; 46.6. Pr.14.16; 29.9; 27. 3,4;18.3,6,7.

o Eze.29.4. Job 41.2. Ps.32.9. Ja.3.3. ver.36. Is.30.28.

3 Oxen and dromedaries are usually guided by a ring which runs through the division between the nostrils, and which abides permanently, only requiring the fastening of a rein, or by means of an open hole in the same place, into which a hook with a rein is occasionally inserted.—*C.*

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p Of fulfilling, ver. 21,31,34. Is.37.30; 7. 14;38.8,22.

q Le. 25. 4, 5, with 1 Ki.3.13. Ep.3.20.

4 Such as figs, grapes, apples, melons, cucumbers, and many such vegetables, as, in eastern countries, require little or no cultivation.—*Note*, The temporary prohibition of agriculture was first a trial of Hezekiah's faith; and, secondly, a means of repelling the Assyrians, by withholding the means of subsistence. —*C.*

r ver.4. Is.1.9; 10.20, 21. Ps.80.9.

s Is.10.22;1.9. Ro. 9. 27. Je.4.10;46.28.

t Is.9.7;37.32; 59. 17; 63.4,5.

u ver.7,28. Is. 37.34; 10.12, 21-27, 32, 33; 37. 34.

x Is. 10. 32; 31.5; 37. 35;26.1.

y ch.20.6. Is.48.9,11. Eze.36.22.

5 For the sake of my mercy and honour. —*C.*

6 Not for any personal merit in David, but for the sake of the covenant confirmed with him, 2 Sa. 7.28-29.—*C.*

z 1 Th.5.2,3. Job 20. 5;34.20. Ex.12.29.2 Sa. 24 10.2 Ch.32.21,22. Is. 37. 36; 10. 12, 16-19,24-34; 14.25; 17. 12-14; 24. 21.2;25.4,5,9-12;27. 1; 29.5-8;30.27-33;31.4,8, 9;33.1,3-5,11,12,23.

7 It is customary to account for this destruction, by supposing it effected by the wind called 'simoom.' Such attempts are not philosophy, but presumption. True philosophy stands upon *evidence*. The *evidence* here says the agent was an *angel*, and the angels of the Scriptures are always *persons*.—*C.*

8 That is, when the *Jews* arose, the *Assyrians* were dead.—*C.*

a ver.7, 28. 2 Ki. 37. 7, 29.

b Ge.10.11,12. Jonah 1.2. Na.2.8.

9 B.C. 709.

c Is.33.1. Je.8.2. Eze. 6.5. Le.26.30. Na.3.15.

d Heb. *Ararat*, Ge.8.4. Is.37.38. Je.51. 27.

CHAP. XX.

B.C. 713.

a 2 Ch.32.24. Is.38.1. ver.7.

b 2 Sa.17.23. Mat.24. 42,44.

c Jonah 4.3,8. He.9. 27. Job 30.23;14.1,5. Ps. 49.7, 9; 89. 47, 48. 2 Sa. 14.14. Ge.3.19.

1 'The natural tendency of thy disease is certain and speedy death;' a fact that no more precluded God's miraculous interference to prolong his days, than the death of Lazarus, and the certain and speedy tendency of his body to corruption, precluded Christ from raising him from the grave.—*C.*

d Mat.6.6. Ps.38.2,3, or 1 Ki. 8. 30. 2 Sa. 12. 22. Ps.50.15.

e Ge.8.1. Ne.5.19;13. 14,22,31. Ps.25.7.

f 1 Ki.2. 4; 8. 61. Ge. 6.9. 1 Th.2.4,10. Job 2. 3. 2 Co.1.12. Ac.24.16.

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greatest distress! and contemptible in his sight are the greatest of his opposers—an empty noise, a proud puff, and no more! Nor hell nor earth can rage any further than his limits permit them. He protects, delivers, and provides for his people above what they think or ask, and all for Jesus' sake. But what a speedy regard to his promise! What terrible majesty is with him! How fearful to fall into his hands! How great the power of his angels! and how safe those who have millions of such guardians and protectors! But miserable is the end of blasphemers! Often their very gods or children, from whom they expected support, become the instruments of their ruin.

CHAPTER XX. REFLECTIONS.—Neither greatness nor goodness can exempt from sickness or death. Not a moment of life but the present is certain. And often God lays men aside from their work when we think there is most need of them. But, oh! the vast preparation of state, frame, and exercise that is necessary for a comfortable entrance into eternity! There is need for ministers to inculcate this in the most earnest and solemn manner. In dying moments it is the greatest mercy, and should be our greatest desire, to have all our hopes founded on Jesus' blood, and attended with the testimony of a good conscience: and to have the consolations of God enabling us to triumph

CARAVAN NEAR MT. HERMON—IN VIEW OF THE SPOT WHERE OUR LORD WAS TRANSFIGURED IN THE PRESENCE OF PETER, JAMES AND JOHN. [II. KINGS, xix: 23.]—"By thy messengers thou hast reproached the Lord, and hast said, With the multitude of my chariots I am come up to the height of the mountains, to the sides of Lebanon." Above is an illnstration of the southern side of Mt. Hermon, a mountain which belongs to the Lebanon range. We have here a long line of donkeys on their way to Damascus. Upon the backs of these donkeys little villages through this mountain country are supplied with the freight which is brought to them from the cities. In this view we have a clump of olive trees to the left of the picture, and we have very accurately brought out the topographical features of the country. This is not far from a village called Mejdel esh-Shems, where the Druses live.

is good in thy sight. And Hezekiah [g]wept sore.[2]

4 And it came to pass, [h]afore Isaiah was gone out into the middle court,[3] that the word of the LORD came to him, saying,

5 Turn again, and tell Hezekiah the [i]captain of my people, Thus saith the LORD, the God of David thy father, [k]I have heard thy prayer, I have seen thy tears: behold, I will heal thee:[4] on the third day [l]thou shalt go up unto the house of the LORD.

6 And I will [m]add unto thy days fifteen years;[5] and[n] I will deliver thee and this city out of the hand of the king of Assyria; and I will defend this city for mine own sake, and for my servant David's sake.

7 And Isaiah said, Take a [o]lump of figs.[6] and they took and laid *it* on the boil, and he recovered.

8 ¶ And Hezekiah said unto Isaiah, What *shall be* the [p]sign that the LORD will heal me, and that I shall go up into the house of the LORD the third day?

9 And Isaiah said, [q]This sign shalt thou have of the LORD, that the LORD will do the thing that he hath spoken: shall the shadow go forward ten degrees,[7] or go back ten degrees?

10 And Hezekiah answered, It is a light thing for the shadow to go down ten degrees: nay, but let the shadow return backward ten degrees.

11 And Isaiah the prophet [r]cried unto the LORD; and [s]he brought the shadow ten degrees backward, by which it had gone down in the dial[8] of Ahaz.[9]

12 ¶ At[t] that time Berodach-baladan, the son of Baladan, king of Babylon,[1] sent letters and a present unto Hezekiah: for he had heard that Hezekiah had been sick.

13 And Hezekiah hearkened unto them, and showed[u] them all the house of his precious things,[2] the silver, and the gold, and the spices, and the precious ointment, and *all* the house of his [3]armour,[4] and all that was found in his treasures: there was [v]nothing in his house, nor in all his dominion, that Hezekiah showed them not.

14 ¶ Then [y]came Isaiah the prophet unto king Hezekiah, and said unto him, [z]What said these men? and from whence came they unto thee? And Hezekiah said, They are come from a far country, *even* from Babylon.

15 And he said, What have they seen in thine house? And Hezekiah answered, [a]All *the things* that *are* in mine house have they seen: there is nothing among my treasures that I have not showed them.[5]

16 And Isaiah said unto Hezekiah, Hear the word of the LORD.

17 Behold, the days come, that all that *is* in thine house, and that which thy fathers have laid up in store[6] unto this day, [b]shall be carried into Babylon: nothing shall be left, saith the LORD.

18 And of [c]thy sons that shall issue from thee, which thou shalt beget, shall they take away; and they shall be eunuchs in the palace of the king of Babylon.

19 Then said Hezekiah unto Isaiah, [d]Good[7] *is* the word of the LORD which thou hast spoken. And he said, *Is it* not *good*,[8] if peace and [9]truth be in my days?

20 ¶ And[e] the rest of the acts of Hezekiah, and all his might, and how [f]he made a pool, and a conduit, and brought water into the city, *are* they not written in the book of the Chronicles of the kings of Judah?

21 And Hezekiah slept with his fathers:[1] and Manasseh his son reigned in his stead.

A.M. 3291. B.C. 713.

g Ps.6.6;102.9. He.5. 7.
2 Heb. *with a great weeping.*
h Is.38.9; 65.24. Da. 9.20,21. Ps.46.1;34.6.
3 Or, *city.*
i ch. 18. 1. 1 Sa.9.16; 10. 1; 13. 14. 2 Sa. 5. 2. Jos.5.14,15. He.2.10.
k ch.19. 20. Is. 38. 5. Ps.65.2;66.8;39.12; 147. 3.ver.7. Ex.15.26.
4 God is always the healer of disease, Ps. 103. 3; but, in some cases, the *vis medicatrix naturæ* is his agent, and medicine his means. In other cases the disease in an attained stage is naturally incurable, and then miracle is his agent, his word the means.—*C.*
l Ps. 26. 8; 66. 13-15; 116.12,14. Is.38.22.
m Ex. 20. 12, with Job 14.5.
5 Not fifteen years beyond the time I had appointed thee, but fifteen years beyond what the state of disease, left to its course, would have allowed thee, Job 7.1; 14.6-14.—*C.*
n ch.19.6,7,32-34. Is. 10.24-34. 2 Ch.32.22.
o ch.4.41. Mar. 7.33. Jn.9.6. Ac.27.24,31.
6 The precise nature of the disease is unknown, any farther than that it was inflammatory. Means are employed even in production of the miracle, to teach us that in our utmost dependence upon his word, we may not neglect the least of his precepts, nor, in pretended faith on his promise, dare to tempt his providence. —*C.*
p Is. 7. 11, 14; 38. 22. Ju. 6. 17,37, 39. 2 Sa. 5. 24.
q Is.38.7,8, with Jos. 10.12-14.
7 Half-hour lines.
r Ex.14.15. 1 Ki. 17. 20;18.42. Eze.36.37. Ja. 5. 16. Jn.15. 7. Mar. 11. 24.
s Is.38.8. 2 Ch.32.24.
8 Heb. *degrees.*
9 Of the precise nature of this dial we know nothing, more than that by its construction it measured time. As to the means of the miracle, whether by any extraordinary development or change of the laws of refraction, it is useless to inquire. He that made all things made their laws, and doeth according to his will. —*C.*
t Is. 39. 1. 2 Ch.32. 31. 2 Sa. 8. 10; 10. 2. He not only congratulated him on his marvellous deliverance, but probably courted him into a league against the Assyrians.
1 This is the first time Babylon is mentioned. Hitherto it had been a mere province under the Assyrians, now it asserts its independence, and takes the first step to that 'bad eminence,' from which it was hurled for its idolatry, cruelty, and pride.—*C.*
u Is. 39. 2. 2 Ch.32.25 -31. 1 Ki.10.2,15,25.
2 Or, *spicery.*
3 Or, *jewels.*
4 Heb. *vessels.*
x 1 Ki.8.46. Ec.7.20. 1 Jn.1.8. Hab.2.4.
y Is. 39. 3-8.
z ch. 5. 25.

A.M. 3291. B.C. 713.

a ver.13. 2 Ch.32.27. Jos.7.19. Job 31.33. Pr. 22.13.
b The fault lay not in showing, but in the vanity of showing them as his own, and as attractives to his alliance—in looking upon personal riches and national resources, as any means of protection or property, farther than as God should be pleased to command a blessing upon them.—*C.*
6 This custom of heaping up treasure is common in the East. Vertomannus, describing the treasure of the king of Calicut, says that it was esteemed so immense, that it could not be contained in two very large cellars or warehouses. It consisted of precious stones, plates of gold, and as much coined gold as might load 100 mules.—*I.*
b ch.24.13; 25.13. Je. 27.19-22; 52.17.
c ch. 24. 12. 2 Ch. 33. 11. Da.1.3.
d Is.39.8. 1 Sa. 3. 18. Job 1. 21. Ps. 39.9. La. 3. 32, 39.
7 Not that the evil threatened was good in itself—that is impossible—but good in its consequences, as correcting Hezekiah's sin, and bringing him to the remembrance of God. —*C.*
8 Or, *shall there not be peace and truth,* &c.
9 The union of *peace with truth,* is peace as Jesus, and not as the world, gives, Jn.14.27.—*C.*
e 1 Ki. 11. 41, 43. ch. 12.19;15.6,7,36,38.
f ch.18.7. 2 Ch.32. 4, 30. Ne.3.16.
1 B.C. 698.

CHAP. XXI.

a 2 Ch.33.1-10.1 Ch. 3.13. Mat.1.10.
b 2 Ch.33. 2, 3. 1 Ki. 16.25-33. ch.8.18; 16. 2-4;22.17;24.3,4; 17. 8-17. ver.3-7,16. De.18.9,10. Je.15.4.
c ch.18.4;17.16; 8.18, 27;23.4-25.24. 1 Ki. 16. 32,33. Je.ii.-xvii. Is.59. 7-15.
1 'A grove,' Hebrew *Asherah, i.e.* 'an image of Astarte.'—*P.*
2 'All the host of heaven,' *i.e.* the sun, moon, planets, and stars. The worship consisted in the offering of incense to them on elevated spots, such as the flat roofs of houses, tops of hills, &c.—*P.*
d 2 Ch.33.4,5. Je. 32. 34. ch.16.19;23.4,6.
e 2 Sa. 7. 13. 1 Ki. 8. 29;9.3. Ps.78.68,69.
f ch.16.11; 23. 4,6. 1 Ki.6.36. 2 Ch.33.15.
g 2 Ch.33.6. ch.16.3. Le.18.21;19.16,31. De. 18.10-14. Is.8.19.
3 See Le.18.21. 2 Ki. 16.3.—*C.*
4 Dealt with such as pretended to possess power over spirits, either to render them visible or audible, and so to obtain from them information concerning hidden treasure, things lost or stolen, or the knowledge of future events—a miserable example of imposture and credulity, which even the light of Christianity has not entirely banished from the world. —*C.*

CHAPTER XXI.

1 *Manasseh's reign.* 3 *His great idolatry.* 10 *Prophecies uttered against Judah because of his wickedness.* 17 *Amon succeedeth him:* 19 *His wicked reign.* 23 *He being slain by his servants, and those murderers slain by the people, Josiah is made king.* 25 *Amon's acts and burial.*

MANASSEH *was*[a] twelve years old when he began to reign, and reigned fifty and five years in Jerusalem: and his mother's name *was* Hephzi-bah.

2 And [b]he did *that which was* evil in the sight of the LORD, after the abominations of the heathen, whom the LORD cast out before the children of Israel.

3 For he built up again the high places [c]which Hezekiah his father had destroyed; and he reared up altars for Baal, and made a [1]grove, as did Ahab king of Israel; and worshipped all the host of heaven,[2] and served them.

4 And [d]he built altars in the house of the LORD, of which the LORD said, [e]In Jerusalem will I put my name.

5 And he built [f]altars for all the host of heaven in the two courts of the house of the LORD.

6 And [g]he made his son pass through the fire,[3] and observed times, and used enchantments, and dealt with familiar spirits[4] and wizards: he

over the natural fears and pains of death. How useful is prayer; it can prepare us for death, and recover us from distempers which are in themselves deadly. And God grants with pleasure his people's requests, and bestows on them exceedingly above what they ask or think. At best our life is limited: it is short, and had need to be well improved. In sickness we ought to use proper remedies, otherwise we but tempt God in desiring or expecting recovery: and the prayers and advices of God's prophets do us more good than the prescriptions of our physicians. How God condescends to the weakness of his saints! He will work wonders to strengthen their faith. Prosperous favourites of heaven are ordinarily courted into friendship by the wicked: and the best of men are apt to be thus ensnared, especially by their own pride. But if we walk in pride, God will certainly abase us or our seed. And what has ministered to our vanity and self-confidence will ere long cover us with confusion. May God then make us to accept of the punishment of our iniquity! We have cause of thankfulness if we are but out of hell. But outward quietness and gospel preaching are singular mercies which we can never sufficiently acknowledge.

CHAPTER XXI. REFLECTIONS.—It is extremely dangerous to arrive too early at dignity and

wrought[h] much wickedness in the sight of the LORD, to provoke *him* to anger.

7 And he set [i]a graven image of the grove[5] that he had made in the house, of which the LORD said to David, and to Solomon his son, In[k] this house, and in Jerusalem, which I have chosen out of all the tribes of Israel, will I put my name for ever:

8 Neither will I make the feet of Israel move [l]any more out of the land which I gave their fathers; [m]only if they will observe to do according to all that I have commanded them, and according to all the law that my servant Moses commanded them.

9 But [n]they hearkened not: and Manasseh seduced[o] them to do more evil than did the nations whom the LORD destroyed before the children of Israel.

10 ¶ And the LORD spake[6] by his servants the prophets, saying,

11 Because[p] Manasseh king of Judah hath done these abominations, *and* hath done wickedly above all that the Amorites did, which *were* before him, and hath made Judah also to sin with his idols;

12 Therefore thus saith the LORD God of Israel, Behold, [q]I *am* bringing *such* evil upon Jerusalem and Judah, that whosoever heareth of it, both his ears shall tingle.

13 And I will [r]stretch over Jerusalem the line[7] of Samaria, and the plummet[8] of the house of Ahab: and I will wipe Jerusalem, as *a man* wipeth a dish, wiping *it*, and turning *it* upside down.[9]

14 And I will forsake the [s]remnant[1] of mine inheritance, and deliver them into the hand of their enemies; and they shall become a prey and a spoil to all their enemies;

15 Because they have done *that which was* evil in my sight, and have provoked me to anger, [t]since the day their fathers came forth out of Egypt, even unto this day.

16 Moreover, [u]Manasseh shed innocent blood very much,[2] till he had filled Jerusalem from one end to another;[3] besides [x]his sin wherewith he made Judah to sin, in doing *that which was* evil in the sight of the LORD.[4]

A.M. 3306. B.C. 698.

h Ge.13.13. ch.24.3, 4. Je. 15.4. 2 Ti. 3.13. De. 32. 21,22. 2 Ch.36. 14. Am.4.4.

i ch.23.6. 2 Ch.33.7.

5 'A graven image of the grove' is scarcely intelligible; but taking *Asherah* as a proper name, it seems to be the same as the idol *Astarte*, the Phœnician Venus, whose licentious worship was celebrated in groves.—*C.*

k 2 Ch.6.6. 1 Ki.8.13, 29,44. 9. 3. ch.23.27. 2 Sa.7.10. Ps.132. 131. 78. 68,69.

l 1 Ch.17.9. ch.18.11. 2 Ch.33.8.

m Le. 26. 1–14. De. 28.1–15; iv.–xxvi. Is. 1. 19. Ps.37.3.

n ch.17.14,15. Zec.7. 11,12. 2 Ch. 36. 13–16. Je.44.4,5.

o Pr.29.12. Re.2.20. 1 Ki.14.15,16. Ho.5.11. Mi.6.16. Jn. 15. 22. Ja. 4.17. Eze.16.47,51. Ps. 12.8.

6 B.C. 688.

p Je.15.4. ch. 23. 26; 21.3,4.

q Mi.3.12. Da. 9.12. Je.19.3. 1 Sa.3.11. Is.3. 11. Ro.2.8,9. ch.22.17.

r Is.34.11. ch. 17, 6; 10.11. Je.26.9; 25.9; ii.–xxiii. xxv xxvi.; 32.28–35. La.2.8. Am. 7. 7, 8. Zec. 1. 6. 1 Ki. 21. 24. Eze.v.–xvi.; 20. 33–48; 21. 31, 32; xxii. xxiii. xxiv.

7 'Line' is put for 'lot' or 'portion,' Ps. 16.6, because the lots or portions of the tribes were ascertained by lines of demarcation or measurement.—*C.*

8 If the plummet indicate that the wall is overhanging, it is consequently insecure and dangerous, and must be thrown down.—*C.*

9 As the dish, or, according to the Septuagint, an alabaster box for precious ointment, is thus thoroughly emptied of its contents, so shall the land of idolatrous Judah be cleared of inhabitants.—*C.*

s ch.19.4,30,31; xxiv. xxv.2 Ch.33.11. Le.26. 15–39. Je.28.15–68. Je. l.–xxvi. xxxii. Eze.iv. –xxiv. La.i.–v.

1 Judah and Benjamin were left as a *remnant* when the ten tribes were carried into captivity.—*C.*

t Eze. xvi. xx. xxiii. Ps. lxxviii. cvi. Ne.ix. Da.ix.

u ver.2–7; ch.16.3,4; 24.3,4.

2 Idolatry and apostasy, which both met in Manasseh, have always been cruel; for Satan, the author of both, was a murderer as well as a liar from the beginning. Jn. 8. 44. The Jewish historians relate that by this wicked king Is iah was sawn asunder.—*C.*

3 Heb. *from mouth to mouth.*

x ver.7. 1 Ki. 14. 15, 16.

4 The reign of Manasseh was longer than that of any monarch of the house of David. In rebellion against God and absolute wickedness he exceeded all others during the first part of his reign; but during the latter part he appears to have been a humble penitent, and an accepted and devoted servant of the God he had so long dishonoured. It is a remarkable fact that only the first or wicked part of his reign is recorded in this book; his repentance is not mentioned, and were it not for the account furnished in the book of Chronicles, we should have known nothing of his conversion. This is one among many examples of the necessity of reading Kings and Chronicles in harmony. During the first part of Manasseh's reign there was a more complete and systematic departure from the worship of the true God in Jerusalem than had ever been seen. Every faith was tolerated there except the faith of JEHOVAH. The great altar of burnt-offering was taken away; the ark was removed from the sanctuary, and an idol substituted; the sacred books were destroyed or proscribed; the Sabbath was despised; prophets and priests of God were slain. Never, in fact, had there been such a thorough national apostasy as was seen at this period. An account of the conversion of Manasseh and its happy results is given in 2 Ch. xxxiii.—*P.*

A.M. 3316. B.C. 688.

y 1 Ki.22. 45, 50. ch. 15.6,7,36,38; 20,20,21. 2 Ch.33.1–20.

5 B.C. 643.

6 This mode of burial prevailed amongst the Jews in the time of our Lord, Jn.19.41. But Manasseh most probably was so buried, apart from the royal sepulchres, out of regard to some of his idols whose statues he had erected in his garden.—*C.*

z 2 Ch. 33. 21–25. 1 Ch.3.14. Mat.1.10.

a 1 Ki.15.25; 16.8; 22. 51. ch.15.23.

b ver.2–7, 16. 2 Ch.33. 22. Nu.32.14.

c 1 Ki.11.33. Ju.2.12, 13. Je.2.13. Jonah 2.8. De.32.15–21.

d ch.12.20; 14.19; 15. 9,25,30. 1 Ki.15.27; 16. 9.

e 1 Ki. 16. 16–18. ch. 14.5; 15.14.

f 1 Sa.11.15. 2 Sa.5.3. 1 Ki.12.20; 16.16. ch.11. 17.

g ver.17. 1 Ki.11.41, 43; 14.20,31. ch.8.23,24; 15.6,7,36,38.

7 B.C. 641.

CHAP. XXII.

a 2 Ch.34.1,2. 1 Ch.3. 14. Mat. 1.10. Je. 1.2. Zep.1.1. 1 Ki.13.2. Is.3. 4.

b Jos.15.39.

c ch.18.3. 1 Ki.11.28; 3.6; 15.5. De.5.32. Jos. 1.7. Eze.18.14. Je. 22. 15,16.

d 2 Ch.34.3,8, *i.e.* the eighteenth year of his reign.

17 ¶ Now [y]the rest of the acts of Manasseh, and all that he did, and his sin that he sinned, *are* they not written in the book of the Chronicles of the kings of Judah?

18 And Manasseh slept with his [5]fathers, and was buried in the garden[6] of his own house, in the garden of Uzza: and Amon his son reigned in his stead.

19 ¶ Amon[z] *was* twenty and two years old when he began to reign; and he reigned [a]two years in Jerusalem: and his mother's name *was* Meshullemeth, the daughter of Haruz of Jotbah.

20 And he did [b]*that which was* evil in the sight of the LORD, as his father Manasseh did.

21 And he walked in all the way that his father walked in, and served the idols that his father served, and worshipped them:

22 And he [c]forsook the LORD God of his fathers, and walked not in the way of the LORD.

23 ¶ And the servants of Amon [d]conspired against him, and slew the king in his own house.

24 And the people of the land [e]slew all them that had conspired against king Amon; and the people of the land [f]made Josiah his son king in his stead.

25 ¶ Now[g] the rest of the acts of Amon which he did, *are* they not written in the book of the Chronicles of the kings of Judah?

26 And he was buried[7] in his sepulchre in the garden of Uzza: and Josiah his son reigned in his stead.

CHAPTER XXII.

1 *Josiah's good reign.* 3 *He provideth for the repair of the temple.* 8 *Hilkiah having found a book of the law, Josiah sendeth to the prophetess Huldah to inquire of the Lord.* 15 *Huldah prophesieth the destruction of Jerusalem, but respite thereof in Josiah's time.*

JOSIAH *was*[a] eight years old when he began to reign; and he reigned thirty and one years in Jerusalem: and his mother's name *was* Jedidah, the daughter of Adaiah of [b]Boscath.

2 And he did [c]*that which was* right in the sight of the LORD, and walked in all the way of David his father, and turned not aside to the right hand or to the left.

3 ¶ And it came to pass in the [d]eighteenth year of king Josiah, *that* the king sent Shaphan

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power: so many are lying in wait to flatter such to their ruin. And novices, being lifted up with pride, fall into the condemnation of the devil. None are apt to be more abandoned profligates than those who trample on a religious education. Irreligion and a violent attachment to devilish devices and false worship are often closely connected. The bad example of great men, particularly kings, is often extremely infectious; and those who set it will, in the last judgment, have to answer for thousands or millions of souls which they have seduced or destroyed: for the greatest kings must shortly stand on a level with the meanest criminals at God's bar. When men abandon themselves to sin, the former public sins of their nation are all brought into their account as approved and reacted by them. And nothing sooner fills up the measure of a nation's sins than the persecution of God's people. Terrible are the miseries which wicked magistrates and ministers bring on those under their charge. And they who imitate them in their wickedness must share in their punishment. They who forsake God must expect to be forsaken by him. But great must be the strength of that inward corruption which renders men daring in wickedness notwithstanding the most awful warnings and judgments. Often men's forwardness in sinning hurries them into hell. And it is a great mercy for a nation when the career of a wicked king is short.

CHAPTER XXII. [Ver. 14. 'College' is an unfortunate rendering of the Hebrew. It was given on the authority of some Jewish rabbins. The word appears to be a proper name, or at least a descriptive title, applied to a distinct, and then well-known, quarter of Jerusalem. The literal meaning of the Hebrew word *Mishneh* is 'second place.' The site of the place referred to in the city cannot now be determined. *P.*]

REFLECTIONS.—Sometimes there are eminent patterns of piety in the most profane family. And wise is the display of God's abundant love and grace. It bodes well when princes begin their cares with the reformation of religion. And it is extremely honourable when the most untainted honesty prevails in the management of public funds and general affairs. But how dreadful is it when the oracles of God are thrust into corners! and much more so when they are little known or regarded by those who have them daily in their hands! It is very unbecoming for great men to live ignorant of, and unconcerned about, their Bibles. For the time is at hand when their contents shall make the most careless and hardened despisers and neglecters tremble: and God's word, when blessed by his Spirit, is quick and powerful to the piercing and conviction of men's consciences. And when we see the wrath of God hanging over our heads, it is full time to think

the son of Azaliah, the son of Meshullam, the scribe, to the house of the LORD, saying,[1]

4 Go up to [e]Hilkiah the high priest, that he may sum the silver which is brought into the house of the LORD, which the keepers of the [f]door have gathered of the people:

5 And let them deliver it into the hand of the doers of the work, that have the [g]oversight of the house of the LORD: and let them give it to the doers of the work which *is* in the house of the LORD, to repair the breaches of the house,

6 Unto carpenters, and builders, and masons, and to buy timber and hewn stone to repair the house.

7 Howbeit [h]there was no reckoning made with them of the money that was delivered into their hand, because they dealt [i]faithfully.[2]

8 ¶ And Hilkiah the high priest said unto Shaphan the scribe, I have found the [k]book of the law in the house of the LORD.[3] And Hilkiah gave the book to Shaphan, and he read it.

9 And Shaphan the scribe came to the king, and brought the king word again, and said, Thy servants have gathered[4] the money that was found in the house, and have delivered it into the hand of them that do the work, that have the oversight of the house of the LORD.

10 And Shaphan the scribe showed the king, saying, Hilkiah the priest hath delivered me a book: and Shaphan [l]read it before the king.

11 And it came to pass, when the king had heard[m] the words of the book[5] of the law, that he rent his clothes.

12 And the king commanded Hilkiah the priest, and Ahikam the son of Shaphan, and Achbor[n] the son of Micaiah, and Shaphan the scribe, and Asahiah a servant of the king's, saying,

13 Go[o] ye, inquire of the LORD for me, and for the people, and for all Judah, concerning the words of this book that is found: for great *is* the wrath of the LORD that is kindled [p]against us, because our fathers have not hearkened unto the words of this book, to do according unto all that which is written concerning us.

14 So Hilkiah the priest, and Ahikam, and Achbor, and Shaphan, and Asahiah, went unto Huldah the [q]prophetess, the wife of Shallum

n 2 Ch.34.20,ch.19.2,3, Je.26.22,24;36.12. *o* Pr.3.6, Am.3.7, Ps.25.14. *p* Ex.20.5, De.5.9,31;xxviii.xxix.xxxi.xxxii, Ro.15.4, 1 Co.10.6,11. *q* 2 Ch.34.22, Ex.15.20, Ju.4.4, Lu.2.36.

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1 A comparison with 2 Ch. xxxiv. shows that the attention of Josiah began to be awakened to divine things in the sixteenth year of his age and eighth of his reign. Four years later he commenced the great work of reformation, removing the idolatrous shrines and altars, and clearing away the images from every district of the land. It is worthy of note that this work was not confined to Judah; he extended it to the country of the ten tribes, a portion of whom must have returned ere this period to their former homes, 2 Ch. 34. 6. In the 18th year of his reign, having cleansed the land of its idolatry, he began, as is here stated, to repair the temple (comp. 2 Ch. 34. 8).—*P.*

e 2 Ch. 34. 9–13. ch. 12.4,9–15. It is thus the Scriptures indicate and establish, not by assertion or argument, but by *fact*, the intellectual and spiritual equality of man and woman. The Spirit of the Lord is upon Huldah, and she is consulted by the high-priest and the nobles.—*C.*

f Heb. *threshold*, Ps.84.10. 2 Ch.8.14.

g 2 Ch. 34.12. ch.12. 11,12.

h ch.12.15.

i Ne.5.16, 13.13. Da. 6.4. Pr.28.20. 2 Ti.2.2. 1 Co.4.2, He.3.2,5.

2 It has been poetically pronounced, and popularly adopted, that 'an honest man's the noblest work of God.' And if 'honesty' be understood as including the payment of the debts we owe to God as well as to man, the sentiment may justly be approved; and will lead both to the discovery and acknowledgment of our own poverty and incapacity to pay, and to the riches and grace of him (Ep. 2. 4) by whom we are bought with a price; whose we are, and whom we should serve. Ac.27.23. 1 Co. 6.20.—*C.*

k 2 Ch.34.14. De.31. 26. It seems to have been the original copy written by Moses.

3 This would seem to have been the *Mosaic autograph*, 2 Ch. 34. 14. Nor need we be surprised at its preservation during so long a period. The interval from Moses to Josiah was but 950 years, and there are still extant MSS. of a confessedly greater age. *C.*——Whether the book discovered was the autograph of Moses or not, there can be no doubt (1) That it was the whole book which we now call the *Pentateuch*, with most probably the other sacred books subsequently added, for it appears from Joshua that all the inspired writings were placed in the tabernacle first, and then in the temple, immediately upon their being written; and (2) That this was the *temple copy* of the law, and consequently of equal authenticity with the Mosaic autograph, if not that autograph itself.—*P.*

4 Heb. *melted.*

l Je.36.21,ver.8,11.

m With De. 17. 18, 19. 31.24,26. Jos. 1. Josh.7.6.

5 We are not to infer that the king had never before heard either this or any other part of the Mosaic Scriptures—such an inference being utterly inconsistent with the character of Hilkiah, his tutor and guardian. The conduct of Josiah is the natural expression of a mind carried back to the days of Moses, who had written what God had spoken to him 'face to face,' and then carried forward into the future judgments threatened against Idolatry, and aroused to a deeper feeling of the impending danger by the venerable relic of inspired antiquity now brought to light. See ver. 13.—*C.*

r Heb. *garments*, Ne.5.13.

6 Or, *in the second part.*—[The *second* rank of buildings adjoining the royal palace. Boothroyd translates it '*suburbs*.'—*Note*. It is thus the Scriptures indicate and establish, not by assertion or argument, but by *fact*, the intellectual and spiritual equality of man and woman. The Spirit of the Lord is upon Huldah, and she is consulted by the high-priest and the nobles.—*C.*]

s Je.22.8, ch.1.6,16.

t De.9.12 Ju.2.20,15-39, De.28.15-68; 29.17-28; 30.17,18; 31.16-18; 32.15-26, with ch.xxiv. xxv.

u Ex. 32. 34. Ju. 3.7, 1 Ki.11.5-11;16.1 Ki.9.6 -9;11.6-8;14.22. Je.ii.-xxvi.

x Ps 115.4-7. Is.2.8. Je.1.16. Mi.5.13.

y Is.33.14 De.32.22, Zep.1.18.

z Is.3.11,8.1.19. Ec.8. 12. Mal 3.18.

a 1 Sa. 24.5. Ps.51.17. Is. 57.15,16; 66.2. Le. 26.40,41. Mi.6.8.

7 'Soften.' (Boothroyd). 'Trembled' (Targum).—*C.*

b ch.19.20,20.5.

c Ge. 15.15. Is.57.1,2 Ps.37.37. ch.22.20,1 Ki.

8 In peace with God, and before the ruinous war break out.

9 So did he die; for though slain in battle at Megiddo, he was brought to Jerusalem, and gathered to his fathers 'in peace' with God, and the rightful people, upon whom God did not, till after Josiah's death, send the threatened judgments of invasion and captivity.—*C.*

CHAP. XXIII.

a 2 Ch. 34.29,30; 29. 20,23. ch. 11. 19.

b Ne.8.1,2. Je. 1.1. Zep.1.1.

1 One of the most affecting and encouraging illustrations of the right of all men to read and hear the Scriptures; the *king*, and not a *priest*, being here the reader, and all the people his audience.—*C.*

c 2 Ki. 8. 9. ch. 22. 8. De.31.26.

d ch. 11.14,17. 2 Ch. 34.31. 35.12-15; 23. 10; 29.10. De.5.1-3;29. 1,10-15. Jos.24.25. Ezr. 10 3.Ne.9.38; x.2 Co.8. 5.

2 The pillar itself being an emblem of stability and sustaining power. See ch. 11.14.—*C.*

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the son of Tikvah, the son of Harhas, keeper of the [r]wardrobe; (now she dwelt in Jerusalem in the college;[6]) and they communed with her.

15 ¶ And she said unto them, [s]Thus saith the LORD God of Israel, Tell the man that sent you to me,

16 Thus saith the LORD, Behold, [t]I will bring evil upon this place, and upon the inhabitants thereof, *even* all the words of the book which the king of Judah hath read:

17 Because they have [u]forsaken me, and have burnt incense unto other gods, that they might provoke me to anger with all the [x]works of their hands; therefore my wrath shall be kindled against this place, and shall not be [y]quenched.

18 But to the king of Judah, which sent you to inquire of the LORD, thus shall [z]ye say to him, Thus saith the LORD God of Israel, *As touching* the words which thou hast heard;

19 Because thine [a]heart was tender,[7] and thou hast humbled thyself before the LORD, when thou heardest what I spake against this place, and against the inhabitants thereof, that they should become a desolation and a curse, and hast rent thy clothes, and wept before me; I also have [b]heard *thee*, saith the LORD.

20 Behold therefore, [c]I will gather thee unto thy fathers, and thou shalt be gathered into thy grave [8]in peace;[9] and thine eyes shall not see all the evil which I will bring upon this place. And they brought the king word again.

CHAPTER XXIII.

1 *Josiah causeth the book to be read in a solemn assembly.* 3 *He reneweth the covenant of the Lord.* 4 *He destroyeth idolatry.* 15 *He burned dead men's bones upon the altar of Bethel, according to the prophecy.* 21 *He kept a most solemn passover.* 24 *He put away witches and all abomination.* 26 *God's final wrath against Judah.* 29 *Josiah, provoking Pharaoh-nechoh, is slain at Megiddo.* 31 *Jehoahaz, succeeding him, is imprisoned by Pharaoh-nechoh, who made Jehoiakim king.* 36 *Jehoiakim's wicked reign.*

AND the[a] king sent, and they gathered unto him all the elders of Judah and of Jerusalem.

2 And the king went up into the house of the LORD, and [b]all the men of Judah, and all the inhabitants of Jerusalem with him, and the priests, and the prophets, and all the people, both small and great; and he read[1] in their ears all the words of [c]the book of the covenant *which was* found in the house of the LORD.

3 ¶ And the [d]king stood by a pillar,[2] and made a covenant before the LORD, to walk after

how to prevent it. Such as are under deep convictions or oppressive fears ought to consult the Lord's prophets. Holy men and women are the fittest to be our friends and advisers. And it is a great benefit to courts when they have Heaven's favourites at hand. How dreadful is it for a nation to be loaded with crimes which the Lord will not pardon. Obstinate and wilful sinning must end in remediless and eternal misery. But it is a great mercy to have our hearts early and deeply affected with the things of God. Such as tremble under apprehensions of God's wrath are in a fair way to escape it. And happy are those who, being at peace with God and their own conscience, are taken away before the infliction of public and awful judgments.

CHAPTER XXIII. [Ver. 2. In the parallel passage in 2 Ch. 34. 30, instead of 'prophets' we find 'Levites.' In Hebrew the two words not only resemble each other closely in letters, but even more closely in pronunciation. It is probable that one of the passages, and perhaps this in Kings, may be a mistake of an early copyist; though both may be genuine—the one historian mentioning 'prophets,' the other 'Levites.' *P.*]

Ver. 7. [Reference is made in this verse to the infamous rites and libidinous orgies by which Astarte was worshipped. These are fully described and indignantly denounced by Augustin, who was an eye-witness of their horrors in Carthage. Her priests were eunuchs in women's attire; and her shrine was surrounded by women who prostituted themselves to enrich the temple. It is this abominable practice which is referred to in De. 23. 18. *P.*]

REFLECTIONS.—When God's wrath hangs over our head, it is high time to attend to and learn his law; and to concur in hearty and cheerful promising with God in Christ. But it is principally God's love and promise of grace that binds men fast to him, and their most solemn vows and promises. Nothing tends more to the welfare of princes than their zealous promoting of the true knowledge and worship of God. But, alas! what fearful abominations may be found among people who have not entirely abandoned the worship of the

MOSQUE OF OMAR FROM THE JERICHO ROAD—A VIEW FROM THE JERICHO ROAD OF THE PLACE WHERE THE HOUSE OF THE LORD STOOD. [II. KINGS, xxiii: 1-2.]—"And the king sent and they gathered unto him all the elders of Judah and of Jerusalem. And the king went up into the house of the Lord, and all the men of Judah, and all the inhabitants of Jerusalem with him, and the priests, and the prophets, and all the people both small and great: and he read in their ears all the words of the book of the covenant which was found in the house of the Lord." On Friday morning, May 27th, 1894, the artist who took these pictures, and the writer, arose in Jericho about 2:30 o'clock, and after a slight breakfast started at 3 o'clock for Jerusalem. We passed by the Judean mountains as in awful solemnity they stood around us in the quiet moonlight, and reached Bethany, two miles from Jerusalem, at 8 o'clock. This picture was taken about half past eight as we approached Jerusalem from Bethany.

the LORD, and to keep his [e]commandments, and his testimonies, and his statutes, with all *their* heart, and all *their* soul, to perform the words of this covenant that were written in this book: and all the people [f]stood to the covenant.

4 ¶ And the king commanded Hilkiah the high priest, and the [g]priests of the second order, and the keepers of the door, to bring forth out of the temple of the LORD all the [h]vessels that were made for Baal, and for the grove, and for all the host of heaven:[3] and he burnt them without Jerusalem [i]in the fields of Kidron, and carried the ashes of them unto [k]Beth-el.

5 And he put down[4] the[l] idolatrous priests, whom the kings of Judah had ordained to burn incense in the high places in the cities of Judah, and in the places round about Jerusalem; them also that burnt incense unto [m]Baal, to the sun, and to the moon, and to the planets,[5] and to all the host of heaven.

6 And he brought out the [n]grove[6] from the house of the LORD, without Jerusalem, unto the brook Kidron, and burnt it at the brook Kidron, and stamped *it* small to powder, and cast the powder thereof upon the graves[7] of the children of the people.[8]

7 And he brake down the houses of the sodomites,[o] that *were* by the house of the LORD, where the women wove [p]hangings[9] for the grove.

8 And he brought all the priests out of the cities of Judah, and defiled the high places where the priests had burnt incense, from Geba[q] to Beer-sheba,[1] and brake down the high places of the gates that *were* in the entering in of the gate of Joshua the governor of the city, which *were* on a man's left hand at the gate of the city.

9 Nevertheless the [r]priests of the high places came not up to the altar of the LORD in Jerusalem, but they did eat of the unleavened bread among their brethren.

10 And he defiled [s]Topheth,[2] which *is* in the valley of the children of Hinnom,[3] that[t] no man might make his son or his daughter to pass through the fire to Molech.

11 And he took away the horses that the kings of Judah had given to the [u]sun,[4] at the entering in of the house of the LORD, by the chamber of Nathan-melech the chamberlain,[v] which *was* in the suburbs, and burnt the chariots of the sun with fire.

12 And the altars that *were* [w]on the top of the upper chamber of Ahaz, which the kings of Judah had made, and the altars which [x]Manasseh had made in the two courts of the house of the LORD, did the king beat down, and brake *them* down from thence,[6] and cast the dust of them into the brook Kidron.

13 And the high places that *were* before Jerusalem, which *were* on the right hand of [z]the mount of Corruption,[7] which [a]Solomon the king of Israel had builded for Ashtoreth the abomination of the Zidonians, and for Chemosh the abomination of the Moabites, and for [b]Milcom the abomination of the children of Ammon, did the king defile.

14 And he [c]brake in pieces the [8]images, and cut down the groves, and filled their places [d]with the bones of men.

15 ¶ Moreover, [e]the altar that *was* at [9]Beth-el, *and* the high place which Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who made Israel to sin, had made, both that altar and the high place he brake down, and burnt the high place, *and* stamped *it* small to powder, and burnt the grove.

16 And as Josiah turned himself, he spied the sepulchres that *were* there in the mount, and sent, and took the bones out of the sepulchres, and [f]burnt *them* upon the altar, and polluted it, according to the word of the LORD which the man of God proclaimed,[1] who proclaimed these words.[2]

17 Then he said, What title[3] *is* that that I see? And the men of the city told him, *It is* [g]the sepulchre of the man of God, which came from Judah, and proclaimed these things that thou hast done against the altar of Beth-el.

18 And he said, Let him alone; let no man move his bones. So they let his bones [h]alone, with the bones of the [i]prophet that came out of Samaria.

19 ¶ And [k]all the houses also of the high places that *were* in the cities of Samaria,[4] which the kings of Israel had made to provoke *the* LORD to anger, Josiah took away, and did to them according to all the acts that he had done in Beth-el.

20 And he [l]slew all the priests of the high places that *were* there upon the altars, and burnt men's bones[5] upon them, and returned to Jerusalem.

21 ¶ And the king commanded all the people, saying, [m]Keep the passover unto the LORD your God, as *it is* written in the book of this covenant.

22 Surely there was not holden [n]such a passover from the days of the judges that judged Israel, nor in all the days of the kings of Israel, nor of the kings of Judah;

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[e] Ex.xx.–xxiii. Le.i. –xxvii. De.i.–xxvii.

[f] 2 Ch.34.32. Ec.8.2. Je.4.2.

[g] 1 Ch. 24.4–7; 26.1–19.

[h] ch.21.4–7; 17.16. 2 Ch. 34.3–7.

3 'Baal' signifies 'lord, master, ruler;' and is here used as a name for the sun, as the chief luminary of the earth, and ruler of the planetary system. 'The grove,' or *Asherah*, most probably the idol called by the Greek and Roman heathens *Venus*. 'All the host of heaven,' all the *constellations*, which, for the sake of order, astronomers have distributed into arbitrary forms, and distinguished by specific names. *C.*—See note on ch.17.16.—*P.*

[i] ver.10. Je.7.31,32.

[k] 1 Ki.12.29. Am. 4. 4. Ho.4.15.

4 Heb. *caused to cease.*

[l] Heb. *Chemarin.* Ho.10.5. Zep.1.4.

[m] ch. 21. 2–7,21; 17. 16. Je.44.17–25.

5 Or, *twelve signs* or *constellations.*

[n] ch.21.7.

6 Evidently the image of the grove-idol 'Asherah.'—*C.*

7 Thus rendering it unclean, so that none might attempt to collect it for relics. —*C.*

8 The spot where the idols were destroyed and burned was doubtless in the deep valley south-east of the city, where Hinnom falls into the Kidron. There the shrine of Moloch was placed; and the whole sides of the valley, with the cliffs and rocks overhead, were filled with tombs. It was easy to scatter the dust of the broken images upon 'the graves of the people.'—*P.*

[o] 1 Ki. 14. 24; 15. 12; 22.46. 2 Ch.34.33. De. 23.17. Jude 7. Ro.1.26, 27.

[p] Or, *shrines*, Ac. 19.24.

9 'Hangings,' either robes for the idol, or curtains and screens for her abominable worship.—*C.*

[q] Jos.18.24. 1 Ki.15. 22. Ge.21.31. Ju.20.1.

1 From Geba, six miles north of Jerusalem, to Beersheba, 40 miles south of it; *i.e.* throughout the whole length of the kingdom of Judah.—*P.*

[r] ver.8. Mal.2.8,9. 1 Sa.2.30,36. Eze.44.10–14,29–31.

[s] ver. 4. Je. 7. 31, 32; 19.6,11. Jos.15.8.

2 So called from *tophet*, a drum. Such noisy instruments are still used in India, to drown the cries of the widows immolated in the *Brahminical suttees.*—*C.*

3 'The valley of *Ben-Hinnom*,' for thus ought the Hebrew to be translated, winds round the western and southern sides of Mount Zion, and falls into the Kidron at En-rogel. It is a deep, narrow, dark ravine.—*P.*

[t] Le. 18. 21. De. 18. 10. ch.16.3; 21. 6. Eze. 20. 37, 39.

[u] Eze.8.16.

[v] Or *eunuch*, or *officer.*

[w] De.22.8. Je. 19.13. Zep.1.5.

[x] ch.21.5,21,22.2Ch. 33.15.

4 The heathen Greeks and Romans, deriving their ideas from the Phœnician idolatry, represented Apollo, or the sun, as drawn by fleet horses in a chariot. Whether the horses mentioned in the text were sculptures, or real horses dedicated to the sun, does not appear. It is most probable they were living horses, as, had they been statuary, of bronze or marble, they had likely shared the fate of the idolatrous altar, recorded ver. 13,14.—*C.*

6 Or, *ran from thence.*

[z] That is, *the Mount of Olives*, 2 Sa.15.30.

7 One of the three tops of the Mount of Olives, denominated 'Corruption,' because of the idolatry practised on it by Solomon. See De.32.5.—*C.*

[a] 1 Ki. 11. 7. Nu. 13. 26.

[b] Or, *Molech*, 1 Ki. 11.5,7.

[c] Ex.23. 24. De. 7. 5, 25. Is.2.18,20;30.22.

8 Heb. *statues.*

[d] ver.16,20.

[e] 1 Ki.12.29,31; 13.2. Thus the man of God's prediction was fulfilled.

9 Josiah had evidently some authority over a great part of the former kingdom of Israel, no doubt by permission of the king of Assyria. He had carried the ashes of the idolatrous vessels to Bethel (ver. 4), in order to render both it and the ashes abominable to the people.—*I.*

[f] 1 Ki.13.1,2.

1 The Sept. and the Hexaplar Syrvers. of Paris insert immediately after these words, 'the man of God proclaimed,' 'when Jeroboam stood by the altar at the feast. And (king Josiah) turning about, cast his eyes on the sepulchre of the man of God who proclaimed these words.' This makes the sense more complete.—*I.*

2 Above 300 years before.

3 'Title,' inscription, perhaps rendered illegible by the lapse of 300 years, unless to those who knew it by local tradition.—*C.*

[g] 1 Ki.13.30,31. 1 Sa. 3.18,19. Ro. 1. 18. Am. 3.7.

[h] Heb. *to escape*, Is.57.2. Re.14.13.

[i] 1 Ki.13.11–32.

[k] 1 Ki.12.31. ch.17.9. 2 Ch.34.6.

4 As Samaria had belonged to the ten tribes, it seems strange that Josiah carried his reformation into that district. But it is most probable that being in amity with the king of Assyria, he ruled over Samaria by a delegated authority.—*C.*

[l] Or, *sacrificed*, Ex. 22.20. Is.34.6. ch.10.25; 11. 18. De. xiii. xvii. 1 Ki.18.40.

5 The design of this was to render their idolatry detestable; for, according to the ceremonial law, nothing was so polluting as a human carcass, or any part of it.—*I.*

[m] 2 Ch.35.1–19. Ex. 12.3. De.16.2. Le.23.5. Nu.9.2,3;28.16.

[n] 2 Ch.35.7–9, 18,19, with 30.1–27. Not one so exactly observed in every respect.

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true God! and shameful discoveries of these are made whenever reformation is thoroughly attempted. There is therefore need of much knowledge, prudence, courage, and zeal, to carry reformation to a proper pitch. God's promises and threatenings are all fulfilled at last, notwithstanding the longest delays. Such as truly covenant with God must not only remove corruptions, but restore the purity and strict observation of the ordinances of God; and particular regard must be had to the exact observation of the instituted seals of his covenant. God takes a peculiar pleasure to perpetuate their honour who have been sincere and active for him in their generation. But irreversible is the doom of nations when once ripened by wickedness. Often the best of princes must taste a little of their cup, especially if they attempt to help their ungodly neighbours. When those who stood in the gap to retard deserved judgments are removed by death, with what tremendous

23 But in the eighteenth year of king Josiah, *wherein* this passover was holden to the LORD in Jerusalem.

24 ¶ Moreover, the [o]*workers with* familiar spirits, and the wizards, and the images,[6] and the idols, and all the abominations that were spied in the land of Judah and in Jerusalem, did Josiah put away, that he might perform the words of the law *which were* written in the book that Hilkiah the priest found in the house of the LORD.

25 And [p]like unto him was there no king before him,[7] that turned to the LORD with [q]all his heart, and with all his soul, and with all his might, according to all the law of Moses; neither after him arose there *any* like him.

26 ¶ Notwithstanding [r]the LORD turned not from the fierceness of his great wrath, wherewith his anger was kindled against Judah, because of all the provocations[8] that Manasseh had provoked him withal.[9]

27 And the LORD said, [s]I will remove Judah also out of my sight, as I have removed Israel, and will cast off this city Jerusalem, which I have chosen, and the house of which I said, My[t] name shall be there.

28 ¶ Now[u] the rest of the acts of Josiah, and all that he did, *are* they not written in the book of the Chronicles of the kings of Judah?

29 ¶ In[x] his days Pharaoh-nechoh king of Egypt went up against the king of Assyria to the river Euphrates: and king Josiah went against him; and he [y]slew him[1] at Megiddo,[2] when he had [z]seen him.[3]

30 And his servants carried him in a chariot dead from Megiddo, and brought him to Jerusalem, and buried him in his own sepulchre: and [a]the people of the land took Jehoahaz[4] the son of Josiah, and anointed him, and made him king in his father's stead.

31 ¶ Jehoahaz *was* twenty and three years old when he began to reign; and he reigned three months in Jerusalem: and his mother's name *was* [b]Hamutal, the daughter of Jeremiah of Libnah.

32 And [c]he did *that which was* evil in the sight of the LORD, according to all that his fathers had done.

33 And Pharaoh-nechoh [d]put him in bands at [e]Riblah, in the land of Hamath, that he might not reign[5] in Jerusalem; and put the land to a tribute of an [6]hundred talents of silver, and a talent of gold.[7]

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o ch.21.3,6;22.8. Le. 20.27. De. 18. 11. 12. 2 Ch.34.3–7,33.Is.8 19.

6 Or, *teraphim.*

p 1 Ki.15.5. 2 Ki. 18. 5. None so blameless.

7 Among the good kings recorded in Scripture, David was signalized by many excellences, but was also guilty of great errors, and one surpassing crime, never passed over by the recording Spirit of God. So that his real eminence lies in his deep remorse and retrieval through faith in the Redeemer. Hezekiah stands next distinguished above all other kings, by confidence in God —whom yet he partially forgot in the day of his prosperity —and whom threatened judgments were necessary to bring to his remembrance, ch. 20. 13, 15–19. Josiah stands above them all in purity of life, and ardent and untiring zeal for reformation. —*C.*

q 1 Ki. 2. 4. Mat. 21. 37. De. 6. 5; 10. 12.

r ch. 24. 4; 22. 13, 17. Je. 15. 1, 4; 43. 10.

8 Heb. *angers.*

9 Not merely the evil acts Manasseh had done, but the evil principles and practices he had inculcated and patronized, the corrupting infection of which still remained to provoke the Lord, and call down his judgments.—*C.*

s ch.17. 6, 18, 20, 23; 24. 3; 25. 11. Je. 3. 11; 15. 4. De. 28. 49–68; 4. 26, 27; 8. 19.

t 1 Ki. 8. 29; 9. 3. ch. 21. 4.

u 1 Ki. 11. 41, 43; 14. 29, 31; 15. 23, 24; 22. 45, 50. ch. 15. 6, 7, 36, 38; 20. 20, 21.

x 2 Ch. 35. 20–24.

y ver. 25. Ec. 8. 14; 9. 1, 2. Ps. 82. Ro. 11. 33. Is. 57. 1, 2; 54. 10. Re. 14. 13.

1 B.C. 610.

2 A city of Manasseh, within the limits of Issachar, about 17 miles north-west of Samaria. Here Josiah attempted to arrest Pharaoh's march to the Euphrates—an act to which he was obligated both by regard to his own safety, and his fealty for Samaria to the king of Assyria.—*C.*

z ch. 14. 8, 11.

3 As soon as he had discovered him—at the first onset. *C.*—This sad event is more fully detailed in 2 Ch. 35. 20.—*P.*

a 2 Co. 36. 1–4. 1 Ch. 3. 15. Je. 22. 11.

4 Or *Shallum*, a younger son.

b ch. 24. 18.

c ch. 16. 2–4; 21. 2–7, 21, 22.

d 2 Ch. 36. 3. Eze. 19. 3, 4.

e Nu. 34. 11. ch. 25. 6, 20, 21. Je. 39. 5, 6; 52. 10. Eze. 47. 17.

5 Or, *because he reigned.*

6 £39,694.

7 By comparing the narrative here given with 2 Ch. 26. 2, we learn that Pharaoh, when on his way to Assyria, captured Jerusalem after the death of Josiah, and took the new-made king Jehoahaz with him northwards, to Riblah on the Orontes. He then raised Eliakim, the elder brother of Jehoahaz, to the throne, where

A.M. 3394. B.C. 610.

he ruled as the vassal of the Egyptian monarch. Riblah is situated on the right bank of the Orontes, in a fertile plain, near the northern termination of the range of Antilebanon.—*P.*

f ch. 24. 17. Da. 1. 6.

g Mat. 1. 11. 1 Ch. 3. 15, 16. 2 Ch. 36. 4.

8 *Eliakim*, God shall arise—*Jehoiakim*, Jehovah shall arise. Jehovah having been the name by which God was revealed in Egypt, the Egyptian monarch seems to convey by the change, either heathenish contempt for the name, or a superstitious evidence that he, and not the king of Judah, was now Jehovah's favourite.—*C.*

h Je. 22. 11.

i ver. 33; ch. 15. 19, 20.

k 2 Ch. 36. 5, 8.

l Je. 22. 13–19; 26, 20–23; 36. 23–26. 2 Ch. 36. 5.

CHAP. XXIV.

B.C. 607.

a 2 Ch. 36. 6. Je. 46. 2; 25. 1. ch. 17. 5. Da. 1. 1, 2.

b 2 Ch. 36. 6, 7. Is. 10. 5, 6. Je. 51. 20–23. Eze. 7. 24; 16. 36–43; 23. 22–35, 45–47.

1 B.C. 603.

c ch. 20. 17; 21. 10–15; 22. 16, 17. Je. 25. 9; 26. 20. Le. xxvi. De. xxviii.

d Am. 3. 6. Is. 10. 5, 6; 45. 7; 27. 11.

2 God is not the author of the sin, when by one wicked man he punishes another. The one that is guilty deserves the punishment; the one who desires to punish is given over to his own corrupt affections, which he follows, thereby fulfilling the righteous judgments of God.—*C.*

e ch. 23. 26, 27. Le. 26. 33. De. 4. 26, 27; 28. 64. Je. 15. 4.

f ch. 21. 2–7, 16; 22. 16, 17. 2 Ch. 33. 2–9. Je. 15. 1–4.

3 Not punishing them for the personal sins of Manasseh, but for those sins he taught them to practise, and in which they became such expert and infamous adepts.—*C.*

g 1 Ki. 11. 41, 43; 14. 29, 31; 15. 7, 8, 23, 24; 22. 45, 50. ch. 23. 28; 21. 17, 25; 20. 20–22; 16. 19; 15. 6, 7, 36, 38.

h 2 Ch. 36. 8. Je. 22. 18, 19; 36. 30.

4 B.C. 599.

5 It is necessary to remark that this king is called by other names, 1 Ch. 3. 16. Je. 22. 24. Mat. 1. 11. But nothing is more common in all ages than for the same person to be called by different names. Napoleon and Bonaparte is the most striking modern example—that conquering scourge of the nations being indiscriminately called by the one or the other title.—*C.*

6 This is not contradicted by Je. 36. 30, for *Jehoiakim* had not to *sit* upon the throne of David, *Jehoiachin* having scarcely ascended till he is carried away from the royal seat which Nebuchadnezzar did not permit him to occupy.—*C.*

i Je. 37. 6, 7; 46. 2.

k 1 Ch. 3. 16. Mat. 3. 11; 1. 12. Je. 22. 24, 28. 2 Ch. 36. 9. His father had made him prorex ten years before.

34 And Pharaoh-nechoh made Eliakim the son of Josiah king in the room of Josiah his father, and [f]turned his name to [g]Jehoiakim,[8] and took Jehoahaz away: and he came [h]to Egypt, and died there.

35 ¶ And Jehoiakim [i]gave the silver and the gold to Pharaoh; but he taxed the land to give the money, according to the commandment of Pharaoh: he exacted the silver and the gold of the people of the land, of every one according to his taxation, to give *it* unto Pharaoh-nechoh.

36 ¶ Jehoiakim[k] *was* twenty and five years old when he began to reign; and he reigned eleven years in Jerusalem: and his mother's name *was* Zebudah, the daughter of Pedaiah of Rumah.

37 And he did *that which was* [l]evil in the sight of the LORD, according to all that his fathers had done.

CHAPTER XXIV.

1 *Jehoiakim, first submitting to Nebuchadnezzar, then rebelling against him, procureth his own ruin.* 5 *Jehoiachin succeedeth him.* 7 *The king of Egypt is vanquished by the king of Babylon.* 8 *Jehoiachin's evil reign.* 10 *Jerusalem is taken, and carried captive into Babylon.* 17 *Zedekiah is made king, and reigneth wickedly: he rebelleth, to the utter destruction of Judah.*

IN his days [a]Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came up, and Jehoiakim became his servant three years: then he turned and rebelled against him.

2 And the LORD [b]sent[1] against him bands of the Chaldees, and bands of the Syrians, and bands of the Moabites, and bands of the children of Ammon, and sent them against Judah to destroy it, [c]according to the word of the LORD, which he spake by his servants the prophets.

3 Surely [d]at the commandment of the [2]LORD came *this* upon Judah, to [e]remove *them* out of his sight, [f]for the sins of Manasseh,[3] according to all that he did;

4 And also for the innocent blood that he shed, (for he filled Jerusalem with innocent blood,) which the LORD would not pardon.

5 ¶ Now[g] the rest of the acts of Jehoiakim, and all that he did, *are* they not written in the book of the Chronicles of the kings of Judah?

6 So Jehoiakim [h]slept with his fathers:[4] and Jehoiachin[5] his son reigned in his stead.[6]

7 ¶ And the king of Egypt [i]came not again any more out of his land: for the king of Babylon had taken, from the river of Egypt unto the river Euphrates, all that pertained to the king of Egypt.

8 ¶ Jehoiachin[k] *was* eighteen years old when

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speed do those judgments hasten to ruin the guilty! and when neither warnings restrain, nor good examples influence, destruction is evidently near.

CHAPTER XXIV. [Ver. 1. The history of the kingdom of Judah under Jehoiakim, as given in this book, is very brief; but from a comparison of Da. i., 2 Ch. 36. 6, and Je. 25. 1, sq., the following facts may be gleaned, and they throw light on the detached statements here made. In the third year of the reign of Jehoiakim Nebuchadnezzar set out on his first expedition against Palestine and Western Asia. His march across the desert must have occupied some time; then he met and conquered the Egyptians at Carchemish; then he conquered Northern Syria and Phœnicia; and at length, in the fourth year of Jehoiakim, he besieged Jerusalem, and captured it about a month after. He took the king prisoner, bound him in fetters to carry him to Babylon, and took some of the precious vessels of the temple to place them in the temple of Bel. For some reason which is not stated Nebuchadnezzar changed his purpose regarding Jehoiakim, and placed him again on the throne. He remained subject for three years, when he rebelled, probably because Nebuchadnezzar was engaged in other wars. The Babylonian king being unable himself to punish the rebel, appears to have sent against Judah bands of the Chaldees,

he began to reign; and he reigned in Jerusalem three months: and his mother's name *was* Nehushta, the daughter of Elnathan of Jerusalem.

9 And he did *that which was* evil in the sight of the LORD, [l]according to all that his father had done.

10 ¶ At[m] that time the servants of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came up against Jerusalem, and the city [n]was besieged.

11 And Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came against the city, and his servants did besiege it.

12 And Jehoiachin the king of Judah [o]went out to the king of Babylon, he, and his mother, and his servants, and his princes, and his officers:[7] and the king of Babylon took him in the eighth year of [p]his reign.[8]

13 And[q] he carried out thence all the treasures of the house of the LORD, and the treasures of the king's house, and cut in pieces [r]all the vessels of gold which Solomon king of Israel had made in the temple of the LORD, as the LORD had said.[s]

14 And he [s]carried away all Jerusalem, and all the princes, and all the mighty men of valour,[1] *even* ten thousand captives, and all the craftsmen[t] and smiths: none remained, save the poorest[u] sort of the people of the land.

15 And [x]he carried away Jehoiachin to Babylon, and the king's mother, and the king's wives, and his officers,[2] and the mighty of the land; *those* carried he into captivity from Jerusalem to Babylon.

16 And all [y]the men of might,[3] *even* seven thousand, and craftsmen and smiths a thousand, all *that were* strong *and* apt for war,[4] even them the king of Babylon brought captive to Babylon.

17 ¶ And [z]the king of Babylon made Mattaniah his father's brother king in his stead, and changed his name to Zedekiah.[4]

18 Zedekiah *was* twenty and one years old when he began to reign; and he reigned eleven years in Jerusalem: and his mother's name *was* Hamutal,[a] the daughter of Jeremiah of Libnah.

19 And he did *that which was* evil in the sight of the LORD, [b]according to all that Jehoiakim had done.

20 For [c]through the anger of the LORD[5] it came to pass in Jerusalem and Judah, until he had cast them out from his presence, that Zedekiah [d]rebelled[6] against the king of Babylon.

A.M. 3405. B.C. 599.

l ch.23.37.

m 2 Ch.36.10. De.28. 49. Le.26.25.

n Heb. *came into siege*, Le.26.25,26. De. 28. 52-57. ch. 17. 5, 6. Hab.1.5-10.

o Je.27.17; 38.17; 22. 24-30.

7 Or, *eunuchs.*

p Nebuchadnezzar's, Je.25.1;52.28.

8 Not in the eighth of Jehoiachin (see ver. 8), but in the eighth of Nebuchadnezzar himself.—*C.*

q ch.20.17; 14.14. Is. 39.6. 1 Ki.14.26. Je.20. 5.

r For ch. 25. 13-15. Je.27.18-21. Da.5.2,3; 1.2.

9 See note on Ezr. 1. 7; and compare with 2 Ch.36.7.—*P.*

s Je.24.1.5; 52.28. 2 Ch.36.6,7. Ezr.1.2.

1 Not all that were in the land, but all the warriors, nobles, and mechanics that were in the city.—*C.*

t 1 Sa. 13. 19, 22. ch. 25.12.

u ch.25.12. Je. 40.7; 52.16.

x 2 Ch.36.10. Es.2.6. Ezr. 1. 2. Je. 22.24-30. ver.12;ch.25.27,28.

2 Or, *eunuchs.*

y Je.52.28. Ps.76.5,6. ch.25.12. Is.9a.13,19,22.

3 This expression generally refers to military prowess, but it also signifies *wealth*, Ge.34.29, and elsewhere; and this sense seems to be required here when compared with ver. 14. *C.*——This is evidently a supplementary account to that in ver. 14. The total may be thus summed up: chiefs and warriors, 10,000; persons of property ('men of might'), 7000; craftsmen and smiths, 1000. Total, 18,000. That persons of property are denoted by 'men of might,' is clear from the distinction in this and the 14th verse.—*I.*

z 2 Ch.36.11. Je.37.1; 52.1. 1 Ch.3.15. ch.23. 34.

4 *Mattaniah*, 'gift of the Lord'—*Zedekiah*, 'justice of the Lord;' a change imposed in vindication of Nebuchadnezzar's severity, which he justifies by the act of providence that permits or inflicts, and not by the principle by which the agent is actuated.—*C.*

a ch.23.31.

b ch.23.37; Je.24.8.

c ch.22.17; 17.12-18. De. 4. 24-27; 31. 16,17; 32.15 27;28.15 68.

5 'Through the anger of God' Zedekiah was given over to his own ways, Ro. 1.24,28.—*I.*

d Je.27.12. Eze.17.3 21. Pr.14.14.

6 The temerity of this act would be astonishing and unaccountable were it not that, as usual, the renunciation was connected with an alliance with the king of Egypt, Pharaoh-hophra, the Apries of profane authors; compare Je.xlvii. Yet he is strongly reproved for having violated the oath he took to the king of Babylon. This was the filling up of the measure of his iniquity, and now the wrath of God descends upon this devoted king, city, and people to the uttermost.—*I.*

A.M. 3414. B.C. 590.

CHAP. XXV.

a Je.39.1; 52.4. Eze. 4.2;24.1, 2;jer.1.2,3;Le.26.25-31. De.28.52-57.

1 In this chapter we have a brief but graphic narrative of the destruction of Jerusalem and Solomon's temple. It is almost verbatim the same as Je. lii. The systematic student of Bible history ought also to read in connection Je.xxxix. with the whole book of Lamentations.—*P.*

2 B.C. 588.

b Je.52.6; 39.2. Zec. 8.19.

c Le. 26. 26. De. 28. 52,53. La.4.10. Eze.4. 16,17;5.3,12;7.15,19;14. 13,21;5.10. Je.37.21; 52. 6.

3 Before the invention of gunpowder there were various military engines for the assault of city walls. Still the chief dependence was on a chain of forts, united by lines, called lines of circumvallation, by which means, by the process now called 'blockade,' cities were at length reduced by famine.—*C.*

d Je.39.2,3; 52.7; 5. 10. De. 28.25. Eze.12. 12.1 Sa.12.25.

4 'The king's garden' was south of Moriah, in the bed of the Kidron valley. The king and his chief men appear to have left the city by a postern, and to have fled down the glen toward the Jordan valley. They were not discovered till the morning; but they were then pursued and captured at Jericho.—*P.*

e Am.2.14. Is.30.16. Eze.12.13.

f Je 52.9,11. Eze.17. 18.

5 Heb. *spake judgment with him*

g Heb. *made blind*, Je.32.5; 34.3. Eze.12. 13. Ps.107.10,11.

6 This cruel practice is a common punishment of dethroned princes in the East, and is done to render them incapable of again ascending the throne. In Persia it is effected by passing a red-hot copper-plate close to the eyes, or with the point of a dagger.—*I.*

7 It was prophesied (Je.32.5; 34.3) that he should go to Babylon, and in Eze.12. 13, that he should never *see* Babylon; and, by this cruelty of Nebuchadnezzar, the apparently contradictory prophecies were reconciled and fulfilled.—*C.*

h Je.52.12. ch.24.12. Zec.8.19.

8 Or, *chief marshal*

i Je.39.14; 37.8; 17.27; 21.14; 52.13; 39.8. 2 Ch. 36.19. Ps.74.3,4,7,8. Lam.2.7. Am.1.5,7,10. 41.10 47.20.18-22;24.4-14,21.

9 Solomon's temple, which, according to Usher, had now stood 424 years, 3 months, and 8 days.—*C.*

k Je.39.8; 52.14. Ne. 1.3.

l Je. 52. 15, 16; 39. 9. ch.24.14.

1 Heb. *fallen away.*

m Je.39.10;xl.-xliv.

CHAPTER XXV.

1 *Jerusalem is again besieged.* 4 *Zedekiah taken, his sons slain, and his eyes put out.* 8 *Nebuzaradan defaceth the city, carrieth the remnant, except a few poor labourers, into captivity,* 13 *spoileth and carrieth away the treasures.* 18 *The nobles of Judah are slain at Riblah.* 22 *Gedaliah, who was set over the people that remained, being slain, the rest flee into Egypt.* 27 *Evil-merodach advanceth Jehoiachin in his court.*

AND it came to pass [a]in the ninth year of his reign, in the tenth month, in the tenth *day* of the month, *that* Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came, he, and all his host, against Jerusalem, and pitched against it; and they built forts against it round about.[1]

2 And the city was besieged unto the eleventh year of king Zedekiah.[2]

3 And on the ninth *day* of the [b]*fourth* month the famine prevailed in the city, and there was [c]no bread for the people of the land.[3]

4 ¶ And the city [d]was broken up, and all the men *of war* fled by night by the way of the gate between two walls, which *is* by the king's garden; (now the Chaldees *were* against the city round about;) and *the king* went the way toward the plain.[4]

5 And the army of the Chaldees [e]pursued after the king, and overtook him in the plains of Jericho; and all his army were scattered from him.

6 So[f] they took the king, and brought him up to the king of Babylon to Riblah; and they gave judgment upon him.[5]

7 And they slew the sons of Zedekiah before his eyes, and [g]put out the eyes[6] of Zedekiah, and bound him with fetters of brass, and carried him to Babylon.[7]

8 ¶ And [h]in the fifth month, on the seventh *day* of the month, (which *is* the nineteenth year of king Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon,) came Nebuzar-adan, captain of the guard,[8] a servant of the king of Babylon, unto Jerusalem:

9 And [i]he burnt the house of the [9]LORD, and the king's house, and all the houses of Jerusalem, and every great *man's* house burnt he with fire.

10 And all the army of the Chaldees, that *were* with the captain of the guard, [k]brake down the walls of Jerusalem round about.

11 Now the [l]rest of the people *that were* left in the city, and the fugitives that fell away[1] to the king of Babylon, with the remnant of the multitude, did Nebuzar-adan the captain of the guard carry away.

12 But the captain of the guard left of [m]the

Syrians, Moabites, &c., by whom the whole country was ravaged, and the last days of Jehoiakim rendered miserable. *P.*]

REFLECTIONS. — By their own wickedness men destroy themselves when they give themselves to sin. Multitudes of wicked men, for their own selfish purposes, are always ready to execute the righteous purpose of God; and all resistance is vain when God will judge. If men mourn not for their fathers' iniquities, they will smart for them: and not one jot or tittle of God's threatenings shall fail. In a day of wrath the vain confidences of sinners shall utterly fail them; and the mightiest arm of flesh will be a weak support against an angry God. In his great power he nips wicked princes in the bud, and lifts them up so their fall becomes the more ruinous and miserable. How craftily conquerers weaken the nations which they purpose to keep enslaved! But there is no evil in the city which the Lord hath not done. Hardened indeed must men be in wickedness, when the repeated miseries of their fellow-transgressors deter them not at all from treading in their steps. And a nation is on the verge of ruin, when God gives up her rulers to infatuation; and when, for the sin of a land, many and wicked are the princes thereof.

CHAPTER XXV. REFLECTIONS. — How dreadful are the fruits of sin in persons, cities, and nations! And fearful is the case of those in cities which are long besieged, or taken by force. But no contrivance for safety will at last avail them who have contemned the counsels of God. The final doom of

INTERIOR OF THE MOSQUE OF OMAR—STANDING OVER THE ROCK WHERE ABRAHAM IS THOUGHT TO HAVE OFFERED UP ISAAC, AND SOLOMON BUILT THE TEMPLE. [II. KINGS, xxv: 13-14.]—"And the pillars of brass that were in the house of the Lord, and the bases, and the brazen sea that was in the house of the Lord, did the Chaldees break in pieces, and carried the brass of them to Babylon. And the pots, and the shovels, and the snuffers, and the spoons, and all the vessels of brass wherewith they ministered, took they away." The interior of the temple that stood where the Mosque of Omar now stands was richly furnished. So the interior of this Mohammedan place of worship is most elaborately furnished. The building has eight sides, each sixty-eight feet long, the whole being covered with richly colored porcelain tiles, and a frieze of tiles running around the building upon which are written passages from the Koran. The great dome is supported by Corinthian columns. There are fifty-six stained glass windows of great brilliancy and beauty. The dome is ninety-eight feet high, and sixty-six in diameter.

poor[9] of the land *to be* vine-dressers and husbandmen.

13 ¶ And [n]the pillars of brass *that were* in the house of the LORD, and the bases, and the brazen sea *that was* in the house of the LORD, did the Chaldees break in pieces, and carried the brass of them to Babylon.[1]

14 And the pots, and the shovels, and the snuffers, and the spoons, and all the vessels of brass, wherewith they ministered, took they away.

15 And the [o]fire-pans, and the bowls, *and* such things as *were* of gold, *in* gold, and of silver, *in* silver, the captain of the guard took away.

16 The two pillars, one sea,[2] and the bases which Solomon had made for the house of the LORD; the brass of all these vessels was without weight.

17 The[p] height of the one pillar *was* eighteen cubits, and the chapiter upon it *was* brass: and the height of the chapiter three cubits; and the wreathen work, and pomegranates upon the chapiter round about, all of brass: and like unto these had the second pillar with wreathen-work.

18 ¶ And the captain of the guard took Seraiah[q] the chief priest,[3] and Zephaniah the second[r] priest, and the three keepers of the door:[4]

19 And out of the city he took an officer[5] that was set over the men of war, and five[6] men of them that [s]were in the king's presence, which were found in the city, and the principal scribe of the host,[7] which mustered the people of the land, and threescore men of the people of the land *that were* found in the city:

20 And Nebuzar-adan captain of the guard took these, and brought them to the king of Babylon to Riblah:

21 And the king of Babylon [t]smote them, and slew[8] them at Riblah, in the land of Hamath. So [u]Judah was carried away out of their land.

A.M. 3416. B.C. 588.

9 Sometimes poverty is a protection; they who own nothing have nothing to lose. The poor, formerly oppressed, have now liberty, while their oppressors are enslaved.—*J.*

n ch.20.17. Je.27.21, 22; 52. 17–22. 1 Ki.7.15, 23,27,47,50. 2 Ch.4. 11–16.

1 This robbery of the house of the Lord, and this carrying away of his people into captivity, are here to be accurately noted, (1) as judgments against an apostatizing and idolatrous church; and (2) as instances of that reckless covetousness and cruelty, which, in due time, brought down the judgments of God against Babylon.—*C.*

o 1 Ki.7.48–51. 2 Ch. 4.20–22;24.14. Ezr.1.9–11. Da.5.2,3.

2 Heb. *the one sea.*

p 1 Ki.7.15. Je.52.21.

q 1 Ch. 6. 14. Je. 52. 24. Ezr.7.1.

3 The person who is here called the *second* priest was what the Jews call *sagan*, a sort of deputy, who performed the functions of the high-priest when he was prevented by any infirmity from attending the temple service.—*Clarke.*

r Je.21.1;29.25.

4 Heb. *threshold.*

5 Or, *eunuch.*

6 In Je. 52. 25 they are said to be *seven*, but this is no contradiction. *Five* were selected at first, and afterwards augmented to *seven*. *C.*—Probably they were no more than *five* at first; or perhaps Jeremiah reckoned, with the five, the *officer* that was set over the men of war, and the *principal scribe* of the host, mentioned here as two with the five; and thus made seven in the whole.—*J.*

s Heb. *saw the king's face*, Je.52.25.

7 Or, *scribe of the captain of the host, i.e.* the secretary of war.

t Je.7.4;52.27.

8 Probably, as the chief instigators and leaders of the insurrection, and to strike the deeper terror into the inferior ranks of the people. *C.*—They were probably known as the favourites and counsellors of Zedekiah, and were put to death as accessories to his rebellion.—*J.*

u Je.25.9. Am. 2.13–16;5.27. De.28.36,64.

A.M. 3416. B.C. 588.

x Je.40.5–9;39.14.

y Je.40.5–9,11–16.

9 Leaders of the disjointed and independent bands of the Jews that arose after the reduction of Jerusalem.—*C.*

1 He was anxious to promote the welfare of the people, by reconciling them to the Babylonian government.—*J.*

z Je.40.9. He.6.16. 2 Sa.14.11;19.23.

a Je.27.12,17;38. 17, 20.

b Zec.7.5;8.19. Je.40. 13–16;41.1–10.

2 Heb. *of the kingdom.*

c Not Ge.31. 49. Ju. 10. 17; 11. 11, not Jos. 11.3, or 15.38, but Jos. 18. 26. 1 Sa. 7.5–16. Ju. 20.1,3.

3 A full narrative of this murder is given in Je. xl. xli.—*P.*

d Je. 41. 17, 18; xlii. xliii. De.28.68.

e Je.52.31–34.

4 B.C. 562.

f Pr. 21. 1. Da. 5. 11. Ge.40.14.

5 His proper name was Merodach, but the epithet *Evil, i.e.* foolish, was prefixed, probably because he was profligate and wicked.—(*Prideaux.*) He succeeded Nebuchadnezzar in the year 561 B.C., and reigned three years. He resumed his designs on the Medes, whose growing power he dreaded. His army was however routed, and himself slain, by Cyrus. He was succeeded by Belshazzar, in whose reign Babylon was taken by the same parties who had defeated his father.—*J.*

6 Heb. *good things with him.*

7 In times and countries abounding with petty sovereignties, we need not be surprised to hear of many captive kings being congregated at Babylon. England, at a period comparatively modern, contained seven distinct kingdoms. Providence, by thus distinguishing the captive monarch of Judah, had the great end in view of drawing the attention of the Babylonian monarch to the revealed word and divine ordinances of Moses and the prophets, and of thus preparing the way for the development of those instructions and warnings which, through Babylon, continue to be still addressed by Daniel and other prophets, to the mighty kings and proud cities of the earth.—*C.*

g Ge. 41. 42; 49. 10. 2 Sa.9.7.ch.24.12. Da. 1. 9;2.48;3.30.

22 ¶ And[x] *as for* the people that remained in the land of Judah, whom Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon had left, even over them he made Gedaliah the son of Ahikam, the son of Shaphan, ruler.

23 And when all the [y]captains of the [9]armies, they and their men, heard that the king of Babylon had made Gedaliah governor, there came to Gedaliah to Mizpah, even Ishmael the son of Nethaniah, and Johanan the son of Careah, and Seraiah the son of Tanhumeth the Netophathite, and Jaazaniah the son of a Maachathite, they and their men.

24 And [1]Gedaliah [z]sware to them, and to their men, and said unto them, [a]Fear not to be the servants of the Chaldees: dwell in the land, and serve the king of Babylon, and it shall be well with you.

25 But it came to pass in the [b]seventh month, that Ishmael the son of Nethaniah, the son of Elishama, of the seed royal,[2] came, and ten men with him, and smote Gedaliah, that he died, and the Jews and the Chaldees that were with him at [c]Mizpah.[3]

26 And all the people, both small and great, and the captains of the armies, arose, and [d]came to Egypt: for they were afraid of the Chaldees.

27 ¶ And [e]it came to pass in the seven and thirtieth year[4] of the captivity of Jehoiachin king of Judah, in the twelfth month, on the seven and twentieth *day* of the month, *that* [f]Evil-merodach[5] king of Babylon, in the year that he began to reign, did lift up the head of Jehoiachin king of Judah out of prison;

28 And he spake kindly[6] to him, and set his throne above the throne of the kings[7] that *were* with him in Babylon;

29 And [g]changed his prison garments: and he did eat bread continually before him all the days of his life.

30 And his allowance *was* a continual allowance given him of the king, a daily rate for every day, all the days of his life.

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impenitent sinners is to be bound with chains of darkness unto the judgment of the great day! How terribly the ordinances of God suffer for the sin of their attendants! And woe to that city or kingdom from which they are removed! Dreadful is the universal overthrow that surely follows: and men of rank, in the time of such public calamities, are exposed to the most distinguished miseries, answerable to their distinguished influence in the sinful causes thereof. But observe here how exactly the threatenings of God by Moses and the prophets are now fulfilled. Notwithstanding Nebuchadnezzar's intentions, not a remnant of Jews is left in the land of Canaan: and yet, in the very midnight of their captivity, he grants them a token of their future deliverance.

THE FIRST BOOK OF

CHRONICLES.

This and the following book were probably written by Ezra the noted reformer after the captivity. They comprehend a history of about 3500 years from the creation till after the Jews returned from Babylon. Their manifest scope is to fix the genealogies of the Jewish nation, and to narrate the noted transactions of David and his royal descendants. As the ancient names of persons or places are sometimes altered in whole or in part, and a number of circumstances, not formerly mentioned, inserted, there is sometimes a seeming, but not a real, contradiction between them and the preceding books; particularly 2 Samuel and the two books of Kings. If we are at any loss to reconcile some of these passages let us blame our own weakness, but never the oracles of God. Things relative to these mere circumstances might be obvious to the ancient Jews, which are now to us obscure or unknown. The first book contains, (1) A collection of sacred genealogy for about 3600 years, from Adam till long after the captivity, mingled with some shreds of history not formerly inserted, i.–ix. This genealogy was of great use to the Jews who returned from Babylon, to fix them in their respective tribes and families; and is of use to us, to manifest our Redeemer to be the promised seed of David, Judah, Abraham, and Eve, according to the flesh. And now that he is come, for whose sake the registers were chiefly preserved, no genealogy of the Jews, for more than 1700 years backwards, is in the least to be depended on. (2) A repeated view of the translation of the kingdom of Israel from Saul to David, and of the triumphs of the latter, with several additions, x.–xii. xviii.–xxi. (3) An account of David's settling the ark at Jerusalem; fixing the orders of the priests, Levites, singers, porters, and other ecclesiastical officers; appointing the officers of his property and trained bands; of the vast preparations he made for building the temple; and the directions he gave to Solomon and others concerning it; most of which is not before narrated; xiv.–xvii. xxii.–xxix.

[The First and Second Books of Chronicles were originally one. Jerome informs us that in his time they formed but one book in all Hebrew MSS.; but that the early Christian churches had divided them on account of their length. The name *Chronica*, or *Chronicorum Liber*, given to them in the Vulgate, and from which comes their modern appellation, appears to be derived from Jerome. Jewish tradition assigns the compilation of the books to Ezra, and with this their internal character entirely agrees. It is worthy of note that the book of Ezra is a continuation of Chronicles. The two may be said in fact to form one complete history. The more immediate causes of the compilation of Chronicles appear to have been, (1) A desire to rectify and preserve the genealogical registers of the nation, which had doubtless become seriously deranged by the captivity. Without these registers the redistribution of Palestine among the returned captives would have been impossible. (2) A desire to reconstruct the whole temple service and national worship in accordance with the Mosaic law. This could only be effected by the residence of the priests and Levites in Jerusalem in the order of their courses, as arranged by David. The whole registers of the tribe of Levi had therefore to be revised; and the laws for the tithes and offerings had to be fully considered. These facts will explain the leading characteristics of the books of Chronicles. The scholar observes a striking resemblance in style to the book of Ezra; he also notices many Chaldee words and forms of expression, showing that the author, while he wrote in Hebrew, was familiar with the Chaldee tongue. *P.*]

CHAPTER I.

1 *Adam's line to Noah and his sons.* 5 *The sons of Japheth.* 8 *The sons of Ham.* 17 *The sons of Shem.* 24 *Shem's line to Abraham and his sons.* 29 *Ishmael's sons.* 32 *The sons of Keturah.* 34 *The posterity of Abraham by Esau.* 43 *The kings of Edom.* 51 *The dukes of Edom.*

ADAM,[a] Sheth,[1] Enosh,
2 Kenan,[b] Mahalaleel, Jered,
3 Henoch,[c] Methuselah, Lamech,
4 Noah,[d] Shem, Ham, and Japheth.

5 ¶ The[e] sons of Japheth; Gomer, and Magog, and Madai, and Javan, and Tubal, and Meshech, and Tiras.[2]

6 And the [f]sons of Gomer; Ashchenaz, and Riphath,[3] and Togarmah.[4]

7 And the [g]sons of Javan; Elishah, and Tarshish, Kittim, and Dodanim.[5]

8 ¶ The [h]sons of Ham; Cush, and Mizraim, Put, and Canaan.[6]

9 And [i]the sons of Cush; Seba, and Havilah, and Sabta, and Raamah, and Sabtecha. And the sons of Raamah; Sheba, and Dedan.

10 And Cush [k]begat Nimrod; he began to be mighty upon the earth.[7]

B.C. 4004.

CHAP. I.

a Ge.5.1–9.Lu.3.38.

1 Cain is omitted as not in the direct line of the patriarchs, and Abel because he had no descendants.—*C.*

b Ge.5.10–18. Lu. 3. 37.

c Ge.5.18–25. Lu. 3. 36,37.

d Ge.5.32;10.1.

e Ge.10.2. Eze.38.2; 27.13;32.26.Is.66.19.

2 B.C. 2446.

f Ge.10.3. Je.51. 27. Eze.38.6;27.14.

3 Or *Diphath*, as in some copies. But Riphat is the correct reading, as in Ge. 10. 3.—*I.*

4 Togarmah is Armenia; Riphath the Riphæan Mountains. By Ashchenaz the modern Jews understand Germany, but without authority.—*I.*

g Ge. 10. 4. Eze. 27. 7,12,25.Is.66.19. From Japheth sprang the Gomerians, Tartars, Turks, Medes, Greeks, Italians, &c.

5 Or, *Rodanim*. [The words terminating in *im* denote tribes.—*Davidson.*]

h Ge.10.6.

6 B.C. 2346.

i Ge.10.7.

k Ge.10.8–10.

7 B.C. 2311. [See Genesis x. xxv. xxxvi., which contain a similar genealogy. The difference of the names may have arisen merely from the mutation of certain Hebrew letters, from the want of uniformity in the rendering of the original by our translators, and from the same person being known by two or more names.—*Davidson.*]

A.M. 1714. B.C. 2290.

l Ge.10.13,14.

8 B.C. 2290.

m De.2.23.

n Ge. 10. 15–19; 15. 18–21. From Ham sprang the Cushites, Egyptians, and other Africans, and the Canaanites.

9 B.C. 2346.

o Ge.10.22;11.10.

p Or, *Mash*, Ge.10. 23. From Shem sprang the Persians, Assyrians, Chaldeans, Syrians, Arabians, &c.

q Ge.10.24;11.12–14.

r Ge.10.25.

1 That is, *division*.

2 B.C. 2247.

3 The Arabs call Joktan *Kachtan*, and in their traditions also he is the son of Eber. After the confusion of tongues, and the dispersion of Noah's posterity, he is said to have settled in Yemen (Arabia Felix), and to have been the first that wore a diadem.—*I.*

s Ge.10.26–30.

11 And [l]Mizraim begat Ludim, and Anamim, and Lehabim, and Naphtuhim,[8]

12 And Pathrusim, and Casluhim, (of whom came the Philistines,) and [m]Caphtorim.

13 And [n]Canaan begat Zidon his first-born, and Heth,[9]

14 The Jebusite also, and the Amorite, and the Girgashite,

15 And the Hivite, and the Arkite, and the Sinite,

16 And the Arvadite, and the Zemarite, and the Hamathite.

17 ¶ The [o]sons of Shem; Elam, and Asshur, and Arphaxad, and Lud, and Aram, and Uz, and Hul, and Gether, and Meshech.

18 And [q]Arphaxad begat Shelah, and Shelah begat Eber.

19 And unto [r]Eber were born two sons: the name of the one *was* Peleg,[1] (because in his days[2] the earth was divided,) and his brother's name *was* Joktan.[3]

20 And [s]Joktan begat Almodad, and Sheleph, and Hazarmaveth, and Jerah,

CHAPTER I. REFLECTIONS.—What ground have all men to be humble, when they are sprung of Adam, who disobeyed God! and it is necessary to love all as our neighbours and brethren, since God has made of one blood all nations of the earth. How contemptible and short the years of all generations appear before the everlasting God! Quickly men post into death and eternity: and scarcely are they born, in God's reckoning, when they die. How marvellous is the providence of God in keeping up the degenerate race of mankind in the world, and in such equality between the sexes, amidst such a multitude of changes! Remarkably trodden are the paths of death, though still unknown. What multitudes have gone before us, as there are innumerable that follow: and how great and

21 Hadoram also, and Uzal, and Diklah,
22 And Ebal, and Abimael, and Sheba,
23 And Ophir, and Havilah, and Jobab. All these *were* the sons of Joktan.[4]
24 ¶ [t]Shem,[5] Arphaxad, Shelah,
25 Eber,[u] Peleg, Reu,
26 Serug,[x] Nahor, Terah,
27 Abram;[y] the same *is* Abraham.[6]
28 The[z] sons of Abraham; Isaac, and Ishmael.
29 ¶ These *are* their generations: [a]The firstborn of Ishmael,[7] Nebaioth; then Kedar, and Adbeel, and Mibsam,[8]
30 Mishma, and Dumah, Massa, [b]Hadad, and Tema,
31 Jetur, Naphish, and Kedemah. These are the sons of Ishmael.
32 ¶ Now the [c]sons of Keturah, Abraham's concubine: she bare Zimran, and Jokshan, and Medan, and Midian, and Ishbak, and Shuah.[9] And the sons of Jokshan; Sheba, and Dedan.
33 And the sons of Midian; Ephah, and Epher, and Henoch, and Abida, and Eldaah. All these *are* the sons of Keturah.[1]
34 ¶ And Abraham begat Isaac.[2] The [d]sons of Isaac; Esau, and Israel.
35 The sons of [e]Esau; Eliphaz, Reuel, and Jeush, and Jaalam, and Korah.
36 The sons of Eliphaz; Teman, and Omar, Zephi,[f] and Gatam, Kenaz, and Timna,[3] and Amalek.[4]
37 The sons of Reuel; Nahath, Zerah, Shammah, and Mizzah.
38 ¶ And the sons of [g]Seir; Lotan, and Shobal, and Zibeon, and Anah, and Dishon, and Ezer, and Dishan.
39 And the sons of Lotan; Hori, and [h]Homam:[5] and Timna[6] *was* Lotan's sister.
40 The sons of Shobal; [i]Alian, and Manahath, and Ebal, [k]Shephi, and Onam. And the sons of Zibeon; Aiah, and Anah.
41 The sons of Anah; Dishon. And the sons of Dishon; [l]Amram, and Eshban, and Ithran, and Cheran.
42 The sons of Ezer; Bilhan, and Zavan, *and* Jakan.[m] The sons of Dishan; Uz, and Aran.
43 ¶ Now these *are* the kings [n]that reigned in the land of Edom before *any* king reigned over the children of Israel;[7] Bela[8] the son of Beor:[9] and the name of his city *was* Dinhabah.
44 And when Bela was dead, Jobab the son of Zerah of Bozrah reigned in his stead.
45 And when Jobab was dead, Husham of the land of the Temanites reigned in his stead,
46 And when Husham was dead, Hadad the son of Bedad (which smote Midian in the field of Moab) reigned in his stead: and the name of his city *was* Avith.
47 And when Hadad was dead, Samlah of Masrekah reigned in his stead.
48 And when Samlah was dead, [n]Shaul of Rehoboth by the river reigned in his stead.
49 And when Shaul was dead, Baal-hanan the son of Achbor reigned in his stead.
50 And when Baal-hanan was dead, [o]Hadad reigned in his stead: and the name of his city *was* [p]Pai; and his wife's name *was* Mehetabel, the daughter of Matred, the daughter of Mezahab.
51 ¶ Hadad died also.[1] And the [q]dukes[2] of Edom were; duke Timnah, duke Aliah, duke Jetheth,
52 Duke Aholibamah, duke Elah, duke Pinon,
53 Duke Kenaz, duke Teman, duke Mibzar,
54 Duke Magdiel, duke Iram.[r] These *are* the dukes of Edom.[3]

A.M. 2247. B.C. 1757.

4 These settled in the south and east of Arabia.
t Lu.3.30,35. Ge.11.10–12.
5 The genealogy returns to Shem, because from him the Jews were descended, and from them our Lord.—*C.*
u Ge.11.14–18. Lu.3.35.
x Ge.11.20–24. Lu.3.34.
y Ge.17.5.
6 B.C. 1836.
z Ge.21.2,3;16.12,15;25.12.
a Ge.25.13–17. ch.5.19.
7 These are particularized to mark the fulfilment of the divine promise, Ge. 17. 20. The descendants of Ishmael still constitute 'a great nation,' occupying a principal place in the still unconquered Arabia.—*C.*
8 B.C. 1870.
b Or, *Hadar*, Ge. 25.15.
c Ge. 25. 1–6; 37. 28. Nu.22,3,7,25–17,18; 31. 2,8, 16, 17. Ju. vi.–viii. Is.60.6.
9 B.C. 1854.
1 These, and the Ishmaelites, settled in the north and east parts of Arabia, and became great nations.
2 B.C. 1836.
d Ge.25.26;35.29.
e Ge.36. 9, 20. They settled on the south-east border of Canaan.
f Or, *Zepho*, Ge.36. 11.
3 We learn from Ge. 36. 12 that Timna was the name of the mother of Amalek. But this will not authorize us to follow the Arabic or Alexandrine copy of the Septuagint, and suppose this Timna to be the concubine and not the son of Eliphaz. The mother and the son might both be called by the same name. C.——Timna was not a *son* of Eliphaz, but his concubine, and mother of Amalek. Ge. 36. 12, with which the Arabic and Wechelius' edition of the Septuagint agree here. The Codex 495 of Kennicott omits Timnah.—*I.*
4 B.C. 1700.
g Ge.36.20–30. They dwelt in Mount Seir, and intermingled with the offspring of Esau.
h Or, *Heman*, Ge. 36.22.
5 cir. 1900.
6 This is most probably that Timna who was the concubine of Eliphaz, and mother of Amalek. —*C.*
i Or, *Alvan*, Ge.36. 23.
k Or, *Shepho*, Ge.36. 23.
l Or, *Hemdan*, Ge. 36.25,26.
m Or, *Achan*, Ge. 36.27,28.
n Ge.36.31–39.
7 That is, any king of their own nation, of whom Saul was the first. Previously they had been ruled by patriarchs, as Abraham, &c.; by a foreign king, as Pharaoh; by Moses and Aaron by direct commission from God; by Joshua as a military leader, but with Mosaic authority; and then by an intermixture of foreign conquerors and native judges.—*C.*
8 These kings probably all reigned before the Hebrews came out of Egypt, and perhaps were Horites, who reigned before the posterity of Esau took possession of the country from them.
9 About 1900 or 1670.

A.M. cir. 2504. B.C. cir. 1500.

n Ge.36.37.
o Or, *Hadar*, Ge. 36.39.
p Or, *Pau*, Ge. 36. 39.
1 About 1500.
q Ge. 36. 40–43. Ex. 15.15.
2 These rulers are not well represented by the modern idea attached to the word 'duke.' Perhaps the nearest approach is 'chieftain,' head or leader of a family or clan, and nearly allied to the patriarchal rulers of the Scottish Highlanders. —*C.*
r Ge.36.41,43.
3 Several difficulties in these genealogies have arisen from errors or omissions in transcribing. It is in this way that various readings and apparent contradictions have originated, particularly in this and the following chapter. They are, however, of no moment except as matters of criticism. In some cases (as Chileab, 2 Sa. 3. 3, called Daniel, 1 Ch. 3. 1) the person probably had two names, and in others the pronunciation might be altered. We know that changes occur in every language during the lapse of several hundred years. Grandsons and remote descendants are often mentioned as sons. The marginal readings remove many of the seeming discrepancies.—*I.*

CHAP. II.

B.C. 1751.

1 Or, *Jacob*.
a Ge.29.32–35; 30.5–24; 35. 18–22; 46. 8–26; xlix. Ex.1.1–5. Nu.i.ii. x.xiii.xxvi. xxxiv. Jos. xiii.–xxi. ch.ii.–ix.; 12 29–49; 27. 16–22. Eze. xlviii.
b Ge.38.1–10; 46. 12. Nu.26.19–21.
2 Reuben was the first-born in point of time, Judah in respect of dignity. The title of first-born being transferable.—*C.*
3 B.C. 1735.
4 The renewed in heart are sometimes taken away early, that God may deliver them from temptation, sorrow, and 'the evil to come,' Is. 57. 1; the wicked are also cut off early in judgment, so that they do not live 'half their days,' Ps. 55.23.—*C.*
c Ge.38. 11–30. Mat. 1.3. Nu.26.20.
d Ru.4.18. Ge.46.12. Nu.26.21.
e Or, *Zabdi*, Jos. 7. 1.
6 B.C. 1706.
f 1 Ki.4.31.
g Or, *Darda*.
7 Or, *Achan*, [Here called *Achar*, *i.e.* the *trouble*r, from the *trouble* he caused to Israel in the accursed thing. Carmi is in Jos. 7. 17 called the son of Zabdi, which, by the change of *b* to *m*, and *d* to *r* (letters which resemble each other, the former in sound, the latter in form), is converted here into Zimri.—*I.*]
g Jos.6.1917.1–26.
8 B.C. 1460.
9 B.C. 1680.
h Ru.4. 18–22. Mat. 1.3–6. Lu.3.24–31.
i Or, *Aram*, Mat. 1.3.
k Or, *Caleb*, ver.18.
1 B.C. 1630.
l Salmon, Ru. 4. 21. Mat.1.4.ver.51.
2 B.C. 1544.
3 B.C. 1410.

CHAPTER II.

1 The sons of Israel. 3 The posterity of Judah by Tamar. 13 The children of Jesse. 18 The posterity of Caleb the son of Hezron. 21 Hezron's posterity by the daughter of Machir. 25 Jerahmeel's posterity. 34 Sheshan's posterity. 42 Another branch of Caleb's posterity. 50 The posterity of Caleb the son of Hur.

THESE *are* the sons of [1]Israel; [a]Reuben, Simeon, Levi, and Judah, Issachar, and Zebulun,
2 Dan, Joseph, and Benjamin, Naphtali, Gad, and Asher.
3 ¶ The sons of [b]Judah;[2] Er,[3] and Onan, and Shelah: *which* three were born unto him of the daughter of Shuah the Canaanitess. And Er, the first-born of Judah, was evil in the sight of the LORD, and he slew him.[4]
4 And [c]Tamar, his daughter-in-law, bare him Pharez, and Zerah. All the sons of Judah *were* five.
5 The sons of [d]Pharez; Hezron, and Hamul.
6 And the sons of Zerah; [e]Zimri,[5] and Ethan, and Heman, and [f]Calcol, and Dara:[6] five of them in all.
7 And the sons of Carmi; Achar,[7] the troubler of Israel, who transgressed in the thing [g]accursed.[8]
8 And the sons of Ethan; Azariah.[9]
9 The sons also of [h]Hezron, that were born unto him; Jerahmeel, and [i]Ram, and [k]Chelubai.
10 And Ram begat Amminadab, and Amminadab begat Nahshon,[1] prince of the children of Judah;
11 And Nahshon begat [l]Salma, and Salma begat Boaz,[2]
12 And Boaz begat Obed,[3] and Obed begat Jesse.

awful will be that assembly in which all the dead, small and great, shall stand before God! Not one existing, from the foundation of the world till Christ's second coming, shall then be missing! But of little account with God are all nations in respect of his loving people and church. **Their genealogy comes in merely as incidental to that of his blessed family.**

CHAPTER II. REFLECTIONS.—Great were the blemishes of the first four fathers of the Hebrew tribes: and yet two of these tribes are chosen to the distinguished honours of priesthood and royalty; and the last of these to produce an incarnate God.—Not of works, lest any man should boast! The most distinguished sinners are often rendered the most remarkable

13 ¶ And[m] Jesse begat his first-born [n]Eliab,[3] and Abinadab[4] the second, and [o]Shimma the third,

14 Nethaneel the fourth, Raddai the fifth,

15 Ozem the sixth, David the seventh:[5]

16 Whose sisters *were,* Zeruiah and Abigail. And[p] the sons of Zeruiah; Abishai, and Joab, and Asahel, three.[6]

17 And [q]Abigail bare Amasa: and the father of Amasa *was* Jether the Ishmaelite.[7]

18 ¶ And [r]Caleb[8] the son of Hezron begat *children* of Azubah[9] *his* wife, and of Jerioth: her sons *are* these; Jesher,[1] and Shobab, and Ardon.

19 And when Azubah was dead, Caleb took unto him [s]Ephrath, which bare him Hur.

20 And Hur begat Uri, and Uri begat [t]Bezaleel.[2]

21 ¶ And afterward Hezron went in to the daughter of [u]Machir, the father of Gilead, whom he married[3] when he *was* threescore years old; and she bare him Segub.

22 And Segub begat Jair,[4] who had three and twenty cities in the land of Gilead.

23 And [x]he took Geshur, and Aram, with the towns of Jair, from them, with Kenath, and the towns thereof, *even* threescore cities: all these *belonged to* the sons of Machir, the [y]father of Gilead.[5]

24 And after that Hezron was dead in Caleb-ephratah, then Abiah, Hezron's wife, bare him Ashur the father of [z]Tekoa.

25 ¶ And the sons of [a]Jerahmeel[6] the first-born of Hezron were, Ram the first-born, and Bunah, and Oren, and Ozem, *and* Ahijah.

26 Jerahmeel had also another wife, whose name *was* Atarah; she *was* the mother of Onam.

27 And the sons of Ram the first-born of Jerahmeel were, Maaz,[7] and Jamin, and Eker.

28 And the sons of Onam were, Shammai, and Jada. And the sons of Shammai; Nadab, and Abishur.

29 And the name of the wife of Abishur *was* Abihail; and she bare him Ahban, and Molid.

30 And the sons of [b]Nadab; Seled, and Appaim: but Seled died without children.

31 And the sons of Appaim; Ishi. And the sons of Ishi; Sheshan. And the children of Sheshan;[c] Ahlai.

32 And the sons of Jada the brother of Shammai; Jether, and Jonathan: and Jether died without children.

33 And the sons of Jonathan; Peleth, and Zaza. These were the sons of Jerahmeel.

34 ¶ Now Sheshan had no sons, but daughters: and Sheshan had a servant, an Egyptian, whose name *was* Jarha.

35 And Sheshan [d]gave his daughter to Jarha[8] his servant[e] to wife; and she bare him Attai.

A.M. 2806. B.C. 1198.

m 1 Sa. 16. 6–11; 17. 12.

n Or, *Elihu,* ch.27. 18.

3 B.C. 1198.
4 B.C. 1086.

o Or *Shammah,* 1 Sa.16.9, or *Shimea,* ch.20.7.

5 He had eight sons, 1 Sa. 16. 10, but one must have died, and so, like Abel, ch. 1. 1, have had his name expunged from the genealogy.—*C.*

p 2 Sa.2.18; 3. 30; 17. 25.

6 B.C. 1080.

q 2 Sa. 17. 25; 19. 13; 20. 4–10. 1 Ki. 2. 5, 32. Jether was an Ishmaelite by birth, and an Israelite by religion.

7 He was, say some, an Ishmaelite by birth, and an Israelite by religion; but the reading of 'Israelite' in Samuel must be corrected from the text here.—*I.*

r ver.9.

8 Not that Caleb mentioned Nu. 13. 6, for he was the son of Jephunneh, who is referred to ch. 4. 15. This Caleb must have lived some time before the *exodus,* as Bezaleel, who was a principal artist in constructing the tabernacle, was his grandson.—*C.*

9 The text is here corrupt. It would seem from the next verse that Jerioth was not a wife of Caleb. Houbigant and Dathe put the name as the first of his sons; and Geddes and Boothroyd consider Jerioth a daughter, and that the names which follow are those *of her* sons, and not Caleb's; but it is not likely that in a condensed genealogy like this, the children of daughters would be mentioned. —*I.*

1 B.C. 1650.
s ver.5,50;ch.4.4.
t Ex.31.2;38.22.
2 B.C. 1580.
u Nu.27.1.
3 Heb. *took.*
4 B.C. 1510.

x Nu.32.41,42. De.3. 14,15. Jos.13.30,31. Ju. 10.4.

y ver. 21, 24, 42, 49–52;ch.4.4,11,12,14, &c. To be father of a city or country, is to be the father of its inhabitants, or the founder or chief ruler of it.

5 See notes on Nu. 32. 41 and De. 3. 14.—*I.*

z ch. 4. 5. 2 Sa. 14.2. Je 2. 1.

a ver.9,26,27, 33, 42. 1 Sa.27.10;30.29.

6 Of all the persons mentioned from ver. 25 to 33, nothing more is known than the names. What then is the use of the record? Amongst other uses, one is very important, to teach men humility. The proud may leave nothing but a name; nay, their very name may be expunged from all but the records of him, who, while he is no respecter of the persons of the living, is ready to judge the dead, 'both small and great,' Re.20.12. —*C.*

7 B.C. 1610.

b ver.28.

c ver.34,35.

d Ge.21.21. De. 7. 3. Ju.14.2.1 Co.7.38.

8 B.C. 1500.

9 He may have been a proselyte, and consequently there was no breach of law in the marriage. The name *servant* is no certain index of his rank; for such was Eliezer of Damascus, whom, nevertheless, Abraham contemplated as his heir. The record is given,

A.M. 2504. B.C. 1500.

not merely as a genealogical fact, but also as an historical remedy against national prejudices. A lesson which none ever needed more frequently than Israel. *C.*——The object doubtless was to preserve the inheritance in the family. This is no uncommon circumstance in the East. 'Among the attendants of the Cambay nabob, as also at Surat and other places, are several Abyssinian and Caffre slaves, called, by way of courtesy, *seddees* or master. They are often promoted to great honour, richly apparelled, and furnished with horses, arms, and servants. This is customary among the Moguls, Turks, Persians, and Arabians, and especially the Mamelukes of Egypt, most of whom have ascended to their eminence from such an origin. The slaves who conduct themselves well find their chains light, are treated like near relatives, and are admitted to great confidence. They often obtain their freedom, and marry their masters' daughters' (Forbes's *Oriental Memoirs*).—*I.*

e ch.11.41.

f ver.9,18,19,24. Ge. 49.3. Ex.4.22,23. Ro.8. 29. He.12.23.

1 B.C. 1630.

2 Men are in this and the following chapters called *fathers* of cities, because their posterity peopled them. [Dathe translates 'founder,' saying that Ziph was a town, as were Hebron and other names here given. But may they not have been first names of men before they were given to towns?—*I.*]

g ver. 23, 24, 45, 49; ch. 8. 29. Ezr. 2.21–35. Ne.7.25–38.

h Jos.15. 58. ver. 18, 19,48.

3 Heb. *pelegesh,* that is, *a half-wife,* or *divided,* or *secondary wife,* Ge. 22. 24; 25. 1,5. 2 Sa.5.13. 1 Ki. 11.3.ch.1.32.

4 B.C. 1540

i Not Jos.15.17.

5 Caleb the son of *Jephunneh* had a daughter called Achsa, who was married to Othniel at the time when Joshua completed the division of the land. But Caleb, the son of *Hezron,* lived some ages before, and his daughter Achsa was a different person.—*I.*

6 The Caleb here spoken of was the grandson of him before-mentioned, and brother to Uri the father of Bezaleel; the same who erected the tabernacle.—*I.*

k Or, *Ephrath,* ver. 19.

7 B.C. 1536.

8 Kirjath-jearim is the name, not of a person, but of a town —but as his descendants named the district, Shobal is called its common father.—*C.*

l Ge.35.19.Ru.1.1,2. Ju.17.7,8;19.1. Mi. 5.2. Mat.2.1,6.

m Or, *Reaiah,* ch. 4.2.

9 Or, *half of the Menuchites,* or *Harsham-menucheth.*

n ver.52. Jos.9.17.

1 Or, *Atarites,* or *crowns of the house of Joab.*

o Je.8.8. Ezr.7.6.
2 B.C. 1000.
p Ju.1.16;4.11.

q Je.35.2.2 Ki.10.15, 23.

36 And Attai begat Nathan, and Nathan begat [e]Zabad,

37 And Zabad begat Ephlal, and Ephlal begat Obed,

38 And Obed begat Jehu, and Jehu begat Azariah,

39 And Azariah begat Helez, and Helez begat Eleasah,

40 And Eleasah begat Sisamai, and Sisamai begat Shallum,

41 And Shallum begat Jekamiah, and Jekamiah begat Elishama.

42 ¶ Now the sons of [f]Caleb the brother of Jerahmeel *were,* Mesha[1] his first-born, which *was* the father[2] of Ziph; and the sons of Mareshah the father of Hebron.

43 And the sons of Hebron; Korah, and Tappuah, and Rekem, and Shema.

44 And Shema begat Raham, the father of Jorkoam: and Rekem begat Shammai.

45 And the son of Shammai *was* Maon: and Maon *was* the father of [g]Beth-zur.

46 And Ephah, [h]Caleb's concubine,[3] bare Haran, and Moza, and Gazez: and Haran begat Gazez.

47 And the sons of Jahdai; Regem, and Jotham, and Geshan, and Pelet, and Ephah, and Shaaph.

48 Maachah, Caleb's concubine, bare Sheber, and Tirhanah.

49 She bare also Shaaph[4] the father of Madmannah, Shevah, the father of Machbenah, and the father of Gibeah: and the daughter of Caleb *was* [i]Achsa.[5]

50 ¶ These were the sons of Caleb[6] the son of Hur, the first-born of [k]Ephratah; Shobal the father of [l]Kirjath-jearim,[8]

51 Salma the father of [l]Beth-lehem, Hareph the father of Beth-gader.

52 And Shobal the father of Kirjath-jearim had sons; [m]Haroeh, *and* half of the Manahethites.[9]

53 And the families of [n]Kirjath-jearim; the Ithrites, and the Puhites, and the Shumathites, and the Mishraites: of them came the Zareathites, and the Eshtaulites.

54 The sons of Salma; Beth-lehem, and the Netophathites, Ataroth, the house of Joab,[1] and half of the Manahethites, the Zorites.

55 And the families of [o]the scribes which dwelt at Jabez;[2] the Tirathites, the Shimeathites, *and* Suchathites. These *are* the [p]Kenites that came of Hemath, the father of the house of [q]Rechab.

CHAPTER III.

1 *The sons of David.* 10 *His line to Zedekiah.* 17 *The successors of Jeconiah.*

NOW these were the sons of David, which were born unto him in Hebron: the first-

monuments of his saving grace, or of usefulness in the church! And often the families which God intends for uncommon honours are first dishonoured with the vilest characters, and marked with distinguished vice and sin. How rare is it to find four brothers in a family all famed for wisdom and grace!—But frequent enough

born [a]Amnon, of Ahinoam the [b]Jezreelitess; the second, [c]Daniel,[1] of Abigail the Carmelitess;

2 The third, [d]Absalom the son of Maachah, the daughter of Talmai king of Geshur; the fourth, [e]Adonijah the son of Haggith;

3 The fifth, Shephatiah of Abital; the sixth, Ithream, by [f]Eglah his wife.

4 *These* six were born unto him in Hebron; and [g]there he reigned seven years and six months:[2] and in Jerusalem he reigned thirty and three years.

5 And[h] these were born unto him in Jerusalem; [i]Shimea, and Shobab, and Nathan, and Solomon, four, of [k]Bath-shua, the daughter of Ammiel.[1]

6 Ibhar also, and [m]Elishama, and Eliphelet,[3]

7 And Nogah, and Nepheg, and Japhia,[4]

8 And Elishama, and [n]Eliada, and Eliphelet, nine.

9 *These were* all the sons of David, besides the sons of the concubines, and [o]Tamar their sister.

10 ¶ And Solomon's son *was* [p]Rehoboam,[5] Abia[q] his son, Asa his son, Jehoshaphat his son,

11 Joram his [6]son, [r]Ahaziah his son, Joash his son,

12 Amaziah his son, [s]Azariah his son, Jotham his son,

13 Ahaz[t] his son,[7] Hezekiah his son, Manasseh his son,

14 Amon his son, Josiah his son.

15 And the sons of Josiah *were*, the firstborn Johanan,[8] the second [u]Jehoiakim, the third Zedekiah,[x] the fourth [v]Shallum.

16 And the sons of [z]Jehoiakim; [a]Jeconiah his son [b]Zedekiah[9] his son.

17 ¶ And the sons of Jeconiah; [1]Assir, [c]Salathiel his son,

18 Malchiram also, and Pedaiah, and Shenazar, Jecamiah, Hoshama, and Nedabiah.

19 And the sons of Pedaiah *were*, [d]Zerubbabel, and Shimei: and the sons of Zerubbabel; Meshullam, and Hananiah, and Shelomith their sister:

20 And Hashubah, and Ohel, and Berechiah, and Hasadiah, Jushab-hesed, five.

21 And the sons of Hananiah; Pelatiah, and Jesaiah: the sons of Rephaiah, the sons of Arnan, the sons of Obadiah, the sons of Shechaniah.

A.M. cir. 2949.
B.C. cir. 1055.

CHAP. III.

a 2 Sa.3.2;xiii.

b Jos.15.56. 1 Sa.25.43.

c Or, *Chileab*, 2 Sa.3.3.

1 Called also Chileab, 2 Sa. 3. 3. Two contemporaneous names were common. So also was a change of name, one succeeding and superseding the other. It is probable this individual died young, as there is no special mention of him subsequently in the history.—*C.*

d 2 Sa.13.20–29; xiv.–xviii.

e 1 Ki.i.ii.

f 2 Sa.3.5. His beloved wife.

g 2 Sa.2.11;5.5. 1 Ki. 2.11.ch.29.27.

2 About 1048.

h 2 Sa. 5. 14–16. ch. 14.3-7.

i Or, *Shammua*, 2 Sa.5.14.ch.14.4.

k Or, *Bath-sheba*, 2 Sa.11.3.

l Or, *Eliam*, 2 Sa. 11.3.

m Or, *Elishua*, 2 Sa.5.15.ch.14.5.

3 In this and ver. 8 these two names occur twice. Some think this is a mistake, but others suppose that two persons so called died young, and that the next born received the name of the deceased.—*I.*

4 B.C. 1033.

n Or, *Beeliada*, ch. 14.7.

o 2 Sa.13.1–19.

p Mat. 1. 7–16. 2 Ki. 11.43.

5 B.C. 1016.

q Or, *Abijam*, 1 Ki. 15.1,6,24;22.41,50.

6 B.C. 921.

r Or *Azariah*, or Jehoahaz, 2 Ch. 22. 6; 21.17;24.1;25.1.

s Or, *Uzziah*, 2 Ki. 15.1,38.

t 2 Ki. 16. 1,20; 21.1, 19,26.

7 B.C. 884.

8 B.C. 762.

u Or, *Eliakim*, 2 Ki.23.34.

x Or, *Mattaniah*, 2 Ki.24.17.

y Or, *Jehoahaz*, 2 Ki.23.30. 2 Ch.36.1. Je. 22.11.

z Mat.1.11.

a Or, *Jehoiachin*, 2 Ki.24.6; or *Coniah*, Je. 22.24. Mat.1.12.

b 2 Ki.24.17. Being his successor.

9 Supposed by some to be that Zedekiah whose name was originally Mattaniah, 2 Ki.24.17. If this were so he is called son, merely as successor of Jeconiah But this Zedekiah may have been another, and an actual son of Jechoniah, of whom nothing more is historically recorded.—*C.*

1 The word *Assir* signifies *prisoner*, and is most probably an epithet applied to Jeconiah, who was so long a prisoner in Babylon; and this translation will reconcile the genealogy with that of Mat.1.12.—*C.*

c Heb, *Shealtiel*, Mat.1.12.

d Ezr. 2. 2; 3.2; 5.2. Hag. 1. 1,12,14; 2. 2,4, 21,23. Zec.4.6,9. Mat.1. 12. Lu.3.27. It seems Pedaiah adopted him, or became his father-in-law.

A.M. 3434. B.C. 570.

e Ezr.8.2.

2 That is—the sons of Shechaniah were *six*, reckoning to him Shemaiah and his *five* sons, as Jacob reckoned to himself Ephraim and Manasseh the sons of Joseph, Ge.48.5,6. This is evident from the word *sons* of Shechaniah, for only one proper son, Shemaiah, is mentioned, ver. 22, and as *sons* are ascribed to him, they must be his son and grandsons, by the virtue of patriarchal adoption. There is thus no use for the violent and unauthorized substitution of five, without authority of MSS., as Houbigant would read.—*C.*

3 Heb. *Hezekiahu.*

4 B.C. 430.

CHAP. IV.

B.C. 1720.

1 This second genealogy of Judah is given, because with its appendages, Benjamin, Simeon, and Levi, this tribe returned into the land, and reconstituted the kingdom of Judah, which subsisted 'until Shiloh came,' Ge. 49.10.—*C.*

a Ge.38.29;46.12.

b Or, *Chelubai*, ch. 2. 9; or *Caleb*, ch. 2. 18.

c Or, *Haroeh*, ch. 2.52.

d Jos. 15. 33. Ju. 13. 25.

e 2 Ch.11.6. Ju.15.11.

f ver. 18, 39. Jos.15. 36,58.ch.12.7.

g ch.2.50.

h Or, *Asher*, ch. 2. 24;ver.6–8.

2 B.C. 1510.

i ver. 10. Pr. 10. 26. Ac.17.11. Is.45.4.

3 His superiority of honour lay (1) In piety towards God, the true source and characteristic of honour. (2) In his pursuit of advancement being in dependence upon God. (3) In his complete dependence upon God's protection; and (4) In his unshaken confidence in restraining and preventing grace. *C.*—The Jews think that Jabez was an eminent doctor of the law, and that the scribes which dwelt at Jabez were his disciples. The Targum says he was called 'Jabets,' because in his counsel '*beytsatih*,' he instituted a school for disciples, and that he was Othniel the son of Kenaz.—*I.*

4 That is, *sorrowful.*

k Ge.3.16.ch.7.23.

l Ps.55.16;50.15.

5 Heb, *If thou will*, &c.

m Ps. cxii. cxviii.; 72.17. Ep.1.3.

n Ps.127.1. Pr.10.22.

6 Heb. *do* me.

o Ps.65.2;21.4;91.15. Is. 58. 9; 65. 24; 30.19. Joh 22.27,28. Mat.7.7. Ep.3.20.

7 Or, *the city of Nahash.*

8 Something is here wanting, viz. Who was the father of Kenaz? Was it not Jephunneh? as Kenaz is said to have been Caleb's brother. —*I.*

p Jos.15.17. Ju.3.9.

9 Or, *Hathath and Meonothai*, who *begat*, &c.

22 And the sons of Shechaniah; Shemaiah: and the sons of [e]Shemaiah; Hattush, and Igeal, and Bariah, and Neariah, and Shaphat, six.[2]

23 And the sons of Neariah; Elioenai, and Hezekiah,[3] and Azrikam, three.

24 And the sons of Elioenai *were*,[4] Hodaiah, and Eliashib, and Pelaiah, and Akkub, and Johanan, and Dalaiah, and Anani, seven.

CHAPTER IV.

1, 11 *The posterity of Judah by Caleb the son of Hur.* 5 *Of Ashur the posthumous son of Hezron.* 9 *Concerning Jabez, and his prayer.* 21 *The posterity of Shelah.* 24 *The posterity and cities of Simeon.* 39 *Their conquest of Gedor, and of the Amalekites in Mount Seir.*

THE sons of [1]Judah; [a]Pharez, Hezron, and Carmi,[b] and Hur, and Shobal.

2 And [c]Reaiah the son of Shobal begat Jahath; and Jahath begat Ahumai, and Lahad. These *are* the families of the [d]Zorathites.

3 And these *were of* the father [e]of Etam; Jezreel, and Ishma, and Idbash: and the name of their sister *was* Hazelelponi:

4 And Penuel the father of [f]Gedor, and Ezer the father of Hushah. These *are* the sons of [g]Hur, the first-born of Ephratah, the father of Beth-lehem.

5 ¶ And [h]Ashur the father of Tekoa had two wives, Helah and Naarah.[2]

6 And Naarah bare him Ahuzam, and Hepher, and Temeni, and Haahashtari. These *were* the sons of Naarah.

7 And the sons of Helah *were*, Zereth, and Jezoar, and Ethnan.

8 And Coz begat Anub, and Zobebah, and the families of Aharhel the son of Harum.

9 ¶ And Jabez was [i]more honourable[3] than his brethren: and his mother called his name Jabez,[4] saying, Because [k]I bare him with sorrow.

10 And Jabez [l]called on the God of Israel, saying, Oh that thou wouldest[5] bless[m] me indeed, and [n]enlarge my coast, and that thine hand might be with me, and that thou wouldest keep[6] *me* from evil, that it may not grieve me! And God [o]granted him that which he requested.

11 ¶ And Chelub the brother of Shuah begat Mehir, which *was* the father of Eshton.

12 And Eshton begat Beth-rapha, and Paseah, and Tehinnah the father of [7]Ir-nahash. These *are* the men of Rechah.

13 And the sons of Kenaz;[8] Othniel,[p] and Seraiah: and the sons of Othniel; Hathath.[9]

14 And Meonothai begat Ophrah: and Se-

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to find families almost desolated by the sword. God takes peculiar pleasure to exalt the low, and abase that which is high. David, the youngest son of Jesse, is raised to the throne.—Even so, Father, because so it seemed good in thy sight! By what incontestable wisdom God orders the condition of families, giving or withholding children, or of this or that sex, as it pleaseth him! Let all therefore learn, in whatever state he places them, to be therewith content. Let parents learn rather to marry their children to pious servants than to the ungodly rich. And let those who, like the Kenites, join God's people in their warfare, expect to dwell with them in their Canaan above.

CHAPTER III. REFLECTIONS.—Even good men may have large families with little appearance of piety or wisdom among most of them, while there is plenty of crosses: and often children die and leave their names to others. But it is highly becoming when we so love our reprovers, and especially our God, as to commemorate them in the names of our children.[1] What distinguished respect God pays to his promise, and to the noted piety of his servants! Never, perhaps, but in David's family, did a crown go directly from father to son for seventeen generations! But great indeed is our mercy that we now have Jesus, the King eternal, immortal, and invisible, to complete and crown the list.

1 David called one of his sons *Nathan;* and many of them had *Eli* (*My God*) in their names.

CHAPTER IV. REFLECTIONS.—How often have parents most comfort in those children from whom they at first expected least of it! What honour doth learning, and especially piety, put upon men! But it is a singular mercy to have a loving God to address in our prayers. To set out in the world with much earnest supplication to God is a hopeful beginning; and the most extensive and substantial blessings may boldly be asked at his throne of grace, who takes pleasure in hearing and answering the fervent prayers of faith. They that wait upon him shall renew their

raiah begat Joab, the father of the valley[1] of Charashim;[2] for they were craftsmen.[3]

15 And the sons of Caleb [q]the son of Jephunneh; Iru, Elah, and Naam: and the sons of Elah, even [4]Kenaz.[5]

16 And the sons of Jehaleleel; Ziph, and Ziphah, Tiria, and Asareel.

17 And the sons of Ezra *were*, Jether, and Mered, and Epher, and Jalon: and she bare Miriam, and Shammai, and Ishbah the father[6] of Eshtemoa.

18 And his wife [r]Jehudijah bare Jered the father of [s]Gedor, and Heber the father of Socho, and Jekuthiel the father of Zanoah. And these *are* the sons of Bithiah the daughter of Pharaoh,[7] which Mered took.

19 And the sons of *his* wife [t]Hodiah, the sister of Naham, the father of Keilah the Garmite, and Eshtemoa the Maachathite.[8]

20 And the sons of Shimon *were*, Amnon, and Rinnah, Ben-hanan, and Tilon. And the sons of Ishi *were*, Zoheth, and Ben-zoheth.

21 ¶ The sons of Shelah [u]the son of Judah *were*, Er[9] the father of Lecah, and Laadah the father of Mareshah, and the families of the house of them that wrought fine linen,[1] of the house of Ashbea,

22 And Jokim, and the men of Chozeba, and Joash, and Saraph, who [z]had the dominion in Moab, and Jashubi-lehem.[2] And *these are* ancient things.

23 These *were* the potters, and those that dwelt among plants[3] and hedges:[4] there they dwelt[5] with the king for his work.

24 ¶ The sons of Simeon *were*, [y]Nemuel, and Jamin, [6]Jarib, [z]Zerah, *and* Shaul:

25 Shallum his son, Mibsam his son, Mishma his son.

26 And the sons of Mishma; Hamuel his son, Zacchur his son, Shimei his son.

27 And Shimei had sixteen sons and six daughters;[7] but his brethren had not many children, neither did all their family multiply like[a] to the children of Judah.[8]

28 And they [b]dwelt at Beer-sheba, and Moladah, and [c]Hazar-shual,

29 And at [d]Bilhah, and at Ezem, and at Tolad,[e]

30 And at Bethuel, and at Hormah, and at Ziklag,

A.M. 2494. B.C. 1510.

1 Or, inhabitants *of the valley*.

2 Or, *craftsmen*.

3 'Charashim,' artists—of what description we are not told, but most probably workers in metallurgy, cutlery, jewellery, carpentry, &c.—*C.*

q Nu.13.6, 30; 14.6-10,24, 30. Jos. 14.6-14. Ju.1.12-14.

4 Or, *Cenaz*.

5 B.C. 1490.

6 Father still denotes the founder or planter of a city.

r Or, *the Jewess*, ver.19.

s ver.4,39.

7 She may have been an Egyptian princess, or an Israelitess, that, from some peculiar circumstance, was called by that name: such as having been born in or about the Egyptian court, or having saved a child from drowning, as Pharaoh's daughter saved Moses.—*C.*

t Or, *Jehudijah*, mentioned before, ver.18.

8 About 1200.

u Ge.38.1,5. Nu. 26. 20.

9 B.C. 1700.

1 Two or three statements in this chapter lead us to conclude that about this time something like *caste* or confinement to particular trades and employments—still so common in the East Indies—had begun to take place amongst the Israelites. By 'fine linen' some understand flax, others cotton.—*C.*

x Perhaps in David's time, 2 Sa.8.2.

2 B.C. 1040.

3 Now they were debased and impoverished.

4 The frequent reference to specific employments in this chapter may well induce us to adopt the translation of dwelling amongst 'plants and hedges' as descriptive of gardeners, instead of taking them for the names of places.—*C.*

5 'There they dwelt,' viz. at Bethlehem.—*C.*

y Or, *Jemuel*, Ge. 46.10. Ex.6.15. Nu.26. 12-14.

6 Or, *Jachin*.

z Or, *Zohar*, Ge.46. 10.

7 This genealogy of Simeon differs from the parallel account of the same family, but the discrepancies may be fully reconciled by the recollection that it was common for the same person to have two or more contemporaneous or consecutive names.—*C.*

a Heb. *unto*, Ge. 49.7-10. Nu.1.23,27;26. 14,22. Pr.17.6.

b Jos.19.2-8.

c B.C. 1444.

d Or, *Balah*, Jos.19. 3.

e Or, *Eltolad*, Jos. 19.4.

8 That 'children are a heritage of the Lord' is the statement of the Psalmist, Ps.127.3, a truth upon which alone can be founded any real population statistics. Simeon, Nu. 26. 14, amounted merely to 22,200, when Judah, ver. 22, amounted to 76,500. The statistical philosophy of the world will adopt any population theory but the will and blessing of God, and confide in any regulation and check upon overgrowth, but that apostasy and idolatry which brought the divine wrath upon Israel. Yet the true philosophy is the Bible, for it is uniformly a history of facts.—*C.*

A.M. 2560. B.C. 1444.

9 Or, *Hazar-susah*, Jos.19.5.

1 B.C. 1048.

2 When David obtained Ziklag by grant from Achish, and probably others by right of reconquest.—*C.*

f Or, *Ether*, Jos.19. 7.

g Or, *Baiath-beer*, Jos.19.7.

3 Or, *as they divided themselves by nations among them*.

h Heb. *coming by names*, Ge.6.4. ch. 5. 24.

4 See note on ver. 27.—*C.*

i Perhaps not that Jos.15.36,58. ver.4, 18; ch.12.7.

5 About thirty-six miles south-west of Jerusalem. The city was assigned to Judah, Jos. 12. 13, but the 'entrance' was probably the southern border of the district next to Egypt. —*C.*

6 About 710.

7 This expedition of the Simeonites took place in the days of Hezekiah; and, as Calmet conjectures, near the time of the captivity of the ten tribes, when the remnant of Simeon would feel themselves obliged to retire more southward into Arabia Petræa for fear of the Jews, and to seek pasture for their flocks. Or it is possible that on the revolt of the ten tribes the ancestors of these persons had adhered to the family of David.—*I.*

k Ge.9.24;14.5-7. Ps. 78.51.

8 'They of Ham,' Egyptians by whose skill in agriculture the land had been highly improved, and by whose valour and well-ordered government its peace had been secured.—*C.*

l 2 Ki. xviii.–xx. 2 Ch.xxix.–xxxii.

9 This took place about the time of the captivity of the ten tribes, and these bold and adventurous emigrants were consequently preserved from the disasters of their compatriots.—*C.*

m Ge.36.8. De.2.5.

1 About 715.

n 1 Sa.15.7,8;27.8;30. 16,17. 2 Sa.8.12. Ex.17. 14,16. De.25.17–19.

31 And at Beth-marcaboth, and [9]Hazar-susim, and at Beth-birei, and at Shaaraim.[1] These *were* their cities unto the reign of David.[2]

32 And their villages *were*, [f]Etam, and Ain, Rimmon, and Tochen, and Ashan, five cities;

33 And all their villages that *were* round about the same cities, unto [g]Baal. These *were* their habitations, and their genealogy.[3]

34 And Meshobab, and Jamlech, and Joshah the son of Amaziah,

35 And Joel, and Jehu the son of Josibiah, the son of Seraiah, the son of Asiel,

36 And Elioenai, and Jaakobah, and Jeshohaiah, and Asaiah, and Adiel, and Jesimiel, and Benaiah,

37 And Ziza the son of Shiphi, the son of Allon, the son of Jedaiah, the son of Shimri, the son of Shemaiah.

38 These [h]mentioned by *their* names *were* princes in their families; and the house of their fathers increased greatly.[4]

39 ¶ And they went to the entrance of [i]Gedor,[5] *even* unto the east side of the valley, to seek pasture for their [6]flocks.[7]

40 And they found fat pasture and good, and the land *was* wide, and quiet, and peaceable: for *they* of [k]Ham[8] had dwelt there of old.

41 And these written by name came in the days of [l]Hezekiah king of Judah,[9] and smote their tents, and the habitations that were found there, and destroyed them utterly unto this day, and dwelt in their rooms; because *there was* pasture there for their flocks.

42 And *some* of them, *even* of the sons of Simeon, five hundred men, went to [m]mount Seir,[1] having for their captains Pelatiah, and Neariah, and Rephaiah, and Uzziel, the sons of Ishi.

43 And they smote the rest of the [n]Amalekites that were escaped, and dwelt there unto this day.

CHAPTER V.

1 *The line of Reuben (who lost his birthright) unto the captivity.* 9 *Their habitation and conquest of the Hagarites.* 11 *The chief men and habitations of Gad.* 18 *The number and conquests of Reuben, Gad, and the half-tribe of Manasseh.* 23 *The habitations and chief men of that half-tribe.* 25 *Their captivity because of their sins.*

NOW the sons of Reuben, the [a]first-born of Israel, (for he *was* the first-born; but, forasmuch as he [b]defiled his father's bed, his birthright was given unto the sons of Joseph

CHAP V.

B.C. 1710.

a Ge.29. 32; 49. 3, 4. Ex.6.14. Nu.26.5.

b Ge.35. 22; 49. 4; 48. 15,22. 1 Co.5.1. Pr. 14. 34.

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strength, and be protected from all their enemies. How differently God disposes of men in respect of their callings and stations on earth! He advances them to honour and power, or degrades them to the meanest employments, as seemeth good in his sight. This world is a changing scene: nothing substantial or enduring is to be expected in it. Let it quicken our diligence to secure a better, where our dignity will be secure, without variableness or shadow of turning. Behold how God rewards the Simeonites, who cleaved to the family of David! They are provided with new habitations; when their brethren, who joined the kingdom of Israel, are carried into captivity. If I firmly adhere to God and my duty, he will always provide for me what I need; and that which appears an afflictive separation, shall at last prove a comfortable deliverance. But the curse of God shall hunt out the sinners, as it did the Amalekites, till they are utterly destroyed.

CHAPTER V. REFLECTIONS.—Behold how sin degrades men and thrusts them down from their excellency! And one false step often leaves an indelible stain upon their memory. But God does not utterly cast off those who fall foully at first, and are severely punished in the flesh. Behold how he divides the honours which had been sinfully forfeited, that no flesh may glory in his presence!—how he casts out the enemy from before his people by little and little, and gives them residence and substance as they have need of it! Behold these Gadites in their pride; and see how God in his wisdom, to mark them not utterly cast off, takes up their names just before their removal into a long captivity! But what mighty things the people of God can do when they take him along with them! With ease they tread down their enemies, and gather their spoils when they go forth crying to and trusting in him. But sin is pregnant with the greatest mischief to the temporal as well as the eternal interests of professors. God sometimes serves his own purposes by the ambition of the most proud, tyrannical, and murderous princes. And the most lasting destruction

the son of Israel:[1] and the genealogy is not to be reckoned after the birthright.

2 For [c]Judah prevailed above his brethren, and of him *came* the chief [d]ruler; but the birthright *was* Joseph's;)

3 The sons, *I say*, of [e]Reuben the first-born of Israel *were*, Hanoch, and Pullu, Hezron, and Carmi.

4 The sons of Joel; Shemaiah his son, Gog his son, Shimei his son,

5 Micah his son, Reaia his son, Baal his son,

6 Beerah his son, whom [f]Tilgath-pilneser king of Assyria carried away *captive:* he *was* prince of the Reubenites.

7 And his brethren by their families, (when the [g]genealogy of their generations was reckoned,) *were* the chief, Jeiel, and Zechariah,[2]

8 And Bela the son of Azaz, the son of Shema,[h] the son of Joel, who dwelt in [i]Aroer, even unto Nebo and Baal-meon:

9 And eastward he inhabited unto the entering in of the wilderness from the river Euphrates; because their cattle were multiplied in the land of Gilead.

10 And in the days of Saul[3] they made war with the [k]Hagarites,[4] who fell by their hand: and they dwelt in their tents throughout all the east[5] *land* of Gilead.

11 ¶ And the children of Gad dwelt over against them, [l]in the land of Bashan, unto Salcah:[6]

12 Joel the chief, and Shapham the next, and Jaanai, and Shaphat in Bashan.

13 And their brethren, of the house of their fathers, *were*, Michael, and Meshullam, and Sheba, and Jorai, and Jachan, and Zia, and Heber, seven.

14 These *are* the children of Abihail the son of Huri, the son of Jaroah, the son of Gilead, the son of Michael, the son of Jeshishai, the son of Jahdo, the son of Buz;

15 Ahi the son of Abdiel, the son of Guni, chief of the house of their fathers.

16 And they dwelt in Gilead in Bashan, and in her towns, and in all the suburbs of [m]Sharon,[7] upon their borders.[8]

17 All these were reckoned by genealogies in the days of [n]Jotham king of Judah, and in the days of Jeroboam king of Israel.

18 ¶ The sons of Reuben, and the Gadites, and half the tribe of Manasseh, of valiant men,[9] men able to bear buckler and sword, and to shoot with bow, and skilful in war, *were* four and forty thousand seven hundred and threescore, that went out to the war.

19 And they made war with the Hagarites,[1] with [o]Jetur, and Nephish, and Nodab.

20 And they were [p]helped against them, and

A.M. 2294. B.C. 1710.

1 By the law of God, De. 21. 17, the first-born was entitled to a *double portion* of a father's possessions. This right was transferred to Joseph, who inherited two shares of the land in Ephraim and Manasseh. Judah had but one share, but from him descended David and Messiah — the one the type, the other the real ruler.—*C.*

c Ge.49.8,10. 2 Sa. 7. 8–13. Mi.5.2. Mat.2.6. He.7.14.

d Or, *prince*, Nu. 2. 3;10.14.2 Sa.8.15. 1 Ti. 6.15. Re.5.5; 17.14; 19. 16.

e Ge.46.9. Ex. 6. 14. Nu.26.5–9.

f Or, *Tiglath-pileser*, 2 Ki.15.29;16.7.

g ver.17.

2 B.C. 740.

h Or, *Shemaiah*, ver.4.

i Jos. 13. 15, 23. Nu. 32.37,38. De. 3. 12, 16, 17. Je. 48. 19–24. Eze. 25.9.

3 B.C. 1060.

k Ge.21.9.ver.19,20.

4 Ishmaelites, descendants of Hagar. —*C.*

5 Heb. *upon all the face of the east.*

l Jos. 13. 11, 24–28. De.3.10,12, 16, 17. Nu. 32.34–36.

6 Salcah was a strong city, situated on the top and sides of a conical hill, at the southern extremity of the mountain range of Bashan. It was 12 miles east of Bozrah. It is now deserted, though many of its old stone houses are still perfect. Its citadel or castle, whose remains crown the summit of the hill, must have been one of the strongest in Palestine.—*P.*

m ch.27.29. Is. 35. 2; 33.9; 65.10. Ca.2.1, not Ac. 9. 37. Several places had this name.

7 The site of Sharon or Saron (Ac.9.35) cannot be precisely ascertained. According to Eusebius the whole district of country between Joppa and Cæsarea was called *Sharon*; and its richness and fertility are noticed by most travellers. Another district lying between Mount Tabor and the Sea of Galilee was also distinguished by the same name; and a third, on the east of Jordan, in the tribe of Gad, seems to be that described in the text. *C.*——The celebrated *plain of Sharon* extended along the coast of the Mediterranean, from the base of Carmel on the north to Joppa on the south, where it joined the plain of Philistia. It was, and still is, famous for its pastures. Eusebius and Jerome speak of two Sharons, one lying between Tabor and Tiberias; but the sacred writers mention only one of these. The Sharon referred to in this verse is not the plain of western Palestine. Its exact situation is not known; but it seems probable it was the pastoral plateau extending eastward from the mountains of Gilead to the walls of Bozrah and Salcah on the borders of Bashan.—*P.*

8 Heb. *their goings forth.*

n 2 Ki.15.5,32;14.16, 28.

9 Heb. *sons of valour.*

1 Perhaps about 800.

o Ge.25.14, 15. Ch. 1. 31.

p ver.22. Ps.46.1. Ex. 17.11. 1 Ki.22.32. 2 Ch. 14.11. Ro.8.31. He. 13. 5,6.

A.M. 3204. B.C. 800.

2 Heb. *led captive.*

q Nu. 31, 32–35. Job 1.3;42.12. 2 Ki.3.4. De. 3.7;20.14.

r Heb. *souls of men*, as Nu.31.35.

s 2 Ch.32.8. Ro.8.31. Ex.14.25. Pr.21.30.

3 The war was a judgment from God upon an idolatrous and wicked people. A war (as such) comes from men's 'lusts that war in their members,' Ja. 4. 1; but war, as a judgment and punishment, comes from God, who gives the invading nation up to their own evil desires, and the invaded to the retribution of the idolatries they have practised, the injustice they have done, and the cruelties they have committed.—*C.*

t 2 Ki.17.6, or 15.29; ver.26.

u De.3.8,9;4.48. Jos. 11. 17; 12. 5; 13. 29–31. Ps.42.6;89.11;133.3.

4 It therefore appears from this verse that the country occupied by the tribes of Jetur, Nephish, and Nodab lay along the northern and north-western border of Bashan, and extended to the mountain range of Hermon. Jetur was unquestionably the *Itureæ* of the Greeks, mentioned in Lu.3.1, and now bearing its ancient name in the Arabic form *Jedûr*. It is a region of rocks and rich pasture land, lying close along the eastern base of Hermon, and extending on the north to Damascus.—*P.*

x Heb. *men of names*, Ge. 6. 4. ch.4. 38.

y De.31.16,29;32.15–21. Ju.2.12,17,19. 2 Ki. 17. 7–17. Ho. iv.–xiii. Eze.xvi.xx.xxiii.

z 2 Sa.24.1. 2 Ki. 15. 19,29;17.6. Is.10.5,6.

5 B.C. 770.

a Places in Assyria and Media, 2 Ki.17.6; 18.11;19.12.

CHAP. VI.

B.C. 1720.

a Ge.46.11. Ex.6.16. Nu.26.57. ch.23.6; ver 16.

b Or, *Gershom*, ver.16,17,20.

c Ex.6.18.ch.23.12.

d Ex.6.20;15.20. ch. 23.13.

e Le.10.1,12. Ex.28. 1. ch 24.1,2. Nu. 26. 60; 3.3,4.

f Nu.25.7. Jos.24.33. Ezr.7.1–5.

g 2 Sa.8.17;15.27;17. 17; 18. 19,22. 1 Ki.2.35, not that 1 Sa.14.3.

h Perhaps Jehoiada, 2 Ki.xi.xii.

i 2 Ch.26.17–20.

k 1 Ki. vi. vii. 2 Ch. iii.iv.

1 Heb. *in the house.*

2 This is an intimation that the writer lived when the second temple was built or building. The person mentioned is supposed to have been that Azariah who vigorously opposed Uzziah's presumptuous attempt to burn incense. His father Johanan is thought by some to have been the same as Jehoiada, the firm friend to religion and the family of David during Athaliah's usurpation; otherwise Jehoiada is not mentioned.—*J.*

3 Who, consequently, witnessed there the glory of the *Shechinah*, and the completion of those shadowy ordinances that set forth the body of Christ, He. 10.1.—*C.*

the Hagarites were delivered into their hand, and all that *were* with them: for they cried to God in the battle, and he was entreated of them; because they put their trust in him.

21 And they took [2]away [q]their cattle; of their camels fifty thousand, and of sheep two hundred and fifty thousand, and of asses two thousand, and of [r]men an hundred thousand.

22 For there fell down many slain, because the war *was* [s]of God.[3] And they dwelt in their steads until [t]the captivity.

23 ¶ And the children of the half-tribe of Manasseh dwelt in the land: they increased from Bashan [u]unto Baal-hermon and Senir, and unto mount Hermon.[4]

24 And these *were* the heads of the house of their fathers, even Epher, and Ishi, and Eliel, and Azriel, and Jeremiah, and Hodaviah, and Jahdiel, mighty men of valour, [x]famous men, *and* heads of the house of their fathers.

25 ¶ And they [y]transgressed against the God of their fathers, and went a whoring after the gods of the people of the land, whom God destroyed before them.

26 And the God of Israel [z]stirred up the spirit of Pul king of Assyria, and the spirit of Tilgath-pilneser king of Assyria,[5] and he carried them away, (even the Reubenites, and the Gadites, and the half-tribe of Manasseh,) and brought them unto Halah, and Habor, and Hara, and to the river [a]Gozan, unto this day.

CHAPTER VI.

1 *The sons of Levi.* 4 *The line of the priests unto the captivity.* 16 *The families of Gershom, Merari, and Kohath.* 49 *The office of Aaron, and his line unto Ahimaaz.* 54 *The cities of the priests and Levites.*

THE sons of Levi; [a]Gershon,[b] Kohath, and Merari.

2 And the sons of [c]Kohath; Amram, Izhar, and Hebron, and Uzziel.

3 And [d]the children of Amram; Aaron, and Moses, and Miriam. The [e]sons also of Aaron; Nadab, and Abihu, Eleazar, and Ithamar.

4 ¶ Eleazar[f] begat Phinehas, Phinehas begat Abishua,

5 And Abishua begat Bukki, and Bukki begat Uzzi,

6 And Uzzi begat Zerahiah, and Zerahiah begat Meraioth,

7 Meraioth begat Amariah, and Amariah begat Ahitub,

8 And [g]Ahitub begat Zadok, and Zadok begat Ahimaaz,

9 And Ahimaaz begat Azariah, and Azariah begat Johanan,

10 And [h]Johanan begat Azariah, (he *it is* [i]that executed the priest's office in the [k]temple[1] that Solomon built[2] in Jerusalem,)[3]

follows those who are cut off in their sins. They who are governed more by sense than by faith in the choice of their settlement, find often when it is too late, that they have made a very disadvantageous one. Their first settlement issues in their being first wretched and miserable.

CHAPTER VI. REFLECTIONS.—If God so care for the remembrance of Levites, singers, and ceremonial priests, how fixed in his book of life must be

11 And Azariah begat Amariah, and Amariah begat Ahitub,

12 And Ahitub begat Zadok, and Zadok begat [l]Shallum,

13 And Shallum begat [m]Hilkiah, and Hilkiah begat Azariah,

14 And Azariah begat [n]Seraiah,[4] and Seraiah begat Jehozadak,

15 And [o]Jehozadak went *into captivity*, when the LORD [p]carried away Judah and Jerusalem by the hand of Nebuchadnezzar.[5]

16 ¶ The sons of [6]Levi; [q]Gershom,[r] Kohath, and Merari.

17 And these *be* the names of [s]the sons of Gershom; Libni, and Shimei.[7]

18 And the [t]sons of Kohath, *were* Amram, and Izhar, and Hebron, and Uzziel.

19 The [u]sons of Merari; Mahli, and Mushi. And these *are* the families of the Levites, according to their fathers.

20 ¶ Of Gershom; [x]Libni his son, Jahath his son, Zimmah his son,[8]

21 Joah[y] his son, [z]Iddo his son, Zerah his son, Jeaterai his son.

22 ¶ The sons of Kohath; [a]Amminadab[b] his son, Korah his son, Assir his son,

23 Elkanah[9] his son, and Ebiasaph his son, and Assir his son,

24 Tahath his son, [c]Uriel his son, Uzziah his son, and Shaul his son.

25 And the sons of Elkanah; [d]Amasai, and Ahimoth.

26 *As for* Elkanah: the sons of Elkanah; Zophai[e] his son, and Nahath his son,

27 Eliab[f] his son, Jeroham his son, [g]Elkanah his son.

28 And the sons of Samuel; the first-born[1] [h]Vashni,[2] and Abiah.

29 ¶ The[i] sons of Merari: Mahli; Libni his son, Shimei his son, Uzza his son,

30 Shimea his son, Haggiah his son, Asaiah his son.

31 ¶ And these *are they* whom David set over the service[3] of song in the house of the LORD, after that the [k]ark[4] had rest.[5]

32 And they [l]ministered before the dwelling-place of the tabernacle of the congregation with singing, until Solomon had built the house of the LORD in Jerusalem; and *then* they waited on their office, according to their order.

33 And these *are* they that [m]waited, with their children: of the sons of the Kohathites; [n]Heman a singer, the son of Joel, the son of Shemuel,

34 The son of Elkanah, the son of Jeroham, the son of [o]Eliel, the son of Toah,

35 The son of [p]Zuph, the son of Elkanah, the son of Mahath, the son of Amasai,

A.M. 3204. B.C. 800.

l Or, *Meshullam*, ch.9.11.

m 2 Ki. 22. 12, 14. 2 Ch.34.14.

n 2 Ki.25.18. Ezr. 7. 1.Ne.11.11.

4 With him ended the succession of priests in the first temple.—*C.*

o Ezr.5.2. Hag. 1. 2, 12;2. 2.

p 2 Ki. xxv. 2 Ch. xxxvi. Je.xxxix.lii.

5 B.C. 588.

6 The principal persons who presided over the three families of Levi, till the time of David, seem to be mentioned in these verses. The marginal references contain the variation in the names given to the same persons in different parts of sacred history, as far as it can be ascertained; and nearly the whole that is at present known concerning them may be learned by carefully consulting them. Samuel, the son of Elkanah, was not a priest, but descended from Izhar, Aaron's uncle; yet, as a prophet, he sacrificed personally, and not by the ministration of the priests.—*I.*

q Or, *Gershon*, ver. 1.

r Ex.6.16.ver.1.

s Ex.6.17.ch.23.7.

7 B.C. 1700.

t ver.2;ch.23.12.Ex. 6.18.

u Ex.6.19. Nu. 3.33. ch.23.21;24.26;ver.29.

x ver. 17,29,30.

8 B.C. 1650.

y Or, *Ethan*, ver. 42, not Ps.89. title.

z Or, *Adaiah*, ver. 41.

a Or, *Ethni*, ver. 41.

b Or, *Izhar*, ver.2, 18,33–38.Ex.6.21,24.

9 B.C. 1350.

c Or, *Zephaniah*, *Azariah*, *Joel*, ver. 36.

d ver.35,36.

e Or, *Zuph*, 1 Sa.1. 1.ver.35.

f Or, *Eliel*, ver.34.

g 1 Sa.1.1.

1 B.C. 1095.

h Called also *Joel*, ver. 33; 1 Sa.8.2.

2 From 1 Sa. 8. 2, and from 1 Ch. 6. 33, it appears that the name of Samuel's eldest son was Joel, and not Vashni. Some suppose the word *Joel* to have dropped out of the text, and that Vashni, which signifies *second*, is an epithet to be joined with Abiah. There seems no necessity for this conjectural emendation, as the first-born of Samuel may have been called both Joel and Vashni.—*C.*

i ver.19,44–47.

3 Over the hands,' inasmuch as the hands were largely used in the instrumental music, divinely authorized and appointed, as a significant and delightful accompaniment of the Jewish worship.—*C.*

k ch.16.1. 2 Sa. 6.17. 1 Ki.8.4–6.

4 B.C. 1045.

5 Two states of the church are represented by the ark—the one, uncertainty of abiding, and many removals—the other, rest and permanence. The one, the church on earth—the other, the church in heaven.—*C.*

l ch.16.37–42; 24. 30; xxv.

m Stood, Ps.134.1, 2.ch.25.9;ver.22–28.

n ch. 15.17,19; 25. 4; ver.28.Ps.88. title.

o Or, *Eliab*, *Nahath*, ver.26,27.

p Or, *Zophai*, ver. 20,27.

A.M. 2959. B.C. 1045.

q *Shaul*, *Uzziah*, *Uriel*, ver.24.

r Nu.16.1–37; 26.10, 11. Ps. xiii. xliv.–xlix. lxxiv.lxxxv. title.

s ch. 15.17, 19; 25.2; ver.20,21. Ps. l. lxxiii.–lxxxiii. title. ver. 20, 21.

6 To whom are ascribed twelve of the psalms.—*C.*—As Asaph was of the same tribe with Heman, he is called his brother, though belonging to a different family of that tribe, for he was descended from Gershom; but Heman from Kohath. These persons are celebrated in these books and in the Psalms for their skill in singing, and the part they performed in the public worship of God. It is very likely that their singing was only a kind of recitative or chanting, such as we still find in the synagogues.—*I.*

t Or, *Jeaterai*, ver. 21.

u Or, *Iddo*, ver.21.

v Or, *Joah*, ver.21.

w Or, *Jeduthun*, ch.9.16; 25.3,6. Ps.89. title.

x Or, *Kushaiah*, ch.15.17.

y ch.22.21,28. Nu.3. 2, 33–36. Ex.6.19. Jos. 21.7,34–40.

z Nu.18.7;8.10. Le.i. –ix. Ex.30.7. He.9.14; 6.25.

a ver. 3–9. Ezr. 7.1–5.

7 B.C. 1000.

b Jos.21.9–19, in this list of the cities of the priests Gibeon and Juttah are omitted.

8 'These things seem to be mentioned so often, with such exactness, that it might appear what care was taken by God for the maintenance of his ministers, of all sorts; and for the instruction of his people, among whom he dispersed the Levites, who were peculiarly devoted to this service.'—(*Patrick.*) In this list of the cities of the priests, which gives eleven instead of thirteen, Gibeon and Juttah are omitted. None of the versions give the full number of names here, though they all give the whole sum. Probably those two cities had been destroyed, and lay in ruins when this book was written.—*I.*

9 Other tribes obtained by investment on request, and in virtue of continued military service—as the tribe of Reuben and half-tribe of Manasseh, east of Jordan—others obtained directly by conquest, some earlier, some later; but Levi, in all its branches, obtained his possessions only *by lot*, the emblem of every spiritual blessing which must be 'the gift of God,' first to Christ, our High-priest, Ps. 24. 25, and then, from and through him, to all his members, Ep.4.8.—*C.*

c Jos.21.11; 14 13;15. 13.

d Jos.21.4,13–19.

e Or, *Holon*, Jos.21. 15. [It is common for cities to have several names. Sarun and Salisbury, Salop and Shrewsbury, are more unlike than Hilen (ver. 58) and Holon (Jos. 21. 15); Ashan (ver. 59) and Ain (Jos. 21. 16); Alemoth (ver.60) and Almon (Jos. 21. 18); and time changes names.—*Henry.*]

36 The son of Elkanah, the son of [q]Joel, the son of Azariah, the son of Zephaniah,

37 The son of Tahath, the son of Assir, the son of Ebiasaph, the son of [r]Korah,

38 The son of Izhar, the son of Kohath, the son of Levi, the son of Israel.

39 And his brother [s]Asaph,[6] (who stood on his right hand,) *even* Asaph the son of Berachiah, the son of Shimea,

40 The son of Michael, the son of Baaseiah, the son of Malchiah,

41 The son of [t]Ethni, the son of Zerah, the son of [u]Adaiah,

42 The son of [v]Ethan, the son of Zimmah, the son of Shimei,

43 The son of Jahath, the son of Gershom, the son of Levi.

44 And their brethren the sons of Merari *stood* on the left hand: [w]Ethan the son of [x]Kishi, the son of Abdi, the son of Malluch,

45 The son of Hashabiah, the son of Amaziah, the son of Hilkiah,

46 The son of Amzi, the son of Bani, the son of Shamer,

47 The son of Mahli, the son of Mushi, the son of [y]Merari, the son of Levi.

48 Their brethren also the Levites *were* appointed unto all manner of service of the tabernacle of the house of God.

49 ¶ But [z]Aaron and his sons offered upon the altar of the burnt-offering, and on the altar of incense, *and were appointed* for all the work of the *place* most holy, and to make an atonement for Israel, according to all that Moses the servant of God had commanded.

50 And these *are* [a]the sons of Aaron; Eleazar[7] his son, Phinehas his son, Abishua his son,

51 Bukki his son, Uzzi his son, Zerahiah his son,

52 Meraioth his son, Amariah his son, Ahitub his son,

53 Zadok his son, Ahimaaz his son.

54 ¶ Now [b]these[8] *are* their dwelling-places throughout their castles in their coasts, of the sons of Aaron, of the families of the Kohathites; for theirs was the lot.[9]

55 And[c] they gave them Hebron in the land of Judah, and the suburbs thereof round about it.

56 But the fields of the city, and the villages thereof, they gave to Caleb the son of Jephunneh.

57 And[d] to the sons of Aaron they gave the cities of Judah, *namely*, Hebron, *the city* of refuge, and Libnah with her suburbs, and Jattir, and Eshtemoa, with their suburbs,

58 And [e]Hilen with her suburbs, Debir with her suburbs,

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the names of those who, through trusting in Jesus' blood, are made kings and priests to him and his Father! With exact care ought every one in the church, particularly ministers, to see to the regular observation of the ordinances of God. These Levites were most commodiously stationed for the instruction of the Israelites, when they were thus, according to Jacob's threatening, divided and scattered. But what comfortable provision God requires for his ministers;

CITADEL OF TIBERIAS. [I. CHRON., vi : 63.]—"Unto the sons of Merari were given by lot, throughout their families, out of the tribe of Reuben, and out of the tribe of Gad, and out of the tribe of Zebulun, twelve cities." Tiberias in Old Testament times was in the territory of Zebulun, and the particular city which stood upon the site of Tiberias was called, according to the Jewish Talmud, Rakkath. It is also by the Talmud identified with the ancient Hammath, and some have supposed it to be the same as Chinnereth, referred to in Joshua, xix : 35. The excesses and vices of the Roman court were transferred to this capital of the weak and cruel Herod Antipas, and Tiberias remained the metropolis of the province of Galilee till the emperor Nero placed Agrippa II. in charge of the province. It became in the time of the great Jewish afflictions a center of refuge for the rabbis. Thirteen synagogues were built here and in the thirteenth century a school of Jewish learning was established which attained great celebrity.

59 And [f]Ashan with her suburbs, and Beth-shemesh with her suburbs:

60 And out of the tribe of Benjamin; Geba with her suburbs, and [g]Alemeth with her suburbs, and Anathoth with her suburbs. All their cities, throughout their families, *were* thirteen cities.[9]

61 And [h]unto the sons of Kohath, *which were* left of the family of that tribe, *were cities given* out of the half-tribe, *namely, out of* the half-*tribe* of Manasseh,[1] by lot, ten cities.

62 And [i]to the sons of Gershom, throughout their families, out of the tribe of Issachar, and out of the tribe of Asher, and out of the tribe of Naphtali, and out of the tribe of Manasseh in Bashan, thirteen cities.

63 Unto the [k]sons of Merari *were given* by lot, throughout their families, out of the tribe of Reuben, and out of the tribe of Gad, and out of the tribe of Zebulun, twelve cities.

64 And[l] the children of Israel gave to the Levites *these* cities, with their suburbs.

65 And they [m]gave by lot out of the tribe of the children of Judah, and out of the tribe of the children of Simeon, and out of the tribe of the children of Benjamin, these cities which are called by *their* [2]names.[3]

66 And[n] *the residue* of the families of the sons of Kohath had cities of their coasts out of the tribe of Ephraim.

67 And they gave unto them, *of* the cities of refuge, Shechem in mount Ephraim with her suburbs; *they gave* also [o]Gezer with her suburbs,

68 And [p]Jokmeam with her suburbs, and Beth-horon with her suburbs,

69 And [q]Aijalon with her suburbs, and Gath-rimmon with her suburbs:

70 And out of the half-tribe of Manasseh; Aner[r] with her suburbs, and Bileam with her suburbs, for the family of the remnant of the sons of Kohath.

71 Unto [s]the sons of Gershom *were given* out of the family of the half-tribe of Manasseh, Golan in Bashan with her suburbs, and Ashtaroth with her suburbs:

72 And out of the tribe of Issachar; [t]Kedesh with her suburbs, Daberath with her suburbs,

73 And [u]Ramoth with her suburbs, and Anem with her suburbs:

74 And out of the tribe of Asher; [v]Mashal with her suburbs, and Abdon with her suburbs,

75 And [w]Hukok with her suburbs, and Rehob with her suburbs:

76 And[x] out of the tribe of Naphtali; Kedesh in Galilee with her suburbs, and Hammon with her suburbs, and Kirjathaim with her suburbs.

77 Unto[y] the rest of[4] the children of Merari *were given* out of the tribe of Zebulun,[5] Rimmon with her suburbs, Tabor with her suburbs:

78 And on the other side Jordan by Jericho, on the east side of Jordan, *were given them* out of the tribe of Reuben, Bezer in the wilderness with her suburbs, and Jahzah with her suburbs,

79 Kedemoth also with her suburbs, and Mephaath with her suburbs:

80 And out of the tribe of Gad; [z]Ramoth in Gilead with her suburbs, and Mahanaim with her suburbs,

81 And [a]Heshbon with her suburbs, and [b]Jazer with her suburbs.[6]

A.M. 3004. B.C. 1000.

f Or, *Ain*, Jos. 21. 16.

g Or, *Almon*, Jos. 21.18.

9 *Eleven* here, two more, Jos. 21. 16, 17. The eleven were their dwelling-places, ver. 54, the thirteen their right by lot and inheritance, ver. 60. These represent the Israelitish family. When Levi ceased to be a portioned tribe, and was given for the first-born (Nu. 3. 12), there remained eleven, for Ephraim and Manassen were not of Jacob, but of Joseph. But when all were counted there were thirteen tribes, for every one of whom there is a representative city of refuge. *C.*—The text in this list of Levitical cities being ill-arranged and corrupted, must be rectified from Jos. xxi.; for internal and collateral evidence shows that to be the accurate copy. Geddes has been at much pains to point out and remove the discrepancies, and restore the true order. —*I.*

h Jos. 21. 5, 20–26. ver.67–70.

1 And out of the tribes of Ephraim and Dan.

i Jos.21.6,27–33.ver. 71–76.

k Jos. 21. 7, 34–40. ver.77–81.

l Jos.xxi.Nu.35.1–8.

m ver.57–60. Jos.21. 9–19.

2 Probably each family gave its own name to the city that fell to its lot.—*I.*

3 Each of the other tribes received a compact territory, except the tribe of Manasseh, which was divided into two separate portions, and a few additional allotments to some tribes within the limits of their neighbours. But Levi receives no extended territory in any one place, but merely cities and their suburbs—a gracious arrangement providing for the equable extension of religious education to all the tribes, and the due administration of the law, of which the priests were the principal judges, while it fulfilled the prophecies of Jacob and Moses concerning their future destination, Ge. 49.7. De.33. 10.—*C.*

n Jos.21.5,20–26.

o 1 Ki.9.15.

p Jos.21.22.

q Jos.21.23,24.

r Jos.21.25.

s Jos.21.6,27–33.

t Jos.21.28.

u Jos.19.21.

v Jos.21.30.

w Jos.21.31.

x Jos.21.32.

A.M. 2560. B.C. 1444.

y Jos.21.7,34–40.

4 The Levites.

5 Some of the cities mentioned in this chapter had changed their names, or been exchanged for other cities after the time of Joshua.

z 1 Ki.4.13.

a Nu.21.34.

b Nu.32.3,35.Jos.21. 39.ch.26.31.

6 The number of cities and extended suburbs allotted to Levi may seem a large and even undue proportion to so small a tribe; but it is to be recollected that these cities and suburbs were evidently held, not in exclusive possession by the Levites, but in some species of co-partnership with the secular tribe by whom they were granted, and that consequently the Levitical possessions were reduced to little more than a mere residence. *C.*—None of the Lord's people, and especially of his ministers, should be unemployed; they who through want of ability or change of circumstances are precluded from one method of glorifying God, should set themselves to devise another. And if they deem nothing which may conduce to the advancement of true religion too laborious, mean, disgusting or discouraging—if they be disposed to be instant in season and out of season, to instruct or encourage one, ten, or ten thousand, in public or in private, in a cottage, an hospital, a prison, or a palace, in safe and easy, or in difficult or perilous circumstances—if they consider nothing too little to be attended to, and nothing too arduous to be attempted—and if they do all in sincerity, humility, and simplicity of spirit—they cannot long be unoccupied or useless.—*Scott.*

CHAPTER VII.

1 *The sons of Issachar,* 6 *of Benjamin,* 13 *of Naphtali,* 14 *of Manasseh.* 20 *The sons of Ephraim who were slain by the men of Gath.* 23 *Beriah is born.* 28 *Ephraim's habitations.* 30 *The sons of Asher.*

NOW the sons of Issachar *were,* Tola, and [a]Puah,[b] Jashub, and Shimron, four.

2 And the sons of Tola; Uzzi, and Rephaiah, and Jeriel, and Jahmai, and Jibsam, and Shemuel, heads of their father's house, *to wit,* of Tola: *they were* valiant men of might in their generations; [c]whose number *was,* in the days of David, two and twenty thousand and six hundred.[1]

3 And the sons of Uzzi; Izrahiah: and the sons of Izrahiah; Michael, and Obadiah, and Joel, Ishiah, five:[2] all of them chief men.

4 And with them, by their [d]generations, after the house of their fathers, *were* bands of soldiers for war, six and thirty thousand *men:* for they had many wives and sons.[3]

5 And their brethren among all the families of Issachar *were* valiant men of might, reckoned in all, by their genealogies, [e]fourscore and seven thousand.

6 ¶ *The sons* of [f]Benjamin; Bela, and Becher, and Jediael, three.[4]

7 And the sons of Bela;[5] Ezbon, and Uzzi, and Uzziel, and Jerimoth, and Iri, five; heads of the house of *their* fathers, mighty men of valour, and were reckoned by their genealogies twenty and two thousand and thirty and four.

8 And the sons of Becher; Zemira,[6] and Joash, and Eliezer, and Elioenai, and Omri, and Jerimoth, and Abiah, and Anathoth, and Alameth. All these *are* the sons of Becher.

9 And the number of them, after their genealogy by their generations, heads of the house

CHAP. VII.

B.C. 1714.

a Ge. 46. 13. Nu. 26. 23,24.

b Phuvah, Job. Ge. 46.13.

c 2 Sa.24.1–9. ch. 21. 1–5;27.23,24.

1 B.C. 1027.

2 That is, the sons of Uzzi were *five.* The sons of Izrahiah being counted to their grandfather, for some legal reason, as Ephraim and Manasseh were counted to their grandfather Jacob, and not to their father Joseph. —*C.*

d ch.12.32.

3 Heb. *they multiplied wives and children,* ver.5.

e This was the whole number of their fighting men, ch. 21.5.2 Sa.24.9.

f Ge.46.21.Nu.26.38 -41.ch.8.1.

4 We learn from Ge. 46. 21 that Benjamin had *ten* sons, and in ch. 8. 1 *five* are enumerated. This apparent discrepancy is accounted for by observing how in ch. 1. 1 the name of Abel is omitted, as he had no family. The extinction, first of five, and finally of seven branches of Benjamin's family, is an event not unlikely in the scenes of turmoil in which the country had been so long involved.—*C.*

5 B.C. 1680.

6 B.C. 1027.

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and what joint concurrence of his people in procuring it according to their several abilities!

CHAPTER VII. [Ver. 24. At what time, or under what circumstances, does not appear; but, as she could not be alive at the exodus, she must have previously removed from Egypt, unless, as in some other instances, some generations are passed over, and by some legal technicality in reference to inheritance, a distant descendant be ranked as the immediate daughter. *C.*]

REFLECTIONS.—How God multiplies a people amidst hard country labour as he did that of Issachar! He can multiply families after they had been almost utterly extirpated, as were the Benjamites, Ju. xx. How early the Hebrews, even in Egypt, began to contract marriages with the heathen! We go astray from the womb, speaking lies. The families and nations

A WOMAN OF SAMARIA—IN THE ANCIENT CAPITAL OF ISRAEL. [I. CHRONICLES, vi: 67.]—"And they gave unto them, of the cities of refuge, Shechem in Mount Ephraim with her suburbs." Upon one of the hills in the neighborhood of Shechem. this picture of a Woman of Samaria was taken. The Samaritans have always lived in this region, and their central place of worship is Mount Gerizim, which overlooks the city. Shechem is mentioned during the exile in Jeremiah, xli: 5, and after the exile, though Samaria had been the previous capital of the country (Ezra, iv: 10) at the building of the new temple on Gerizim, Shechem, which was hard by, was made by Manasseh, probably before the time of Alexander the Great, the chief center of Samaritan worship. After this the Samaritans were the objects of Jewish scorn. Josephus says that John Hyrcanus destroyed the temple on Gerizim 129 years B. C. after it had stood 200 years.

of their fathers, mighty men of valour, *was* twenty thousand and two hundred.

10 The sons also of Jediael; Bilhan: and the sons of Bilhan; Jeush, and Benjamin, and Ehud,[g] and Chenaanah, and Zethan, and Tharshish, and Ahishahar.

11 All these the sons of Jediael, by the heads of their fathers, mighty men of valour, [h]*were* seventeen thousand and two hundred *soldiers*, fit to go out for war *and* battle.

12 Shuppim[i] also, and Huppim, the children of [j]Ir, *and* Hushim, the sons of [k]Aher.[7]

13 ¶ The [l]sons of Naphtali; Jahziel, and Guni, and Jezer, and Shallum, the sons of Bilhah.

14 ¶ The[m] sons of Manasseh; Ashriel, whom she bare;[8] (*but* his concubine the Aramitess bare Machir the father of Gilead:

15 And [n]Machir took to wife[9] *the sister* of Huppim and Shuppim, whose sister's name *was* Maachah;) and the name of the second *was* Zelophehad:[1] and [o]Zelophehad had daughters.

16 And Maachah the wife of Machir bare a son, and she called his name Peresh; and the name of his brother *was* Sheresh; and his sons *were* Ulam and Rakem.

17 And the sons of Ulam; [p]Bedan. These *were* the sons of Gilead, the son of Machir, the son of Manasseh.

18 And his sister Hammoleketh bare Ishod, and Abiezer, and Mahalah.

19 And the sons of [q]Shemidah were, Ahian, and Shechem, and Likhi, and Aniam.

20 ¶ And[r] the sons of Ephraim; Shuthelah,[2] and Bered his son, and Tahath his son, and Eladah his son, and Tahath his son,

21 And Zabad his son, and Shuthelah his son, and Ezer, and Elead, whom the men of Gath *that were* born in *that* land slew, because they [s]came down to take away their cattle.[3]

22 And Ephraim their father [t]mourned many days, and his brethren came to comfort him.

23 ¶ And when he went in to his wife, she conceived, and bare a son, and he [u]called his name Beriah, because it went evil with his house.

24 (And his daughter *was* Sherah, who built Beth-horon[x] the nether, and the upper, and Uzzen-sherah.)

25 And Rephah *was* his son, also Resheph; and Telah his son, and Tahan his son,

26 Laadan his son, Ammihud his son, Elishama his son,

27 Non[y] his son, Jehoshua his son.[z]

28 ¶ And their possessions and habitations *were*, Beth-el and the towns thereof, and eastward [a]Naaran, and westward Gezer with the towns[4] thereof, Shechem also and the towns thereof,[5] unto [a]Gaza and the towns thereof:[6]

29 And by the borders of the children of [b]Manasseh, Beth-shean and her towns, Taanach and her towns, Megiddo and her towns, Dor and her towns. [c]In these dwelt the children of Joseph the son of Israel.

30 ¶ The[d] sons of Asher; Imnah,[7] and Isuah, and Ishuai, and Beriah, and Serah their sister.

31 And the sons of Beriah; Heber, and Malchiel, who *is* the father of Birzavith.

32 And Heber begat Japhlet, and [e]Shomer, and Hotham, and Shuah their sister.

33 And the sons of Japhlet; Pasach, and Bimhal, and Ashvath: these *are* the children of Japhlet.

34 And the sons of [f]Shamer; Ahi, and Rohgah, Jehubbah, and Aram.

35 And the sons of his brother Helem; Zophah, and Imna, and Shelesh, and Amal.

36 The sons of Zophah; Suah, and Harnepher, and Shual, and Beri, and Imrah,

37 Bezer, and Hod, and Shamma, and Shilshah, and [g]Ithran, and Beera.

38 And the sons of Jether; Jephunneh, and Pispah, and Ara.[8]

39 And the sons of Ulla; Arah, and Haniel, and Rezia.

40 All these *were* the children of Asher, heads of *their* father's house, choice *and* mighty men of valour, chief of the princes. And the [h]number, throughout the genealogy of them that were apt to the war *and* to battle, *was* twenty and six thousand men.

CHAPTER VIII.

1 *The sons and chief men of Benjamin.* 33 *The stock of Saul and Jonathan.*

NOW Benjamin[1] begat [a]Bela his first-born, Ashbel the second, and Aharah the third,

2 Nohah the fourth, and Rapha the fifth.

3 And the sons of Bela were, [b]Addar, and Gera, and Abihud,

4 And Abishua, and Naaman, and Ahoah,

5 And Gera, and [c]Shephuphan,[2] and Huram.

6 And these *are* the sons of Ehud: these are the heads of the fathers of the inhabitants of Geba,[3] and they removed them to [d]Manahath:

7 And Naaman, and Ahiah, and Gera, he [e]removed them, and begat Uzza, and Ahihud.

8 And Shaharaim begat *children* in [f]the country of Moab, after he had sent them away; Hushim and Baara *were* his wives.

9 And he begat of Hodesh his wife, Jobab, and Zibia, and Mesha, and Malcham,

10 And Jeuz, and Shachia, and Mirma. These *were* his sons, heads of the fathers.

A.M. 2987. B.C. 1017.

g Ju.3.15; v.

h They amounted to 59,434, exclusive of those mentioned ver. 12, who perhaps were not numbered, ch. 27. 24.

i Or, *Shupham, Muppim*, Nu. 26. 39. Ge.46.21.

j Or, *Iri*, ver. 7.

k Or, *Ahiram*, Nu. 26.38.

7 The omission of the genealogy of Dan in this its proper place, can be accounted for by a reference to Jos. 18. 30, 31, from which it appears that they continued not only in schismatical separation from the church of God, but in a state of uninterrupted idolatry till the days of the captivity.—*C.*

l Ge. 46. 24. Nu. 26. 48–50.

m Nu.26.28–34;27.1.

8 This passage is undoubtedly obscure. Greenfield proposes the following change in the translation—'The sons of Manasseh were Ashriel, whom his Syrian concubine bare to him; and Machir the father of Gilead, whom his wife bare to him. Machir took for a wife Maachah, sister to Huppim,'&c. —*C.*

n Hezron, a grandson of Judah, married his daughter, and their child was reckoned to the tribe of Manasseh, ch.2.21–23.

9 B.C. 1480.

1 Zelophehad was not literally the son, but the descendant of Manasseh in the third generation. Zelophehad was the son of Hepher, Nu. 26.33, the son of Gilead, the son of Machir, the son of Manasseh, Nu. 26.29. This, with the apparent want of connection with the genealogy, has induced some expositors to reject it as a fragment unaccountably interpolated. Such a criticism is both rash and unwarranted. The narrative was a legal conveyance of the family property, and were we acquainted with all the family history, the cause of its insertion would no doubt appear, and the obscurity of the whole passage be dissipated.—*C.*

o Nu. 1–11; 36.1–12. Jos.17.3,4.

p Perhaps the judge mentioned 1 Sa.12.11.

q Nu.26.32.

r Nu.26.35.

2 B.C. 1570.

s The Philistines came down to Goshen to rob the Hebrews of their cattle. Judah and Ephraim, who were intended to have the largest tribes, have most of their children at first cut off. Compare Ge. 38.1.

t Ge.37.34,35. Job 2. 11.

u Ge.35. 18. 1 Sa. 4. 21,14,9, &c. in evil.

x Jos.16. 3, 5, 18, 19. 1421. 2. 21. 1 Sa.13. 17.1 Ki. 9.18. 2 Ch. 8. 5, *i.e.* her posterity built these cities.

y Or, *Nun*, Nu. 13. 8,16. Ex.17.9,10,13.

z B.C. 1560.

a Naarath, Jos. 16. 5–9. Ju.1.29.

3 Expositors are divided as to whether the Ephraimites made the inroad upon the Philistines, or the Philistines upon the Ephraimites. But it being evident from ver. 22 that the murder took place in the life of Ephraim, it must have been in Egypt; for the phrase *came down* would never characterize the *going up* from the level of the Nile to the mountains of Philistia; but is the constant geographical description of the descent from the higher to the lower country. See Ge. 43. 4. The word translated *because* must therefore be rendered *when*.—*C.* The land of Goshen, in which the Israelites dwelt, extended northwards, almost, if not altogether, to the borders of Philistia. The Israelites were semi-nomads. They had their head-quarters in Goshen; but their shepherds were accustomed to lead their flocks far over the pasture-land that lies between Palestine and Egypt. Probably the sons of Ephraim had approached too near the territory of the Philistines—the latter attacked and killed them.—*P.*

4 Heb. *daughters.*

5 B.C. 1444.

a Not Gaza of the Philistines, Ju.16.1.

6 *Naaran* stood in the Jordan valley north of Jericho. *Gezer* lay on the northern border of Benjamin, between Beth-horon-the-nether and the sea, and consequently in the plain of Sharon. *Gaza* cannot, of course, be the celebrated capital of Philistia, for it stood far beyond the border of Ephraim. This is another place of the same name, situated, apparently, in the region of Shechem.—*P.*

b Jos.17.7,11.

c Jos. xvi. xvii.; 21. 21,25. Ju.1.22–29.

d Ge.46. 17. Nu. 26. 44–46.

7 B.C. 1720.

e Or, *Shamer*, ver. 34.

f Or, *Shomer*, ver. 32.

g Or, *Jether*, ver.38.

8 B.C. 1017.

h 2 Sa.24.1–9.ch.21. 1–5;27.23,24.

CHAP. VIII.

B.C. 1714.

1 The tribe of Benjamin adhered to Judah in the division of the kingdom, and returned with the Jews from Babylon; and as the history is about to open with the translation of the kingdom from Saul of that tribe to David of Judah, we have here a more copious account given of it than of several other tribes. But either some of the sons of Benjamin had several names, or those called his *sons* were his more remote descendants. Gera, called his son in Genesis, is here mentioned as his grandson by Bela, and the whole subsequent genealogy is very obscure.—*C.*

a Ge.46.21. Nu. 26. 38–41.ch.7.6.

b Or, *Ard*, Ge.46.21.

c Or, *Shupham*, Nu.26.39.ch.7.12.

2 Not an error for Hupham, as some suppose, but another name for the same person.—*C.*

3 The Benjamites have their genealogy and location most largely given, because they gave birth to the royal house of Saul, and because they adhered most firmly to the house of David, and affectionately and patriotically returned with them from Babylon. *C.*—As *Gibeah* and *Geba* are only the masculine and feminine form of the same word (meaning 'hill'), some think them the same; but that they were two distinct places is evident from Jos. 18.24; 21.17; Isa.10.29; 1 Sa. 13. 3.

d ch.9.52,54

e Settled out of the family, ver.6. Ge.25.6.

f Ru.1.1. Perhaps a famine obliged him to sojourn there.

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for which God intends peculiar honour often meet with singular breaches and discouragements in their way to it. Providence often seems to contradict promises: but the counsel of the Lord, that shall stand. We are nowhere safe from danger; nor are good causes always successful. Children are certain cares and griefs to parents, but uncertain pleasures. They who live long only live to see their sorrows multiplied, and to bury the choicest of their worldly comforts. To soothe the

11 And of Hushim he begat Ahitub, and Elpaal.

12 The sons of Elpaal; Eber, and Misham, and Shamed, who built [g]Ono and Lod, with the towns thereof:

13 Beriah also, and Shema, whc *were* heads of the fathers of the [h]inhabitants of Aijalon,[4] who drove away the inhabitants of Gath:[5]

14 And Ahio, Shashak, and Jeremoth,

15 And Zebadiah, and Arad, and Ader,

16 And Michael, and Ispah, and Joha, the sons of Beriah;

17 And Zebadiah, and Meshullam, and Hezeki, and Heber,

18 Ishmerai also, and Jezliah, and Jobab, the sons of Elpaal;

19 And Jakim, and Zichri, and Zabdi,

20 And Elienai, and Zilthai, and Eliel,

21 And Adaiah, and Beraiah, and Shimrath, the sons of [i]Shimhi;

22 And Ishpan, and Heber, and Eliel,

23 And Abdon, and Zichri, and Hanan,

24 And Hananiah, and Elam, and Antothijah,

25 And Iphedeiah, and Penuel, the sons of Shashak;

26 And Shamsherai, and Shehariah, and Athaliah,

27 And Jaresiah, and Eliah, and Zichri, the sons of Jeroham.

28 These *were* heads of the fathers, by their generations, chief *men*. These [k]dwelt[6] in Jerusalem.[7]

29 And [l]at Gibeon dwelt the [m]father of Gibeon; (whose wife's name *was* Maachah;)

30 And his first-born son Abdon, and Zur, and Kish, and Baal, and Nadab,

31 And Gedor, and Ahio, and [n]Zacher.

32 And Mikloth begat [o]Shimeah. And these also dwelt with their brethren in Jerusalem over against them.

33 ¶ And [p]Ner begat Kish,[8] and Kish begat Saul, and Saul begat Jonathan, and Malchishuah, and Abinadab, and [q]Esh-baal.

34 And the son of Jonathan [r]*was* Merib-baal; and Merib-baal begat Micah.

35 And the sons of Micah *were*, Pithon, and Melech, and [s]Tarea, and Ahaz.

36 And Ahaz begat [t]Jehoadah; and Jehoadah begat Alemeth, and Azmaveth, and Zimri; and Zimri begat Moza;

37 And Moza begat Binea: [u]Rapha *was* his son, Eleasah his son, Azel his son.

38 And Azel had six sons, whose names *are* these, Azrikam, Bocheru, and Ishmael, and Sheariah, and Obadiah, and Hanan.[9] All these *were* the sons of Azel.

39 And the sons of Eshek his brother *were*, Ulam his first-born, Jehush the second, and Eliphelet the third.

40 And the sons of Ulam were mighty men of valour, [z]archers, and had [y]many sons, and sons' sons, an hundred and fifty. All these *are* of the sons of Benjamin.

A.M. 2290. B.C. 1714.

g Ezr. 2. 33. Ne. 11. 35;7. 37;6.2.

h Jos.10.12;19.42;21. 24.ch.7.21.

4 *Aijalon*, or *Ajalon*, was the name of an ancient city and a valley, allotted to the tribe of Dan; but the Danites never obtained possession of it from the Amorites. It lay on the frontier of the kingdoms of Judah and Israel, and is consequently sometimes spoken of as in Ephraim (*i.e.* under the dominion of the ruler of Ephraim, 1 Ch. 6.69), and sometimes in Judah and Benjamin (*i.e.* under the dominion of the king of Jerusalem, 2 Ch. 11.10). Ajalon is best known in connection with the celebrated victory of Joshua, 10. 12. The ancient town is now represented by the village of *Yalo*, a corruption of the old name; and the valley is called *Merj ibn Omeir*. It is about 14 miles west of Jerusalem, at the foot of the mountain range. There was another *Ajalon* in the tribe of Zebulon; it is mentioned as the burial-place of Elon, one of the judges, Ju. 12.12.—*P.*

5 Perhaps 1630, ch. 7.21, or 1300, Ju. 3.31.

i Or, *Shema*, ver. 13.

k Jos. 15. 63; 18. 28. ch.9.34.

6 B.C. 1444.

7 The celebrated capital of Judea, and alike dear to the recollections of the Jew and the Christian. It is situated in lon. 35° 20′ E.; lat. 31° 47′ 47″ N.; 136 miles S.W. of Damascus, 35 miles E. of Jaffa, 34 miles S. of Shechem, and 17 miles N. of Hebron. It lay partly in the tribe of Judah and partly in that of Benjamin, but for religious, commercial, civil, and military purposes, was, to a certain extent, a common centre and residence for all the tribes, ch.9.4. Ps. 122. 4. *C.*—The ancient city of Jebus, taken by David from the Jebusites, was not large, and stood on a mountain south of that on which the temple was erected. Between lay the valley of Millo, filled up by David and Solomon. The Maccabees considerably enlarged Jerusalem on the north, inclosing a third hill; and Josephus mentions a fourth hill, called Bezetha, which Agrippa joined to the former. This new city lay north of the temple, along the brook Kidron.—*I.*

l ch.9.35–44.

m Called *Jehiel*, ch.9.35.

n Or, *Zechariah*, ch.9.37.

o Or, *Shimeam*, ch.9.38.

p ch. 9. 39–44. 1 Sa. 14.49–51;9.1;31.2.

8 B.C. 1200.

q Or, *Ishbosheth*, 2 Sa.2.8.

r Or, *Mephibosheth*, 2 Sa.4.4; 9. 6, 10; 19.24. *Baal* is changed into *Bosheth*, shame.

s Or, *Tahrea*, ch. 9.41.

t Jarah, ch.9.42.

u Rephaiah, ch. 9. 43.

A.M. about 3564. B.C. about 440.

9 About 440.

x ch.12.2. 2 Ch.14.8; 26.14. Ne. 4. 13. Je. 51. 56.

y Ps.127.5;128.3,6.

CHAP. IX.

B.C. about 444.

1 Ne.xi.xii. Ezr.7.1–5;8.2–14.

a On four different occasions, 2 Ch.33.11; 36.9. Da.1.2. Je.52.4,5.

b After the captivity, Ezr.2.70. Ne.11.3.

c Ezr.2.43,58;7.7,24; 8.17,20. Ne.10.28;3.26; 11.21. Jos.9.21,28.

2 The word signifies 'given or offered,' because given to the Levites to perform the servile offices of the sanctuary. They appear to have been originally the Gibeonites, Jos. 9. 27, by which name they seem to have been distinguished till the time of David—when he and his princes seem to have added a number of their vassals, Ezr. 8. 20; the Gibeonites being inadequate to the now perfected ritual of the tabernacle service—after which period the name of Gibeonite seems to have been dropped, and the more dignified and more comprehensive title of Nethinim to have been adopted. *C.*—The time referred to in this verse is immediately after the return from the Babylonish captivity, and the settlement of the returned captives in the country of their fathers. The *Israelites* are the common people of Judah and Israel. The *Nethinims* were the temple servants who were appointed to do the menial work, under the direction of the Levites. The name signifies 'devoted.' The Gibeonites who were condemned by Joshua to be 'hewers of wood, and drawers of water,' were the original Nethinims. These were subsequently added to, probably by captives taken in war.—*P.*

d Ne. 11. 1–19, with 2 Ch.11.16;30.11,18.

e Nu. 26. 20. Ge. 46. 12;38.5,29,30. Ne.11.4, 6.

f Kinsmen, ver. 9. Ge.13.8.

g Ne.11.7–9.

h Ne.11.8.

i Ne.11.10–14.

k ch.6.12–14, or *Seraiah*, Ne.11.11.

3 Most probably the same kind of officer mentioned, Ac. 5. 24, as 'captain of the temple,' an officer sustaining partly a military and partly an ecclesiastical character; as an ecclesiastic, second only to the high-priest; and as a soldier, commanding a guard for the preservation of order, the protection of the worshippers, and the suppression of those riots to which the Jews were prone, since the days of their rebellion against Moses in Egypt and the wilderness.—*C.*

4 In Scripture genealogies several generations are sometimes omitted, on account of their idolatry, &c.

CHAPTER IX.

1 *Concerning the original register of Israel's and Judah's genealogies.* 2 *The Israelites,* 10 *the priests,* 14 *and the Levites, with the Nethinims, which dwelt in Jerusalem.* 27 *The charge of certain Levites.* 35 *The stock of Saul and Jonathan.*

SO all Israel were reckoned by genealogies; and, behold, they *were* written[1] in the book of the kings of Israel and Judah, *who* were [a]carried away to Babylon for their transgression.

2 ¶ Now the [b]first inhabitants that *dwelt* in their possessions in their cities *were*, the Israelites, the priests, Levites, and the [c]Nethinims.[2]

3 ¶ And in [d]Jerusalem dwelt of the children of Judah, and of the children of Benjamin, and of the children of Ephraim and Manasseh;

4 Uthai the son of Ammihud, the son of Omri, the son of Imri, the son of Bani, [e]of the children of Pharez the son of Judah.

5 And of the Shilonites; Asaiah the first-born, and his sons.

6 And of the sons of Zerah; Jeuel, and their [f]brethren, six hundred and ninety.

7 And [g]of the sons of Benjamin; Sallu the son of Meshullam, the son of Hodaviah, the son of Hasenuah,

8 And Ibneiah the son of Jeroham, and Elah the son of Uzzi, the son of Michri, and Meshullam the son of Shephatiah, the son of Reuel, the son of Ibnijah;

9 And their brethren, according to their generations, [h]nine hundred and fifty and six. All these men *were* chief of the fathers in the house of their fathers.

10 ¶ And [i]of the priests; Jedaiah, and Jehoiarib, and Jachin,

11 And [k]Azariah the son of Hilkiah, the son of Meshullam, the son of Zadok, the son of Meraioth, the son of Ahitub, the ruler of the house of God;[3]

12 And Adaiah the son of Jeroham, the son of Pashur, the son of Malchijah, and Maasiai the son of Adiel, the son of Jahzerah, the son of Meshullam, the son of Meshillemith, the son of Immer,

13 And their brethren,[4] heads of the house

griefs of the afflicted is to act a kind and brotherly part. But what a mercy is it when God compensates the breaches which he hath made in families! And virtuous women are an honour and blessing to families as well as mighty and illustrious men.

CHAPTER VIII. REFLECTIONS.—The more closely we adhere to God and his people the greater will be our honour at last. How little great kings and warriors appear before God! Not one king of Israel, after the division of the kingdom, is marked in these registers of heaven; but the family of Jonathan the saint is marked with distinguished honour.

CHAPTER IX. REFLECTIONS.—God never distresses or unsettles men but for their sin. And it is comely and joyful when the once discordant tribes of God harmoniously unite in asking and travelling the way to Zion; and when the priests and Levites, the ministers of Christ, are remarkable in their attachment to, and zeal for, re-establishing the worship of God and order of his church! God graciously proportions men's strength for the work to which he calls them. But residence, labour, and zeal are indispensably required

LYDDA, THE ANCIENT LOD OF THE OLD TESTAMENT—WHERE THE APOSTLE PAUL RESTORED THE SICK ÆNEAS. [I. CHRONICLES, viii: 12.]—"And Lod, with the towns thereof." Lydda occupies the site of the Old Testament Lod, which is referred to in Ezra, ii: 33, and Nehemiah, xi: 35. It was an ancient Benjamite city which was rebuilt after the captivity, and through all the ages has preserved its ancient name. Lydda is but a slightly modified form of Lod. The Gospel was preached at Lydda very early, and here the Apostle Paul restored the sick Aeneas. In the time of the Emperor Vespasian this was a center of Jewish learning. The great caravan road runs from Lydda to Jimzu, the ancient Gimzo (II. Chronicles, xxviii: 18), which the Philistines once took, and which also has preserved its name to the present day. One of the first episcopates in Palestine was that of Lydda, and the signatures of its bishops are said to be found as late as the year 518.

of their fathers, a thousand and seven hundred and threescore; very able men[5] for the work of the service of the house of God.

14 ¶ And[1] of the Levites; Shemaiah the son of Hashub, the son of Azrikam, the son of Hashabiah, of the sons of Merari;

15 And Bakbakkar, Heresh, and Galal, and Mattaniah the son of Micah, the son of Zichri, the son of Asaph;

16 And Obadiah the son of Shemaiah, the son of Galal, the son of [m]Jeduthun, and Berechiah the son of Asa, the son of Elkanah, that dwelt in the villages of the [n]Netophathites.

17 And the [o]porters *were*, Shallum, and Akkub, and Talmon, and Ahiman, and their brethren: Shallum *was* the chief;

18 (Who hitherto *waited* in [p]the king's gate eastward:[6]) they *were* porters in the companies of the children of Levi.

19 And Shallum the son of Kore, the son of Abiasaph, the son of Korah, and his brethren, of the house of his father, the [q]Korahites, *were* over the work of the service, keepers of the gates[7] of the tabernacle:[8] and their fathers, *being* over the host of the LORD, *were* keepers of the entry.[9]

20 And [r]Phinehas[1] the son of Eleazar was the ruler over them in time past, *and* the LORD *was* with him.

21 *And* Zechariah the son of Meshelemiah *was* porter of the door of the tabernacle of the congregation.

22 All these *which were* chosen to be porters in the gates *were* two hundred and twelve. These were reckoned by their genealogy in their villages, whom [s]David and Samuel the seer did ordain[2] in their [3]set office.[4]

23 So they and their children *had* the oversight of the gates of the house of the LORD, *namely*, the house of the tabernacle, by wards.

24 In[t] four quarters were the porters, toward the east, west, north, and south.

25 And their brethren, *which were* in their villages, *were* to come after [u]seven days from time to time with them.

26 For these Levites, the four chief porters, were in *their* [x]set office, and were over the chambers[5] and treasuries of the house of God.

27 And they lodged round about the house of God, because [y]the charge *was* upon them, and the opening thereof every morning *pertained* to them.

28 And [z]*certain* of them had the charge of the ministering vessels, that they should bring them in and out by tale.[6]

29 *Some* of them also *were* appointed to oversee the vessels, and all the instruments[7] of the sanctuary, and the fine flour, and the wine, and the oil, and the frankincense, and the spices.

30 And *some* of the sons of the priests made [a]the ointment of the spices.

31 And Mattithiah, *one* of the Levites, (who *was* the first-born of Shallum the Korahite,) had the set office[8] over the things that were made [b]in the pans.

32 And *other* of their brethren, of the sons of the Kohathites, *were* over the [c]show-bread, to prepare *it* every sabbath.

33 And these *are* [d]the singers, chief of the fathers of the Levites, *who remaining* in the chambers *were* free: for they were employed[9] in *that* work [e]day and night.[1]

34 These chief fathers of the Levites *were* chief throughout their generations: these dwelt at Jerusalem.

35 ¶ And [f]in Gibeon dwelt the father[2] of Gibeon, Jehiel,[3] whose wife's name *was* Maachah;

36 And his first-born son Abdon, then Zur, and Kish, and Baal, and Ner, and Nadab,

37 And Gedor, and Ahio, and Zechariah, and Mikloth.

38 And Mikloth begat Shimeam: and they also dwelt with their brethren at Jerusalem, over against their brethren.

39 And[g] Ner begat Kish, and Kish begat Saul, and Saul begat Jonathan,[4] and Malchishua, and Abinadab, and Esh-baal.

40 And the son of Jonathan *was* Merib-baal:[5] and Merib-baal begat Micah.

41 And the sons of Micah *were*, Pithon, and Melech, and Tahrea, [h]*and Ahaz*.[6]

42 And Ahaz begat Jarah;[7] and Jarah[8] begat Alemeth, and Azmaveth, and Zimri; and Zimri begat Moza;

43 And Moza begat Binea; and Rephaiah his son, Eleasah his son, Azel his son.

44 And Azel had six sons, whose names *are* these; Azrikam, Bocheru, and Ishmael,[9] and Sheariah, and Obadiah, and Hanan; these *were* the sons of Azel.

CHAPTER X.

1 *Saul's overthrow and death.* 8 *The Philistines triumph over Saul.* 11 *The kindness shown by the men of Jabesh-gilead toward Saul and his sons.* 13 *Saul's sin, for which the kingdom was translated from him to David.*

NOW[1] the [a]Philistines fought against Israel; and the men of Israel fled from before the Philistines, and fell down slain[2] in mount Gilboa.

2 And the Philistines followed hard after Saul, and after his sons; and the Philistines slew [b]Jonathan, and [c]Abinadab, and Malchishua, the sons of Saul.

3 And the battle went sore against Saul,

A.M. 3560. B.C. 444.

5 Heb. *mighty men of valour.*

l *i.e.* singers, Ne. 11.15-19.ch.9.19,33,44.

m ch.25.1.2 Ch.5.12; 35.15.

n ch.2.54. Ne.12.28, 29.

o ch.xxvi. Ne.12.25, 26,11.19.

p 1 Ki.10.5, 2 Ki.11. 19.

6 Houbigant considers these words a proper name, and translates it thus—'And Adanah was over the eastern gate, called the king's,' that is, the gate by which the kings of Judah were accustomed to enter the temple. An emblem of that gate by which the King of glory enters the temple above, Ps.24.7.—*C.*

q Ps.42. title, Nu.26. 11.ch.xxvi.16,33-38.

7 Heb. *thresholds.*

8 The word *tabernacle* may refer to the sanctuary erected by Moses, which the temple built after the captivity, more resembled than it did Solomon's magnificent edifice. Indeed the sanctuary at first was only a tent or tabernacle when Phinehas superintended it in time past, yet the Lord was with him. This seems to have been mentioned as an instruction and encouragement to the priests and Levites in the times of Ezra and Nehemiah; for there can be no reasonable doubt that Phinehas, the grandson of Aaron, was intended.—*I.*

9 Boothroyd translates it thus:—'The Korahites, in the work of the ministry, were gate-keepers of the temple, as their fathers were keepers of the entrance of the tabernacle during the encampments of Jehovah.'—*C.*

r Nu.25.7,8; 31. 6; 3. 32.

1 B.C. 1420.

s ch.xxvi.

2 Heb. *founded.*

3 Or, *trust.*

4 Great irregularity in the tabernacle service must have prevailed during the unsettled times that followed the death of Joshua, especially during a period not only of neglect of the divine ordinances, but frequently of idolatry and apostasy. To the reformation of these abuses Samuel and David seem to have directed their attention, and instituted a regular routine of porters, not merely to open and shut the gates, for that had been an easy work, but as guards against idolatry and licentiousness, and conservators of good order around the entrance of the sanctuary.—*Note*, They that would reform the church of God must begin at the door—the door of examination and discipline, both in the admission and exclusion of its membership.—*C.*

t ch.26.14-18.

u 2 Ki.11.5, 7. 2 Ch. 23. 8. They served from Sabbath to Sabbath at a time.

x Or, *trust*, ver.31.

5 Or, *storehouses.*

y Ro. 12. 7. He. 13. 17.2 Ti.4.2.

z Ne.12.44. ch.23.28 -32.Nu.3.25-36.

6 Heb. *bring them in by tale, and carry them out by tale.*

7 Or, *vessels.*

A.M. 2584. B.C. 1420.

a Ex.30.23.

8 Or, *trust.*

b Or *on flat plates*, or *slices*, Le.2.5,6.21.

c Heb. *bread of ordering*, Ex.25.30;40.4, 23. Le. 24. 8. Nu. 4. 7. Mar.2.26. He. 9. 2,24. Jn.6.32.

d ch.6.31-47;xv.xxv.

9 Heb. *upon them was.*

e Ps.134.1,2.

1 To meditate on the law of God 'day and night' is a characteristic of Christian perfection, and of every godly member of his body in degree, Ps. 1. 2. To sing God's praises 'day and night' seems to have been an employment of the Levites, see Ps.cxxxiv., an emblem of that heavenly service witnessed by John, Re. 4. 8, where 'they rest not day and night, saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come.' Those who thus sang were *free*, for where all is praise, saints 'do rest from their labours.'—*C.*

f ch.8.29-40. Probably what follows is repeated as an introduction to Saul's history, and ought to be part of ch. x.

2 Why is this passage repeated, being the same with ch. 8. 29? An error of a transcriber is the answer even of the pious Henry. A better solution seems to be afforded by a reference to ver. 1, where the book of the Kings both of Israel and Judah is mentioned, and the genealogy of Saul is given from the public records of each, as he had been the monarch of both. —*C.*

3 B.C. 1300.

g ch.8.32-34.

4 B.C. 1098.

5 B.C. 1060.

h ch.8.35,38.

6 This is added from ch. 8. 35, but such liberties should only be taken in a note; for although the words are now sufficiently distinguished from the text by being printed in italics, yet it is too much to expect that every editor of a Bible will attend to such distinctions, and in process of time the words will be found incorporated with the text.—*Clarke.*

7 Or, *Jehoadah.*

8 Another name for Jehoadah, ch. 8.36.—*C.*

9 That is, *God hath heard.*

CHAP. X.

B.C. 1056.

1 The chief design of this book was to preserve the records of the house of David, which, though to a common eye much diminished by the captivity, yet grew more and more illustrious in the eyes of those who lived by faith, by the nearer approach of the Son of David. The writer therefore repeats not the history of Saul's reign, but only of his death, which paved the way for David's accession. The reader will find the same history in almost the same words in 1 Sa. 31.1-13.—*I.*

a 1 Sa. 28. 1; xxxi. 2 Sa. 1. 1-10.

2 Heb. *thrust through.*

b 2 Sa. 31. 2. 2 Ki. 23. 29. Ec. 5. 1.

c Or, *Ishui*, 1 Sa. 14. 49.

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from every minister of God: and if they begin with God they may hope to prosper in their undertakings. Happy is it for the church when every one knows and waits on his proper work, and when the meanest offices and services are reckoned truly honourable. Better be door-keepers in the house of God than dwell in palaces of wickedness. It is pleasant to be always rejoicing in and praising God, who is continually doing us good, and loading us with his benefits; for it is a blessed

and the [2]archers [d]hit him, and he was wounded of the archers.

4 Then said Saul to his armour-bearer, Draw thy sword, and thrust me through therewith, lest these uncircumcised come and [e]abuse me. But his armour-bearer would not; for he was sore afraid.[3] So Saul took a sword, and fell upon it.

5 And when his armour-bearer saw that Saul was dead, he fell likewise on the sword,[4] and died.

6 So Saul [f]died, and his three sons, and all his house died together.[5]

7 And when all the men of Israel that *were* in the valley saw that they fled, and that Saul and his sons were dead, then they forsook their cities, and fled; and the Philistines came and dwelt in them.

8 ¶ And[g] it came to pass on the morrow, when the Philistines came to strip the slain, that they found Saul and his sons fallen in mount Gilboa.

9 And when they had stripped him, they took his head, and his armour, and sent into the land of the Philistines round about, to carry tidings unto [h]their idols, and to the people.

10 And they put his armour in the house of [i]their gods, and fastened his head in the temple of Dagon.[6]

11 ¶ And when all [k]Jabesh-gilead heard all that the Philistines had done to Saul,

12 They arose, all the valiant men, and took away the body of Saul, and the bodies of his sons, and brought them to Jabesh, and buried their bones under the [l]oak in Jabesh, and fasted[m] seven days.[7]

13 ¶ So Saul died for his transgression which he committed[8] against the LORD, [n]*even* against the word of the LORD, which he kept not, and also for asking *counsel* of *one that had* a familiar spirit, to [o]inquire *of it;*

14 And inquired not of the LORD:[9] therefore he slew him, and [p]turned the kingdom unto David the son of Jesse.

CHAPTER XI.

1 *David by a general consent is made king over Israel at Hebron.* 4 *He winneth the castle of Zion from the Jebusites by Joab's valour.* 10 *A catalogue of David's mighty men.*

THEN all[a] Israel[1] gathered themselves to David unto Hebron, saying, Behold, we *are* [b]thy bone and thy flesh.

2 And moreover, in time past, [c]even when Saul was king, thou *wast* he that leddest out and broughtest in Israel; and the LORD thy God said unto thee, Thou shalt feed[2] my people Israel, and thou shalt be ruler over my people Israel.

3 Therefore came all the elders of Israel to the king to Hebron; and David [d]made a covenant with them in Hebron before the LORD: and they anointed David king over Israel, [e]according to the word of the LORD by[2] Samuel.

4 ¶ And David and all Israel [f]went to Jerusalem, which *is* Jebus; where the Jebusites *were*, the inhabitants of the land.[3]

5 And the inhabitants of Jebus said to David, [g]Thou shalt not come hither. Nevertheless David took the castle of Zion, which *is* the city of David.

6 And David said, Whosoever smiteth the Jebusites first shall be [h]chief and captain. So Joab the son of Zeruiah went first up, and was chief.

7 And David dwelt in the castle; therefore they called it[4] the city of David.

8 And he built the city round about, even from [i]Millo[5] round about: and Joab [6]repaired the rest of the city.[7]

9 So David waxed greater and greater: [k]for the LORD of hosts *was* with him.

10 ¶ These[l] also *are* the chief of the mighty men whom David had, who strengthened themselves with him[9] in his kingdom, *and* with all Israel, to make him king, [m]according to the word of the LORD concerning Israel.

11 And this *is* the number of the mighty men[1] whom David had; [n]Jashobeam, an Hachmonite, the chief of the captains: he lifted up his spear [o]against three hundred slain *by him* at one time.

12 And after him *was* Eleazar the son of Dodo, the [p]Ahohite, who *was one* of the three mighties.

13 He was with David at [q]Pas-dammim, and there the Philistines were gathered together to battle, where was a parcel of ground full of barley;[2] and the people [r]fled from before the Philistines.

14 And they set themselves[3] in the midst of *that* parcel, and delivered it, and slew the Philistines; and the LORD [s]saved *them* by a great deliverance.[4]

15 Now [t]three of the thirty captains[5] went down to the rock to David, into the cave of Adullam; and the host of the Philistines encamped in the valley of [u]Rephaim.[6]

16 And David *was* then in the [z]hold, and the Philistines' [y]garrison *was* then at Bethlehem.

17 And David longed,[7] and said, Oh that

A.M. 2948. B.C. 1056.

2 Heb. *shooters with bows.*

d Heb. *found him,* 1 Sa. 31. 3.

e Or, *mock me,* Ju. 16. 25, 39. 54. 1 Sa. 31. 4.

3 Not afraid of the deed he was called on to commit, but so panic-struck by the flight of the arrows that he would not attend to anything but his own safety.—*C.*

4 The Jewish tradition is, that this was Doeg, and if so, then both now fell by the same sword with which Doeg, at the command of Saul, had formerly murdered the priests of the Lord, 1 Sa. 22. 18. An instance of retribution frequently exemplified in history. So Haman died by the lofty gallows of his own erecting.—*C.*

f 1 Sa. 31. 6, 7. Ex. 20. 5. 34. 7. Nu. 14. 18.

5 Not all his descendants, but according to 1 Sa. 31. 6, 'all his men,' that is all his adults that were with him in the battle. *C.* —— This does not mean his family, but his household servants (for Ishbosheth remained), or 'all his men,' as they are called in 1 Sa. 31. 6, that is, all who were present with him in the battle; and his family had received such a blow that it never recovered itself again.—*I.*

g 1 Sa. 31. 8–10. 2 Sa. 1. 20.

h Ju. 16. 24. 2 Sa. 1. 20. Is. 48. 5.

i 1 Sa. 5. 2. 1 Ki. 11. 5. Is. 48. 5.

6 The heads of enemies are still the triumphal ornaments of the palaces of Mahomedans and the temples of idolaters. —*C.*

k 1 Sa. 11. 1–11; 31. 11–13. 2 Sa. 2. 5, 6, with Ju. 21. 8–12.

l Ge. 35. 8.

m Ge. 50. 10. 2 Sa. 1. 12; 3. 35.

7 Not seven whole days of 24 hours each; but seven days from sunrise to sunset.—*C.*

8 That sickness and death are 'the wages of sin,' is the invariable doctrine of the Scripture. See 1 Co. 11. 30. 1 Jn. 5. 16. Even God's dear children die, because 'sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned,' Ro. 5. 12. To them, however, it is deliverance; to the impenitent a judgment.—*C.*

n 1 Sa. 13. 13; 15. 3, 23.

o 1 Sa. 28. 7–20. 2 Ki. 21. 6; 23. 24. Ex. 22. 18. Le. 19. 26, 31; 20. 6. De. 18. 10–14. Is. 8. 19.

9 There is no contradiction between this statement and 1 Sa. 28. 6, where Saul is said to inquire of the Lord. He inquired, but not in faith; he asked, but he asked amiss, Ja. 1. 6, 7; 4. 3.

p 1 Sa. 13. 14; 15. 28; 28. 17. 2 Sa. ii.–v. ch. xi. xii.

CHAP. XI.

B.C. 1048.

a 2 Sa. 5. 1–3. ch. 12. 23–39. Is. 11. 10.

1 All were gathered by their representatives or heads. The date, however, is not immediately after the battle of Gilboa, but at a few years after. —*C.*

b Ge. 2. 23; 29. 14. Ju. 9. 2. Ep. 5. 30.

c 1 Sa. 18. 13, 16, 30.

2 Or, *rule.*

A.M. 2956. B.C. 1048.

d 2 Ki. 11. 17; 14. 21; 23. 30. Ju. 11. 11.

e 1 Sa. 13. 14; 15. 28; 16. 13. 2 Sa. 2. 4. Ps. 2. 6; 89. 19, 20.

2 Heb. *by the hand of.*

f 2 Sa. 5. 6–10. Jos. 15. 63. Ju. 1. 21; 19. 11, 12.

3 B.C. 1047.

g 2 Sa. 5. 6, 7. 1 Sa. 17. 9, 10.

h Heb. *head,* ch. 18. 5; 27. 34. 2 Sa. 8. 16; 20. 23. 1 Ki. 1. 7.

4 That is, *Zion,* 2 Sa. 5. 7. Ps. 2. 6.

i 1 Ki. 9. 15; 11. 27.

5 This seems to have been some public place, all round which David erected such buildings as were requisite for a seat of government. He selected Jerusalem as his metropolis, because a more central situation would have placed him in the hands of the turbulent and ambitious Ephraimites, upon whom little dependence could then be placed.—*I.*

6 Heb. *revived.*

7 Over which he must have obtained some superiority of title; a circumstance that will serve to account for much of Joab's future influence over the counsels of David.—*C.*

8 Heb. *went in going and increasing.*

k Ro. 8. 31. Is. 41. 10, 14, 15.

l 2 Sa. 23. 8–39. Ps. xvii. xx. cxliii.

9 Or, *held strongly with him.*

m 1 Sa. 13. 14; 15. 28; 16. 1, 13, 14.

1 1048 to 1015.

n Or, *Adino* the Eznite, 2 Sa. 23. 8.

o 2 Sa. 23. 8. On the same occasion he slew or wounded other 500, or 800 at another time.

p 2 Sa. 23. 9, 10. ch. 8. 4; 27. 4.

q Or, *Ephesdammim,* 1 Sa. 17. 1.

2 In 2 Sa. 23. 11 the ground is said to have been full of lentils; but there is no contradiction, as it is common still for two species of vegetables to be sown together, as grass and clover.—*C.*

r At 2 Sa. 17. 24; 31. 1. Le. 26. 17.

3 Or, *stood.*

s Ps. 3. 8. Pr. 21. 30, 31.

4 Or, *salvation.*

t 2 Sa. 23. 12.

5 Or, *three captains over the thirty.*

u Or, *giants,* Jos. 15. 8. Is. 17. 5. 2 Sa. 5. 18, 22. ch. 14. 9, 13.

6 Rephaim, or Giants' Valley, so called from its gigantic aboriginal inhabitants, was situated on the confines of Judah and Benjamin, and appears anciently to have been distinguished for its abundant harvests; but, like all the country about Jerusalem, it is now stony, and scantily furnished with patches of light red soil.—*I.*

x ver. 15. *y* 2 Sa. 22. 1; 23. 25, or 2 Sa. 5. 9.

y 1 Sa. 10. 5; 13. 23.

7 Longing for the water of a particular well is by no means an uncommon occurrence with persons recovering from fever. The character of David, which was most remote from childish anxiety that the text might intimate, renders it probable he was at this time recovering from some such sickness.—*C.*

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token that we shall praise him without ceasing in the temple above.

CHAPTER X. [Ver. 12. The narrative of the defeat of Israel at Gilboa, and of the death of Saul and Jonathan, is almost verbatim the same as that in 1 Sa. xxxi. It is introduced here simply as a preface to the history of David's reign in Jerusalem. The anointing of David in Hebron, and his coronation and reign of seven years there, are dismissed in a very few words. The main object of the historian evidently is to narrate the achievements of David and his band of heroic followers, commencing with the siege and capture of Jerusalem. *P.*]

REFLECTIONS.—Behold how God stains the pride of human glory! He is sovereign, but righteous and terrible, in all his judgments! The hands of sinners often make the snares with which themselves are caught. And disobedience to God, and intimacy with the devil, most certainly bring to ruin persons, families, and nations.

CHAPTER XI. REFLECTIONS.—Here let me observe, that God's counsels will be fulfilled whatever

one would give me drink of the [z]water of the well of Beth-lehem, that *is* at the gate!

18 And the three brake through the host of the Philistines, and drew water out of the well of Beth-lehem, that *was* by the gate, and took *it*, and brought *it* to David: but David would not drink *of* it, [a]but poured it out to the LORD,

19 And said, My God forbid it me, that I should do this thing: shall I drink the blood of these men [b]that have put their lives in jeopardy? for [c]with *the jeopardy of* their lives they brought it: therefore he would not drink it. These things did these three mightiest.

20 And [d]Abishai the brother of Joab, he was chief of the three: for lifting up his spear against three hundred, he slew *them*,[8] and had a name among the three.

21 Of the three, he was more honourable than the two, for he was their captain; howbeit he attained not to the *first* three.

22 Benaiah[e] the son of Jehoiada, the son of a valiant man of Kabzeel, who had done many acts;[9] he slew two lion-like men of Moab: also he went down and slew a lion in a pit in a snowy day.[1]

23 And he slew an Egyptian, a man of *great* stature,[2] five cubits high; and in the Egyptian's hand *was* a spear [f]like a weaver's beam; and he went down to him with a staff, and plucked the spear out of the Egyptian's hand, and slew him [g]with his own spear.[3]

24 These *things* did Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, and had a name among the three mighties.

25 Behold, he was honourable among the thirty,[4] but attained not to the *first* three: and David set him over his guard.[5]

26 Also[h] the valiant men of the armies *were*, Asahel the brother of Joab, Elhanan the son of Dodo of Beth-lehem.

27 Shammoth the [i]Harorite,[6] Helez the [k]Pelonite,

28 Ira the son of Ikkesh the Tekoite, Abiezer the Antothite,

29 Sibbecai[7] the Hushathite, Ilai[8] the Ahohite,

30 Maharai the Netophathite, [l]Heled the son of Baanah the Netophathite,

31 Ithai the son of Ribai of Gibeah, *that pertained* to the children of Benjamin, Benaiah the Pirathonite,

32 Hurai[m] of the brooks of Gaash, [n]Abiel the Arbathite,

33 Azmaveth the Baharumite, Eliahba the Shaalbonite,

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z With Ca.4. 15. Jn. 4.10,14.18.12.3.

a 2 Sa.23.16,17. As a thank-offering for his preservation of the men.

b Ju.9.17; 12.3. 1 Sa. 19.5;28.21. Es.4.16.

c Heb. *with their lives*, Ro. 16. 4. 2 Co. 12. 15, with Ps. 72. 14; 116.15.

d 2 Sa.23.18,19;2.18; 10. 10;18. 2. ch. 2.16. 1 Sa.26.6.

8 The might here ascribed to Abishai and Jashobeam, ver. 11, seems so much beyond the ordinary power of man, that while infidels have found them occasion for question, expositors have sought, by various means, to bring them within the limits of historical probability. The difficulty, however, seems most easily removed by observing, that in ver. 11, the words *by him*, and in ver. 20, the word *them*, is supplied; and that the acts ascribed to these worthies is not the actual destruction of the hundreds by their own hands, but their personal boldness in 'lifting up the spear against them,' and boldly, it may be, defending some pass against them, till assistance arrived.—*C.*

e 2 Sa. 23. 20–23; 20. 23. 1 Ki.1.8,38;2.35.

9 Heb. *great of deeds.*

1 Having followed his track in the snow. —*C.*

2 Heb. *a man of measure.*

f ch.20.5. 1 Sa.17.7.

g 1 Sa.17.51. 2 Sa.23. 21.

3 A proof at once of great courage and dexterity of fence; yet not so wonderful as the others; for the moment he had warded off the thrust of his antagonist, and got nearer to him than his spear's point, the Egyptian was completely in his power.—*C.*

4 The word *shalishim*, which is translated thirty, properly signifies an office or particular description of men. Of these *shalishim* we have in 2 Sa. xxiii. thirty-seven, and it can scarcely be said with propriety that we have thirty-seven out of thirty; and besides, here in Chronicles there are sixteen added. The captains over Pharaoh's chariots are termed *shalishim*, Ex 14.7.—*I.*

5 Or, *council.*

h 2 Sa. 2. 18; 23. 24–39. About sixteen of the names here are different from what they are in Samuel, and sixteen other mighty men of less account are added after Uriah, ver. 41.

i Or, *Shammah the Harorite*, 2 Sa.23.25.

6 Several variations will be found between the names as recorded here and elsewhere; but this implies no contradiction, but merely that there were several modes of writing and pronouncing the same name, or that the same persons had different names, either at one time or at different periods of their lives, *e.g.* Abram, Abraham; Sarai, Sarah.—*C.*

k Or, *Paltite*, 2 Sa. 23.26.

7 Or, *Mebunnai.*

8 Or, *Zalmon.*

l Or, *Heleb*, 2 Sa.23. 29.

m Or, *Hiddai*, 2 Sa. 23.30.

n Or, *Abialbon.*

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o Or, *Jashem*, 2 Sa. 23.32.

9 Or, *Eliphelet.*

p Or, *Ahasbai*, 2 Sa. 23.34.

q Or, *Paarai*, 2 Sa. 23.35.

r Or, *Igal*, 2 Sa. 23. 36.

1 Or, the *Haggerite.*

s Jos.15.48. ch. 2.50, 53. 2 Sa.23.38.

t 2 Sa.11. 3; 23. 39. 1 Ki.15.5.

2 Perhaps these last sixteen were of less note, and so are not added in Samuel, or were dead before that roll was formed.

3 Or, *Shimrite.*

4 Either a Moabitish proselyte, or an Israelite called a Moabite, from victories gained over Moabites, or from having originally dwelt in their country. See Ru. 1. 1.—*C.*

CHAP. XII.

B.C. cir. 1056.

1 The writer here goes back to the times which preceded the death of Saul, and records some particulars not mentioned in the books of Samuel respecting David's advancement to the throne. Several considerable persons resorted to him at Ziklag; and either joined his small troop or assured him of assistance when it became necessary. Some of these were Benjamites, and related to Saul, who were either induced through a firm belief of the word of God by Samuel respecting him, or by indignation at the base treatment which David met with from Saul to the disgrace of their family and tribe, or because they perceived that the Lord was departed from Saul, and was with David of a truth. The hand of God was, however, very conspicuous in raising him up friends from this tribe, whence he might have expected the most determined opposition.—*I.*

a 2 Sa.27.2,6.

2 Heb. being yet *shut up.*—[The expression *shut up*, so often applied to the extermination of eastern royal families, De. 32.36. 1 Ki.14. 10; 21.21. 2 Ki. 9. 8, 14, 26, strictly speaking refers to the case when some of them had secured themselves in an impregnable fortress, or in places of great secrecy, from the usurper. But the term is used in a more extensive sense for those who had fled to foreign countries to escape being slain; thus it is here applied to David. Ziklag is described as a town in the country, and was probably an unwalled town; and it is certain he did not confine himself to it, but was continually making excursions from thence.—*J.*]

b 1 Sa.xviii.–xxvii.

c Ju. 20. 16. 1 Sa. 17. 49.

3 Most probably in slinging stones. See Ju.20.16.—*C.*

4 Or, *Hasmaah.*

d Jos.18.28. 2 Sa.11. 4.

e Jos.21.18.

f Jos.9.3;18.25.

g Jos.15.36.

h Ne.7.27.

i Jos.15.36,58. ch. 4. 4,18,39.

34 The sons of [o]Hashem the Gizonite, Jonathan the son of Shage the Hararite,

35 Ahiham the son of Sacar the Hararite, Eliphal[9] the son of [p]Ur,

36 Hepher the Mecherathite, Ahijah the Pelonite,

37 Hezro the Carmelite, [q]Naarai the son of Ezbai,

38 Joel[r] the brother of Nathan, Mibhar the son of Haggeri,[1]

39 Zelek the Ammonite, Naharai the Berothite, the armour-bearer of Joab the son of Zeruiah,

40 Ira the [s]Ithrite, Gareb the Ithrite,

41 Uriah[t] the Hittite,[2] Zabad the son of Ahlai,

42 Adina the son of Shiza the Reubenite, a captain of the Reubenites, and thirty with him,

43 Hanan the son of Maachah, and Joshaphat the Mithnite,

44 Uzzia the Ashterathite, Shama and Jehiel the sons of Hothan the Aroerite,

45 Jediael the son of Shimri,[3] and Joha his brother the Tizite,

46 Eliel the Mahavite, and Jeribai and Joshaviah, the sons of Elnaam, and Ithmah the Moabite,[4]

47 Eliel, and Obed, and Jasiel the Mesobaite.

CHAPTER XII.

1 *The companies that came to David at Ziklag.* 23 *The armies that came to him at Hebron.*

NOW[1] these[a] *are* they that came to David to Ziklag, while he yet kept himself [2]close [b]because of Saul the son of Kish: and they *were* among the mighty men, helpers of the war.

2 *They were* armed with bows, and could use both the [c]right hand and the left in *hurling* stones,[3] and *shooting* arrows out of a bow, *even* of Saul's brethren of Benjamin.

3 The chief *was* Ahiezer, then Joash, the sons of Shemaah[4] the [d]Gibeathite; and Jeziel and Pelet, the sons of Azmaveth; and Berachah, and Jehu the [e]Antothite,

4 And Ismaiah the [f]Gibeonite, a mighty man among the thirty, and over the thirty; and Jeremiah, and Jahaziel, and Johanan, and Jozabad the [g]Gederathite,

5 Eluzai, and Jerimoth, and Bealiah, and Shemariah, and Shephatiah the [h]Haruphite,

6 Elkanah, and Jesiah, and Azareel, and Joezer, and Jashobeam, the Korhites,

7 And Joelah and Zebadiah, the sons of Jeroham of [i]Gedor.

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difficulties lie in the way; that pride goeth before destruction; and that men, after long wearying themselves in vain, are sometimes made to understand the things which belong to their peace and return to their own mercy. There is a real contract between kings and their subjects which both parties ought religiously to observe. Hopes of preferment strongly induce carnal men to their duty; and the strength and prosperity of kings depend, under God, chiefly upon their servants. But the providential or spiritual presence of God with men is the true cause of their strength and fortitude; and the way to be great and famous is to do remarkable services to our God, our king, and our country. Great men ought never to be prodigal of the lives of their subjects; but if their rashness hath brought others into danger, they ought bitterly to repent of it and to study more self-denial; and if we have anything superexcellent, the Lord ought to be honoured with it. But

8 And of the Gadites there separated themselves unto David,[5] into [k]the hold to the wilderness, men of might, *and* men of war[6] *fit* for the battle, that could handle shield and buckler,[7] whose [l]faces *were like* the faces of lions, and *were* as swift as the roes[8] upon the mountains;[9]

9 Ezer the first, Obadiah the second, Eliab the third,

10 Mishmanna the fourth, Jeremiah the fifth,

11 Attai the sixth, Eliel the seventh,

12 Johanan the eighth, Elzabad the ninth,

13 Jeremiah the tenth, Machbanai the eleventh.

14 These *were* of the sons of Gad, captains of the host: [m]one of the least *was* over an hundred, and the greatest over a thousand.[1]

15 These *are* they that went over Jordan in the first month, when it [n]had overflown[2] all his banks; and they put to flight all *them* of the valleys, *both* toward the east, and toward the west.

16 And there came of the children of Benjamin and Judah [o]to the hold unto David.[3]

17 And David went out to meet them,[4] and answered and said unto them, If ye be come peaceably unto me to help me, mine heart shall be[p] knit unto you: but if *ye be come* to betray me to mine enemies, seeing *there is* no [q]wrong in mine hands, the God of our fathers look *thereon*, and [r]rebuke *it*.

18 Then [s]the spirit came upon [t]Amasai, *who was* chief of the captains, *and he said*, Thine *are we*, David, and on thy side, thou son of Jesse: peace, peace *be* unto thee, and peace *be* to thine helpers; for thy God helpeth thee. Then David received them, and made them captains of the band.

19 And there fell *some* of Manasseh to David, when he came with the Philistines against Saul to battle; but they helped them not: for [u]the lords of the Philistines, upon advisement, sent him away, saying, He will fall to his master Saul,[5] to *the jeopardy of* our heads.[6]

20 As he [v]went to Ziklag, there fell to him of Manasseh, Adnah, and Jozabad, and Jediael, and Michael, and Jozabad, and Elihu, and Zilthai, captains of the thousands that *were* of Manasseh.

21 And they helped David [w]against the band[7] *of the rovers*:[8] for they *were* all [x]mighty men of valour, and were captains in the host.

22 For at *that* time, [c]day by day, there came to David to help him, until *it was* a great host, like the host of God.[9]

23 ¶ And [b]these *are* the numbers of the [1]bands[2] *that were* ready armed to the war, *and* came to David to Hebron, to turn the kingdom of Saul to him, [c]according to the word of the LORD.[3]

24 The[d] children of Judah, that bare shield and spear, *were* six thousand and eight hundred, ready armed[4] to the war.

25 Of[e] the children of Simeon, mighty men of valour for the war, seven thousand and one hundred.

26 Of [f]the children of Levi, four thousand and six hundred.

27 And Jehoiada *was* the leader of the Aaronites, and with him *were* three thousand and seven hundred;

28 And [g]Zadok, a young man mighty of valour, and of his father's house twenty and two captains.

29 And[h] of the children of Benjamin, the kindred[5] of Saul, three thousand: for hitherto the greatest part[6] of them [i]had kept the ward of the house of Saul.[7]

30 And[k] of the children of Ephraim, twenty thousand and eight hundred, mighty men of valour, [l]famous throughout the house of their fathers.

31 And of the [m]half-tribe of Manasseh, eighteen thousand, which were expressed by name,[8] to come and make David king.

32 And [n]of the children of Issachar, *which were men* that had [o]understanding of the [p]times, to know what Israel ought to do; the heads of them *were* two hundred; and all their brethren *were* at their commandment.

33 Of[p] Zebulun, such as went forth to battle, expert in war,[1] with all instruments of war, fifty thousand, which could keep rank:[2] *they were* [q]not of double heart.[3]

34 And [r]of Naphtali a thousand captains, and with them, with shield and spear, thirty and seven thousand.

35 And of the Danites, expert in war, twenty and eight thousand and six hundred.

36 And of Asher, such as went forth to battle, expert in war,[4] forty thousand.

37 And [s]on the other side of Jordan, of the Reubenites, and the Gadites, and of the half-tribe of Manasseh, with all manner of instru-

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A.M. 2948. B.C. 1056.

5 About 1058.
k 7 Sa.23.14,29;24.22.
6 Heb. *of host.*
7 Various countries and tribes use different weapons, and the minute and graphic description of this variety furnishes an internal proof that the history was written at the period described. Alas! that the sinfulness of man should prompt his ingenuity to discover such various modes of destruction! Hasten, Lord, the promised reign of the glorious "Prince of peace."—*C.*
l Pr.28.1. 2 Sa.17.10; 23.20,21; 23.12.18.
8 Heb. *as the roes upon the mountains to make haste.*
9 The Gadites were a warlike race. Their own semi-nomad habits, the position and physical characteristics of their allotted territory, had great influence in moulding the character of the people, and training them to war. Gilead was mountainous—it was a land of roving shepherds, moving camps, and wild adventure. The Gadites were devotedly attached to both Saul and David. Some of their warriors followed the fortunes of the latter in the darkest epochs of his eventful history.—*P.*
m Or, *one that was least could resist a hundred, and the greatest a thousand*, i.e. *ch.* 8.
1 It is not improbable that, though fewer at first, the Gadite auxiliaries of David should soon increase to 1000, which would constitute the following of these eleven chiefs.—*C.*
n Jos.3.15; 4.18. Je. 12.5;49.19, with Ca. 8. 7. Ro.8.35.
2 Heb. *filled over.*
o ch.11. 16; ver. 8. 1 Sa.23.14,29;24.22.
3 There are several places called *the hold*, as Adullam, 1 Sa. 22. 4, the caves of Engedi, 24. 22—that in the text is Ziklag, as appears from ver. 1.—*Note*, Those natural recesses into which David so often fled, and in which he found protection, should remind us of the sure defence, and of "fleeing to the stronghold as prisoners of hope."—*C.*
4 Heb. *before them.*
p Heb. *be one*, 2 Kl. 10.15. Phi.1.27.2 Co.13. 11.1 Co.1.10.
q Or, *violence*, 1 Sa. 24.11,17;26.18.
r Gen. 31.53. Jude 9. Ge.16.5. 1 Sa.24.12,15.
s Ju.3.10;6.34;13.25.
t ch.2.17. 2 Sa.17.25; 19.13;20.4-12.
u 1 Sa.29.2-4.
5 "By our heads he will return to his master Saul," *i.e.* he will in the midst of the battle turn upon and slay us, and thus our overthrow will be the price of a friendly reception with Saul. This was the opinion formed of David by the Philistine chiefs.—*P.*
6 Heb. *on our heads.*
v 1 Sa.29.11. De. 33. 25.
w 1 Sa. 30. 1-17, *i.e.* Amalekites.
7 Or, *with a band.*
8 That is, against the Amalekites who had invaded Ziklag in David's absence, 1 Sa.30.1-3.—*C.*
x ch.5.24.

A.M. 2948. B.C. 1056.

a 2 Sa.2.3,4;3.1. He. 11.34. Job 17.9.
9 Terrible and numerous as the angelic armies which Jacob saw, Ge.32.1,2.—*C.*
b 2 Sa.5.2, 3. ch.11.1 -3;11. 14.
1 Or *captains*, or *men.*
2 Heb. *heads.*
c 1 Sa.13.14;15.28; 16. 12-14. Ps.2.6;89.19-35. Ge.49.8-10. ch.11.3,10.
3 B.C. 1048.
d Ge.46.12. Nu.1.26, 27;2.3;4;26.22.
4 Or, *prepared.*
e Nu. 1 22, 23; 2. 12, 13; 26. 12-14. ch. 4. 24-43, with Ge.46.10.
f Ge. 46. 11. Ex. 32. 27,28. Nu.4.46,48;25.8. 2 Ki.11.4-15.
g 2 Sa.8.17.1 Ki.1.8; 2.35.
h Ge.46.21. Nu.1.36, 37;2.22,23;26.38-41. ch. viii.ix.
5 Heb. *brethren.*
6 Heb. *a multitude of them.*
i 2 Sa.2.8,9.
7 The meaning of this statement appears to be, that the number sent by the tribe of Benjamin was very small, but was owing to the fact that hitherto the great mass of the tribe had been careful guardians of the house and interest of Saul. Even after the death of Ishbosheth, a large part of the tribe of Benjamin hesitated to acknowledge David as king.—*P.*
k Ge. 46. 20; 48. 19. Nu.1.32,33;2.18,19; 26. 35-37. ch.7.20-27.
l Heb. *men of names*, Ge.6.4.
m Who dwelt on the west of Jordan, Jos.xvii.
8 Most probably this peculiarity is mentioned because the western half-tribe of Manasseh lay in three separate portions, which rendered a simultaneous movement less easy, and a selection *by name* more requisite, than in the other tribes.—*C.*
n Ge.46.13. Nu.1.28, 29;26.23-25;2.5,6. ch.7. 1-5.
o Ge.49. 15. Es.1.13. Mat.16.3.
9 Learned and pious men discerning "the signs of the times," and thence inferring and teaching public duty.—*C.*
p Ge.46.14. Nu.1.30, 31;2.7,8;26.26,27.
1 Or *rangers of battle*, or *ranged in battle.*
2 Or, *set the battle in array.*
q Heb. *without a heart and a heart.* Not Ps. 12. 2, but Jn. 1 47
3 *Double* is opposed to *perfect*, ver. 38; they were all sincerely affected towards David, though so numerous. By its being said they could 'keep rank,' it seems implied that the rest could not, and that attention was beginning to be paid to the training of troops to act in organied masses. But the Sept. and Vulg. read the original word so as to make the clause mean that the men of Zebulun came to *assist* David, not that they could keep rank.—*C.*
r Ge.46.24. Nu.1.38-43;2.25-31;26.42-50.
4 Or, *keeping their rank.*
s Nu.32.33; 24.25,35; 26.7,18,34. Jos.3.12,13; 13.8-33;xxii.

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were not these chiefs typical of Jesus Christ's apostles, faithful ministers and followers, who by faith do marvellous exploits, wrestle with principalities and powers, and are more than conquerors through him that loved them!

CHAPTER XII. [Ver. 33. *Fifty thousand which could keep rank.* A rare accomplishment in eastern warfare, which is rather a succession of duels, in which each man pursues his own plan, than a combined movement in which one spirit wields the energies of the whole mass. The Septuagint and Vulgate, adopting a different reading of the Hebrew, render it *to assist*, but we can see no good reason to prefer this reading. *C.*]

REFLECTIONS.—The Lord can easily bow the hearts of men, and sometimes he uses the wicked to accomplish his purposes. And when we are in the way to Jesus and our duty, no high-swelled Jordans of difficulty ought to hinder or discourage us. Swiftly ought we to flee from evil, and boldly to maintain the cause of truth. Such as have once been endangered by false friends had need to be cautious. And with great prudence, and the kindest affection, should great men receive and entertain those who come to their help in a time of distress. With prudent earnestness ought we to join those whom the Lord plainly favours, helps, and protects; and much more to join with Jesus Christ, in whom his soul delights, and who exalts all his servants to high and eternal honours. How often God raises up help for his people in the very moments in which they most need it! And hopeful is the state of a kingdom when kings ascend their throne to the

EXTERIOR WALL—TIBERIAS, A CITY OF ZEBULUN. [I. CHRON. xii: 33.]—"Of Zebulun, such as went forth to battle, expert in war, with all instruments of war, fifty thousand, which could keep rank; they were not of double heart." Tiberias has been the scene of many battles. It is perfectly in keeping with the character of this town, both in ancient and modern times, therefore, that we should have Zebulun represented as a country from which went forth to battle those who were expert in war. In the days of Herod Antipas and Agrippa, this town was not upon good terms with the city of Jerusalem. The inhabitants of Tiberias surrendered voluntarily to Vespasian, so that their city was spared. The city was sacked by the Caliph Omar in the seventh century, and subsequently by Saladin in the thirteenth, when it was much injured. Through battles and earthquakes, its palaces, churches, synagogues, institutions of learning, baths and theatres, have passed into complete desolation.

ments of war for the battle, an hundred and twenty thousand.

38 All[t] these men of war, that could keep rank, came with a perfect heart to Hebron, to make David king over all Israel: and all the rest also of Israel *were* of one heart to make David king.

39 And there they were with David three days, [u]eating and drinking: for their brethren had prepared for them.

40 Moreover, they that were nigh them, *even* unto Issachar, and Zebulun, and Naphtali, brought bread[5] on asses, and on camels, and on mules, and on oxen,[6] *and* [x]meat, meal, cakes of figs, and bunches of raisins, and wine, and oil, and oxen, and sheep abundantly: for *there was* joy[y] in Israel.[7]

CHAPTER XIII.

1 *David fetcheth the ark with great solemnity from Kirjath-jearim.* 9 *Uzza being smitten, the ark is left at the house of Obed-edom.*

AND David [a]consulted with the captains of thousands and hundreds, *and* with every leader.

2 And David said unto all the congregation of Israel, [b]If *it seem* good unto you, and *that it be* of the LORD our God, let us send abroad unto our brethren every where, *that are* [c]left in all the land of Israel, and with them *also* [d]to the priests and Levites *which are* in their cities *and* suburbs, that they may gather themselves unto us:

3 And let us bring again the ark of our God to us: for we [e]inquired not at it in the days of Saul.[1]

4 And all the congregation said that they would do so: for the thing was [f]right in the eyes of all the people.

5 So [g]David gathered all Israel together, from Shihor of Egypt, even unto the entering of Hemath,[2] to bring the ark of God from Kirjath-jearim.

6 And David went up, and all Israel, to Baalah,[h] *that is,* to Kirjath-jearim, which *belonged* to Judah, to bring up thence the ark of God the LORD, [i]that dwelleth *between* the cherubims, whose name is called *on it.*

7 And they carried the ark[3] of God [k]in a new cart out of the house of Abinadab: and Uzza and Ahio drave the cart.

8 And David and all Israel [l]played before God with all *their* might, and with singing, and with harps, and with psalteries, [m]and with timbrels, and with cymbals, and with trumpets.

9 ¶ And when they came unto the thrashing-floor of [n]Chidon, Uzza [o]put forth his hand to hold the ark; for the oxen stumbled.[4]

10 And the anger of the LORD was kindled against Uzza, and he smote him, [p]because he put his hand to the ark: and there he died [q]before God.

11 And David was displeased,[5] because the LORD had made a breach upon Uzza: wherefore that place is called Perez-uzza[6] to this day.

12 And David was afraid of God that day, saying, [r]How shall I bring the ark of God *home* to me?

13 So David brought[7] not the ark *home* to himself to the city of David, but carried it aside into the house of [s]Obed-edom the Gittite.[8]

14 And the ark of God remained with the family of Obed-edom [t]in his house three months. And the LORD blessed the house of Obed-edom, and all that he had.

CHAPTER XIV.

1 *Hiram sendeth timber and builders to David.* 2 *The prosperity of David's kingdom.* 8 *His two signal victories over the Philistines.*

NOW Hiram[a] king of Tyre sent messengers to David, and timber of cedars, with masons and carpenters, to build him an house.[1]

2 ¶ And David perceived that the [b]LORD had confirmed him king over Israel; for his kingdom was lifted up on high, [c]because of his people Israel.

3 ¶ And David [d]took more wives at Jerusalem: and David begat more sons and daughters.

4 Now[e] these *are* the names of *his* children which he had in Jerusalem; Shammua,[2] and Shobab, Nathan, and Solomon,[3]

5 And Ibhar, and [f]Elishua, and Elpalet,

6 And Nogah, and Nepheg, and Japhia,

7 And Elishama, and [g]Beeliada, and Eliphalet.

8 ¶ And when the Philistines [h]heard[4] that David was anointed king over all Israel, all the Philistines went up to seek David: and David heard *of it,* and went out against them.

9 And the Philistines came and spread themselves in the valley of [i]Rephaim.[5]

10 And David [k]inquired of God, saying, Shall I go up against the Philistines? and wilt thou deliver them into mine hand? And the LORD said unto him, Go up; for I will deliver them into thine hand.

11 So they came up to Baal-perazim; and David smote them there. Then David said, [l]God hath broken in upon mine enemies by mine hand, like the breaking forth of waters:

A.M. 2948. B.C. 1056.

t Ge.49.8,10. Ps.110. 3. Zec.8.21, 22. Re. 11. 15. Is. 11. 10; lv. lx.

u Ge.26, 30; 31, 54. 2 Sa.6.19. Is.1.3,4.

5 For *bread* the Septuagint reads *to them.* In whichever sense it is understood, the narrative furnishes a happy example of the increasing riches of the kingdom during the brief period of David's administration. The introduction of the 'joy in Israel,' renders probable that these contributions were chiefly, if not altogether freely bestowed. Even so, the early church had 'all things in common,' an emblem and foretaste of that better time, when the Lord shall 'make all things new.'—*C.*

6 We see that oxen were used as beasts of burden. The form of back in these animals does not adapt them for this service, but in the East they are still required to perform it, and they do it well, though in their deliberate and quiet way. Greek writers intimate the same use of oxen. At present, in different parts of Asia, they are employed for riding, burden, or draught.'—*Kitto.*

x Or, *victual of meal,* Le.2.4,5,7.1 Sa. 25.18.2 Sa.16.1.

y Pr.29. 2; 11. 10. Je. 23,5,6. Re.11.17; 19. 1–8.

7 The allotted possessions of the northern tribes were much richer in agricultural produce than those of the southern. The section of southern Palestine held by the Israelites was mainly a pastoral mountainous region. But the fertile plains of Issachar, Zebulun, and Naphtali were famous for their crops of grain.—*P.*

CHAP. XIII.

B.C. 1045.

a Ec. 4. 9. Pr. 15. 22; 20. 18. 24. 6. 2 Ki. 12. 21.

b 2 Ki.9. 15. Ps.131.1, 2. 1 Ki. 1 :7.

c 1 Sa.31.1,7. Is.37.4.

d Nu.iii.iv.xviii. ch. 6.54–80.

e 1 Sa.7.1,2;11.12.

1 This will account for the statement noticed in the note on ch.10.14. Forthus, it appears that in whatever way of self-will Saul had inquired, he had neglected or despised inquiry in God's appointed place and manner.—*C.*

f 2 Sa.3.36.

g 2 Sa.6.1;24.2.1 Ki. 4. 21. Jos. 13. 3–6. Nu. 34. 5–8. Ju. 20. 1.

2 That is, from the south, the extremity to the northern, equal to the corresponding expression, 'from Dan to Beersheba,' the northern and southern extremities. *C.* —— Hamath was the Epiphania of the Greeks. It was formerly a celebrated city of Syria, and is still a considerable town, about three and a half days' journey from Tripoli.—*J.*

h Jos.15.9. 1 Sa.7.1, 2. Ps.132.6. 2 Sa.6.2.

i Ex. 25. 22. 2 Ki. 19. 15. Ps.80.1. Is. 37. 16. 1 Ki.6.13.

3 Heb. *made the ark to ride.*

k Nu. 4. 15. ch. 15.2, 13.2 Sa.6.3,4.

l 2 Sa. 6. 5. Ps. xxiv. xlvii. lxvi.–lxviii.

m Ps.68.25–27; 150.1–6.

A.M. 2959. B.C. 1045.

n Or, *Nachon,* 2 Sa. 6.6.

o Nu.4.15.

4 Or, *shook it.*

p Nu.4.15. ch. 15. 2, 13. De.12.8. Jos. 6. 6. 1 Sa.6.19; v.

q Le.10.2. Nu.14.37. Ps. 50.16,22. 1 Co.10.30. 2 Ch.26.16,20.

5 Not displeased with God for his judgment, see ver. 12, but with himself and the Levites for neglecting the appointed order, and incurring the divine displeasure.—*C.*

6 That is, *The breach of Uzza.*

r Job 4.17; 25. 6. Ps. 119.120.

7 Heb. *removed.*

s 2 Sa. 6. 10–12. ch. 15.18,24;26.4,8,15.

8 David did not here seek to avoid danger to himself, by transferring the ark to another; this had been both unlike and unworthy his character for courage and piety. But Obed-edom being a Levite, ch. 15. 18, his house was considered more suitable than even the royal residence. *C.*—Obed-edom was a Levite of the family of Kohath. He is called a Gittite, apparently because he was a native of the town of *Gath*-Rimmon, in Manasseh, which was assigned to the Kohathites, Jos. 21. 45. There is another Levite of this name mentioned in ch.16.38.—*P.*

t ch.16.5;26.4–8.2Sa. 6. 10. Ge. 30. 27; 39. 5. Mat.6.33.2 Co.2.16.

CHAP. XIV.

B.C. 1046.

a 2 Sa.5.11,12. 1 Ki. 5.1.

1 The low state of the mechanical arts in Israel cannot surprise when the disastrous period since the days of Joshua is considered. David, as a wise king, imports the skill of other countries, and demonstrates how reformation in religion is the surest handmaid of national improvement. *C.*—The Phœnicians of Tyre were, from the earliest ages, famed for their architectural genius, and for their skill in masonry and in ship-building. The massive foundations and walls still existing in Tyre, Sidon, Gebal, and Arvad, afford some magnificent specimens of mural architecture. It is worthy of note that these remains of former greatness are similar in style to the remains of the temple and castle in Jerusalem.—*P.*

b Ps.75.6,7;127.1. *c* 2 Sa.5.12; 7.8,9; 12. 7. Ro.13.4. Is.1.26;43.4.

d 2 Sa.5.13–16. ch.3. 5–8, with De.17.17.

e ch.3.5–9. 2 Sa.5.14–16.

2 So called after the prophet his reprover.

3 B.C. 1033.

f Elishama, ch.3.6.

g Or, *Eliada,* 2 Sa. 5.16.ch.3.8.

h 2 Sa. 5.17–23. Jos. 10.3;11.2. Re. 11.17,18; 17.14. Ps.2.1–5; 118. 10–13;22.16.

4 B.C. 1047.

i Or, *giants,* 2 Sa. 5.18, 22. Ge. 14. 5. Jos. 15.8. Is.17.5.

5 Translated, Jos. 15. 8, 'the valley of the giants,' and lies to the south-west of Jerusalem. It was exceedingly fertile, a circumstance that fitted it for the muster of the Philistine army.—*C.*

k Ju.1.1;20.18,23,28. 1 Sa.23 2,4.12;30.7. Nu.27.21. 2 Sa.2.1;5.19. Pr.3.5,6. Ps.73.28.

l Ps.44.3;115.1;118.10–13;92.7,9,10. 2 Sa.5.20.

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universal satisfaction of their subjects, especially the most pious and prudent. Thus may the nations quickly flock to Jesus, when he takes to himself his great power and reigns! May all the ends of the earth remember and turn to the Lord;—and the kingdoms of this world become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ.

CHAPTER XIII. REFLECTIONS. — To have God with us, as the foundation of all true felicity, should be our first and principal desire. But respect paid to those whom we command engages their consent, and is the way to be obeyed with cheerfulness. In the multitude of counsellors there is much, but not all safety. In the settlement of true religion magistrates ought to manage so as to recommend it to the approbation of all their subjects, and to act as nursing parents, not as ravening wolves. All who fear God ought to rejoice when religion is countenanced and promoted; and when princes are active, ministers should heartily correspond with their godly designs. Great care ought to be taken in correcting the mistakes of former times, which have passed unpunished. But not the least commandment of God ought ever to be overlooked; for the ignorance of those who minister

therefore they called the name of that place Baal-perazim.[m]

12 And when they had left their gods there, David gave a commandment, and they [n]were burnt with fire.[6]

13 And the Philistines [o]yet again spread themselves abroad in the valley.

14 Therefore David inquired again of God: and God said unto him, Go not up after them; turn away from them, and come upon them over against the mulberry-trees.

15 And it shall be, when thou [p]shalt hear a sound of going in the tops of the mulberry-trees, *that* then thou shalt go out to battle: for God is gone forth before thee, to smite the host of the Philistines.

16 David therefore did as God commanded him: and they smote the host of the Philistines from [q]Gibeon even to Gazer.[7]

17 And the [r]fame of David went out into all lands; and the LORD brought the fear of him upon all nations.[8]

CHAPTER XV.

1 David, having prepared a place for the ark, ordereth the priests and Levites to bring it from Obed-edom. 25 He performeth the solemnity thereof with great joy. 29 Michal despiseth him.

AND *David* made him houses[1] in the city of David,[2] and prepared [a]a place for the ark of God, and pitched for it a tent.

2 Then David said, None ought to carry the ark of God[3] but the Levites:[4] for them hath the[b] LORD chosen to carry the ark of God, and to minister unto him for ever.

3 And David [c]gathered all Israel together to Jerusalem, to bring up the ark of the LORD unto his place, which he had prepared for it.

4 And David assembled the [d]children of Aaron, and the Levites:

5 Of[e] the sons of Kohath; Uriel the chief, and his brethren[5] an hundred and twenty.

6 Of the sons of Merari; Asaiah the chief, and his brethren two hundred and twenty.

7 Of the sons of Gershom; Joel the chief, and his brethren an hundred and thirty.

8 Of the sons of [f]Elizaphan; Shemaiah the chief, and his brethren two hundred.

9 Of the sons of [g]Hebron;[6] Eliel the chief, and his brethren fourscore.

10 Of the sons of [h]Uzziel; Amminadab the chief, and his brethren an hundred and twelve.

11 And David called for [i]Zadok and Abiathar the priests, and for the Levites, for Uriel, Asaiah, and Joel, Shemaiah, and Eliel, and Amminadab,

A.M. 2957. B.C. 1047.

m That is, *Lord of breaches*, Is.28.21.

n De.7.25.Ex.32.20. 2 Ki. 23.4,6,15,16.

6 David did not retain them as trophies of victory, or subjects of curiosity, but destroyed them by fire—an example which, had it been followed by Christians, would in all human probability have prevented that influx of picture and image worship by which so large a portion both of the eastern and western churches has been so grievously inundated.—*C.*

o 2 Sa.5. 22. 1 Ki.20. 22.Is.26.11.Ps.2.1-4.

p 2 Ki.7.6;19.7. Hab. 3.6-15. Ju.7.9-15. Le. 26.7,8,36.

q Jos.9.17; 10.33; 21. 17,21. 2 Sa. 5. 25. The battle was fought near Gibeon and Geba.

7 Most probably Gezer, a city of Ephraim, Jos. 10. 33, the precise site of which is not now known.—*C.*

r ch.ii. 2 Ch.26.8. 2 Sa.7 9;22.29-49. Ps.99. 1. Re.15.4.

8 All the neighbouring lands and nations wherein David was a type of Christ, whose fame is in all the earth, and whose fear is even upon his enemies.—*C.*

CHAP. XV.

B.C. 1045.

1 An eastern house of any importance is not a single house, but a collection of several houses, around one or several courts, and parcelled out in different departments.—*C.*

2 'The City of David' was the name given to that quarter of Jerusalem which stood on the hill of Zion, which was originally occupied by the fortress and city of the ancient Jebusites. It lay west of Moriah, the temple mount, and it was surrounded on all sides by deep ravines, leaving only a low narrow neck on the north communicating with the suburbs on that side.—*P.*

a 2 Sa.6.17. Ps. 132. 2–5.

3 Heb. it is *not to carry the ark of God, but for the Levites.*

4 He had been taught by the judgment of Uzza to consult the Scriptures more attentively.—*Note*, Happy are they whom the rod teaches to listen to him who appointed it.—*C.*

b Nu.4.2,15. De. 10. 8;31.9. Jos.3.3;6.6.2Ch. 35.3.

c 2 Sa.6.11.ch.13.5.

d Nu.18.1-7;iii.iv.

e Ex.6.16,18,22. Nu. iii.iv.ch.6.1, &c.; 24.7-24.

3 Or, *kinsmen.*

f Ex.6.22. Le.10.4.

g Ex.6.18. ch. 23.12, 19.

6 Hebron does not of course mean the city so called. It is here the name of a son of Kohath, who is mentioned in Ex. 6.18.—*P.*

h Ex.6.18. Le. 10.4. ch.23.20.

i ch.18.16.2 Sa.8.17; 15.24,29,35; 20. 21. ver. 5–10.

A.M. 2959. B.C. 1045.

k Ex.19.10,15. 2 Ch. 29.5. Ge.35.2. Is.52.11. Jn.17.17. Ro.12.1, 2. 1 Pe.1.15,16;2.1,5,9.

7 Prepare yourselves after the appointed manner to appear before God in his service, Ex. 19.10, 11,22. This preparation was outward, but was the emblem of a heart 'sanctified by faith,' Ac.26.18, in the Lamb of God, 'whose blood cleanseth from all sin,' 1 Jn.1.7.—*C.*

l Le.10.1, 3. ch. 13. 10, 11, with Nu. 4. 15. ver.2.

8 When God had prescribed his own form of service, it was their duty to observe it; for every form was significant of some truth or principle, and wilful neglect or substitution was wilful rebellion.—*C.*

m Ge. 35.2. Ex. 19. 14,15. 1 Sa.7.6.2 Ch.29. 15,34.Is.52.11.

n Ex.25.14.Nu.4.15; 7.9.De.31.9.

o Is.49.24. Ezr.7.11–27.

p ver. 11, 19–21. Ps. 105.1–6;29.1, &c. ch.16. 5;6.31.

q ch.6.33,39,44;25.1–6; 26. 5. ver. 19. Ps. l. lxxxviii.lxxxix.titles.

r Or, *Aziel*, ver.20.

s Ps. 150. 2–5; 68. 25; 33.2.ver.16.

9 Convex, bowl-shaped instruments of brass, which being struck against each other, generally above the head of the player, produced a ringing tinkling sound, calculated to relieve the deeper notes of the other instruments. The ruins of Herculaneum furnish several specimens, most probably borrowed from the Hebrew worship, and misappropriated to the heathen.—*C.*

t Ps.46.1, *i.e.* virginal or treble.

1 There is every reason to conclude that the psaltery was a stringed instrument of the harp kind, by some supposed to be of a triangular form, by others a segment of a circle, like an English bow with several strings. But nothing is certainly known, except that it was sacred to the service of religion. 'Alamoth,' most probably the *treble*, the vocal part being sung by virgins, as the word signifies.—*C.*

u Bass, or instruments of eight strings, Ps.6.title.

2 The Hebrew *kinna* or harp seems to have differed from the *nebel* or psaltery, chiefly in its greater compass of notes and power of sound. It is one of the antediluvian instruments, ascribed to Jubal. 'Sheminith,' the *eighth*, perhaps the male voice, ordinarily an octave below the female. 'To excel,' to elevate. 'To complete the harmony' (*Boothroyd*).—*C.*

3 Or, was *for the carriage; he instructed about the carriage.*

4 Heb. *lifting up.*

5 The marginal reading seems best—*carriage* meaning how to carry, and when to lift or lay down the ark.—*C.*

x Nu.10.8. Ps.81.3. 2 Ch.5.12.

y 2 Sa.6.11–13, &c.

z 2 Ch.20.27. Ezr. 6. 16. Ps.47.5, 6; xcv.–c. lxviii.

12 And said unto them, Ye *are* the chief of the fathers of the Levites: [k]sanctify yourselves,[7] *both* ye and your brethren, that ye may bring up the ark of the LORD God of Israel unto *the place that* I have prepared for it.

13 For [l]because ye *did it* not at the first, the LORD our God made a breach upon us, for that we sought him not after the due [8]order.

14 So the priests and the Levites sanctified [m]themselves to bring up the ark of the LORD God of Israel.

15 And the children of the Levites bare the ark of God upon their shoulders, with the staves thereon, as [n]Moses commanded, according to the word of the LORD.

16 And David [o]spake to the [p]chief of the Levites to appoint their brethren *to be* the singers with instruments of music, psalteries, and harps, and cymbals, sounding, by lifting up the voice with joy.

17 So the Levites appointed [q]Heman the son of Joel; and of his brethren, Asaph the son of Berechiah; and of the sons of Merari their brethren, Ethan the son of Kushaiah;

18 And with them their brethren of the second *degree*, Zechariah, Ben, and [r]Jaaziel, and Shemiramoth, and Jehiel, and Unni, Eliab, and Benaiah, and Maaseiah, and Mattithiah, and Elipheleh, and Mikneiah, and Obed-edom, and Jeiel, the porters.

19 So the singers, Heman, Asaph, and Ethan, *were appointed* to sound [s]with cymbals[9] of brass;

20 And Zechariah, and Aziel, and Shemiramoth, and Jehiel, and Unni, and Eliab, and Maaseiah, and Benaiah, with psalteries on [t]Alamoth;[1]

21 And Mattithiah, and Elipheleh, and Mikneiah, and Obed-edom, and Jeiel, and Azaziah, with harps on the [u]Sheminith[2] to excel.

22 And Chenaniah, chief of the Levites, *was* for [3]song:[4] he instructed about the song,[5] because he *was* skilful.

23 And Berechiah and Elkanah *were* door-keepers for the ark.

24 And Shebaniah, and Jehoshaphat, and Nethaneel, and Amasai, and Zechariah, and Benaiah, and Eliezer, the priests, did blow with the [x]trumpets before the ark of God: and Obed-edom and Jehiah *were* door-keepers for the ark.

25 ¶ So [y]David, and the elders of Israel, and the captains over thousands, went to bring up the ark of the covenant of the LORD out of the house of Obed-edom [z]with joy.

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before God's ark is especially criminal and dangerous. With all our joys we had need to join trembling. For a seemingly small miscarriage God may quickly turn our temple songs into howlings; and discouragements are apt to cool our zeal in the way of duty. But how profitable may the ark, the Christ, the gospel of God, be to some, while it is the savour of death unto others.

CHAPTER XIV. [Ver. 8. *The Philistines went up to seek David.* Why did they wait so long during David's weakness and contests with the family of Saul? Hitherto as the head of a weak, divided, and self-wasted kingdom, they did not fear him. They perhaps had politically fomented the national strife, or encouraged the weaker against the stronger party, in hopes of the ruin of both by mutual wounds; but now that all parties have united in favour of David, the Philistines are roused to a sense of danger, and assemble to crush him before he could be supposed able to concentrate his forces. *C.*]

REFLECTIONS.—No man hath such sufficiency of his own as not to need the help of his neighbours. Let me therefore be thankful for their assistance: but let my sufficiency be of God. It is pleasant for the godly to discern God's hand even in their earthly settlements. And all advancements ought to be considered as intended for usefulness—for the glory of God and

THE ARMENIAN CHURCH AND CONVENT, JERUSALEM—WHERE DAVID MADE HIS HOUSE IN JERUSALEM. [I. CHRON., XV: 1.]—"And David made him houses in the city of David, and prepared a place for the ark of God, and pitched for it a tent." We pass through the gate called Zion's Gate in the south wall on the summit of the ridge of Zion. At this place we are on the height held by the Jebusites until David took it by storm. It was the highest point within the limits of the city. It was here, or in this immediate neighborhood, where this Armenian church and convent now stand that David built his house and the household of his families, and here was the place for the ark of the Lord before the temple was built. The Armenian convent is one of the richest and largest in the city. There are some tamarisk trees in front of it said to have been planted by Herod. Within the convent is the church of St. James, the place where, according to tradition, St. James was beheaded.

26 And it came to pass, when God helped[6] the[a] Levites that bare the ark of the covenant of the LORD, that they offered [b]seven bullocks and seven rams.

27 And David *was* clothed with [c]a robe of fine linen, and all the Levites that bare the ark, and the singers, and Chenaniah the master of the song[7] with the singers: David also *had* upon him an ephod of linen.[8]

28 Thus all Israel [d]brought up the ark of the covenant of the LORD with shouting, and with sound of the cornet,[9] and with trumpets, and with cymbals, making a noise with psalteries and harps.

29 ¶ And it came to pass, *as* [e]the ark of the covenant of the LORD came to the city of David, that Michal the daughter of Saul, looking out at a window, [f]saw king David dancing and playing: and she despised him in her heart.

CHAPTER XVI.

1 David's festival sacrifice. 4 He appointeth a band of singers and music to praise the Lord. 7 The psalm of thanksgiving. 37 He appointeth ministers, porters, priests, and musicians, to attend continually on the ark.

SO they[a] brought the ark of God, and set it in the midst of the tent that David had pitched for it:[1] and they offered burnt-sacrifices and peace-offerings before God.

2 And when David had made an end of offering the burnt-offerings and the peace-offerings, [b]he blessed the people in the name of the LORD.

3 And he [c]dealt to every one of Israel, both man and woman, to every one a loaf of bread, and a good piece of flesh, and a flagon *of wine*.

4 ¶ And he appointed *certain* of the Levites to minister [d]before the ark of the LORD, and to record, and to thank and praise the [e]LORD God of Israel:

5 Asaph[f] the chief, and next to him Zechariah, Jeiel, and Shemiramoth, and Jehiel, and Mattithiah, and Eliab, and Benaiah, and Obed-edom; and Jeiel with psalteries [g]and with harps; but Asaph made a sound with cymbals:

6 Benaiah also and Jahaziel the priests [h]with trumpets continually before the ark of the covenant of God.

7 ¶ Then on that day David 'delivered first[2] *this psalm*, to thank the LORD, into the hand of Asaph and his brethren.[3]

8 Give[k] thanks unto the LORD, call upon his name, make known his deeds among the people.[4]

9 Sing[l] unto him, sing psalms unto him, [m]talk ye of all his wondrous works.

10 Glory[n] ye in his holy name: let the heart of them rejoice that seek the LORD.

11 Seek[o] the LORD and his strength, seek his face continually.

12 Remember [p]his marvellous works that he hath done, his wonders, and the judgments of his mouth;[5]

13 O [q]ye seed of Israel his servant, ye children of Jacob, his chosen ones.

14 He *is* [r]the LORD our God: his [s]judgments *are* in all the earth.[6]

15 Be [t]ye mindful always of his covenant; the word *which* he commanded to a thousand generations;

16 *Even of the* [u]*covenant* which he made with Abraham, and of his oath unto Isaac;

17 And hath confirmed the same to Jacob for a law, *and* to Israel *for* an everlasting covenant,

18 Saying, [v]Unto thee will I give the land of Canaan, the lot[7] of your inheritance;

19 When ye were but [8]few, [w]even a few, and strangers in it.

20 And *when* they [x]went from nation to nation, and from *one* kingdom to another people;

21 He [a]suffered no man to do them wrong; yea, he reproved kings[9] for their sakes,[1]

22 *Saying*, Touch not mine anointed,[2] and do my prophets no harm.

23 Sing[b] unto the LORD, all the earth; show forth from day to day his salvation.

24 Declare[c] his glory among the heathen; his marvellous works among all nations.

25 For [d]great *is* the LORD, and greatly to be praised: he also *is* to be feared above all gods.

26 For [e]all the gods of the people *are* idols; but the LORD made the heavens.

27 Glory[f] and honour *are* in his presence; strength and gladness *are* in his place.

28 Give unto the LORD, [g]ye kindreds of the people, give unto the LORD [h]glory and strength.

29 Give unto the LORD 'the glory *due* unto his name: bring an offering, and come before him: worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness.[3]

30 Fear before him, [k]all the earth: the world also shall be [l]stable, that it be not moved.

A.M. 2959. B.C. 1045.

6 When God 'favoured' the Levites they offered sacrifices in acknowledgment of their own unworthiness, and of God's mercy.—*C.*

a 2 Sa. 6. 13. Ps. 91. 11, 12; 110. 3. Ro. 12. 1. 1 Pe. 2. 5.

b Nu. 23. 1. Job 42. 8.

c 1 Sa. 2. 11, 18. 2 Sa. 6. 14.

7 Or, *carriage*.

8 The emblem of being 'clothed with humility' and righteousness. 1 Pe. 5. 5. Re. 19. 8.—*C.*

d 2 Sa. 6. 12, 15. Ne. 8. 10. Ps. 47. 1–9; 68. 1–35; xcv.–c. ver. 16.

9 The cornet was a trumpet made of horn. The trumpet was a similar instrument of greater length made of metal.—*C.*

e Ex. 25. 16, 21; 40. 3, 20. De. 31. 26. Jos. 11. 7. Ju. 20. 2. 1 Sa. 4. 3. 2 Sa. 15. 24. ch. 17. 1. He. 9. 4.

f 2 Sa. 6. 16, 20–23. Ac. 2. 13. 1 Co. 2. 14. 1 Pe. 4. 4.

CHAP. XVI.

a 2 Sa. 6. 19. ch. 29. 20. 1 Ki. 8. 64. Ro. 12. 1. 2 Co. 8. 5.

1 This tent or tabernacle was pitched in the city of David, on Mount Zion. It appears to have been a new structure, and not the old tabernacle which was made in the wilderness, and remained so long at Shiloh. The ark remained in the 'tent' on Zion until the temple was completed, when it was conveyed with great state and ceremony to its final resting-place in the holy of holies on Moriah. See 2 Ch. v.—*P.*

b De. 33. 1. 1 Ki. 8. 55, 56. Lu. 24. 50.

c 2 Sa. 6. 19. Ne. 8. 10. Est. 9. 22. Mat. 14. 16. Ga. 3. 28. Col. 3. 11.

d Nu. 28. 1–7. Ps. 100. 1–5; 134. 1–3.

e Ps. 144. 15. 1 Ki. 8. 15. Ge. 17. 7. Ex. 19. 5, 6. De. 14. 2; 26. 18; 28. 9.

f ch. 15. 17, 18.

g Heb. *with instruments of psalteries and harps*, ch. 15. 16, 19–21, 28; 25. 1, 6. ver. 42. Ne. 12. 27.

h Nu. 10. 8. Ps. 81. 1–3. 2 Ch. 5. 12. ch. 15. 24.

i 2 Sa. 23. 1. 2 Ch. 29. 25. Ne. 12. 24, 46.

2 The *first* psalm prescribed after Asaph's appointment to office.—*C.*

3 'On that day David committed first to Asaph and his brethren to thank Jehovah.' It would seem that the order of service established by David, and placed by him under the charge of Asaph, was now for the first time observed. The psalm was now first composed, but seems afterwards to have been slightly modified, no doubt to adapt it to a somewhat different ritual.—*P.*

k Ps. 105. 1–15; 145. 1–21. ver. 9 12.

A.M. 2959. B.C. 1045.

4 From the beginning to ver. 23 this psalm nearly accords with Ps. 105. 1–15, from ver. 23–33 with Ps. xcvi., and to the end with Ps. cvi., with the addition of ver. 34, 36.—*C.*

l Ps. 100. 1–4; cxlviii. cl.

m Ps. 40. 10; 22. 22; 145. 5–7.

n Is. 45. 25. Ps. 34. 2, 3; 104. 34; 105. 3. 1 Co. 1. 31.

o Am. 5. 6, 14. Mat. 7. 7. 2 Ch. 6. 41. Ps. 27. 8; 105. 4.

p Ps. 111. 2, 3; 105. 5; 119. 11, 93. Re. 15. 4.

5 His revelations and decisions by the mouth of Messiah.—*C.*

q Ps. 105. 6. Ex. 19. 5, 6. De. 7. 7, 8. Mat. 11. 26.

r Ps. 105. 7; 118. 28. Ex. 15. 1, 2.

s Ps. 48. 10, 11; 97. 8, 9.

6 God has never 'left himself without a witness,' Ac. 14. 17, but to every land has declared 'his eternal power and godhead,' Ro. 1. 20.—*C.*

t Ps. 105. 8; 29. 7; 45. 17; 119. 93. Ca. 1. 4. Jn. 14. 26.

u Ge. 17. 2–8; 26. 3; 28. 13, 14.

v Ge. 12. 7; 13. 15; 17. 8; 26. 3, 4; 28. 13, 14; 35. 12; 46. 4. Ps. 105. 11.

7 Heb. *the cord*.

8 Heb. *men of number*.

w Ps. 105. 12. Ge. 34. 30. He. 11. 13.

x Ge. 12. 1, 14; 13. 1; 20. 1; 46. 4.

a Ge. 12. 17; 20. 3. Ex. 7. 15. Ps. 105. 14, 15.

9 So he protected Abraham, and reproved Pharaoh and Abimelech, Ge. 12. 17; 20. 3.—*C.*

1 This noble ode is a striking confirmation of the authenticity of the history recorded in the Pentateuch. It mentions and attests the truth of the leading events from Abraham to the exodus. Here as elsewhere the thoughtful reader will observe a consistency and unity in the Bible which form strong evidences of its divine origin.—*P.*

2 Prophets, priests, and kings were inaugurated by anointing with oil, the emblem of the outpouring of the Spirit. Here it applies to every believer, who spiritually anointed to similar spiritual offices and duties. See Re. 1. 5, 6. 1 Jn. 2. 20, 27.—*C.*

b Ps. 96. 1–13; 147. 1.

c ver. 8, 9. Is. 12. 4, 5. Ps. 96. 3, 4; 145. 5–7, 21; 71. 8, 15, 17, 18.

d Ps. 89. 6–8; 86. 8–10. Re. 4. 11. Is. 40. 12–28.

e 1 Co. 8. 4, 5. Je. 10. 3. Ps. cxv. cxxxv. Is. 44. 9–19; 45. 20–22; 42. 5.

f Ps. 27. 4; 8. 1; 96. 6. Ex. 15. 11. Ne. 8. 10.

g Ps. 96. 7; 29. 1; 66. 1; 100. 1. Is. 11. 10.

h Ps. 115. 1. Da. 9. 7, 9, 15.

i Ps. 96. 8, 9; 89. 5–8; 110. 3. Ro. 12. 1.

2 *Holiness* signifies two things: *separation* from the world, and *dedication* to God. These constitute all that is beautiful in character; as youth, health, colour, and form combine to constitute what is beautiful in person.—*C.*

k Ps. 96. 9, 10; 97. 1; 99. 1. Ge. 49. 10. Re. 11. 15.

l Mat. 16. 18. 1 Pe. 1. 5. Ps. 125. 1, 2.

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good of mankind. Rarely do even good men prosper in worldly things without waxing secure and too indulgent to the flesh. Little ease indeed must be expected in this world to the church of Christ or to the souls of his people. But if we acknowledge the Lord in all our ways, he will direct our paths and make us more than conquerors. Carefully must we attend to the directions of his word, or even motions of his Spirit and providence: and depending on his conduct and strength, we may gird up our loins, gird on our armour, resist the devil, and make him to flee from us. If God deliver my corruptions into my hand, let me, all inflamed with holy zeal, burn them up, and mark the strongest detestation of idolatry, and every monument of it. And let Jesus have all the glory: let his name only be exalted, and his glory fill the whole earth.

CHAPTER XV. [Ver. 27. In the parallel passage in 2 Sa. 6. 14, instead of the words 'And David was clothed with a robe of fine linen,' we find, 'And David danced with all his might.' In the Hebrew there is such a close similarity in letters and sound between the two statements that some commentators think the text in Chronicles is a corruption, especially as in the last clause it is said, 'David had upon him an ephod of linen,' and in ver. 29 reference is made to Michal having seen David dancing. As there is no MS. authority for the alleged corruption I feel bound to reject it. *P.*]

Ver. 29. [The history of Michal was eventful, and may account satisfactorily for this outburst of temper. We are told that at first she loved David, 1 Sa. 18. 20; and when married she proved the depth of her affection by risking her life for her husband, 19. 12. But David was forced to flee from Saul's court, and Michal was married to another. David also married Abigail

31 Let [m]the heavens be glad, and let the earth rejoice: and let *men* say among the nations, The LORD reigneth.

32 Let[n] the sea roar, and the fulness thereof: let the fields rejoice, and all that *is* therein.

33 Then shall the trees of the wood sing out at the presence of the LORD, because he cometh to judge the earth.[4]

34 O[o] give thanks unto the LORD; for *he is* good: for his mercy *endureth* for ever.

35 And [p]say ye, Save us,[5] O God of our salvation, and gather us together, and deliver us from the heathen, that we may give thanks to thy holy name, *and* glory in thy praise.

36 Blessed[q] *be* the LORD God of Israel for ever and ever. And [r]all the people said, Amen, and praised the LORD.

37 ¶ So he left there, before the ark of the covenant of the LORD, [s]Asaph and his brethren, to minister before the ark continually, as every day's work required:

38 And [t]Obed-edom with their brethren, threescore and eight; Obed-edom also the son of Jeduthun and Hosah *to be* porters:

39 And [u]Zadok the priest, and his brethren the priests, before the tabernacle of the LORD in the high place [x]that *was* at Gibeon,[6]

40 To offer [y]burnt-offerings unto the LORD upon the altar of the burnt-offering continually morning and evening, and *to do* according to all that is written in the law of the LORD, which he commanded Israel;

41 And with them [z]Heman and Jeduthun and the rest that were chosen, who were expressed by name, to give thanks to the LORD, because[a] his mercy *endureth* for ever:

42 And with them Heman and Jeduthun, with trumpets and cymbals for those that should make a sound, and with musical instruments of God. And the sons of Jeduthun *were* porters.[7]

43 And all the people departed every man to his house: and David returned to [b]bless his house.[8]

A.M. 2959. B.C. 1045. | A.M. 2562. B.C. 1042.

m Is.35.10. Lu.2.10, 14; 21. 27, 28. Re. 14.2; 15.3. Ps.98. 1; 96.11; 98. 4,5.

n Ps.96.11–13; 98. 7–9; cxlviii. Is.44.23; 42.10 12; 55.12, 13. Re.11.15 –18; 15.3, 4; 18.20; 19.1–9.

4 This glorious concert reminds the church of the future coming of Christ to judgment, 2 Co. 5. 10, while it testifies to his Godhead, for it is JEHOVAH that cometh.—*C.*

o Ps.106.1; 107.1; 118. 1; 136.1.

p Ho.14.2, 3. Is.1.18; 45.17. Ps.68.18, 19; 106. 47.

5 As he is the saving God, so we pray to him to save us. To pray to God under the attribute, the influence of which we need, serves to inspire much confidence. 'I am weak; almighty God, help me! I am ignorant; O thou Father of lights, teach me! I am lost; O merciful God, save me!'

q 1 Ki.8.15, 56. Ps.72. 18, 19; 106.48.

r De.27.15. Ne. 8. 6. 2 Ch. 20. 21, 26. ch. 29. 20.

s ver.4–6; ch. 15.17, 22.

t ch.13.14; 26.4–8, 15.

u ch. 15.11, 12; xxiv.

x ch.21.29. 2 Ch.1.3, with 1 Sa.22.19. Jos.9. 17, 21, 17; 18.25.

6 He did not leave Zadok at Gibeon, where he and his brethren had ministered, but removed them to Jerusalem, thereby restoring the religious services to that unity which God had enjoined as a preservative against idolatry, De. 12. 5, 11, 13, 14. *C.*—It would appear that previous to the building of the temple there were several authorized sanctuaries in the country. There was one at Kirjath-jearim while the ark remained there; there was another at Gibeon, another at Bethel, another at Shiloh, and apparently another at Gilgal. The erection of the temple by Solomon restored unity of worship.—*P.*

y Heb. *in the morning and in the evening.* Ex.29.38–42. Nu. 28.3–7. Le.6.20.

z ch.15. 17–22; 25. 1–6; 6.31–47.

a 2 Ch.5. 13; 7. 3; 20. 21. Ezr.3.11. Je.33.11.

7 Heb. *for the gate.*

b 2 Sa.6. 20. Jos. 24. 15. Ge.18.19.

8 A religion that is merely before the world is nothing but show and hypocrisy. True religion must be found in the heart, the closet, and the family. Even so, David, having attended the public services of the tabernacle, piously retires to 'bless his family.'—*C.*

CHAP. XVII.

a 2 Sa.7.1. 1 Ki.1.8.

b Hag.1.7. Ac.7.46. 2 Sa.6.17; 7.2. ch.16.1.

c Jos.9.14. ch.14.10. 1 Co.13.9.

d Is.55. 8; 30. 21. Ps. 13.10, 11. Je.10.23.

e 2 Sa.7.4. ch.22.8. 1 Ki.8.19; 5.3.

1 The Syriac, Arabic, and some MSS. add 'out of Egypt.' The going from tent to tent, and from tabernacle to tabernacle, alludes to the frequent changes of the site of that sacred shrine. 'I have transferred my tabernacle from Gilgal to Nob, from Nob to Shiloh, and from Shiloh to Gibeon' (*Targum and Jarchi*). It is clear from this, that it had not always been judged necessary that the ark should be exclusively set in the tabernacle framed under divine direction in the wilderness. Indeed we see in ch. 15. 1 that when David contemplated the removal of the ark from the house of Obed-edom, he 'prepared a place for the ark of God, and pitched for it a tent.'—*P.*

2 Heb. *have been.*

f Ex.40.2. 2 Sa.6.17. 1 Ki.8.4, 16.

g Ju.2.16. 1 Sa.12.11. Ac.13.20. 1 Ki. 8. 16. 2 Sa.7.7.

h 2 Sa. 7, 8. 1 Sa. 16. 12, 13. Ps.78.70–72; 113 7, 8; 89.19, 20. Ac.13.22.

3 Heb. *from after.*

4 He reminds David of his humble origin that he may contrast with it the work of his mercy and power. Even so, the work of grace must not only commence in humbling the sinner, but when the believer is most 'exalted through the multitude of the revelations' of God's goodness, he must still be reminded by some 'thorn in the flesh' that he stands by grace, and by grace alone, 2 Co. 12. 7. 1 Co.10.12. Ro. 11.20.—*C.*

i 1 Sa. xvii.–xxxi. 2 Sa.ii.–v. Ps.113.7, 8; 75. 6, 7. ch.14.17.

k Je.31. 12. Eze. 34. 14. Le.26.6.

l 2 Ch.15.2, with Ex. 1.13. Ju. ii.–xvi. 1 Sa. xiii.xxxi. Ps.89.22.

m Ex.1.21. Ps.127.1. 2 Sa.7.11.

CHAPTER XVII.

1 *Nathan, first approving the purpose of David to build God an house, 3 afterward by the word of God forbiddeth it.* 11 *He promiseth him blessings and benefits in his seed.* 16 *David's prayer and thanksgiving.*

NOW it[a] came to pass, as David sat in his house, that David said to Nathan the prophet, Lo, I dwell [b]in an house of cedars, but the ark of the covenant of the LORD *remaineth* under curtains.

2 Then Nathan said unto David, [c]Do all that *is* in thine heart; for God *is* with thee.

3 ¶ And [d]it came to pass the same night, that the word of God came to Nathan, saying,

4 Go and tell David my servant, Thus saith the LORD, [e]Thou shalt not build me an house to dwell in:

5 For I have not dwelt in an house since the day that I brought up Israel[1] unto this day; but have gone[2] from tent [f]to tent, and from *one* tabernacle *to another.*

6 Wheresoever I have walked with all Israel, spake I a word to any of the judges [g]of Israel, whom I commanded to feed my people, saying, Why have ye not built me an house of cedars?

7 Now therefore thus shalt thou say unto my servant David, Thus saith the LORD of hosts, [h]I took thee from the sheep-cote, *even* from following[3] the sheep,[4] that thou shouldest be ruler over my people Israel;

8 And I [i]have been with thee whithersoever thou hast walked, and have cut off all thine enemies from before thee, and have made thee a name like the name of the great men that *are* in the earth:

9 Also [k]I will ordain a place for my people Israel, and will plant them, and they shall dwell in their place, and shall be moved no more; neither shall the children of wickedness waste them [l]any more, as at the beginning,

10 And since the time that I commanded judges *to be* over my people Israel: moreover, I will subdue all thine enemies. Furthermore, I tell thee, that the LORD [m]will build thee an house.

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and Ahinoam. Years passed. Saul is dead, and those who had been his followers desired to make terms with David, who made it a first condition of peace that Michal should be restored to him. Her new husband loved her, and the attachment appears to have been mutual; still she was torn from him and given up to David, 2 Sa. 3. 12, sq. On being brought back she doubtless saw that her old place in David's affections was occupied by others. She was grieved and provoked; and she gave expression to her feelings of hatred and contempt on seeing what she thought acts on David's part beneath the dignity of royalty. She seems also to have spoken disrespectfully of his other wives, for which David rebukes her in these words: 'And of the maid-servants which thou hast spoken of, of them shall I be had in honour,' 2 Sa. 6. 22. *P.*]

REFLECTIONS.—Good works must also be well done: and all our sufferings for our mistakes should teach and stir us up to be more regular. The greatest reformers, being men, have some faults. But it is a mercy when we see our errors and amend them. Even such as know the word of God better than others may, on particular occasions, forget the directions which they are peculiarly called to remember. But readiness to correct former mistakes is an evidence of true wisdom and goodness. Such as are above others in dignity ought to go before them in duty. Many who are very remiss in their duty, if they were but faithfully told of it, would reform and do better. Whatever gifts God bestows upon us should be employed in his service: and in all religious work we should derive our help from heaven and thank God for it. If we escape his judgments while we are serving him, we owe it to his favour, not to our own exactness: and to him we owe the praise of all that is good in our work. God delights in the prosperity of his servants; and we ought to serve him with cheerfulness and joy. But in the very best of times there will be some evil murmurers who think God's service too mean for them.

CHAPTER XVI. REFLECTIONS.—God's ordinances and truths may remain long in obscurity; but their glory will shine forth at last. And the hungry who wait on him will at length be filled with good things. Grateful praises is a most acceptable sacrifice to God. All our rejoicings ought to express thankfulness to him from whom we receive all our comforts: and all our praises to centre in ascribing glory to him. We ought to show ourselves generous to others, as God is gracious to us. And such as know God should endeavour by their triumph in him, and all other fruits of grace, to bring their neighbours into acquaintance with him. The sovereign choice which God has made of his people, the covenant he has established with them; the wonderful works he has done for them; and the statutes he has given them; as well as his almighty power, goodness, and glory; and his being the Creator and governor of all things, should be matter of our praise. And while we enjoy his favours, we ought to intercede for salvation and every other promised blessing to them that want them. But however solemn our occasional worship of God may be, it must never supersede our daily and ordinary service of him.

CHAPTER XVII. REFLECTIONS.—Every true fearer of God is solicitous to have his glory set forth. And God's ministers especially ought to encourage every good word and work. Gracious desires, even where ineffectual, are highly regarded of God.

11 ¶ And it shall come to pass, when thy days be expired that thou must [n]go *to be* with thy fathers, that [o]I will raise up thy seed after thee, which shall be of thy sons;[5] and I will establish his kingdom.

12 He shall [p]build me an house, and I will stablish his throne for ever.[6]

13 I[q] will be his father, and he shall be my son: and I will not take my mercy away from him, as I took *it* from *him* that was before thee:

14 But I will settle him in mine house and in my kingdom for ever: and his throne shall be established for evermore.

15 According[r] to all these words, and according to all this vision, so did Nathan speak unto David.

16 ¶ And David the king came and sat before the LORD, and said, [s]Who *am* I, O LORD God, and what *is* mine house, that thou hast brought me hitherto?

17 And *yet* [t]this was a small thing in thine eyes, O God; for thou hast *also* spoken of thy servant's house for a great while to come, and hast [u]regarded me according to the estate of a man of high degree,[7] O LORD God.

18 What can David *speak* more to thee for the honour of thy servant?[8] for [x]thou knowest thy servant.

19 O LORD, for [y]thy servant's sake,[9] and [z]according to thine own heart, hast thou done all this greatness, in making known all *these* great things.[1]

20 O LORD, *there is* [a]none like thee, neither *is there any* God besides thee, according to all that we have heard with our ears.

21 And [b]what one nation in the earth *is* like thy people Israel, whom God went to redeem *to be* his own people, to make thee a name of greatness and terribleness, by driving out nations from before thy people, whom thou hast redeemed out of Egypt?

22 For thy [c]people Israel didst thou make thine own people for ever; and thou, LORD, becamest their God.

23 Therefore now, LORD, [d]let the thing that thou hast spoken concerning thy servant, and concerning his house, be established for ever, and do as thou hast said.

24 Let it even be established, [e]that thy name[2] may be magnified for ever, saying, The LORD of hosts *is* the God of Israel, *even* a God to Israel: and *let* the house of David thy servant *be* established before thee.

25 For thou, O my God, [f]hast told thy servant that thou wilt build him an house: therefore thy servant hath [g]found *in his heart* to pray before thee.

26 And now, LORD, thou art God, and [h]hast promised this goodness unto thy servant:

27 Now therefore let it please thee[3] to bless the house of thy servant, that it may be before thee for ever: for thou blessest, [i]O LORD, and *it shall be* blessed for ever.

CHAPTER XVIII.

1 David subdueth the Philistines, and maketh the Moabites tributary. 3 He smiteth Hadarezer and the Syrians. 9 Tou sendeth Hadoram with presents to bless David. 11 The presents and the spoil David dedicateth to God. 13 He putteth garrisons in Edom. 14 David's officers.

NOW after this [a]it came to pass, that David smote the Philistines, and subdued them, and took [b]Gath and her towns out of the hand of the Philistines.[1]

2 And he [c]smote Moab; and the Moabites became David's servants, *and* brought gifts.[2]

3 ¶ And David smote [d]Hadarezer king of Zobah unto Hamath,[3] as he[4] went[e] to stablish his dominion by the river Euphrates.

4 And David took from him [f]a thousand chariots, and seven [5]thousand [g]horsemen, and twenty thousand footmen: David also [h]houghed all the chariot-*horses*,[6] but reserved of them an hundred chariots.

5 And when the Syrians of Damascus[7] came to help Hadarezer king of Zobah, David [i]slew of the Syrians two and twenty thousand men.

6 Then David [k]put *garrisons* in Syria-damascus; and the Syrians became David's servants, *and* brought gifts. Thus the LORD [l]preserved David whithersoever he went.

7 And David took the shields of gold that were on the servants of Hadarezer, [m]and brought them to Jerusalem.

8 Likewise from Tibhath,[8] and from Chun, cities of Hadarezer, brought David very much brass, wherewith [n]Solomon made the brazen sea, and the pillars, and the vessels of brass.

9 ¶ Now when [o]Tou king of Hamath heard how David had smitten all the host of Hadarezer king of Zobah;

10 He sent [p]Hadoram his son to king David, to inquire of his welfare,[9] and to [1]congratulate him, because he had fought against Hadarezer, and smitten him; (for Hadarezer had war[2] with Tou;) and *with him* all manner of vessels of gold, and silver, and brass.

11 Them also king David [q]dedicated unto the LORD, with the silver and the gold that he brought from all *these* nations; from Edom, and from Moab, and from the children of Ammon, and from the Philistines, and from Amalek.

A.M. 2962. B.C. 1042.

n 2 Sa.7. 12. 1 Ki. 8. 20. Ac.13.36. Ge.25.8.

o 2 Sa. 7. 12. Ps. 132. 12; 89. 4, 29. Ro.1.3. Is.9. 6, 7.

[5] This expression clearly intimates that this promised son was not yet born, while the subsequent prophecies of establishing his throne 'for ever,' and 'for evermore,' clearly point to Messiah, who was truly of the seed of David according to the flesh, Ac. 2.30.—*C.*

p ch.22.10. 1 Ki. v.-viii. Mat.16.18. Is.9. 6, 7. Zec.6.12, 13.

[6] Solomon was a type of Christ, David's *Greater Son*. This promise can be applied fully to Solomon only in his typical character. It received its fulfilment in Christ the antitype. His kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and his throne is established for ever.—*P.*

q 2 Sa.7.14. Ps.89.26-28; 2. 7; 45. 6. He.1. 5. Da. 2. 44. 1 Co. 15. 25. Jn.12.34.

r Je.23.28. Eze.3.17. Mat.28.20. 1 Co.11.23; 4.1,2. Ac.20.27.

s 2 Sa. 7. 18-23. Ge. 32.10. Job 7.17. Ps.8.4; 144.3. 1 Co.15.9,10. Ep. 3.8.

t ver.7,8. 2 Sa. 7. 19; 12.8. Is.49.6.

u Ps.89.19-29; 78.70, 71. 1 Ki.3.13. Ep.3.20. Is.49.6-9. Phi. 2. 8-11. Mat.28.18.

[7] 'Thou hast regarded me according to the order of the Adam—the man—from above the exalted.' See notes on 2 Sa. 7. 14, 18. *C.*—Pye Smith shows its reference to the Messiah, and adds, 'We collect from it that the Messiah would at an epoch remote by future descent from David, that he would be the *pre-eminent man*, sustaining a relation to the human race analogous to that of the first Adam, being in some peculiar sense from above, and communicating blessings to the world, by means of his most righteous, beneficent, and universal reign.'—*J.*

[8] The honour conferred on thy servant (*Boothroyd*).—*C.*

x Ps.139.1. Jn.21.17. 1 Sa.16.7.

y Is.49.3,6. Mat. 12. 18.

[9] In 2 Sa. 7. 21 it is said to be 'for thy *word's* sake,' that is, for the sake of that servant who is thy Word, Is.52.13.—*C.*

z Mat.11. 26. Ep. 1. 11. Is.63.7. Hos.11.8.

[1] Heb. *greatnesses.*

a Ps.35.10; 36.7; 44.1-3; 47.3-8; 86.8-10; 89.6-8. Ex.15.11; 18. 11. De. 3.24. 1 Sa.2.2. Is.45.5,6, 18,21,22.

b 2 Sa.7. 23. De. 33. 29; 4.7, 32-40. Ps.147.20. Am. 3. 2. Ex. 3.8; vii.-xiv. Is.63.7-13. Eze.10. 3-14, 16.2-25. Jos.vi. -xxi. Tit.2.14.

c Ge.17.7. De.7.6; 14. 2; 26.18; 28.9. Ex. 19.5, 6; 6.7. Jn. 6. 37, 44. Ac. 20.28. 1 Ti.3.15, 16. 2 Ti. 2.19. Ps.48.14. Zec.13. 9. Tit.2.14.

d Mat.7. 7. Eze, 36. 37. Is.45.11. Ps.74. 20; 119.49.

e Mat.6.9. Jn. 12. 28. 1 Pe.4.11. Pr.16.4. Is. 44.23; 23.25, 26.1 Co.10. 31.

f Heb. *hast revealed the yeer of thy servant,* 1 Sa.9.15.

[2] The *name* of God has been progressively revealed, not because God would add to his titles, but because by his *name* he reveals his *nature*, and reveals the perfections of that nature as the necessities of the church have from time to time required.—*C.*

g Ps.10.17. Eze. 36. 37. Ro.8.26.

h Ge.32.12. Tit.1.2. He.6.17, 18; 10.23. Nu. 23.19. 1 Th.5.24.

[3] Or, *it hath pleased thee.*

i Ge.27.33. Mi.7.18-20. Ep.1.3. Ro. 11. 29. Ps.72.17.

CHAP. XVIII.

B.C. 1040.

a 2 Sa.8.1, &c.

b 1 Sa.17.4. ch.20.6.

[1] Gath was the nearest of the five royal cities of Philistia. David, therefore, attacked it. He was besides well acquainted with its position and defences, so that in his assault he had the advantage of accurate and thorough personal knowledge to guide him.—*P.*

c Nu.24.17. Ps. 60.8; 108.9.

2 B.C. 1039.

d Hadadezer, 2 Sa. 8.3.

3 B.C. 1038.

4 David.

e Ge.15.18. Ju.11.24, with Ps.60, title.

f 1 Ki.9.19; 10.26. Ps. 20.7; 33.16, 17.

5 The striking similarity of the Hebrew letters for 7000 and 700, or the assumption of the 'error of a transcriber,' has been employed to reconcile this passage with 2 Sa. 8. 4. There seems no necessity for either, as each may be true; as each account may refer to a different period of the same transaction. See note on 2 Sa. 8. 4.—*C.*

g 2 Sa.8.4.

h Jos.11.6, with De. 17.16. Ps.20.7; 33.16, 17.

6 Rather, 'David disjointed all the chariots,' a proceeding at once more judicious and humane. The reader will perceive the word 'horses' is not in the original.—*C.*

7 Heb. *Damesek.*

i Is.8.9; 31.3. Job 9. 13. Ps.110.5, 6; 2. 9. ch. 19.6, 18.

k 2 Sa.8.6.

l Ps.91.14; 121.7. Pr. 21.31.

m ch.22.14. 1 Ki.10. 17.

8 Called in the book of Samuel *Betah* and *Berothai.*—[In 2 Sa. 8.8 we read for Tibhath 'Betah,' probably by transposition (for the letters are the same), only *th* is here added. And Chun was perhaps another name for Berothai. If Zobah were Nisibis, then Berothai might be (as some have supposed) Bir, the Birtha of Ptolemy, on the east bank of the Euphrates. But as Aram-zobah was certainly on the west of the Euphrates, Berothai must have been in the same direction. Some identify it with Berytus or Beirout, a well-known seaport on the coast of Syro-Phœnicia; but if Berothai was the same as the Berotah of Eze. 47. 16, it seems rather to have been situated between Hamath and Damascus.—*I.*

n 1 Ki. 7. 23. 2 Ch. 4. 15.

o Or, *Toi*, 2 Sa.8.9.

p Or, *Joram*, 2 Sa. 8.10.

9 Or, *to salute.*

1 Or, *to bless.*

2 Heb. *was the man of wars.*

q Mi.4.13. ch. 22.14. Ps.72.10, 15; 60.8, 9. Ex. 17. 16. A prelude of the Gentiles being brought to Christ.

But outward pomp in his worship and service is little esteemed in his sight. Earnest desires and endeavours to build a house to the Lord are the best methods to raise up our own. Blessings on our children are mercies to ourselves. But in Christ himself, as our ALL and IN ALL, the promises have their complete fulfilment. With what deep humility we ought to approach unto God! Those are the truly honourable of the earth whom he regards; and it is the glory of the highest monarchs to be his servants. As there is none like him, so there is no happiness like to a sense of his favour. With ravishing wonder, and believing confidence, we may plead his promises. And if we keep his true word of grace, we shall partake of his everlasting glory.

CHAPTER XVIII. REFLECTIONS.—Intimate fellowship with God makes men bold and active; and

DAM AT DUMMAR, DAMASCUS — THE CITY CONQUERED AND GARRISONED BY DAVID. [I. CHRON., xviii: 5-6.]—"And when the Syrians of Damascus came to help Hadarezer, king of Zobah, David slew of the Syrians two and twenty thousand men. Then David put garrisons in Syria-Damascus; and the Syrians became David's servants, and brought gifts. Thus the Lord preserved David whithersoever he went." Damascus, we see by the above Scripture, was once in the kingdom of David. Here we notice that David placed a garrison. Many years after the time of David, we are told by Ezekiel, that Damascus was a merchant of Tyre in the multitude of the wares and in the multitude of the riches which it brought to Tyre. In the time of Ezekiel Tyre was the port of Damascus, but the present port is Beyrout. Alexander the Great was sent by Parmenio to take this city. The above illustration is of a dam across the Abana river at Dummar, which is a village in the suburbs of Damascus.

12 Moreover, Abishai the son of Zeruiah slew of the Edomites in the valley of Salt [r]eighteen thousand.[3]

13 ¶ And he put [s]garrisons in Edom; and all the Edomites became David's servants. Thus the LORD preserved David whithersoever he went.

14 ¶ So David reigned [t]over all Israel, and executed judgment and justice among all his people.

15 And [u]Joab the son of Zeruiah *was* over the host; and Jehoshaphat the son of Ahilud, recorder;[4]

16 And Zadok the son of Ahitub, and [x]Abimelech the son of Abiathar, *were* the priests; and [y]Shavsha *was* scribe;

17 And [z]Benaiah the son of Jehoiada *was* over the Cherethites and the Pelethites; and the sons of David *were* chief about the king.[5]

CHAPTER XIX.

1 *David's messengers, sent to comfort Hanun for his father's death, are disgracefully entreated.* 6 *The Ammonites, strengthened by the Syrians, are overcome by Joab and Abishai.* 16 *Shophach, making a new supply of the Syrians, is slain by David.*

NOW it[a] came to pass after this, that Nahash the king of the children of Ammon died, and his son reigned in his stead.

2 And David said, I [b]will show kindness unto Hanun the son of Nahash, because his father showed kindness to me.[1] And David sent messengers to comfort him concerning his father. So the servants of David came into the land of the children of Ammon to Hanun, to comfort him.

3 But the princes of the children of Ammon said to Hanun, [c]Thinkest thou that David doth honour thy father, that he hath sent comforters unto thee? are not his servants come unto thee for to search, and to overthrow, and to [d]spy out the land?

4 Wherefore [e]Hanun took David's servants, and shaved them, and cut off their garments in the midst hard by their buttocks, and sent them away.[2]

5 Then there went *certain*, and told David how the men were served: and he sent to meet them; (for the men were greatly ashamed;) and the king said, Tarry at [f]Jericho until your beards be grown, and *then* return.

6 ¶ And when the children of Ammon saw that they had made themselves odious [g]to David, Hanun and the children of Ammon sent a thousand talents of silver[2] to hire them chariots and horsemen out of Mesopotamia, and out of Syria-maachah,[3] and out of Zobah.

7 So they [h]hired thirty and two thousand chariots,[4] and the king of Maachah and his people; who came and pitched before [i]Medeba.[5] And the children of Ammon gathered themselves together from their cities, and came to battle.

8 And when David heard *of it*, he sent [k]Joab, and all the host of the mighty men.

9 And the children of Ammon came out, and put the battle in array before the gate of the [l]city: and [m]the kings that were come *were* by themselves in the field.

10 Now when Joab saw that the battle[6] was set against him before and behind, he chose out of all the choice[7] of Israel, and put *them* in array against the Syrians.[8]

11 And the rest of the people he delivered unto the hand of [n]Abishai his brother, and they set *themselves* in array against the children of Ammon.

12 And he said, [o]If the Syrians be too strong for me, then thou shalt help me: but if the children of Ammon be too strong for thee, then I will help thee.

13 Be[p] of good courage, and let us behave ourselves valiantly[9] for our people, and for the cities of our God; and let the LORD do *that which is* good in his sight.

14 So Joab, and the people that *were* with him, drew nigh before the Syrians unto the battle; and they fled before him.

15 And when the children of Ammon saw that the Syrians were fled, they likewise [q]fled before Abishai his brother, and entered into the city. Then Joab came to Jerusalem.

16 ¶ And when the Syrians saw that they were put to the worse before Israel, they sent messengers, [r]and drew forth the Syrians that *were* beyond the river;[1] and Shophach, [s]the captain of the host of Hadarezer, *went* before them.

17 And it was told David; and he gathered all Israel, and passed over Jordan, and came upon them, and [t]set *the battle* in array against them. So when David had put the battle in array against the Syrians, they fought with him.

18 But the Syrians [u]fled before Israel; and David slew of the Syrians seven thousand *men which fought in* chariots, and forty thousand

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A.M. 2966. B.C. 1038.

r 2 Sa.8.13. Perhaps quite different from Ps.60. title.

3 The account in 2 Sa. 8. 13 says that David slew of the Syrians 18,000; in this chap., ver. 5, they are said to be 22,000, while in the text the conquest of 18,000 is ascribed to Joab. Here again the similarity of the word for *Edom* and *Aram* (Syria), or the 'error of a transcriber,' is frequently employed to reconcile the narratives. Neither is necessary. The victory of Joab, the immediate commander, is ascribed to David the superior, and the Edomites are called Syrians, just as an army is called British, though it may contain numerous auxiliary troops from various countries. *C.* ——See notes on 2 Sa.8.28.—*P.*

s Nu.24.18. Ge. 27. 29,40. Ps.18.44.

t Ps.72.2;78.72. 2 Sa. 8.15. Is.11.2-4.

u 2 Sa.8.16-18; 20.23 -26. ch.11.6. Is.32.1.

4 Or, *remembrancer.*

x Called *Ahimelech*, 2 Sa.8.17.

y Called *Seraiah*, 2 Sa. 8.17; *Sheva*, 2 Sa. 20. 25; and *Shisha*, 1 Ki.4.3.

z 2 Sa. 8. 18; 15. 18; 20.23; 23.26. 1 Ki. 1.38; 4.4.

5 Heb. *at the hand of the king.*

CHAP. XIX.

B.C. 1036.

a 2 Sa.10.1. 1 Sa.11. 1,2.

b 2 Sa.9.1-2 Ch.19.2.

1 We may expect that in this world our kindest actions will often be requited with the basest returns, and our best intentions expose us to the most injurious suspicions. Even in our implicit obedience to our great and gracious Lord, when we most sincerely do good to our fellow-creatures, we must lay our account with ingratitude, contempt, and abuse. But these things should not discourage us, for he will both plead our cause and comfort us, and kindly recompense all that we endure for his sake.—*I.*

c Heb. *In thine eyes doth David,* &c. 1 Co.13.5,7.

d Ge.42.9. Jos.2.1.

e 2 Sa.10.4. Ps.109.4; 35.12. Le.19.27. Is.20.4. 2 Ch.36.16. Mat.22.6.

2 To insult or turn into ridicule is the mark not merely of a weak understanding, but of a bad heart. It may be a gratification or an amusement to either, but that will not palliate the cruelty practised on the sufferer. Christians are taught to avoid such practices, not merely by the example of the evil consequences, as in the case of the foolish Hanun, but must be restrained by the principle of love from every act that can inflict unnecessary pain, either mental or bodily.—*C.*

f At a village near to its place, for it was not yet rebuilt, Jos.6. 24,26. 1 Ki.16.34.

g Heb. *to stink,* 2 Sa.10.6. Ge.34.30. Ex. 5.21. Lu.10.16.

A.M. 2968. B.C. 1036.

2 *i.e.* £342,185, 15*s.* sterling.

3 Aram-maachah, or simply Maachah, 2 Sa.10.6,8, is mentioned along with Aram-zobah. It seems to have extended from Damascus southward as far as the north border of the country of the Jews, on the east side of Jordan; for it is related in De. 3.13 that Zair, the son of Manasseh, took possession of the country of Argob, in Bashan, unto the borders of Geshur and Maachah; and according to Jos. 13. 11 the tribe of Reuben received (among other territories) Gilead unto the borders of Geshur and Maachah. Yet it is added at ver. 13 that the Israelites had not then expelled the inhabitants of Geshur and Maachah, but dwelt along with them there.—*I.*

h 2 Sa.10.6. ch.18.3. 4.

4 32,000 'riders,' as in Is.21.7 (*Boothroyd*,; —32,000 'with chariots' (*Houbigant*).—Either translation removes the apparent difficulty. *C.*——The word *rechab* denotes not only a chariot, but a rider, and in this sense it is probably here employed, or in a collective sense *cavalry*. The Syriac has 'horsemen,' the Arabic 'chariots and horsemen.'—*I.*

i Nu.21.30. Jos.13.9. Is.15.2.

5 A city of Reuben near their north-east border. Its ruins are still about two miles in circumference, but not a single house is standing.—*C.*

k ch.xi.Is.13-3.

l Rabbah, 2 Sa. 11. 1.

m In a separate army, 1 Sa.10.8.

6 Heb. *the face of the battle was.*

7 Or, *young men.*

8 The Syrians being a very warlike people, Joab wisely selects the best troops to encounter them, and then chooses for himself the place of chief danger, while his brother with inferior troops is opposed to a less formidable army.—*C.*

n Heb. *Abshai,* 2 Sa.10.10. ch.11.20.

o 2 Sa. 10. 11. Ne. 4. 2. Lu.22 22. Ro.15.1. Ga.6.2. He.13.1.

p De.31.6,7. Jos.1.6, 7. 1 Sa.4.9. 2 Sa. 15. 26. Ps.3.8. 1 Co.16.13. Ne. 4.14.

9 'Let us play the men,' 2 Sa.10.12. The original is the same in both passages.—*C.*

q Le.26.7,8. ver.13. Ps.37.5; 20.7,8. Pr.21. 30,31. Is.41.14,16. Ro. 8.31.

r Mi.4.11-13. Is.8.9, 10;31.1-3.

1 *Euphrates.*

s Or, *Shobach,* 2 Sa.10.16.

t 2 Sa.10.17. Is.13.4; 22.6. Je.51.27,28.

u 2 Sa. 10.18. Ps. 33. 16. Pr.21.30,31; 26.17. Is.8.9,10;41.14-16.

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however numerous and mighty the enemies of God's people are, they shall be brought down at last. The associated forces of hell and earth in vain oppose his church; she shall stand triumphant over them all in the end. It is not shields of gold, but the shield of faith that will prove an unfailing defence. Nay, so uncertain are worldly things, that men often lose their power and wealth by seeking to establish them. The enemies of God's people frequently hurt themselves by attempting to hurt their neighbours. And sinners, contrary to their own inclinations, lay up wealth for the just, and make preparations for building the temple of God. But it is prudent to make God's children our friends; and proper to honour God with that in which he remarkably blesses us. They cannot but succeed in their enterprises who take God always along with them. And where he gives great power, men should be careful not to look great, but to do good with it.

CHAPTER XIX. [Ver. 7. According to the parallel passage in 2 Sa. x. the Ammonites hired from Beth-rehob and Zoba 20,000 infantry, from king Maacah 1000, and from Ish-tob 12,000. The numbers thus agree, for 20,000 + 12,000 = 32,000, to which must be added the 'king of Maacah and his people,' whose numbers are not given here. So far the two accounts are agreed. The apparent discrepancies are as follows:—1. In the *places;* in Chronicles we have *Mesopotamia*, *Syria-maachah*, and *Zobah;* in Samuel we have *Beth-rehob*, *Zoba*, and *Ish-tob*. The explanation is easy. *Mesopotamia*, or *Aram-naharaim* as it is in the Hebrew, was a name for a large country consisting of several kingdoms and provinces; it included Ish tob-Syria-maachah, or Aram-maachah, lay beside Beth-rehob; and as the whole forces of the province were hired, the name Aram-maachah is used by one historian, and

footmen,[2] and killed Shophach the captain of the host.

19 And when the servants of Hadarezer saw that they were put to the worse before Israel, they made peace with David, and became his servants: neither would the Syrians help the children of Ammon [z]any more.

CHAPTER XX.

1 *Rabbah is besieged by Joab, spoiled by David, and the people thereof tortured.* 4 *Three giants are slain by David's servants in three several battles with the Philistines.*

AND it came to pass, that after the year was expired,[1] at the time that kings go out *to battle*,[2] Joab led forth the power of the army, and wasted the country of the children of Ammon, and came and besieged Rabbah; (but David[3] tarried at Jerusalem:) and Joab [a]smote Rabbah, and destroyed it.

2 And David took the crown of their king from off his head,[4] and found it to weigh[5] a talent of gold,[6] and *there were* precious stones in it; and it was set upon David's head: and he brought also exceeding much spoil out of the city.

3 And he brought out the people that *were* in it, and cut *them* with[7] saws, and with harrows of iron, and with axes:[8] even so [b]dealt David with all the cities of the children of Ammon. And David and all the people returned to Jerusalem.[9]

4 ¶ And it came to pass after this, that [c]there [1]arose[2] war at Gezer[3] with the Philistines; at which time Sibbechai the Hushathite slew Sippai, *that was* of the children of the giant:[4] and they were subdued.[5]

5 And there was war again with the Philistines; and Elhanan the son of [d]Jair slew Lahmi, the brother of Goliath the Gittite, whose spear's staff *was* like a weaver's beam.[6]

6 And yet again [e]there was war at Gath, where was a man of *great* stature,[7] whose fingers and toes *were* four and twenty, six *on each*

d Called also *Jaare-oregim*, 2 Sa.21.19. 6 B.C. 1018. *e* 2 Sa.21.20.
7 Heb. *a man of measure.*

A.M. 2968. B.C. 1036.

2 It is said, 2 Sa.10. 18, that David slew 40,000 *horsemen*, here they are said to be *footmen*: and a 'transcriber's mistake' is, as is too common, assumed as the solution. But there is no necessity for such unauthorized violence. There might have been 40,000 *horsemen* who came to the battle, and being routed and dismounted in rocky or marshy ground, they may all have been *footmen* when the slaughter took place.—*C.*

x ch.14.17. Re.18.10. Ps.48.4.

CHAP. XX.

B.C. 1035.

1 Heb. *at the return of the year.*

2 At the beginning of the Jewish sacred year, in the spring. This is still the season when warlike expeditions are undertaken by the tribes of Western Asia. At this season the weather is suitable for sleeping in the open air and for tent life; the fruits of the field also are approaching maturity, so that supplies can be easily procured both for man and beast. It would seem there had been a cessation of hostilities during the winter months.—*P.*

3 His adultery and murder are not mentioned.

a 2 Sa.12.26-31.
4 B.C. 1034.
5 Heb. *the weight* or *worth.*

6 The *talent* at different times and in different places was a name for different weights, so that here we are unable to fix the exact weight of the crown. The ordinary talent of 114 lb. 15 dwt. would seem out of the question as a crown to be worn on the head. There are, however, examples in antiquity of crowns being suspended over, and not worn on the head; and this may have been the case with the crown of Ammon. —*C.*

7 Kennicott has found in seven MSS. 'he put them under,' instead of 'he *cut* them with,' as in the parallel passage, 2 Sa.12.31. See note.—*C.*

8 Or, made them sawers of stone, diggers of iron, and cutters of wood.

b ch. 19.2, 4. Am.1. 13. Ju.8.6,7.
9 B.C. 1020.
c 2 Sa.21.18-22.
1 Or, *continued.*
2 Heb. *stood.*
3 Or, *Gob.*
4 Or, *Rapha.*
5 These incidents do not profess to be given in chronological order. They occurred at different periods, and are grouped together in this place at the close of the history of David's wars. In the book of Samuel they are inserted at the close of David's whole history.—*P.*

A.M. 2986. B.C. 1018.

8 Several examples of this kind are on record. The daughters of Caius Horatius were called the 'six-fingered.' Pliny (l. lii. c. 43) relates that Volcatius had the same formation; and Maupertuis mentions two families near Berlin in which *sex-digitism* seemed to be hereditary.—*C.*

9 Heb. *born to the giant*, or *Rapha.*

f Or, *reproached*, 1 Sa.17.10.

g 2 Sa.13.3,32. Called *Shammah*, 1 Sa. 16.9, or *Saimma*, ch. 2.13.

CHAP. XXI.

B.C. 1017.

a 2 Sa.24.1, &c. Job 1.6. Zec.3.1. Re.12.9. Ju.8.44. Mat.4.3. 2 Co. 2.11.

b Ju.20.1. 1 Ki.4.25. 2 Sa.17.11. 24.2.

1 See note on 2 Sa. 24.1.—*C.*

c Jos.9.14. De.8.13, 14. Pr.18.12.

d Ps.115.14. Is.26.15.

e Ge.1.10. Ac.5.29,14. 19.

2 That is, in the council, where probably others thought with Joab, but wanted either the courage or honesty to declare it. It is the misfortune of kings and of all great men, to be surrounded either by flatterers who lead them astray, or timid time-servers who dare not tell them the truth. A bold and honest counsellor, and a friend who will tenderly but truly reveal to a man his faults, and urge him to his duty, are truly gifts from the Lord. Pr.1.5. Ps.16.7. Pr.8.14,12.15,19.20; 27. 9.—*C.*

f Here the 288,000 trained bands, mentioned ch.27.2-15, are added to the Israelites reckoned, 2 Sa. 24.9. [In 2 Sa. 24.9 it is only 800,000; but if we allow 1000 officers to each of the twelve legions of 24,000 each, then the two accounts are found exactly to correspond.—*J.*]

g ch.27.23,24.

h ver.14. Jos.7.1,5.1 Sa.6.19.

i 2 Sa. 24.10; 12.13. Je.3.13. Jos.7.19. Ps.38. 4,18. 51.1-4. 32.5. 25.11.

hand, and six *on each foot*:[8] and he also was the son of the giant.[9]

7 But when he [f]defied Israel, Jonathan the son of [g]Shimea, David's brother, slew him.

8 These were born unto the giant in Gath; and they fell by the hand of David, and by the hand of his servants.

CHAPTER XXI.

1 *David, tempted by Satan, forceth Joab to number the people.* 5 *The number of the people being brought, David repenteth of it.* 9 *David having three plagues propounded by Gad, chooseth the three days' pestilence.* 14 *After the death of seventy thousand, David by repentance preventeth the destruction of Jerusalem.* 18 *David, by Gad's direction, purchaseth Ornan's thrashing-floor: where, having built an altar, God giveth a sign of his favour by fire, and stayeth the plague.* 28 *David sacrificeth there, being restrained from Gibeon by fear of the angel.*

AND Satan[a] stood up against Israel, and provoked David to number Israel.

2 And David said to Joab, and to the rulers of the people, Go, number Israel from [b]Beersheba even to Dan;[1] and [c]bring the number of them to me, that I may know *it*.

3 And Joab answered, [d]The LORD make his people an hundred times so many more as they *be*: but, my lord the king, *are* they not all my lord's servants? why then doth my lord require this thing? why will he be a cause of trespass to Israel?

4 Nevertheless[e] the king's word [2]prevailed against Joab: wherefore Joab departed, and went throughout all Israel, and came to Jerusalem.

5 ¶ And Joab gave the sum of the number of the people unto David. And all *they of* Israel [f]were a thousand thousand and an hundred thousand men that drew sword; and Judah *was* four hundred threescore and ten thousand men that drew sword.

6 But [g]Levi and Benjamin counted he not among them: for the king's word was abominable to Joab.

7 ¶ And God was displeased with this thing; therefore he [h]smote Israel.

8 And David said unto God, [i]I have sinned

Beth-rehob by the other. 2. The mercenaries are said to be *infantry* in Samuel, and *chariots* in Chronicles. The discrepancy here resolves itself into the signification of the Hebrew word *rekheb*, which is here translated 'chariots.' The word has several meanings in Scripture;—it means 'cavalry' in Is. 21. 7; it means 'horses of chariots' in 2 Sa. 8. 4; and it means '*men who had been riding in chariots*' in 2 Sa. 10. 18. A probable solution of the difficulty is that these 32,000 were men who fought either in chariots or on foot. *P.*]

REFLECTIONS.—Saints ought to be neighbourly and grateful as far as religion admits. But the kindest actions may be misinterpreted, the most friendly concern be repaid with ingratitude, and the most innocent character may suffer reproach. Wickedness naturally proceeds from the wicked; and they who do ill dread ill; and where whisperers are heard firm friends are separated. They who receive shame and damage in our service ought to be tenderly taken care of and provided for: and the courage of brave men is increased and invigorated by difficulties. But sinners, whom God hath marked for ruin, harden themselves to their own destruction. Vain are the utmost efforts of art and strength against justice and equity: and to little purpose do those rally and reinforce themselves who have God for their enemy. How often those who meddle with strife not belonging to them know not what to do in the end of it; and it is wise if at last they learn to forbear.

CHAPTER XX. [Ver. 3. A careful study of this passage makes it clear that the writer must have been acquainted with the whole narrative as recorded in the book of Samuel; for in ver. 1 he says, 'but David tarried in Jerusalem,' whereas in the succeeding verses the acts of David at the seat of war are mentioned; and in ver. 3 it is said, '*And David returned to Jerusalem.*' The author deliberately omits the painful story of Bathsheba. *P.*]

Ver. 8. [The harmony and consistency of Scripture history are strikingly illustrated by the incidents narrated in this chapter. In the days of Abraham we read of the gigantic race of the *Rephaim*, who inhabited the country east of the Jordan. At the exodus the spies reported that they saw in the mountains of Palestine 'the giants, the sons of Anak, which came of the giants. And we were in our own sight as grasshoppers, and so we were in their sight,' Nu. 13. 33. We again read that in the conquest of Canaan by Joshua, 'He cut off the *Anakims* (sons of Anak) from the mountains of Judah, and from all the mountains of Israel. . . There was none of the Anakims left in the land of the children of Israel, *only in Gaza, in Gath, and in Ashdod there remained*,' Jos. 11. 22. Again we find an upland plain among the mountains near Jerusalem called *the plain or valley of the giants*, 2 Sa. 5. 18. And finally we have in this chapter an account of the overthrow and death of some of the remnants of this strange race who resided in *Gath*, one of the three cities in which alone, according to Joshua, they existed. Thus in a manner altogether undesigned, the truthfulness and consistency of the sacred narrative are remarkably established. *P.*]

REFLECTIONS.—We should conceal the faults of the godly with candour if we can do it with faithfulness. Nay, if we cannot say good of persons, we had generally best say nothing of them. But however long the powerful enemies of God and his church stand their ground, they shall be brought down at last, whether outward or inward. Nor need the saints be ever disheartened by their enemies' insolence and pride while they have the Almighty God on their side. Yea, ordinarily those bring to themselves ruin who reproach and defy God and his people.

CHAPTER XXI. REFLECTIONS.—While the saints remain on earth, Satan never lets them alone,

greatly, because I have done this thing: but now, I beseech thee, do away the iniquity of thy servant; for I have done very foolishly.

9 ¶ And the LORD spake unto Gad, David's seer,[k] saying,

10 Go and tell David, saying, Thus saith the LORD, I offer[3] thee three *things:* choose [l]thee one of them, that I may do *it* unto thee.

11 So Gad [m]came to David, and said unto him, Thus saith the LORD, Choose thee[4]

12 Either[n] three years' famine;[5] or three months to be destroyed before thy foes, while that the sword of thine enemies overtaketh *thee;* or else three days the sword of the LORD, even the pestilence, in the land, and the angel of the LORD destroying throughout all the coasts of Israel. Now therefore advise thyself what word I shall bring again to him that sent me.

13 And David said unto Gad, I am in a great strait: let me fall now into the hand of the LORD; for very [o]great *are* his mercies: but let [p]me not fall into the hand of man.

14 ¶ So the LORD sent pestilence upon Israel: and there fell of Israel [q]seventy thousand men.

15 And God sent an angel unto Jerusalem to destroy it: and as he was destroying, the LORD beheld, and he repented[6] him[r] of the evil, and said to the angel that destroyed, It is enough; stay now thine hand. And the angel of the LORD stood by the thrashing-floor of Ornan [s]the Jebusite.[7]

16 ¶ And David lifted up his eyes, and saw the [t]angel of the LORD stand between the earth and the heaven, having a drawn sword in his hand stretched out over Jerusalem:[8] then David and the elders *of Israel,* [u]*who were* clothed in sackcloth, fell upon their faces.

17 And David said unto God, [x]*Is it* not I *that* commanded the people to be numbered? even I it is that have sinned and done evil indeed; but *as for* [v]these sheep, what have they done? Let thine hand, I pray thee, O LORD my God, be on me, and on my father's house; but not on thy people, that they should be plagued.

18 ¶ Then the angel of the LORD commanded Gad to say to David, that David should go up, and set up an altar unto the LORD [z]in the thrashing-floor of Ornan the Jebusite.

19 And David went up [a]at the saying of Gad, which he spake in the name of the LORD.

20 And Ornan[9] turned back, and saw the angel;[1] and his four sons with him hid themselves. Now Ornan was thrashing wheat.

A.M. 2987. B.C. 1017.

k 1 Sa. 9.9. 2 Sa. 24. 11.

3 Heb. *stretch out.*

l Pr.16.1; 21.1; 3.12. He. 12. 6–11. Re. 3.19. Ps.94.12.

m Eze.2.7; 3.17. Je. 1.7,17. 1 Co.4.1,2. Ac. 20.27.

4 Heb. *take to thee.*

n 2 Sa. 24. 13. La.4. 9.Ke.3.10.

5 As in 2 Sa. 24. 12, *seven* years' famine are offered, but in the text *three,* the 'mistake of a transcriber,' or the confounding of two Hebrew numerals, is as usual assumed by expositors as the only reconciliation. But why this unauthorized violence? May not the prophet have been instructed first to offer *seven* years? And may he not himself have entreated the Lord, as Abraham did in the case of Sodom (Ge. 18. 23), to lower the number to three?—*C.*

o Or, *many,* Ps.130. 7. La.3.32,33. Hab.3. 2.

p 2 Ch. 28. 9. Pr. 12. 10.

q 2 Sa.24.15. Nu.16. 47,49; 25.9. 1 Sa.6.19. Ps.91.6,7.

6 See note on Ex. 32.14.—*C.*

r Ex.32.14. Ju.2.18. Ps.78.38; 106.45,46; 94. 14; 90.13; 79.8–11. Ho. 11.8. La.3.32.

s Or, *Araunah,* 2 Sa.24.18.

7 Ornan's thrashing-floor was on the narrow summit of Mount Moriah. When David first saw the angel of the Lord he was probably at the door of his palace on Mount Zion. Moriah was due east, and to reach it he had to descend into the deep bed of the Tyropoeon valley which divided the two hills, and then climb the steep side of Moriah. The threatening aspect of the angel, stretching out his flaming sword toward Jerusalem, would be seen to great advantage from David's palace on the opposite brow of Zion.—*P.*

t Is.37.36. Ac.12.23.

8 The existence of an invisible world, whose inhabitants may become visible, is everywhere implied or declared in the Scriptures. Still it is revealed as an instructive fact, never to gratify an idle curiosity. Here the appearance of the angel is to convince, not David, but the court and the city, that the plague was a direct infliction of Providence, and thereby to warn them to flee from the wrath to come.'—*C.*

u Jonah 3. 5. Ps. 35. 13,14. Nu.14.5.

x 2 Sa.24.17. Ps.51.4; 25.11. ver.8. Eze.16.63.

y 1 Ki.22.17. Ps. 44. 11. Je.12.3.

z 2 Sa.24.18. 2 Ch.3. 1. Ge.22.2,14.

a De.12.32. Mat.28. 20. 2 Co.11.23. Ps. 119. 59,60.

9 Or, *when Ornan turned back and saw the angel,* then he *and his four sons with him hid themselves.*

1 Rather, he turned and saw the *king* (comp. 2 Sa.24.20), as the Septuagint, Syriac, and Arabic translate the passage. They first saw the king with a large retinue at a distance, and not knowing what it might portend, they hid themselves. When he came near in peace, they came forth to greet him.—*C.*

A.M. 2987. B.C. 1017.

b Heb. *Gîve,* with 1 Ki.21.2 Sa.24.21.

c Nu.16.48; 25.8. Ps. 106.30. Col.1.20.

d 2 Sa.24. 22. Ge. 23. 21.1 Ki.19.21.

e Ge.14.23; 23.13. Ro. 12.17.

2 It is a command from Heaven—'Honour the Lord with thy substance.' He who has a religion that costs him nothing, has a religion that is worth nothing; nor will any man esteem the ordinances of God if these ordinances cost him nothing. Had Araunah's noble offer been accepted, it would have been Araunah's sacrifice, not David's; nor would it have answered the end of turning away the displeasure of the Most High. It was David that sinned, not Araunah, therefore David must offer the sacrifice.—*A.*

f 2 Sa. 24. 24. This was far above the price of the spot, or perhaps was given for the whole ground about the spot of the altar. It is £1095 sterling.

3 This was not, as the venerable Brown, in the preceding note, supposes, 'far above the price.' *Fifty shekels* (2 Sa. 24) were given for the thrashing-floor and oxen, 600 shekels of gold for the whole place or property—two distinct bargains.—*C.*

g Le.9.24. 2 Ch. 7.1. 1 Ki.18.38.

h Ge.22.2, 9. ver. 18, 26.2 Ch.3.1.

i 1 Ki.3.4.ch.16.39. 2 Ch.1.3.

k Ps.119.120. Eze.9. 6.He.12.28,29.

4 Impelled by a faith that feared (Ps. 111.10. He. 5. 7) while it trusted, he dared not defer the sacrifice, lest the sword of the angel might be commissioned to smite.—*C.*

5 Gibeon was half a day's journey distant, and David naturally feared to go so far away lest in his absence the destroying angel would execute his fatal commission on the city. Besides, David rightly considered that the spot over which the angel stood was holy.—*P.*

CHAP. XXII.

B.C. 1016.

a De.12.5–7. 2 Sa.24. 18. Ps. 68.69; 132. 13, 14. 2 Ch.6.6.

1 A *house* is the place of the owner's special residence, where he gathers and provides for his family. In this sense Jehovah, who fills heaven and earth, made choice of this site for his dwelling-place, Ps.cxxii.—*C.*

b 1 Ki.9. 20, 21; 5. 15, 16. Ge.49.10. Is. 11. 10. Ep.3.6,8.

2 The Israelites had never hitherto enjoyed that peace during which the mechanical arts are cultivated. They were either shepherds or soldiers. The resident artists were foreigners, who had either taken refuge in Canaan during wars in their own countries, or who had been attracted to it in search of employment.—*C.*

c ver.14. 1 Ki. 7. 14–47. 2 Ch.4.1–18.

21 And as David came to Ornan, Ornan looked and saw David, and went out of the thrashing-floor, and bowed himself to David with *his* face to the ground.

22 Then David said to Ornan, [b]Grant me the place of *this* thrashing-floor, that I may build an altar therein unto the LORD: thou shalt grant it me for the full price; that [c]the plague may be stayed from the people.

23 And Ornan said unto David, [d]Take *it* to thee, and let my lord the king do *that which is* good in his eyes: lo, I give *thee* the oxen *also* for burnt-offerings, and the thrashing-instruments for wood, and the wheat for the meat-offering; I give it all.

24 And king David said to Ornan, [e]Nay; but I will verily buy it for the full price: for I will not take *that* which *is* thine for the LORD, nor offer burnt-offerings without cost.[2]

25 So [f]David gave to Ornan for the place six hundred shekels of gold by weight.[3]

26 And David built there an altar unto the LORD, and offered burnt-offerings and peace-offerings, and called upon the LORD; and [g]he answered him from heaven by fire upon the altar of burnt-offering.

27 And the LORD commanded the angel; and he put up his sword again into the sheath thereof.

28 ¶ At that time, when David saw that the LORD had answered him in the thrashing-floor of Ornan the Jebusite, then he sacrificed [h]there.

29 For the tabernacle of the LORD, which Moses made in the wilderness, and the altar of the burnt-offering, *were* at that season in the high place at [i]Gibeon.

30 But David could not go before it to inquire of God: for he was [k]afraid,[4] because of the sword of the angel of the LORD.[5]

CHAPTER XXII.

1 *David, foreknowing the place of the temple, maketh large preparations for the building of it.* 6 *He instructeth Solomon in God's promises, and his duty in building the temple.* 17 *He chargeth the princes to assist his son in the work.*

THEN David said, [a]This *is* the house[1] of the LORD God, and this *is* the altar of the burnt-offering for Israel.

2 And David commanded to gather together [b]the strangers[2] that were in the land of Israel; and he set masons to hew wrought stones to build the house of God.

3 And David prepared iron in abundance for the nails for the doors of the gates, and for the joinings; and brass in abundance [c]without weight;

4 Also cedar-trees in abundance: for the

nor despairs of success in his temptations. And to nothing does he more tempt men than to pride; though there is nothing that God more hates, or more severely punishes. Yea, he will use the strangest methods to do the people of God an injury. Sometimes the wicked are wiser in some things of God than the saints. And always, when the heart is averse, the work goes on heavily, and is left imperfect. It is a great mercy to be quickly brought to a sense of our sins. But, even when the Lord enables to repent, he does not always turn away the external punishment which his saints must suffer in their flesh, even when their spirit is saved. Our folly and rashness often reduce us to the most fearful straits and perplexities, when we have none but ourselves to blame. It is an evil and bitter thing to depart from the living God. Spreading is the influence of sin: and if God's mercy were not infinite, we should be utterly consumed. Under the judgments

TOWER OF ANTONIA—THE FIRST STATION IN THE VIA DOLOROSA OVER WHICH CHRIST WALKED FROM THE SANHEDRIM TO CALVARY. [I. CHRON., xxii: 9-10.] —"Behold, a son shall be borne to thee, who shall be a man of rest; and I will give him rest from all his enemies round about: for his name shall be Solomon and I will give peace and quietness unto Israel in his days. He shall build an house for my name; and he shall be my son, and I will be his father; and I will establish the throne of his kingdom over Israel forever." These words were spoken of Solomon the son of David, and Jesus Christ is a direct descendant of David, and the throne of an everlasting kingdom was established not by Solomon but by Christ. The Tower of Antonia is the first station in the Via Dolorosa, the sad and mournful way over which Jesus walked from the Sanhedrim to Calvary. This tower is also called Pilate's Judgment Hall. The holy steps that led to the hall, and which were said to be trodden by the feet of Jesus were removed to Rome and may now be seen in St. John Lateran Church.

Zidonians, and they of Tyre, brought much cedar-wood to David.

5 And David said, [d]Solomon my son *is* young and tender, and the house *that is* to be builded for the LORD *must be* exceeding [e]magnifical, of fame and of glory throughout all countries: I will *therefore* now make preparation for it. So David [f]prepared abundantly before his death.

6 ¶ Then he called for Solomon his son, and charged him to build an house for the LORD God of Israel.

7 And David said to Solomon, My son, as for me, it [g]was in my mind to build an house unto the name of the LORD my God:

8 But the word of the LORD came to me, saying, [h]Thou hast shed blood abundantly, and hast made great wars: thou shalt not build an house unto my name, because thou hast shed much[i] blood upon the earth in my sight.[3]

9 Behold, a son shall be born to thee, who shall be a man of rest; and I will give him rest from all his enemies round about: for his name shall be [k]Solomon; and I will [l]give peace and quietness unto Israel in his days.

10 He[m] shall build an house for my name; and he shall be my son, and I *will be* his father; and I will establish the throne of his kingdom over Israel for ever.

11 Now, my son, [n]the LORD be with thee; and prosper thou, and build the house of the LORD thy God, as he hath said of thee.

12 Only the LORD [o]give thee wisdom and understanding, and give thee charge concerning Israel, that thou mayest keep the law of the LORD thy God.

13 Then[p] shalt thou prosper, if thou takest heed to fulfil the statutes and judgments[4] which the LORD charged Moses with concerning Israel: [q]be strong, and of good courage; dread not, nor be dismayed.

14 Now, behold, in my [5]trouble[6] I have prepared for the house of the LORD an hundred thousand talents of gold, and a thousand thousand[7] talents[8] of silver; and of brass and iron without weight: (for it is in abundance:) timber also and stone have I prepared; and thou mayest add thereto.

A.M. 2988. B.C. 1016.

d ch.29.1.1 Ki.3.7.
e 2 Ch.2.4,5.1 Ki.9.8. Eze.7.20.
f Ec.9.10. Jn.9.4. Ge.xlix. De.1.–xxxiv. Jos. xxiii.xxiv.
g 2 Sa.7. 2. ch. 28. 2; 17.1,2. Ac.7.46. 1 Ki.8. 17,18
h ch.28.3.1 Ki.5.3;8. 19.2 Sa.7.5,9.ch.17.4.
i 1 Sa. 17. 50; 18. 27; 30.17;ii.v.ch.xiv.

3 Some blood he had voluntarily shed, as in the case of Goliath; some in self-defence, or in defence of his country, where necessity was laid upon him; some in purpose, when he was angry, as in the case of Nabal; some unjustly and cruelly, as in the case of Uriah; therefore God, while he pardons the penitent, will not honour him to build his temple. *Note*, The church of Christ, of which the temple was a type, cannot be builded by warfare, but only by 'the Prince of peace' and his servants.—*C.*

k That is, *Peaceable and perfection*, 2 Sa. 12.24.
l 1 Ki.4.20,25;5.4.
m 2 Sa. 7. 12, 13. ch. 17.12,13; 28. 6; 29. 1. 1 Ki.5.5. Ps.89.20–35. Is. 9.6,7.
n ver. 16. 2 Ti. 4. 22. Ro.8.31. Is.26.12. Phi. 2.12,13. Mat.16.18. ch. 28.10,20,21.
o Ps.72.1.1 Ki.3.9.
p Je.22.2–4. De.4. 6. Is.3.10.

4 'Statutes,' the *delineations, descriptions*, and *determinations* of God's holy will, which no creature has a right to increase, diminish, or alter. 'Judgments,' God's *purposes, determinations*, and *decisions*—the mysterious counsels of his righteous will—too deep for man to fathom or discover, unless in so far as God makes them known, Ro.11.33.—*C.*

q De.31.7,8. Jos.1.6–8;23.6. ch.28.10,20. Ep. 6.10.2 Ti.2. 1. 1 Co. 16. 13. Zec.4.6,9. Hag.2.4. 1 Jn.4.1.10.

5 Or, *in my poverty.*

6 'With care' (*Boothroyd.*)—The meaning is, 'by my great labour,' as we find the word employed by Jacob in Genesis 31. 42, to denote his successful efforts to amass a fortune. It shows that David had employed all the exigencies and resources at his command for the accomplishment of this the darling object of his life.—*P.*

7 46,038 tons weight or cart-loads of silver and gold, and in value £889,687,500 sterling. But if it be here reckoned by the *Chaldean talent*, it is about a half less.

8 The *talent* varied in weight and value at different times and in different countries. Some calculate David's provision for the temple at £547,000,000, others at £50,000,000, and our ignorance of the precise weight of the talent at the time renders the calculation uncertain; but there is no doubt that the amount was very great, a lesson and a reproach to the rich Christian nations, when they consider even their most liberal contributions for the extension of the church of the Redeemer.—*C.*

A.M. 2988. B.C. 1016.

r ver.2.1 Ki.5.14–18.
s Phi.2. 12, 13; 4. 13. Ps. 71. 16.1 Co. 15. 58. Lu.1.74,75.ver.11,13.
t ch.23.1–5;28.6.
u Ro.8.31. Is.26.12. Ps.116.12. Jos.23.14. 1 Ki.5.4.
x ch.16.11;28.9.2 Ch. 20.3.De.10.12.
y 1 Ki.5.3;8.16.2 Ch. 6.5.

CHAP. XXIII.

a ch.28.5. 1 Ki.1.33–39.

1 The details of Solomon's designation to the throne, and of his coronation, are not given in this book. It is a remarkable fact that the author omits almost wholly the grievous sins of David, and the various attempts at rebellion during his reign. The attempt of Adonijah to obtain the crown is here passed over. The author's attention is chiefly occupied with the spiritual concerns of the kingdom. The whole narrative given in the first chapter of 1st Kings is embodied in the few words of this first verse; while the details of the course of the priests and Levites which take up this and the five following chapters are not even referred to in Kings. The reason is this—The former concerned the temporal affairs of the kingdom; the latter the spiritual.—*P.*

b ch.28.1;13.1.

2 The princes, priests, and Levites formed David's privy council. In concert with them he arranged all the affairs of the kingdom, so far as regarded the public service of God.—*P.*

c Nu.4.3,47,48.

3 This agrees with Num. iv., where we read that in taking the census all the Levites between the ages of thirty and fifty were set apart for the service of the sanctuary. The arrangement of the Levites to serve in the temple in regular courses, as here recorded, may be compared with the record in Lu.1.5.—*P.*

4 Or, *to oversee.*
d ch.26.29–32.
e ch.xxiv. xxv.
f ch.9.33; 15.16,28. 2 Ch.29.25. Am.6.5.

5 Heb. *divisions.*
g Ex.6.16. Nu.26.57; iii.iv.ch.6.1,16.
h ch.26.21;6.17,20.

i Or, *Libni*, ch.6.17, 20. Nu.3.18,21. Ex.6.17.

6 *Laadan* and *Libni*, two names for the same person, and either co-existing, as is common in European nations, or given successively, as Abram, Abraham.—*C.*

15 Moreover, *there are* [r]workmen with thee in abundance, hewers and workers of stone and timber, and all manner of cunning men for every manner of work.

16 Of the gold, the silver, and the brass, and the iron, *there is* no number. [s]Arise *therefore*, and be doing, and the LORD be with thee.

17 ¶ David also commanded all the princes of Israel [t]to help Solomon his son, *saying*,

18 *Is*[u] not the LORD your God with you? and hath he *not* given you rest on every side? for he hath given the inhabitants of the land into mine hand; and the land is subdued before the LORD, and before his people.

19 Now [x]set your heart and your soul to seek the LORD your God: arise therefore, and build ye the sanctuary of the LORD God, to bring the ark of the covenant of the LORD, and the holy vessels of God, into the house that is to be built [y]to the name of the LORD.

CHAPTER XXIII.

1 *David in his old age maketh Solomon king.* 2 *The number and distribution of the Levites.* ¶ *The families of the Gershonites.* 12 *The sons of Kohath.* 21 *The sons of Merari.* 24 *The office of the Levites.*

SO when David was old and full of days, he made[a] Solomon his son king over Israel.[1]

2 ¶ And [b]he gathered together all the princes of Israel, with the priests and the Levites.[2]

3 Now the Levites were numbered from the age of [c]thirty years and upward:[3] and their number by their polls, man by man, was thirty and eight thousand.

4 Of which, twenty and four thousand *were* to set forward[4] the work of the house of the LORD; and six thousand *were* officers [d]and judges:

5 Moreover, [e]four thousand *were* porters; and four thousand praised the LORD with the instruments which [f]I made, (*said David*,) to praise *therewith*.

6 And David divided them into [5]courses among the sons of Levi, *namely*, [g]Gershon, Kohath, and Merari.

7 ¶ Of the [h]Gershonites *were*, [i]Laadan[6] and Shimei.

8 The sons of Laadan; the chief *was* Jehiel, and Zetham, and Joel, three.

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which we have deserved, it is therefore our only resource to flee to that God whom we have offended. He can not only stop short the execution of his judgment, but bring good out of evil, and make even sin itself an occasion of planting his church, and of a more vigorous preparation for his service. How pleasant is it all along to observe the providence of God marking his intended favours to the accursed sinners of the Gentiles! When his temple is to be built, the gold, silver, and brass must be procured from Gentiles: the place of it must be purchased from a Gentile: and almost all the workmen must be Gentiles, Tyrians, Canaanites, &c. And now to us Gentiles are preached, are given, the unsearchable riches of Christ.

CHAPTER XXII. REFLECTIONS.—Very different is the appearance of men when ruled by their pride, and when governed by the humbling grace of God. Such as have been highly favoured by God ought to be singularly careful and active in promoting his glory and the welfare of his church. And the nearer our death approaches, we ought to be the more earnest in his work. Let us do all that we can in his service, when we are not allowed to do all that we would: and let us kindly assist others in the work which God hath denied us the honour of accomplishing. And as the church of Christ is not built up by the sword of war, but by the gospel of peace, let us, as we have leisure from other avocations, employ it in the immediate service of God. Whatever difficulties lie in the way, God's clear call to a work, his affording us an opportunity, and his promise to invigorate and quicken our spirits, are sufficient encouragements. The more God has done for us the greater are our obligations to serve him, and the more active we ought to be in his service. But truly humble souls make little account of all that they do for God's honour. And it is not indeed the extent of what is done, but the spirituality of the temper with which it is done, that next to Jesus' blood gives it value before God. Great courage and resolution are necessary in our spiritual work, as well as in our spiritual warfare, and a constant dependence on God by faith and prayer. If we enter upon the labours of others, we ought to be always improving; and every one is called to concur. Even the most zealous and active will need excitement or assistance. And if once our heart be thoroughly engaged to the Lord, our head, hand, estate, and influence on earth, will be all cheerfully employed for his honour.

CHAPTER XXIII. REFLECTIONS.—It is an honour to God, and an advantage to his church, to have a proper number of faithful ministers: and pleasing is the prospect when their number remarkably

9 The sons of Shimei; Shelomith, and Haziel, and Haran, three. These *were* the chief of the fathers of Laadan.[7]

10 And the sons of Shimei *were*, Jahath, Zina,[k] and Jeush, and Beriah. These four *were* the sons of Shimei.

11 And Jahath was the chief, and Zizah the second: but Jeush and Beriah had not many sons;[8] therefore they were in one reckoning,[9] according to *their* father's house.

12 ¶ The[l] sons of Kohath; Amram, Izhar, Hebron, and Uzziel, four.

13 The sons of [m]Amram; Aaron and Moses: and [n]Aaron was separated, that he should sanctify the most holy things, he and his sons for ever, to burn incense before the LORD, to minister unto him, and to bless in his name for ever.

14 Now *concerning* Moses [o]the man of God, his[p] sons were named of the tribe of Levi.[1]

15 The sons [q]of Moses *were*, Gershom and Eliezer.

16 Of[r] the sons of Gershom, Shebuel *was* the chief.

17 And the sons of Eliezer *were*, Rehabiah the chief.[2] And Eliezer had none other sons; but the sons of Rehabiah [s]were very many.

18 Of the sons of [t]Izhar; Shelomith the chief.

19 Of the sons of [u]Hebron; Jeriah the first, Amariah the second, Jahaziel the third, and Jekameam the fourth.

20 Of the sons of [x]Uzziel; Micah the first, and Jesiah the second.

21 ¶ The sons of [y]Merari; Mahli and Mushi. The sons of Mahli; Eleazar and Kish.

22 And Eleazar died, and had no sons, but daughters: and their [z]brethren the sons of Kish took them.[3]

23 The[a] sons of Mushi; Mahli, and Eder, and Jeremoth, three.

24 ¶ These *were* the sons of Levi after the house of their fathers; *even* the chief of the fathers, as they were counted by number of names by their polls, that did the work for the service of the house of the LORD, from the age of [b]twenty years and upward.

25 For David said, The LORD God of Israel hath[c] given rest unto his people, that they may dwell in Jerusalem[4] for ever:

26 And also unto the Levites; they shall no *more* carry the tabernacle, nor any vessels of it for the service thereof.

27 For, by the last words of David,[5] the Levites *were* numbered[6] from twenty years old and above:[7]

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7 Why these three sons of Shimei are reckoned among the 'chief of the fathers of Laadan, does not appear; most probably they were removed, by adoption, into the one family to the other, that in the rotation of courses all the males of Shimei's house should not be called from their home at one time.—*C.*

k Or, *Zizah*, ver. 11.

8 Heb. *did not multiply sons.*

9 This combination of small families into one reckoning serves to strengthen our conjecture as to the division of a large family, as in ver. 9.—*C.*

l Ex. 6.18. Nu.3.19. ch.6.2,18; 24.22–25; 26. 23–31.

m Ex.6.20.ch.6.3.

n Ex. 28. 1. He. 5.4. Nu.18.1–6; 6.23–26; 16. 39,40.

o Ps.90. title. De.33. 1.

p Ex.4.20.ch.26.24.

1 They were not reckoned as priests to offer, but as Levites to serve. A proof that Moses was above ambition—an attainment that never belonged to any but a sanctified heart.—*C.*

q Ex.2.22;18.3,4.

r ch.26.23–25.

2 Or, *the first.*

s Heb. *were highly multiplied*, Pr. 17. 6. Ps.128.3;127.3–5.

t ver.12;ch.24.20–25; 6.22–28,33–38.

u ver. 12. Ex. 6. 18. ch 15.9;24.23;26.30,31.

x Ex. 6.18. Le.10.4. ch.15.10,24.24,25.

y ver.6. Ex.6.19. ch. 6.29,30;24.26–30; 26.19. Nu.3.20,33.

z Or, *kinsmen*, Nu. 36.6,8.Ge.13.8.

3 This was according to the law made, Nu.27.1, &c.36.5–9. in favour of the daughters of Zelophehad, that women who were heiresses should marry in the family of the tribe of their father, and that their estates should not be alienated from them.—*I.*

a ch.24.30.

b Their service in the temple being easier, they entered sooner into it by five years, Nu. 8. 24; 4. 3. Ezr.3.8.

c ch.22.18.

4 Or, *he dwelleth in Jerusalem*, &c.

6 Or it may be translated, 'in the last records of David.' Probably some document or authentic history is referred to, in which there was a narrative of the concluding acts of David's life, and a report of his instructions and commands. —*I.*

6 Heb. *numbers.*

7 The Mosaic census (Nu. 4. 3), as well as that by David (ver. 3), was from 30 years and upwards. The change to 20 years was evidently in reference to the 'rest' (ver. 25) that David had given in fixing the temporary tabernacle in a permanent site, and preparing for the building of an immovable temple. The Levites being therefore delivered from their burdens, the younger members were adequate to the now lighter work; and the service of the Lord being now complicated, greater numbers were requisite for its due performance.—*C.*

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d Heb. *their station* was *at the hand of the sons of Aaron*, Ne.11.24. Nu.3.6,9; 8. 19;18.2–6.

e Nu. 3. 6, 9. ver. 29, 32.

f Ex.25.30. Le.6.20; 24.5,7;24.5–9.ch.9.29–32.

8 Or, *flat plate.*

9 Expositors generally interpret this phrase on the supposition that the *standard* weights and measures were kept in the sanctuary. Accordingly we read of the 'shekel of the sanctuary.' But whether the sanctuary standard was universal, or only local and peculiar, does not distinctly appear. One lesson, however, is beautifully inculcated by the ordinance—the inseparable connection of honesty to man with sacrifice to God.—*C.*

g Ex. 29. 39–42. Nu. 28.6.ch.16.37–42.

h Nu. xxviii. xxix.; 10. 10. Ps. 81. 3. Le. xxiii.

i Nu.1.53;3.6–9;18.1 –8.1 Ki.8.4.

CHAP. XXIV.

a Le.10.1,6. Ex.28. 1.ch.6.3.

b Nu.3.4; 26.61. Le. 10.2.

c ver.6,31. 2 Sa.8.17. ch.18.16.

1 To avoid all confusion, now that they were much increased, David distributed the priests, as he had done the Levites, into several courses, which no doubt was a divine direction as well as the other. He appointed sixteen courses of the sons of Eleazar, under as many heads of their families, and half as many of the posterity of Ithamar. —*Patrick.*

d Nu. 25. 11–13. ch 15.6–12.1 Sa.2.30–38.

e Jos.18.10.Pr.16.33; 18.18.Ac.1.26.

2 The adoption of the *lot* was not with the mere view of avoiding any charge of partiality, it was a divine ordinance, by which an appeal was made to God for deciding what was unknown or doubtful, or above human wisdom. By this ordinance the whole land of Canaan had been distributed, so that this use of it was in conformity with the general law of appeal to God, Pr.16.33.—*C.*

f ch.9.29.

3 Grotius, Dathe, &c., render this 'chiefs of the judges.' The heads of the two families of Eleazar and Ithamar were the administrators of religion and the dispensers of justice. For though the high-priesthood had been at first settled in the line of Eleazar, and in the person of Phinehas, Nu. 25.12, that prerogative had been transferred before the time of Eli to the race of Ithamar, and after him it seems to have been shared equally by the descendants of both. Hence David, to prevent jealousy between the families, makes this distribution by lot.—*I.*

g 1 Ki.4.3.Ne.8.1.

4 Heb. *house of the father.*

h Ezr.2.36.Ne 7.39.

28 Because [d]their office *was* to wait on the sons of Aaron, [e]for the service of the house of the LORD, in the courts, and in the chambers, and in the purifying of all holy things, and the work of the service of the house of God;

29 Both [f]for the show-bread, and for the fine flour for meat-offering, and for the unleavened cakes, and for *that which is baked in* the [8]pan, and for that which is fried, and for all manner of measure and size;[9]

30 And to stand [g]every morning to thank and praise the LORD, and likewise at even;

31 And to [h]offer all burnt-sacrifices unto the LORD in the sabbaths, in the new-moons, and on the set feasts, by number, according to the order commanded unto them, continually before the LORD:

32 And that they should [i]keep the charge of the tabernacle of the congregation, and the charge of the holy *place*, and the charge of the sons of Aaron their brethren, in the service of the house of the LORD.

CHAPTER XXIV.

1 *The divisions of the sons of Aaron by lot into four and twenty orders.* 20 *The Kohathites,* 27 *and the Merarites divided by lot.*

NOW *these are* the divisions of the sons of Aaron. The[a] sons of Aaron; Nadab, and Abihu, Eleazar, and Ithamar.

2 But [b]Nadab and Abihu died before their father, and had no children: therefore Eleazar and Ithamar executed the priest's office.

3 And David distributed them, both Zadok [c]of the sons of Eleazar, and Ahimelech of the sons of Ithamar, according to their offices in their service.

4 And there were more chief men found of the sons of Eleazar than of the sons of Ithamar; and *thus* were they divided.[1] Among the sons of [d]Eleazar *there were* sixteen chief men of the house of *their* fathers, and eight among the sons of Ithamar, according to the house of their fathers.

5 Thus were they divided [e]by lot,[2] one sort with another; for the governors of the sanctuary, [f]and governors *of the house* of God,[3] were of the sons of Eleazar, and of the sons of Ithamar.

6 And Shemaiah the son of Nethaneel the [g]scribe, *one* of the Levites, wrote them before the king, and the princes, and Zadok the priest, and Ahimelech the son of Abiathar, and *before* the chief of the fathers of the priests and Levites: one principal[4] household being taken for Eleazar, and *one* taken for Ithamar.

7 Now the first lot came forth to Jehoiarib, the second [h]to Jedaiah,

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increases. It is necessary and honourable to enter on God's service as early as possible. Church affairs are likely to prosper when every one knows and attends to his particular work. And in whatever station a person is fixed, it is always his duty to be zealous and diligent in God's service. But what wisdom God manifests in men's stations! While the offspring of Aaron are dignified priests, those of Moses are but ordinary Levites; yet he always proportions men's burdens to their strength. And it is comely when every one in the church cheerfully applies himself to the meanest service to which he is called; and when the officers thereof heartily harmonize in working to one another's hands.

CHAPTER XXIV. REFLECTIONS.—Nothing ought to be done in the ordering of ecclesiastical offices but according to God's direction. What solemnity

8 The third [t]to Harim, the fourth to Seorim,
9 The fifth to Malchijah, the sixth to Mijamin,[5]
10 The seventh to Hakkoz, the eighth to [k]Abijah,[6]
11 The ninth to Jeshua, the tenth to Shecaniah,
12 The eleventh to Eliashib, the twelfth to Jakim,
13 The thirteenth to Huppah, the fourteenth to Jeshebeab,
14 The fifteenth to Bilgah, the sixteenth to Immer,[l]
15 The seventeenth to Hezir, the eighteenth to Aphses,
16 The nineteenth to Pethahiah, the twentieth to Jehezekel,
17 The one and twentieth to Jachin, the two and twentieth to Gamul,
18 The three and twentieth to Delaiah, the four and twentieth to Maaziah.
19 These *were* the [m]orderings[7] of them in their service to come into the house of the LORD,[n] according to their manner, under Aaron[8] their father, as the LORD God of Israel had commanded him.
20 ¶ And the rest of the sons of Levi *were these:* [o]Of the sons of Amram; Shubael: of the sons of Shubael;[9] Jehdeiah.
21 Concerning Rehabiah: of the sons of Rehabiah, the first *was* Isshiah.[1]
22 Of[p] the Izharites; Shelomoth:[2] of the sons of Shelomoth; Jahath.
23 And the sons *of* [q]*Hebron;* Jeriah[3] *the first*, Amariah the second, Jahaziel the third, Jekameam the fourth.
24 *Of*[r] the sons of Uzziel; Michah: of the sons of Michah; Shamir.
25 The brother of Michah *was* Isshiah: of the sons of Isshiah; Zechariah.
26 ¶ The [s]sons of Merari *were* Mahli and Mushi: the sons of Jaaziah; Beno.
27 The sons of Merari by Jaaziah; Beno, and Shoham, and Zaccur, and Ibri.
28 Of Mahli *came* Eleazar, [t]who had no sons.
29 Concerning Kish: the son of Kish *was* Jerahmeel.
30 The[u] sons also of Mushi; Mahli, and Eder, and Jerimoth. These *were* the sons of the Levites, after the house of their fathers.
31 These likewise [x]cast lots over against their brethren the sons of Aaron,[4] in the presence of David the king, and Zadok and Ahimelech, and the chief of the fathers of the priests and

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[t] Ezr.10.21;3.39. Ne. 7.42.

5 The variation of Miniamin and Mijamin is caused by the elision of *n*, which is occasioned by the reduplication of the succeeding letter.—*I.*

[k] Lu.1.5. Ne. 12.4, 17.

6 As the evangelist Luke mentions the course of Abia as that to which Zacharias, the father of John the Baptist, belonged, it is evident that these courses of the priests established by David (no doubt under divine direction) were continued with some alteration till the days of Christ. These records must therefore have been very useful after the Babylonish captivity.—*I.*

[l] Ezr.10.20;2.37. Ne. 7.40.

[m] Nu. 24. 5. 1 Co. 1. 10;14.40. Col.2.5.

7 Yet the precise arrangements cannot easily be ascertained, in consequence of some obscurities in the text. To reconcile ver. 4 with ver. 6 Geddes (who has bestowed much pains on these lists) translates the latter clause of ver. 6 thus:—'and Abiathar, the son of Abimelech, and the other paternal chiefs of the priests and Levites: *one* paternal chief being taken for Ithamar, and *two* for Eleazar.'—*I.*

[n] A new order entered every Sabbath, 2 Ki.11.5,7. ch.9.25.

8 That is, according to the manner that had begun under the superintendence of Aaron, and was now completed by direction of David.—*C.*

[o] ch.23.14–17;26.23–28.

9 Or, *Shebuel.*

1 Probably *Isshiah* is a contracted form or a corruption of *Jeshaiah.*—*I.*

[p] ch.23.18;26.20.

2 Or, *Shilomith.*

[q] ch.6.2;15.9;23. 19; 26.31.

3 There is some confusion in the list of names here. Dathe, following the Sept., thinks the verse describes the sons of Jerjah, and that the name of the eldest has dropped out. The variations here exist only in the translation, the original being uniformly Jerjah, Michah, and Isshiah.—*I.*

[r] ch.23.20;15.10. Ex. 6.18.

[s] ch.23. 21–23; 6. 19. Ex.6.19. Nu.3.20,33.

[t] ch.23.22.

[u] ch.23.23.

[x] These Levites cast lots to determine which order of the priests each should assist, ver. 5, 6.

4 Each course of priests required a corresponding course of Levites, who accordingly were chosen by lot, without any regard to seniority. David honours the solemn transaction by his royal presence—a lesson to all kings, by which they should learn, that while they may not intrude into the service of the sanctuary, 2 Ch.26.18, it is their duty to take order that it be regularly organized.—*C.*

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CHAP. XXV.

[a] ch.23.2;24.6;12.28. 2 Ch.5.11,12.

1 What in modern language would be called 'leaders of the choir.' The word *captains*, though generally employed as a military title, is still in use in the mere sense of a leader, and is so applied, for example, to the studious youth who stands first in a school-class.—*C.*

[b] ch.6. 33, 39, 44; 15. 17;16.5,41,42.

2 Either the same called Ethan, or his successor, Ethan being dead.—*C.*

[c] ch.23.5; 16.4, 37; 6. 33–39, 44; ver. 2. 1 Co. 14.24.

3 To *prophesy* here means no more than to praise God by singing these prophetical psalms in which the Spirit had revealed the future humiliation and exaltation of Christ, Lu.24.44. 1 Sa. 5.10.—*C.*

[d] Otherwise called *Jesharelah*, ver.14.

[e] Heb. *by the hands of the king*, ver.6.

[f] Or, *Izri*, ver.11.

[g] With *Shimei*, mentioned ver.17.

4 Each master-singer had in his chorus persons who are called his *sons* and his *brethren*, 'because,' says Patrick, 'they *observed* them as sons, and *concurred with* them as brethren.' Jeduthun is said to have had *six* of these sons, but only *five* names are given. But Codex 172 of Kennicott, the Cod. Alex. of the Sept. and Arab. versions introduce the name of Shimei after that of Jeshaiah, and this is confirmed by ver. 17, where Shimei is mentioned as having obtained the tenth course by lot.—*I.*

[h] Or, *Azareel*, ver. 18.

[i] Or, *Shubael*, ver. 20.

[k] ch.21.9.1 Sa.9.9.

[l] Or, *matters*, 1 Pe. 4.11.

5 The word 'horn' does not seem here to signify the *cornet* or *horn trumpet*, but the praise of God for his mighty power, which the horn represented, for which use of the word *horn* see 1 Sa.2.1, 2 Sa.22.3. Ps.75.4;89.17,24;112.9; 132.17. Eze. 29.21. *C.*—I think the expression 'to lift up the horn' must mean *to blow the horn loudly*. Horns or trumpets were used on great festivals and at many solemn acts of worship.—*P.*

[m] Ge.33.5. Ps.127.3.

[n] ch.23.5;6.31; 15.16 –22; 16.5,41,42. Ps.150. 1–5;68.25. Ep.5.19. Col. 3.16.

[o] Heb. *by the hands of the king*, ver.2.

6 See note ver. 31.

[p] ch.24.5,31. Ac.10. 34,35. Ga. 3. 28. Col. 3. 11. It is probable in allusion to the twenty-four orders of priests, of assistant Levites, and of the sacred musicians in the temple-service, that the members of the Christian church are represented as four and twenty elders, Re.4.4,10;5.8;11.16.

7 Though some were *teachers*, others *scholars*, yet no regard was given to these distinctions—the choice was altogether remitted to God.—*C.*

[q] *Asarelah*, ver. 2.

Levites, even the principal fathers over against their younger brethren.

CHAPTER XXV.

1 *The number and offices of the singers.* 8 *Their division by lot into four and twenty orders.*

MOREOVER David, and the captains[a] of the host,[1] separated to the service of the sons of [b]Asaph, and of Heman, and of Jeduthun,[2] who[c] should prophesy[3] with harps, with psalteries, and with cymbals: and the number of the workmen, according to their service, was:
2 Of the sons of Asaph; Zaccur, and Joseph, and Nethaniah, and [d]Asarelah, the sons of Asaph, under the hands of Asaph, which prophesied [e]according to the order of the king.
3 Of Jeduthun: the sons of Jeduthun; Gedaliah, and [f]Zeri, and Jeshaiah, Hashabiah, [g]and Mattithiah, six, under the hands of their father Jeduthun, who prophesied with a harp, to give thanks and to praise the LORD.[4]
4 Of Heman: the sons of Heman; Bukkiah, Mattaniah, [h]Uzziel, [i]Shebuel, and Jerimoth, Hananiah, Hanani, Eliathah, Giddalti, and Romamti-ezer, Joshbekashah, Mallothi, Hothir, *and* Mahazioth:
5 All these *were* the sons of Heman the [k]king's seer in the [l]words of God, to lift up the [5]horn. And [m]God gave to Heman fourteen sons and three daughters.
6 All these *were* under the hands of their father for [n]song *in* the house of the LORD, with cymbals, psalteries, and harps, for the service of the house of God, [o]according to the king's order to Asaph, Jeduthun, and Heman.
7 So the number of them, with their brethren that were instructed in the songs of the LORD, *even* all that were cunning, *was* two hundred fourscore and eight.[6]
8 ¶ And they cast lots, [p]ward against *ward*, as well the small as the great, the teacher as the scholar.[7]
9 Now the first lot came forth for Asaph to Joseph: the second to Gedaliah, who with his brethren and sons *were* twelve:
10 The third to Zaccur, *he*, his sons and his brethren *were* twelve:
11 The fourth to Izri, *he*, his sons and his brethren *were* twelve:
12 The fifth to Nethaniah, *he*, his sons and his brethren *were* twelve:
13 The sixth to Bukkiah, *he*, his sons and his brethren *were* twelve:
14 The seventh to [q]Jesharelah, *he*, his sons and his brethren *were* twelve:

ought to take place in the settlement of ministers! and what order should be observed in the discharge of their work! But great will be the solemnity of the admission and comely the orders of the ransomed priests in their new-covenant state, particularly in the temple above! How happy their blessed equality! No difference is made between bond or free, old or young; but Christ is all and in all!

CHAPTER XXV. [Ver. 1. 'The captains of the host' appear to have been the same as the 'princes of Israel,' mentioned in ch. 23. 2, and the 'princes' mentioned in ch. 24. 6, who were the privy-councillors of the sovereign, and who with the sovereign regulated, as has been seen, the course of public worship. *P.*]

REFLECTIONS.—Great cheerfulness ought to be exercised in the worship and service of God; and great attention should be paid to the praising of God, as a leading business of his saints. And it is comely when those in power concur in promoting religion; the latter in perfecting what others before had begun. Of how little account are human distinctions before God! Before him master and scholar, elder and younger, stand on an equal level. And when we find the lot so much used in deciding in the great things of God as an im-

15 The eighth to Jeshaiah, *he,* his sons and his brethren *were* twelve:

16 The ninth to Mattaniah, *he,* his sons and his brethren *were* twelve:

17 The tenth to Shimei, *he,* his sons and his brethren *were* twelve:

18 The eleventh to [r]Azareel,[8] *he,* his sons and his brethren *were* twelve:

19 The twelfth to [s]Hashabiah, *he,* his sons and his brethren *were* twelve:

20 The thirteenth to [t]Shubael, *he,* his sons and his brethren *were* twelve:

21 The fourteenth to Mattithiah, *he,* his sons and his brethren *were* twelve:

22 The fifteenth to Jerimoth, *he,* his sons and his brethren *were* twelve:

23 The sixteenth to Hananiah, *he,* his sons and his brethren *were* twelve:

24 The seventeenth to Joshbekashah, *he,* his sons and his brethren *were* twelve:

25 The eighteenth to Hanani, *he,* his sons and his brethren *were* twelve:

26 The nineteenth to Mallothi, *he,* his sons and his brethren *were* twelve:

27 The twentieth to Eliathah, *he,* his sons and his brethren *were* twelve:

28 The one and twentieth to Hothir, *he,* his sons and his brethren *were* twelve:

29 The two and twentieth to Giddalti, *he,* his sons and his brethren *were* twelve:

30 The three and twentieth to Mahazioth, *he,* his sons and his brethren *were* twelve:

31 The [u]four and twentieth[9] to Romamtiezer, *he,* his sons and his brethren *were* twelve.[1]

CHAPTER XXVI.

1 *The divisions of the porters.* 13 *The gates assigned by lot.* 20 *The Levites that had charge of the treasures.* 29 *Officers and judges.*

CONCERNING the divisions[1] of the porters: Of[a] the Korhites *was* Meshelemiah [b]the son of Kore, of the sons of [c]Asaph.

2 And the sons of Meshelemiah *were,* Zechariah the first-born, Jediael the second, Zebadiah the third, Jathniel the fourth,

3 Elam the fifth, Jehohanan the sixth, Elioenai the seventh.

4 Moreover, the sons of [d]Obed-edom *were,* Shemaiah the first-born, Jehozabad the second, Joah the third, and Sacar the fourth, and Nethaneel the fifth,

5 Ammiel the sixth, Issachar the seventh, Peulthai the eighth: for God blessed [e]him.[2]

6 Also unto Shemaiah his son were sons born, that ruled throughout the house of their father: for they *were* [f]mighty men of valour.

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r Uzziel, ver. 4.

8 Most probably the same called Uzziel, ver. 4, this being a second name, according to a custom common to the Israelites and other nations.—*C.*

s ver. 3.

t Shebuel, ver. 4.

u Nu. 7, 88. ch. 24. 18. Re. 4. 4, 10. 5. 8; 11. 16.

9 There were just as many companies of musicians as there were of priests, ch. 24. 18; and of the Levites attending on the priests, and helping them, ch. 24. 31, twice as many as the months in the year. Thus all things were disposed for preserving order, and avoiding all disputes about precedent, 1 Co. 14. 40.

1 It is said in ver. 1 that they were separated to this service by David and 'the captains of the host.' But it should be 'the chiefs of the sacred orders;' for it does not mean the *military* chiefs, but the heads of the priests and Levites, who in Nu. 4. 3 are called by the same name. To them naturally belonged the appointment of singers, and not to the generals of the army. — At chap. 23. 5 the number of musicians is given as 4000, whereas at ver. 7 of this chapter the number of those 'instructed in the songs of the Lord' is stated at only 288. Perhaps the 4000 (in which the 288 were doubtless included) were divided in such a manner that each of the larger courses included one of these minor courses, which, as consisting of the most perfect masters, took the lead in the service.—*I.*

CHAP. XXVI.

1 This chapter concludes the account of the careful organization of the great Levitical body established under the direction of David, and carried into effect after the erection of the temple by Solomon his son. The new distribution appears to have arisen partly out of the great increase in the number of the Levites, which must have rendered it difficult to give to a large proportion of them a share in their proper duties; and still more on account of the temple which was about to be erected, and the more extensive and varied duties connected with which rendered a modified arrangement necessary.—*I.*

a ch. 9. 17. Jn. 10. 3.

b Or, *Shelemiah,* ver. 14.

c Or, *Ebiasaph,* ch. 6. 37, 39. 19.

d ch. 13. 14; 15. 18; 16. 38.

e That is, *Obed-edom.* As ch. 13. 14. Ps. 127. 3; 128. 1–5. 1 Co. 15. 58.

2 That is, God had blessed Obed-edom, the father, mentioned ver. 4. This note is given in memorial of his reception and care of the ark.—*C.*

f ver. 7–9. 2 Ki. 24. 14. ch. 15. 24. Pr. 28. 1. It required both strength and courage to render them fit to guard

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the temple and its treasures, and to keep order among the assembled multitude.

3 They were not mere porters, but guards of the gates, and required that strength with which God had blessed them, for the preservation of order amongst the assembled thousands of Israel.—*C.*

g ver. 1, 14.

h ch. 16. 38.

i Ge. 4. 7. De. 21. 16.

k Or, *as well for the small as for the great,* ch. 25. 8; 26. 13. Ac. 10. 34. Ga. 3. 28. Col. 3. 11.

l Called *Meshelemiah,* ver. 1, 2, 9.

m ver. 4–8.

4 Heb. *gatherings.*

5 Asuppim signifies *gatherings* or *collections,* and as Obed-edom is said to be over the treasures (2 Ch. 25. 24), this is probably the house where the offerings for the priests and Levites were kept.—*C.*

6 Boothroyd translates it the 'gate of ejection;' supposing it the gate by which the impurities of the temple were removed.—*C.*

n 1 Ki. 10. 5. 2 Ch. 9. 4. ver. 18. Ne. 12. 24.

o Or, *out part,* 2 Ki. 23. 11.

p Nu. 26. 11. ver. 1, 10.

q ver. 22, 26–28. 1 Ki. 7. 51; 14. 26; 15. 18. 2 Ki. 18. 15. Mal. 3. 10. De. 12. 6, 11.

7 Heb. *holy things.*

8 *Treasures*— not merely money, but vessels, garments, wine, oil, flour, &c. *Dedicated things,* principally here the holy things dedicated by Samuel, David, the princes, or people, for building and beautifying, and future maintenance of the temple. See ver. 26, 28. *C.* —— This verse as it stands in the Hebrew and in the Authorized Version is very obscure. Ahijah is not mentioned in any of the previous lists, and he is introduced abruptly. Besides, according to the statement here made, he was over all the treasures, and consequently united in his own person those offices of which the occupants are named in the verses that follow. I am therefore of opinion that by a very slight clerical error the original Hebrew word signifying 'their brethren' has been changed into a proper name. The Septuagint preserves the true meaning:—'And the Levites their brethren were over the treasures,' &c.—*P.*

r Or, *Libni,* ch. 6. 17; 23. 7.

9 The text here has appeared to all interpreters exceedingly perplexed and mutilated; and yet all the ancient versions seem to have followed the same reading. The whole of this part of the chapter (viz., from ver. 12 to the end), as also chap. xxviii., is wanting in the Arabic and Syriac versions.—*I.*

s Or, *Jehiel,* ch. 23. 8; 29. 8.

t ver. 20. 1 Ki. 7. 51.

u ch. 23. 12–20. Nu. 3. 19, 27. Ex. 6. 18.

x ch. 28. 15, 16.

y ch. 23. 15, 17, 18.

7 The sons of Shemaiah; Othni, and Rephael, and Obed, Elzabad, whose brethren *were* strong men, Elihu, and Semachiah.

8 All these of the sons of Obed-edom: they, and their sons, and their brethren, able men for strength for the service,[3] *were* threescore and two of Obed-edom.

9 And [g]Meshelemiah had sons and brethren, strong men, eighteen.

10 Also [h]Hosah, of the children of Merari, had sons; Simri the chief, (for *though* he was not the first-born, yet his father [i]made him the chief,)

11 Hilkiah the second, Tebaliah the third, Zechariah the fourth: all the sons and brethren of Hosah *were* thirteen.

12 Among these *were* the divisions of the porters, *even* among the chief men, *having* wards one against another, to minister in the house of the LORD.

13 ¶ And they cast lots, [k]as well the small as the great, according to the house of their fathers, for every gate.

14 And the lot eastward fell to [l]Shelemiah; then for Zechariah his son (a wise counsellor) they cast lots, and his lot came out northward.

15 To [m]Obed-edom southward; and to his sons the house of [4]Asuppim.[5]

16 To Shuppim and Hosah *the lot came forth* westward, with the gate Shallecheth,[6] by the [n]causeway of the going up, ward against ward.

17 Eastward *were* six Levites, northward four a day, southward four a day, and toward Asuppim two *and* two.

18 At [o]Parbar westward, four at the causeway, *and* two at Parbar.

19 These *are* the divisions of the porters among the [p]sons of Kore, and among the sons of Merari.

20 ¶ And of the Levites, Ahijah *was* over the [q]treasures of the house of God, and over the treasures of the dedicated[7] things.[8]

21 *As concerning* the sons of [r]Laadan;[9] the sons of the Gershonite Laadan, chief fathers, *even* of Laadan the Gershonite, *were* [s]Jehieli.

22 The sons of Jehieli; Zetham, and Joel his brother, *which were* over the [t]treasures of the house of the LORD.

23 Of [u]the Amramites, *and* the Izharites, the Hebronites, *and* the Uzzielites;

24 And [x]Shebuel the son of Gershom, the son of Moses, *was* ruler of the treasures.

25 And his brethren by [y]Eliezer; Rehabiah his son, and Jeshaiah his son, and Joram his

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mediate appeal to himself, how sinful and profane it must be to use it in trifles, or in what merely relates to diversion! As I regard JEHOVAH's honour, let me never dare to recreate myself with cards or dice, or cast lots in matters of small value.

CHAPTER XXVI. REFLECTIONS. — Great order ought to take place in Christ's church; and great care with respect to the admission or dismission of members, or approaches to and returns from solemn work. What distinguished blessings attend those who, like Obed-edom, are careful of God's ark and interests in a day of distress! It is proper to bestow on works of piety and charity what God bestows upon us in extraordinary favours; and to preserve carefully whatever is dedicated to the Lord. While our life continues there is always something to be done for God. And the nearer our end approaches, the greater ought to be our industry in doing good. They bid fair to be a happy nation who are taught to fear God and honour the king. And those parts of nations and churches

son, and Zichri his son, and Shelomith his son:

26 Which Shelomith and his brethren *were* over all the treasures of the dedicated things, which[x] David the king, and the chief fathers, the captains over thousands and hundreds, and the captains of the host, had dedicated.

27 Out[a] of the spoils won in battles did they dedicate [b]to maintain the house of the LORD.

28 And all that [c]Samuel the seer, and Saul the son of Kish, and Abner the son of Ner, and Joab the son of Zeruiah, had dedicated; *and* whosoever had dedicated *any thing, it was* under the hand of Shelomith, and of his brethren.[1]

29 ¶ Of the [d]Izharites, Chenaniah and his sons *were* for 'the outward business[2] over Israel, for officers and judges.

30 *And* of the [f]Hebronites, Hashabiah and his brethren, men of valour, a thousand and seven hundred, *were* [g]officers[3] among them of Israel on this side Jordan westward, in all the business of the LORD,[4] and in the service of the king.

31 Among the Hebronites *was* [h]Jerijah the chief, *even* among the Hebronites, according to the generations of his fathers. In the [i]fortieth year of the reign of David they were sought for, and there were found among them mighty men of valour at [k]Jazer of Gilead.

32 And his brethren, [l]men of valour, *were* two thousand and seven hundred chief fathers, whom king David made rulers over [m]the Reubenites, the Gadites, and the half-tribe of Manasseh, for every matter [n]pertaining to God, and affairs[5] of the king.

CHAPTER XXVII.

1 *The twelve captains for every several month.* 16 *The princes of the twelve tribes.* 23 *The numbering of the people is hindered.* 25 *David's several officers.*

NOW the children of Israel after their number, *to wit,* the chief fathers and captains of thousands and hundreds, and their officers[1] that [a]served the king in any matter of the courses, which came in and went out month by month, throughout all the months of the year, of every course *were* twenty and four thousand.[2]

2 Over the first course, for the first month, *was* [b]Jashobeam the son of Zabdiel: and in his course *were* twenty and four thousand.

3 Of the children of [c]Perez *was* the chief of all the captains of the host for the first month.

4 And over the course of the second month *was* [d]Dodai the Ahohite, and of his course *was* Mikloth also the ruler: in his course likewise *were* twenty and four thousand.

A.M. 2988. B.C. 1016.

x 1 Ki.7.51.ch.18.11; 22.14;29.2–9;ver.27,28.

a Heb. *out of the battles and spoils,* Nu. 31. 50. Ju. 8. 21,24, 27.

b 2 Ki.12.14. Ne. 10. 32.

c 1 Sa.9.9; 11.11; 15. 15; 17.52; 14.50. 2 Sa.8. 10.

1 It appears from the statements in ver. 20–28 that there were three distinct treasure-houses, with keepers and guards: 1. The treasures of the house of God, over which were placed the sons of Jechieli. These were the free-will offerings. 2. Shebuel was prince over other treasures, probably those accumulated from the tax of the sanctuary, redemption-money, and vow-money. 3. The treasure of dedicated offerings, over which were four guardians.—*C.*

d ch.23.12,18.

e 2 Ch.34.13. Ne.11. 16 ch.:3:4.

2 For instructors and rulers among the tribes, and for regulating their intercourse with foreigners—in modern language, ministers and officials of foreign affairs.—*C.*

f ch.23.12, 19; 24. 23; 27.17.

g Heb. *over the charges,* 2 Ch. 19. 8, 11; 17.8. De.16.18. Ps. 45. 16, ver. 30.

3 The word rendered *officers* is that famous word *shoterim,* which is of indefinite and general application. In the present case it seems to denote a general superintending power, perhaps involving judicial functions; while the 'judges,' *shophetim,* may have been magistrates with more restricted power.—*I.*

4 In providing for the regular service of the temple, guarding against idolatry, and expounding the divine law.—*C.*

h ch.24.23;23.19.

i 2 Sa.5.4. ch.29. 27, 29.1 Ki.2.11.

k Jos.21.39. Is.16.9. ver.6–9,30.

m Nu.32.33. ch. 12. 37. Jos.13.1–6.

n ver.30.2 Ch.19.11.

5 Heb. *thing.*

CHAP. XXVII.

1 These officers did not live all at once.

a 1 Sa.25.10.2 Ch.17. 19. Ps.72.11;22.29.

2 The 'chief fathers,' or patriarchs and princes, with the subordinate officers, were in all 24,000, who served in monthly courses of 2000, each having one general-in-chief. Under these were twelve monthly courses of *militia,* each course mustering 24,000 strong. And as one course could not with safety retire, either from garrison duty or field service, until the succeeding course had assembled, David had always on foot an effective force of 52,000 men, with an army of reserve, duly disciplined, capable of being called out and concentred upon any point of Canaan in a few days, and amounting in the whole to 312,000, perhaps the most powerful yet most economic army that ever was organized for the defence of any country of similar extent.—*C.*

b Or, *Esni,* 2 Sa. 23.8.ch.11.11.

c Or, *Pharez,* Ge. 38.29;46.8,10.

d Or, *Dodo,* 2 Sa. 23.9.ch.11.12.

A.M. 2988. B.C. 1016.

e 2 Sa.8.18. 1 Ki.1.8; 2.35.ch.11.22.

f Or, *principal officer,* 1 Ki.4.2.

3 That is, Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, the chief priest. Jehoiada was the priest, Benaiah the general. *C.*—The Targum has, 'The third captain of the host, for the month Sivan, was Benaiah the son of Jehoiada the priest, who was constituted a chief.'—*I.*

g 2 Sa.23. 20, 22, 23. ch.11.22–25.

h 2 Sa. 23. 24; 2. 19–23.ch.11.26.

4 David must have organized the monthly courses of service at an early period, as Asahel was killed by Abner while David reigned in Hebron over a small part of Israel, 2 Sa. 2. 23. But the text does not say that Asahel ever commanded 24,000; but when David became king of all the tribes, Zobadiah became general of his father's augmented corps.—*C.*

i 2 Sa. 23. 25. ch. 11. 27.

k 2 Sa.23. 26. ch. 11. 28.

5 That is, a native of Tekoah, of the present appearance of which Robinson says:—'We reached Tekoah at ch. 35m. It lies on an elevated hill, not steep, but broad on the top, and covered with ruins to the extent of four or five acres. These consist chiefly in the foundations of houses built of squared stones, some of which are bevelled. At the N.E. part are the remains of a large square tower or castle, still the highest point of all. Near the middle of the site are the ruins of a Greek church, among which are several fragments of columns and a baptismal font of rose-coloured limestone, varying with marble. The high position of Tekoah gives it a wide prospect.'—(*Bib.Res.*)—*I.*

l 2 Sa. 23. 26. ch. 11. 27.

m 2 Sa.23.27; 21. 18, 27.ch.11.29;20.4.

n 2 Sa. 23. 27. ch.11. 28.

o 2 Sa. 23. 28. ch. 11. 30.

p 2 Sa.23. 30. ch. 11. 31.

q Or, *Heled,* ch. 11. 30. *Heleb,* 2 Sa.23.29.

r Ju.3.9.ch.4.13.

6 'In the kingdoms of this world, readiness for war forms a security for peace; in like manner, nothing so much encourages Satan's assaults as unwatchfulness. So long as we stand armed with the whole armour of God, in the exercise of faith and preparation of heart for the conflict, we shall certainly be safe and probably enjoy inward peace.'—*Henry.*

s ch.ii.ix.; 12. 23–40. Ex.1.1–5, Ge.29.32–35; 30.5–24; 35.18–22; 46.8–26. Nu. 1. 11; x. xiii. xxvi. xxxiv. Re. 7.5–8. 1 Ki.4.7–19.

t ch.26.30.

u 2 Sa.8.17;20.25.

x Or, *Eliab,* 1 Sa. 16.6;17.13,28.ch.2.13.

y Ge. 31. 21; 37. 25. Nu.32.33.

z 1 Sa.14.50. 2 Sa.3. 17–38.

5 The third captain of the host, for the third month, *was* [e]Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, a [f]chief priest:[3] and in his course *were* twenty and four thousand.

6 This *is that* Benaiah *who was* [g]mighty *among* the thirty, and above the thirty: and in his course *was* Ammizabad his son.

7 The fourth *captain,* for the fourth month, *was* [h]Asahel the brother of Joab,[4] and Zebadiah his son after him: and in his course *were* twenty and four thousand.

8 The fifth *captain,* for the fifth month, *was* [i]Shamhuth the Izrahite: and in his course *were* twenty and four thousand.

9 The sixth *captain,* for the sixth month, *was* [k]Ira the son of Ikkesh the Tekoite:[5] and in his course *were* twenty and four thousand.

10 The seventh *captain,* for the seventh month, *was* [l]Helez the Pelonite, of the children of Ephraim: and in his course *were* twenty and four thousand.

11 The eighth *captain,* for the eighth month, *was* [m]Sibbecai the Hushathite, of the Zarhites: and in his course *were* twenty and four thousand.

12 The ninth *captain,* for the ninth month, *was* [n]Abiezer the Anetothite, of the Benjamites: and in his course *were* twenty and four thousand.

13 The tenth *captain,* for the tenth month, *was* [o]Maharai the Netophathite, of the Zarhites: and in his course *were* twenty and four thousand.

14 The eleventh *captain,* for the eleventh month, *was* [p]Benaiah the Pirathonite, of the children of Ephraim: and in his course *were* twenty and four thousand.

15 The twelfth *captain,* for the twelfth month, *was* [q]Heldai the Netophathite, of Othniel:[r] and in his course *were* twenty and four thousand.

16 ¶ Furthermore,[6] over the [s]tribes of Israel: the ruler of the Reubenites *was* Eliezer the son of Zichri: of the Simeonites, Shephatiah the son of Maachah:

17 Of the Levites, [t]Hashabiah the son of Kemuel: of the Aaronites, [u]Zadok:

18 Of Judah, [x]Elihu, *one* of the brethren of David: of Issachar, Omri the son of Michael:

19 Of Zebulun, Ishmaiah the son of Obadiah: of Naphtali, Jerimoth the son of Azriel:

20 Of the children of Ephraim, Hoshea the son of Azaziah: of the half-tribe of Manasseh, Joel the son of Pedaiah:

21 Of the half-*tribe* of Manasseh [y]in Gilead, Iddo the son of Zechariah: of Benjamin, Jasiel the son of [z]Abner:

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which are weakest and most exposed ought to be taken particular care of.

CHAPTER XXVII. REFLECTIONS.—In the most quiet and prosperous condition let me prepare for trouble, and stand ready for spiritual warfare. Not only every month, but every moment, I am in danger of new assaults from sin, Satan, and the world. Let me never indulge myself in curious pride: and if I have been guilty, let me show a lasting detestation of my sin. It will never turn to any good account, or to any future comfort. Let me guide my civil affairs with

DERVISH BEGGARS—SUCH AS STAND AND BEG IN THE HOLY CITY WHERE SOLOMON LIVED AND REIGNED. [I. CHRON., xxviii:9.]—"And thou, Solomon, my son, know thou the God of thy father, and serve him with a perfect heart, and with a willing mind: for the Lord searcheth all hearts, and understandeth all the imaginations of the thoughts: if thou seek him, he will be found of thee; but if thou forsake him, he will cast thee off forever." We give a view of Dervish beggars such as are found to-day in Jerusalem, and they serve to illustrate what comes to people when they violate the laws of God. The most wretched and inhuman looking creatures we have ever seen are found among the beggars of Palestine. They are diseased, degraded, and as miserable as humanity with the dregs of generations of sin can make them. The degradation of this wretched class is perhaps due in some respect to the tyrannical, remorseless and outrageous Turkish civilization under which they live.

22 Of Dan, Azareel the son of Jeroham. These *were* the princes of the tribes of Israel.[6]

23 ¶ But David took not the number of them from [a]twenty years old and under; because the LORD had said he would increase Israel like to the stars of the heavens.

24 Joab the son of Zeruiah began to number, but he finished not, because [b]there fell wrath for it against Israel; neither was the number put in the account of the chronicles of king David.

25 ¶ And over the [c]king's treasures *was* Azmaveth the son of Adiel: and over the storehouses in the fields,[7] in the cities, and in the villages, and in the castles, *was* Jehonathan the son of Uzziah:[8]

26 And over them that did the work of the field, for tillage of the ground, *was* Ezri the son of Chelub:

27 And over the [d]vineyards *was* Shimei the Ramathite: over the increase of the vineyards,[9] for the wine-cellars, *was* Zabdi the Shiphmite:

28 And over the olive-trees and the sycamore-trees[1] that[e] *were* in the low plains[2] *was* Baal-hanan the Gederite: and over the cellars of oil *was* Joash:

29 And over the herds that fed in [f]Sharon[3] *was* Shitrai the Sharonite: and over the herds *that were* in the valleys *was* Shaphat the son of Adlai:

30 Over [g]the camels also *was* Obil the Ishmaelite: and over the asses *was* Jehdeiah the Meronothite:

31 And over the flocks *was* Jaziz the Hagerite. All these *were* the rulers of the substance which *was* king David's.

32 Also Jonathan, David's [h]uncle, was a counsellor, a wise man, and a scribe:[4] and Jehiel the son[5] of Hachmoni *was* with the king's sons:

33 And [i]Ahithophel *was* the king's counsellor: and Hushai the Archite *was* the king's companion:

34 And after Ahithophel *was* Jehoiada the son of [k]Benaiah, and Abiathar: and the general of the king's army *was* [l]Joab.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

1 *David in a solemn assembly having declared God's special favour to him, and the promises to his son Solomon, exhorteth them to fear God.* 9, 20 *He encourageth Solomon to build the temple.* 11 *He giveth him patterns for the form, and gold and silver for the materials.*

AND David [a]assembled all the princes of Israel, the princes of the tribes, and the captains of the companies that ministered to the king by course, and the captains over the thousands, and captains over the hundreds, and the stewards over all the substance and possession[1] of the king, and of his sons, with the officers,[2] and with the mighty men, and with all the valiant men, unto Jerusalem.

2 Then David the king [b]stood up upon his feet, and said, Hear me, my [c]brethren, and my people: *As for me*, I *had* [d]in mine heart to build an house of rest [e]for the ark of the covenant of the LORD, and for the [f]footstool[3] of our God, and had made [g]ready for the building:

3 But God said unto me, [h]Thou shalt not build an house for my name, because thou *hast been* a man of war, and hast shed blood.[4]

4 Howbeit the LORD God of Israel chose [i]me before all the house of my father to be king over Israel for ever:[5] for he hath chosen [k]Judah *to be* the ruler; and of the house of Judah, the house of my father; and among the sons of my father he liked me, to make *me* king over all Israel:

5 And of all [l]my sons, (for the LORD hath given me many sons,) he hath [6]chosen [m]Solomon my son to sit upon the throne [n]of the kingdom of the LORD over Israel.

6 And he said unto me, [o]Solomon thy son, he shall build my house and my courts: for I have chosen him *to be* my son, and I will be his father.

7 Moreover, [p]I will establish his kingdom for ever, if he be constant[7] to do my commandments and my judgments, as [q]at this day.

8 Now therefore, [r]in the sight of all Israel, the congregation of the LORD, and in the audience of our God, [s]keep and seek for all the commandments of the LORD your God: that ye may possess this good land, and leave *it* for an inheritance for your children after you for ever.

9 ¶ And thou, Solomon my son, [t]know[8] thou the God of thy father, and serve him [u]with a perfect heart, and with a willing mind; for [v]the LORD searcheth all hearts, and understandeth all the imaginations of the thoughts: [w]if thou seek him, he will be found of thee; but if thou forsake him, he will cast thee off for ever.

10 Take[9] heed now; for the LORD hath chosen thee to build an house for the sanctuary: be strong, and do *it*.

A.M. 2988. B.C. 1016.

6 There are thirteen princes or rulers of tribes, *thirteen* being their real number, when Levi is counted. But in the enumeration here given, Levi is counted as two, and so is Manasseh, while Gad and Asher are omitted. The reason of this omission does not appear. We may, however, readily suppose that during the wars of the Judges they had been so commingled with the other tribes as to be incapable of a separate jurisdiction.—*C.*

a Nu.1.18. Ge.15.5; 22.17.

b ch.21.6,7, 14. 1 Sa. 24.1–15.

c 2 Ch. 21. 9; 26. 2. 2 Ki.18.15.

7 In modern language he was chief of the commissariat.—*C.*

8 B.C. 1016.

d Ca.8.11. De. 6. 11; 8.8.

9 Heb. *over that which* was *of the vineyards.*

1 A word compounded of two words, the one signifying a *fig*, the other a *mulberry*, because it has fruit like the first, and the leaves like the second. It grows to the height of a beech, and unlike other trees it bears its fruit, not on the branches, but on the ends of little sprigs shooting out from the trunk of the tree itself, and having the fruit somewhat like a cluster of grapes. It is always green, and yields its fruit several times in the year.—*C.*

e 1 Ki.10.27. = Ch.1. 15; 9.27. Ps.78.47. Is.9. 10. Am.7.14. Lu. 17. 6; 19.4.

2 'The low plains,' Hebrew, 'in the *Shephelah*,' i.e. the maritime plain of Philistia, lying between the mountains of Judea and the Mediterranean. The largest olive-groves in Palestine or Syria still grow on this noble plain.—*P.*

f Ca.2.1. Is.33.9; 35. 2; 65. 10, or that ch.5. 16. It was a pleasant fruitful spot.

3 Sharon lay north of the Shephelah, extending from Joppa to the promontory of Carmel. Owing to an abundance of water, and a fertile soil, the pastures of Sharon are famous.—*P.*

g Job 1.3. 2 Ki. 3, 4. Ge.47.6.

h Nephew, 2 Sa.21. 21.

4 Or, *secretary.*

5 Or, *Hachmonite.*

i 2 Sa. 16. 23; 15. 37; 17.1–15,23.

k 1 Ki. 1. 8; 2. 35, or whose son was.

l 1 Ki.1.7,ch.18.15;2. 16; 11. 6. 2 Sa.8. 16; x. xviii.xx.;24.2–4.

CHAP. XXVIII.

B.C. 1015.

a ch.23.2;27.1–34;11. 11–47.

A.M. 2989. B.C. 1015.

1 Or, *cattle.*

2 Or, *eunuchs.*

b Ge.47.31. Ju. 3. 20. 1 Ki.1.47.

c De.17.20. Ps.22.22.

d ch. 17. 1, 2; 22. 7. 2 Sa.7.2. Ac.7.46. 1 Ki.8. 17.

e ch.6.31. Ps.132.5.

f Ps.99.5; 132.7. La. 2.1.

3 We learn from Is.66.1. Mat.5.35, that while heaven is God's *throne*, the earth is his *footstool*. Even so is God represented in omnipresence. But when considered in locality, 'he sits between the cherubim,' Ps. 99. 1, whose wings overshadowed the mercy-seat, He. 9.5; the place of worship in front, Ps.99. 5, being consequently denominated God's *footstool.*—*C.*

g ch.xxii.2 Sa.8.11.

h 2 Sa.7.5,13.1 Ki.5. 3;8,18,10. ch.22.8; 17.4. 2 Ch.6.8,9.

4 Heb. *bloods.*

i 1 Sa.16.1–13.ch.17. 7–13;2.13–16.

5 The government was to have no end, provided they continued to walk according to the commandments of God (see ver. 7). The government, as referring to the Messiah, is, and will be, for ever.—*J.*

k Ge. 49. 8, 10. 1 Sa. 16.13. Ps.78.68,70; 108. 8;60.9.

l 2 Sa.3.2–5;5.14–16. ch.3.1–9;14.4–7.

6 He had, by his word, shown David his successor, either by a direct revelation to himself, or by a message through the prophet Nathan.—*C.*

m ch.22.9,10; 29.1. 2 Sa.12.24,25.1 Ki.1.17.

n ch.17.14;29.23. Is. 9.6,7. Re.3.21.

o 2 Sa.7.13,14. 2 Ch. 1.9. ch.17.10–14; 22.10. Zec. 6. 12, 13. Mat. 16. 18. He.1.5.

p ch.17.12,14; 22. 10. Ps.132.12. Da.2.44. Lu. 1.32.

7 Heb. *strong.*

q 1 Ki.2.3;8.61.

r Mat. 5.16. He.12.1, 2. Phi.2.15,16.

s De.4.1,2,6,40; 5. 1, 32,33; 6.2,17,18; 8.1;10. 12,13; 11.32; 12.32. Jos. 23.6; 24.14. 1 Sa. 12.14, 24. ch.22.19.

t De. 4. 35. Je. 9. 24. Jn.17.3. Ho.4.1,6. Ps.9. 10.

8 Study his nature and will, in his word, ordinances, and providence, so that you may *know* him by observation and experience. Take him for thine own covenant God, thy portion and refuge for ever, Job 22.21.—*C.*

u De.10.12. Mat.22. 37. 1 Ki.8.61. 2 Ki.20.3; 22.2.

x 1 Sa.16. 7. Ps. 7. 9; 139.2. Je. 11. 20; 17. 10; 20. 12. Re.2.23. ch. 29. 17. Pr. 17.3.

y Mat.7.7,11. Je. 29. 12, 13. Is.55.6; 3. 10,11. Ps. 32. 6. 1 Ki. 18. 18. 2 Ki.23.27.

z ch.22. 16, 19. Pr. 4. 23. Mal. 2.16. He.3.12; 12. 15. Ps. 39. 1. 1 Ti.4. 16. Ec.5 1.

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discretion; for more religion lies in the right management of temporal concerns than is generally imagined.

CHAPTER XXVIII. [Ver. 19. These words are very remarkable. The Hebrew may be more clearly rendered:—'All this has Jehovah taught me through a writing from his hand given to me as a pattern.' The Lord himself, therefore, had given to David instructions written, and a pattern traced, by his own hand; just as he had done to Moses in regard to the tabernacle. The plan of both temple and tabernacle was divine. *P.*]

REFLECTIONS.—It is honourable to be removed and exalted to the church eternal, while we are earnestly exerting ourselves to leave all things well in the church below. Public settlements of religion and kingdoms ought to be conducted with the utmost prudence, that (if possible) all concerned may be satisfied. Rulers in the church and state should deal with those under them in the most affectionate and engaging manner. Respectful kindness has a powerful tendency to secure their cheerful service. And even when the settlement is divine, and cannot be altered, care ought to be taken to convince every one of its divinity. God puts his honourable work into what hands he pleases. But a solid knowledge of God, holy awe of him as the searcher of hearts, rewarder of piety, and punisher of apostasy, and a knowledge of our divine call, are necessary to excite us to his service. Everything in God's church and worship ought to be framed exactly according to his inspired model, without the smallest intermixture of the inventions of men: and in executing designs for his honour, we should be benevolent and cheerful. God's owning our fathers in his work, and especially the promises of his presence with us, should make us to renounce every unbelieving fear, and every degree of

11 ¶ Then David gave tc Solomor his son the[a] pattern[a] of the [b]porch, and of the houses thereof, and of the treasuries thereof, and of the upper chambers thereof, and of the inner parlours thereof, and of the place of the mercy-seat

12 And the pattern of all that he had[1] by the Spirit,[2] of the courts of the house of the LORD, and of all the chambers round about, of [c]the treasuries of the house of God, and of the treasuries of the dedicated things:

13 Also for [d]the courses of the priests and the Levites, and for all the work of the service of the house of the LORD, and for all the vessels of service in the house of the LORD.

14 *He gave* of gold by weight for *things* of gold, for all instruments of all manner of service; *silver also* for all instruments of silver by weight, for all instruments of every kind of service:[3]

15 Even the weight for the [e]candlesticks of gold, and for their lamps of gold, by weight for every candlestick and for the lamps thereof: and for the candlesticks of silver by weight, *both* for the candlestick, and *also* for the lamps thereof, according to the use of every candlestick.

16 And by weight *he gave* gold for the tables[f] of show-bread, for every table; and *likewise* silver for the tables of silver:

17 Also [g]pure gold for the flesh-hooks, and the bowls, and the cups: and for the golden basons *he gave gold* by weight for every bason; and *likewise silver* by weight for every bason of silver:

18 And for the [h]altar of incense refined gold by weight; and gold for the pattern of the [i]chariot[4] of the cherubims,[5] that spread out *their wings*, and covered the ark of the covenant of the LORD.

19 All *this, said David,* [k]the LORD made me understand in writing by *his* hand upon me, *even* all the works of this pattern.[6]

20 ¶ And David said to Solomon his son, Be[l] strong, and of good courage, and do *it:* fear not, nor be dismayed: for the LORD God, *even* my God, *will be* with thee; he will not fail thee, nor forsake thee, until thou hast finished all the work for the service of the house of the LORD.

21 And, behold, [m]the courses of the priests and the Levites, *even they shall be with thee* for all the service of the house of God: and *there shall be* with thee, for all manner of workmanship, [n]every willing skilful man, for any manner of service; also [o]the princes and all the people *will be* wholly at thy commandment.[7]

A.M. 2989. B.C. 1015.

a Ex.25.40;26.30; 39. 42,43.ver.12,19.

b He gave him an *ichnograph* of the building, with elevations, sections, and specifications of every part; and all this he received by inspiration from God himself (ver. 12–19), just as Moses had received the plan of the tabernacle. *Clarke.*——The temple must be a sacred thing, and a type of Christ. There must be in it not only convenience but significance; it must not be left to man's art or invention to contrive it; but it must be framed by divine institution. Christ the true temple, the church the gospel temple, and heaven the everlasting temple, all are framed according to the divine counsels, and the plan laid in the divine wisdom, ordained before the world, for God's glory and our good. —*Henry.*

b 1 Ki.6.2–36.2 Ch.3. 3–17.

1 Heb. *of all that was with him.*

2 God by his Spirit had shown to David the size, form, and arrangement of the temple in all its detail. Being an emblem of the body prepared for the Lord, it was needful the whole plan should come from God, and not from the imagination of man, Ex. 25. 40;31.3.—*C.*

c ch.26.20–27: 9.26, 1 Ki.14.26;15.15,18.2 Ki. 16.8;18.15.

d ch.xxiii.–xxvi.

3 He appointed what quantity of metal should go to each.

e 1 Ki.7.49. 2 Ch.4.7, 20, Ex.25.31–40.

f 2 Ch.4.8. 1 Ki.7.48. Ex.25.23–30.

g 1 Ki.10.21. 2 Ch.4. 20.1 Sa.2.13,14.

h 1 Ki.7.48. Ex.30.1–10.

i 1 Sa.4.4. Eze.1.24. 1 Ki.6. 23–30. Ps. 99. 1; 18.10;80.1.

4 'The chariot,' it may be translated the *supporters* of the cherubim; or perhaps the cherubs themselves considered as the emblematic chariot of Jehovah. Compare 2 Ki.19.15. Ps.18. 10;80.1. Eze.10.15.—*C.*

5 In the original the word 'cherubims' is in apposition to 'chariot,' and not in the *status constructus*, as our translators appear to have supposed. In fact the form of the words shows at once to any scholar that there can be no genitive here. Consequently they should be translated: 'And for the pattern of the chariot—the cherubim, gold.' The cherubim constituted the chariot of Jehovah, as is stated in Ps. 18. 10, and as ir indicated in Eze.10.14–17.—*P.*

k ver. 11, 12. Ex. 25. 40;26.30.

6 God had shown him in a vision all that he now had copied out for Solomon's direction.—*C.*

l ch.22.13,16. De.31. 7, 8. Jos.1. 5;23. 6. He. 13.5,Ro.8.31. Phi.2.12, 13. Zec.1.17. Is. 41. 10, 14,15.

m ch.xxiii.–xxvi.

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n Ex.31.3;35. 25, 26, 35;36.1,2. Ps.110.3.

o ch.22.17–19. Ro.13. 1. Tit.3.1.

7 Not that David established an irresponsible despotism for his son, but he prophesies the perfect obedience and cordial co-operation of the princes under the power of conscience and grace, Ps. 110.3.—*C.*

CHAP. XXIX.

a ch.28.1,8.

b ch.22.5,17.2 Ch.12. 13;9.30. 1 Ki.3.7. Pr. 4. 3.

1 His precise age is not given, but as he was already married (2 Ch.9.30; 12.13), he is called young and tender, when compared with the hardy and veteran warriors whom David now addresses.—*C.*

c ch.28.10. 2 Ch.2. 4, 5.Ps.132.5.

d ch.22. 14–16. 2 Co. 8.3.2 Ch.31.20,21.

2 It may signify either a very precious gem, called onyx, from its similarity in colour and lustre to the human nail, or a species of marble resembling the gem.—*C.*

3 'Glistering stones.' The original seems to indicate a species of *black marble* or lucullite.—*C.*

4 The Septuagint renders it *Parian*, a beautiful species of white marble, highly valued in statuary. Josephus (*Bel.* l. v. c. 5, sec. 2) says the temple was built of white marble.—*C.*

e 2 Co.5.14. Ps. 84. 1; 26.8;137.5,6;cxxii.

5 'My own private property,' the other materials being from the labours of public servants, ch 22. 2; or spoils of enemies, ch. 18. 11; or purchases by public money, ch. 22.4.—*C.*

f 1 Ki.9.28.

6 About 125 tons of gold and 293 of silver, in value £18,082,312, 10*s.* sterling.

7 This statement differs essentially from that in ch. 22. 4 (on which see note). But it is to be remarked, the statements are made upon two different occasions, and to two different parties, and that the gold and silver here described, is not the sum total prepared, but the amount contributed from David's private property.—*C.*

8 About 200 tons of gold and 418 of silver, in value £30,807,875 sterling.

9 753 tons.

1 About 4185 tons.

2 See note on ch. 22. 4 as to the uncertainty of the value or weight of the talent. If any be surprised that there should be a doubt or difficulty arising from variation of weight or value, let them reflect that even the 'pound' sterling originally signified an actual pound weight of silver; it now scarcely amounts to a third of that weight; and the value of a pound Scots is much less.—*C.*

g ch.26.21,22.

h Ju. 5. 9. 1 Ki.8. 62. Ezr.2.68–70. Ps. 110. 3. Je.3.22. 2 Co.8.12. ver. 5.

CHAPTER XXIX.

1 *David, by his example and entreaty,* 6 *causeth the princes and people to offer willingly.* 10 *David's thanksgiving and prayer.* 20 *The people, having blessed God, and sacrificed, make Solomon king the second time.* 26 *David's reign and death.*

FURTHERMORE, David the king said unto all[a] the congregation, Solomon my son, whom alone God hath chosen, *is yet* [b]young and tender,[1] and the work *is* great: for the [c]palace *is* not for man, but for the LORD God.

2 Now, I [d]have prepared with all my might for the house of my God, the gold for *things to be made* of gold, and the silver for *things* of silver, and the brass for *things* of brass, the iron for *things* of iron, and wood for *things* of wood; onyx-stones,[2] and *stones* to be set, glistering stones,[3] and of divers colours, and all manner of precious stones, and marble [4]stones in abundance.

3 Moreover, [e]because I have set my affection to the house of my God, I have of mine own proper good,[5] of gold and silver, *which* I have given to the house of my God, over and above all that I have prepared for the holy house,

4 *Even* three thousand talents of gold, of the gold of [f]Ophir, and seven thousand talents of refined silver,[6] to overlay the walls of the houses *withal:*[7]

5 The gold for *things* of gold, and the silver for *things* of silver, and for all manner of work *to be made* by the hands of artificers. And who *then* is willing to consecrate his service this day unto the LORD?

6 ¶ Then the chief of the fathers, and princes of the tribes of Israel, and the captains of thousands and of hundreds, with the rulers over the king's work, offered willingly,

7 And gave for the service of the house of God, of gold, five thousand talents and ten thousand drams, and[8] of silver ten thousand talents, and of brass eighteen thousand [9]talents, and one hundred thousand talents[1] of iron.[2]

8 And they with whom *precious* stones were found gave *them* to the treasure of the house of the LORD, by the hand of Jehiel [g]the Gershonite.

9 Then the people rejoiced, for that they [h]offered willingly, because with perfect heart they offered willingly to the LORD: and David the king also rejoiced with great joy.

10 ¶ Wherefore David blessed the LORD before all the congregation: and David said,

insolence. And when princes, priests, and people heartly concur in God's work, the spiritual building rises gloriously.

CHAPTER XXIX. [Ver. 5. In addition to all he had raised by commerce, public taxes, levies on nations conquered, and other means, David had given a magnificent donation from his private fortune. Having set such a noble example, he asked voluntary contributions from the princes and people of Israel. In this respect he followed the example of Moses. It was a wise policy. The people would naturally feel more interest in a building to which they had contributed. They would look upon it as their own. They would regard with pride its grandeur. Their love and devotion to God would thus be increased; while at the same time loyalty to the throne and constitution would be deepened. *P.*]

Ver. 13. [What a noble sentiment is embodied in this expression of thanks to God! It recognizes him alone as the source of national and individual prosperity. All the wealth of a nation comes from him, and ought therefore to be dedicated to him. Generosity as well as riches has its source in God. He gives the power to get

TOMB OF DAVID. [I. CHRONICLES, xxix:28.]—"And he died in a good old age, full of days, riches, and honor: and Solomon his son reigned in his stead." David, we are told, together with his successors, was buried in his own city on Zion, and the site now known as David's Tomb stands on the south brow of the hill outside of the modern walls. Jews, Christians and Moslems have for many centuries united in looking upon this site as genuine, and it is said to be often common to see Jews standing close to the building steadily and reverently contemplating the place. Josephus tells us that Hyrcanus, when besieged by Antiochus Pius, opened David's Sepulcher and took out 3,000 talents. There have been many stories current in different ages about the fabulous wealth buried in this tomb. On one occasion it is said a man was miraculously struck down while attempting to remove some of these treasures.

Blessed[i] *be* thou, LORD God of Israel our father, for ever and ever.

11 Thine,[k] O LORD, *is* the greatness, and the power, and the glory, and the victory, and the majesty: for all *that is* in the heaven and in the earth *is thine:* thine *is* the kingdom, O LORD, and thou art exalted as head above all.

12 Both [l]riches and honour *come* of thee, and[m] thou reignest over all; and in thine hand *is* power and might; and in thine hand *it is* to make great, and to give strength unto all.

13 Now therefore, our God, [n]we thank thee, and praise thy glorious name.

14 But [o]who *am* I, and what *is* my people, that we should be able to offer so willingly after this sort? for all [p]things *come* of thee, and of thine own have we given thee.

15 For [q]we *are* strangers before thee, and sojourners, as *were* all our fathers: our [r]days on the earth *are* as a shadow,[3] and *there is* none abiding.[4]

16 O LORD our God, [s]all this store, that we have prepared to build thee an house for thine holy name, *cometh* of thine hand, and *is* all thine own.

17 I know also, my God, that thou triest the[t] heart, and hast [u]pleasure in uprightness. As for me, in the uprightness of mine heart I have willingly offered all these things: and now have I seen with joy thy people, which are present here, to offer willingly unto thee.

18 O LORD [x]God of Abraham, Isaac, and of Israel, our fathers, [y]keep this for ever in the imagination of the thoughts of the heart of thy people, and [z]prepare their heart[5] unto thee:

19 And give unto Solomon my [a]son a perfect heart, to keep thy commandments, thy testimonies, and thy statutes, and to do all *these things*, and to build the palace, *for* the which [b]I have made provision.

20 ¶ And David said to all the congregation, Now[c] bless the LORD your God.[6] And all the congregation blessed the LORD God of their fathers, and [d]bowed down their heads, and worshipped the LORD, and the king.[7]

21 And they [e]sacrificed sacrifices unto the LORD, and offered burnt-offerings unto the LORD, on the morrow after that day, *even* a thousand bullocks, a thousand rams, *and* a thousand lambs, with their drink-offerings, and sacrifices in abundance for all Israel;

22 And did eat and drink [g]before the [8]LORD on that day with great gladness: and they made Solomon the son of David king [h]the second time,[9] and anointed *him* unto the LORD *to be* the chief governor, and [i]Zadok *to be* priest.

23 ¶ Then Solomon sat on [k]the throne of the LORD[1] as king instead of David his father, and [l]prospered; and all Israel obeyed him.

24 And all the princes, and the mighty men, and all the sons likewise of king David, [m]submitted themselves unto Solomon the king.

25 And the LORD magnified Solomon exceedingly in the sight of all Israel, and bestowed [n]upon him *such* royal majesty as had not been on any king before him in Israel.

26 ¶ Thus David the son of Jesse reigned [o]over all Israel.

27 And the [p]time that he reigned over Israel *was* forty years; seven years reigned he in Hebron, and thirty and three *years* reigned he in Jerusalem.

28 And he died in a [q]good old age, full of days, riches, and honour: and Solomon his son reigned in his stead.

29 Now [r]the acts of David the king, first and last, behold, they *are* written in the book of Samuel the seer, and in the book of Nathan the prophet, and in the book of Gad the seer,[2]

30 With all his reign, and his might, and the times that went over him,[3] and over Israel, and over all the kingdoms of the countries.

A.M. 2989. B.C. 1015.

i Ps.72.18, 19; cxlv.–cl. 1 Ki.8.15, 2 Ch.20.6. Eze.3.12.

k Mat.6.13; 11.25. 1 Ti.1.17; 6.15, 16. Re. 5.12, 13. Ne.9.5, 6; 1.5. Ps. 8.1, 9; 29.1, 2; 24.1; 47.2, 8, 9; 48.1; 86.8–10; 89.5–8; 145.3; 148.1–14. Da.4. 34, 35. Ac.4.24.

l De.8.18. Pr. 10. 22. Ps.75.6, 7. Ja.1.17.

m Da.4.34, 35; 6. 26. Re.5.13; 11. 17; 15. 3, 4; 19.1, 6.

n Ps. 105. 1; 106. 1; cxxxv. cxxxvi. cxlv.–cl.

o Ps.115.1. 2 Co. 3. 5. Phi.2.13. 1 Co.15.10.

p Ja.1.17. Ro.11. 36. ver.14.

q Ps. 39. 12; 119. 19. He. 11. 13. 1 Pe. 2. 11. Ge.47.9.

r Job 14.2. Ps. 90. 9; 102. 11. Ec. 6. 12. Ja.4. 14.

3 A mere form of darkness amidst surrounding light, always escaping, though its motion be imperceptible; lengthening as the evening advances, and vanishing when it seemed greatest.—*C.*

4 'A shadow,' ever changing, never permanent. What a true, graphic, and yet humiliating picture of human life! Job gives expression to the same idea:—'For we are but of yesterday, and know nothing, because our days upon earth are a shadow,' Job 8.9.—*P.*

s Ja.1.17. Ro.11. 36. ver.14. Ps.24.1.

t 1 Sa.16.7. ch. 28. 9. Ps.7 9. He.4.13.

u Ps. 51. 6; 11. 7. Pr. 11.20.

x Ex.3.6, 15, 16; 4. 5. Mat.22.32. Ac.3.13.

y Je.10.23. ch. 28. 9. Ac.11.23.

z Pr.16. 1. Ps. 119. 5, or *establish*, Phi. 1. 6; 2.13.

5 The preparation of the heart for meeting God in confession, petition, prayer, and communion, is altogether from his Spirit.—*C.*

a Pr. 16. 1, 9; 21. 1. Eze.36.26, 27; 11.19, 20. Je.32. 39, 40. Ps.51.7, 10.

b ch.21.25; 22.14. ver. 2–8.

c Ps.103.1, 2, 20; 134. 1. 145.10; 146.1, 10.

6 David was not satisfied with leading the devotions, and praying in the people's name, and blessing God in his official capacity as ruler of the nation. He wished the people to give public and formal expression to their faith in God. It was a kind of national covenanting, and was calculated to make a deep and lasting impression on all the members of that great assembly.—*P.*

d Ge. 24. 26; 47. 31. Ex. 4. 31. Ps.29.1. He. 11.21.

7 The same external act of bowing the head was employed, emblematically acknowledging God to be supreme over all; David as king under him, but over his people.—*C.*

e 2 Ch.7.4–9. 1 Ki. 8. 62–65. Ezr.6.17.

f Ex.24.11. Le.7.15, 16. Ne.8.10.

8 Their eating and drinking was with thankfulness to God for his goodness, reverence for his power, fear for his displeasure, but love for all his guidance and mercy.—*C.*

h With ch. 23. 1. 1 Ki.1.38, 39.

9 The former enthronement was on occasion of Adonijah's rebellion, 1 Ki. 1.39.—*C.*

i 1 Ki.2.35. 1 Sa.2.36.

k ch.28.5; 17. 14. Ps. 82.1. Pr.8.15. Ro.13.1.

1 It was the Lord's, 1. Because all power is derived from him, Ps.62.11. 2. Because all good government is derived from him, Pr. 8. 15. 3. Because all rulers are accountable to him, Ps.2.10–12.—*C.*

l ch. 22. 11; 28. 14. 1 Ki.ii.–x. 2 Ch.i.–ix.

m Heb. *gave the hand under Solomon*, Ge. 24. 2; 47. 29. Eze.17.18.

n 1 Ki.3.13; 1. 37, 47. 2 Ch.1.1, 12. Ec.2.9. Da. xiv. lxxii. cx. He.2.8, 9.

o ch.18.14. Ps.78.71, 72.

p 1 Ki.2.11. 2 Sa.5.5; 2 11. ch. 3.4.

q Ge.15.15; 25.8. Job 5. 26. Pr. 16. 31. Ac.13. 36.

r 1 Ki. 11. 41, 42; 14. 29; 15. 23, ch. xi.–xxii. 1 Sa. xvi. xxx. 2 Sa. i.–xxiv. Ps. 1 –cl. Ac. 13 22, 30; 7. 46. He. 11. 32–34.

2 These books are not lost, but we have here the names of the sacred historians by whom they were compiled, and by whose inspiration they were authenticated. They now constitute, most probably, the books that go entirely by the name of Samuel, because he was the first and principal writer.—*C.*

3 Vicissitudes, revolutions, trials, and triumphs.—*C.*

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wealth; and he gives the grace and wisdom rightly to use it. David sees and devoutly acknowledges all this. *P.*]

Ver. 22. [Abiathar had been priest during the reign of David. The cause of his disgrace, and Zadok's elevation, may be gathered from a number of incidental remarks in the history of David as narrated in Samuel and Kings. Abiathar was son of Ahimelech, who was slain by Saul because he had given David food and arms at Nob, 1 Sa. 22. 20. He fled to David, carrying with him the ephod, and he became David's constant companion. After the death of Saul, and David's accession to the throne, Abiathar was made high-priest, but he had Zadok as colleague. The former was descended from Ithamar, the youngest son of Aaron, 1 Ch. 24. 3, and also from the family of Eli, on which a curse had been pronounced, 1 Sa. 2. 36; the latter was descended from Eleazar, the eldest son of Aaron. It would seem that Abiathar gradually became dissatisfied with the growing influence of his colleague, and his loyalty to the house of David waxed cold. At length, when Adonijah aspired to the throne, he *conferred with Abiathar.* He must have had good reason to anticipate success in that quarter; and the event showed that he was not mistaken in his man. Zadok, on the contrary, was true to David. Thus it was that Abiathar, by envy, folly, and disloyalty, brought about his own disgrace, and at the same time a fulfilment of the prophetic curse pronounced on the guilty house of Eli. *P.*]

Ver. 29. [It detracts nothing from the integrity and completeness of divine revelation even though we admit that these books have perished. God has by his providence preserved all that is necessary for the salvation of his church. The Bible was never intended to be merely a history. The facts of history which it contains were not intended merely for the gratification of man's curiosity. They have a higher object. The books of Samuel, Nathan, and Gad, which are here mentioned, may have been mere biographies of David, with no claim to inspiration. The mention of them here does not prove their inspiration; it merely proves that they were full and trustworthy records of national history. *P.*]

REFLECTIONS.—Young beginners ought to be strongly encouraged in the Lord's way. What we do for God should correspond with the excellences of his nature and his kindness to us, and should be done with all our might; for that only is acceptable to God which is done from hearty affection to him. He loves a cheerful giver: and when our heart is right our hand will be open. But it is not enough that we do our own duty; we must also stir up others to theirs; and to draw them to that which is good, we must show them an example. Such as set their affection upon God's service will think no pains or cost too much to bestow upon it: and what is bestowed in this manner usually brings its own reward in present comfort. It is a pleasure to saints to see God's work carried on with vigour, and to behold a mutual emulation in good works. It is a pleasure for them to die in the comfortable prospect of the church's prosperity: and that they leave behind them such as will zealously endeavour the maintenance of religion in its purity and power. But how delightful is it when dying saints have their mouths opened in prayer, praise, and thanksgiving! And how amazing the infinite excellences and unbounded kindness of God! How unquestionable his right to our most exalted praise! Whatever gifts or grace men have, they have it all from him. And the more we do for him, we are the more indebted to him for employing and enabling us, and ought to walk the more humbly with him. And though our good works ought never to encourage our pride, yet should they be the matter of our praise. If we would retain good impressions on our spirit, we must commit the keeping of them to God. A heart sincerely fixed upon him is the greatest blessing we can here enjoy: and a holy rejoicing should enliven every act of our fellowship with him; particularly our feasting by faith on the sacrifice of his Son. For great is the honour God gives to those whom he calls to his work, while they serve him faithfully therein. But how short a step there is between a throne and a grave! The brightest stars that appear in the church must quickly set in death, and leave their room to others. Let therefore the divinely anointed, the no more dying Jesus, be all my joy and consolation.

THE SECOND BOOK OF

CHRONICLES.

This book greatly coincides with the First and Second Book of Kings, and contains a history of about 480 years, till the return from Babylon: only there we had the history of Israel and Judah mixed together; in this we have scarcely anything but the history of David's descendants, much of which we had not before. In general the good kings were successful, and the wicked severely punished, as Moses had predicted, Le. xxvi.; De. xxviii.–xxxii.; iv. 25–30. Here we have the peaceable reign of Solomon, ch. i.–ix.; the blemished reign of Rehoboam, x.–xii.; the short but busy reign of Abijah, xiii.; the long and happy reign of Asa, xiv.–xvi.; the pious and prosperous reign of Jehoshaphat, xvii.–xx.; the infamous reigns of Jehoram and Ahaziah, xxi. xxii.; the unsteady reigns of Joash and Amaziah, xxiii.–xxv.; the long, prosperous, but ill-concluded reign of Uzziah, xxvi.; the regular reign of Jotham, xxvii.; the idolatrous, profane, and miserable reign of Ahaz, xxviii.; the reforming and glorious reign of Hezekiah, xxix.–xxxii.; the deforming and wicked reigns of Manasseh and Amon, xxxiii.; the pious and reforming reign of Josiah, xxxiv. xxxv.; and the reigns of Jehoahaz, Jehoiakim, Jehoiachin, and Zedekiah, destructive to the nation, xxxvi.

CHAPTER I.

1 The solemn offering of Solomon at Gibeon. 7 Solomon's choice of wisdom is blessed by God. 13 Solomon's forces and opulence.

AND Solomon the son of David was strengthened[a] in his kingdom,[1] and the LORD his God *was* with [b]him, and [c]magnified him exceedingly.

2 Then Solomon [d]spake unto all Israel, to the captains of thousands and of hundreds, and to the judges, and to every governor in all Israel,[2] the chief of the fathers.[3]

3 So Solomon, and all the congregation with him, went to the high place that *was* at [e]Gibeon; for there was the tabernacle [f]of the congregation of God, which Moses, the servant of the LORD, [g]had made in the wilderness.

4 But[h] the ark of God had David brought up from Kirjath-jearim to *the place which* David had prepared for it: for he had pitched a tent for it at Jerusalem.

5 Moreover, [i]the brazen altar that Bezaleel the son of Uri, the son of Hur, had made, he put[4] before the tabernacle of the LORD; and Solomon and the congregation sought unto it.[5]

6 And Solomon went up thither to the brazen altar before the LORD, which *was* at the tabernacle of the congregation, and offered [k]a thousand burnt-offerings upon it.

7 ¶ In[l] that night did God appear unto Solomon, and said unto him, Ask what I shall give thee.

8 And Solomon said unto God, [m]Thou hast showed great mercy unto David my father, and hast made me [n]to reign in his stead.

9 Now, O LORD God, [o]let thy promise unto David my father be established: for thou [p]hast made me king over a people like the dust[6] of the earth in multitude.

10 Give[q] me now wisdom and knowledge, that I may go out and come in before this people: for who can judge this thy people, *that is so* great?[7]

11 And God said to Solomon, Because this [r]was in thine heart, and thou hast not asked riches, wealth,[8] or honour, nor the life of thine enemies, neither yet hast asked long life; but hast asked wisdom and knowledge for thyself, that thou mayest judge my people, over whom I have made thee king:

12 Wisdom and knowledge *is* [s]granted unto thee; and I will give thee riches, and wealth, and honour, such as [t]none of the kings have had that *have been* before thee, neither shall there any after thee have the like.

13 ¶ Then Solomon came *from* [u]*his journey* to the high place that *was* at Gibeon to Jerusalem, from before the tabernacle of the congregation, and reigned [z]over Israel.

14 And[y] Solomon gathered chariots and horsemen: and he had a thousand and four hundred chariots, and twelve thousand horsemen, which he placed in the chariot-cities,[9] and with the king at Jerusalem.

15 And the king made silver and gold at Jerusalem *as plenteous* as stones,[1] and cedar-trees made he as the [z]sycamore-trees that *are* in the vale for abundance.

16 And[a] Solomon had horses brought out of Egypt, and linen yarn: the king's merchants received the linen yarn at a price.

A.M. 2989. B.C. 1015.

CHAP. I.

a 1 Ki.2.12,46. 1 Ch. 29.24;11.10.

1 He increased in popularity and influence as his wisdom was developed.—*C.*

b Ge.21.22. 2 Ki. 18. 7. 2 Sa.5.10. Ro.8. 31. Is.41.10.

c 1 Ch. 29. 25; 17. 8. Ep. 1. 20–22. Phi. 2.9–11.1 Ti.6.15. Re. 5. 11. Da.7.14.

d 1 Ch.13.1; 15.3; 28. 1;29.1; xi.xxvii. ch.29. 20;30.2;34.29,30.

2 Following the example of David, Solomon desired to renew formally and publicly the covenant between the nation and the Lord. Hence he summoned the whole rulers to a great assembly, just as Moses, Joshua, Samuel, and David had done under similar circumstances.—*P.*

3 One of the most pleasing features in the history of this period is the religious condition of the military and civil authorities. These, in council with the king, seem to have constituted the 'estates general of the kingdom,' convened only upon great and momentous occasions.—*C.*

e 1 Ki.3.4.1Ch.16.39; 21.29, with Jos.9.3, 17; 18.25;21.17.

f Ex.26.1.Le.1.1.

g Ex. xxxvi.–xl., with xxv.–xxxi.

h 2 Sa.6. 2, 17. 1 Ch. 13.5, 6; 15.28; 16. 1. Ps. 132.5,6.

i Ex.38.1–7;27.1–8.

4 Or, was *there*.

5 Sought the Lord there by sacrifice, Ps. 50.5.—*C.*

k 1 Ch.29.21. 1 Ki.3. 4;8.63. Le.1.3.ch.7.7.

l 1 Ki.3.5–13. Pr.3.5, 6.Is.58.9;65.24. Mat.7. 7,11. Jn.16.23;15.7.

m Ps.105.1–3; 107.1, 8,15;cxxxv.cxxxvi.

n 1 Ch. 28. 5; 29. 23, ver.1.

o 2 Sa.7.12–16,25–29. 1 Ch. 17. 11–14, 23–27. Ps.132.13,14.

A.M. 2989. B.C. 1015.

p 1 Ki.3.7. Ge.13.16; 22.17. Ps.72.8. Da.7.14. Mat.28.19.

6 Much as the dust.

q 1 Ki.3.9. Nu.27.17. Pr.3.13–16;4.7,8.

7 An humble opinion of his qualifications, and a just perception of the difficulties of public business, leading to an earnest pleading for grace and guidance from God, constitute the basis of Solomon's character.—*C.*

r 1 Sa. 16. 7. 1 Ki. 8. 18;3.11. Ps.10.17. Pr.16. 1;21.1.

8 'Riches,' more properly 'possessions,' as productive lands, cattle, and commerce. 'Wealth,' including money, gems, tribute.—*C.*

s 1 Ki.3. 12, 13; 4.21, 29–34;x. Ps. 65.2. Mat. 6.33.1 Jn.5.15. Ep.3.20.

t 1 Ch.29.25.ch.9.22. Ec.2.9.

u ver.3,5,6.

x 1 Ki. 4. 24, 25. Re. 11.15,17.

y 1 Ki.4.26;10.26,28. ch.9.25;ver.16,17, with De.17.16. Ps.33. 16,17; 20.7. Pr.21.31.

9 Cities, where the more level nature of the country, the better state of the public ways, or where frontiers were exposed to sudden incursions, or where pasturage and forage were more abundant for the horses, were selected as the permanent stations of the chariots. Those at Jerusalem were, most probably, for state processions.—*C.*

1 This is no hyperbole—which is but another name for an untruth, never to be ascribed to the Holy Spirit—it is a literal statement, not that gold and silver coins were made of as little value as stones, nor as great in weight as stones, but that they were as plenty as building-stones, a consummation often realized in times of great commercial prosperity.—*C.*

z 1 Ch.27.28. Is.9.10. Am.7.14.

a ver.14. 1 Ki.10.28. ch.9.28.

CHAPTER I. [Ver. 3. Gibeon was one of the royal cities of the Hivites, and was the scene of Joshua's great victory and miracle. It would seem that the tabernacle was brought to Gibeon in the early part of the rule of Samuel, probably because it was central, and close to Mizpeh, one of the national gathering-places. The city stood on a low rocky hill, in the centre of an upland plain, 6 miles north-west of Jerusalem, in the territory of Benjamin. No spot in central Palestine was better adapted for a great national gathering. The removal of the tabernacle from Shiloh, which was in Ephraim, may have tended to increase the discontent that already existed in that powerful tribe. *P.*]

Ver. 13. [The sense of this passage and the scope of the context, especially ver. 3, appear to require the first clause of this verse to be rendered thus:—'Then Solomon came from the high-place at Gibeon to Jerusalem.' The words 'from his journey' have no equivalent in the Hebrew, and serve to obscure rather than elucidate the meaning. Literally the Hebrew means '*to* the high-place;' but this must be inaccurate, for Solomon was there, and came *to Jerusalem*. Both the Septuagint and Vulgate read *from*. A mistake in

17 And they fetched up, and brought forth out of Egypt, a chariot for six hundred *shekels* of silver, and an horse for an hundred and fifty:[2] and so brought they out *horses* for all the kings of the Hittites, and for the kings of Syria, by their means.[3]

CHAPTER II.

1, 17 *Solomon's labourers for the building of the temple.* 3 *His embassage to Huram for skilful artificers and timber.* 11 *Huram sendeth him a friendly answer.*

AND Solomon determined[1] to build an house for[a] the name of the LORD, and an house for[b] his kingdom.

2 And Solomon [c]told out threescore and ten thousand men to bear burdens, and fourscore thousand to hew in the mountain, and three thousand and six hundred to oversee them.[2]

3 ¶ And Solomon sent to [d]Huram[3] the king of Tyre, saying, As thou didst deal with David my father, and [e]didst send him cedars to build him an house to dwell therein, *even so deal with me.*

4 Behold, [f]I build an house to the name of the LORD my God, to [g]dedicate *it* to him, *and* to burn before him sweet incense,[4] and for the continual show-bread, and for the burnt-offerings morning and evening, on the sabbaths, and on the new-moons, and on the solemn feasts of the LORD our God. This *is an ordinance* for ever to Israel.

5 And the house which I build *is* [h]great: for [i]great *is* our God above all gods.[5]

6 But[k] who is able[6] to build him an house, seeing the heaven and heaven of heavens cannot contain him? [l]who *am* I then, that I should build him an house, save only to burn sacrifice before him?

7 Send me now therefore a man cunning to work in gold, and in silver, and in brass, and in iron, and in purple, and crimson, and blue, and that can skill to grave with the cunning men that *are* with me in Judah and in Jerusalem, whom [m]David my father did provide.

8 Send[n] me also cedar-trees, fir-trees, and [o]algum-trees,[7] out of Lebanon: (for I know that thy servants can skill to cut timber in Lebanon:[8]) and, behold, my servants *shall be* with thy servants,

9 Even to prepare me timber in abundance: for the house which I am about to build *shall be* [p]wonderful great.[9]

10 And, behold, I will give to thy servants, the hewers that cut timber, twenty thousand measures of beaten wheat, and twenty thousand measures of barley, and twenty thousand baths of wine, and twenty thousand baths of oil.[1]

11 ¶ Then Huram the king of Tyre answered in writing,[2] which he sent to Solomon, Because the LORD hath loved his people, he hath made thee king over them.

12 Huram said moreover, [q]Blessed *be* the LORD God of Israel, that made heaven and earth, who hath given to David the king a wise son, endued with prudence and [3]understanding, that might build an house for the LORD, and an house for his kingdom.

13 And now I have sent a cunning man, endued with understanding, of Huram [r]my father's;

14 The son of a woman of the daughters of [s]Dan, and his father *was* a man of Tyre, skilful to work in gold, and in silver, in brass, in iron, in stone, and in timber, in purple, in blue, and in fine linen, and in crimson; also to grave any manner of graving, and to find out every device which shall be put to him, with thy cunning men,[4] and with the cunning men of my lord David thy father.

15 Now therefore the wheat, and the barley, the oil, and the wine, [t]which my lord hath spoken of, let him send unto his servants:

16 And we will cut wood out of Lebanon, as much as thou shalt need:[5] and we will bring it to thee in floats by sea to [u]Joppa,[6] and thou shalt carry it up to Jerusalem.

17 ¶ And[x] Solomon numbered all the strangers that *were* in the land of Israel, after the numbering wherewith David his father had numbered them; and they were found an hundred and fifty thousand, and three thousand and six hundred.[7]

18 And he set [y]threescore and ten thousand of them *to be* bearers of burdens, and fourscore

A.M. 2989. B.C. 1015.

2 Some expositors consider the word translated 'linen yarn' to be a price. Bochart thinks it signifies *the toll* or *custom*. The sum paid for a chariot-horse, amounting to about £22, 10*s*., would seem, however, to indicate the price rather than any *ad valorem* export duty.—*C.*

3 See note on 1 Ki. 10.29.—*P.*

CHAP. II.

1 Many things may have prevented Solomon from determining sooner—such as the popular attachment to Gibeon, and the jealousy of chiefs and tribes.—*C.*

a De. 28.58; 12. 5,11. ver. 5,9. Mat. 6.9,10.

b 1 Ki. 7.1,51.

c ver. 18. 1 Ki. 5. 15, 16. ch. 8.7–9, all Canaanites. Is. 60. 10; 11. 10.

2 There is no discrepancy between this passage and 1 Ki. 5.15. The one passage gives the first appointment of overseers, the second gives the last.—*C.*

d Or, *Hiram*, 1 Ki. 5.1. 2 Sa. 5.11.

3 This mode of spelling the word occurs only in Chronicles. In 1 Ki. 5.1 it is Hiram, while in ch. 7. 40 the Hebrew has Hirom, as it is in the margin of the English version. Menander, as quoted by Josephus, writes the name *Heiromos*; Herodotus has *Siromos*, which is evidently an error of a copyist.—*P.*

e 2 Sa. 5.11. 1 Ch. 14. 1.

f 1 Ki. 5.5,8. 8.17. ver. 1. 1 Ki. 8.63. Ezr. 3.2. 1 Ch. 21.8; 1.—vii. Nu. vii. xv. xviii. xxix.

4 Heb. *incense of spices.*

g 1 Ki. 9.8. 1 Ch. 29. 1. Eze. 7.20.

h 1 Ch. 16.25. Ex. 15. 11; 18.11. ch. 20.6. Ne. 9. 5. Ps. 86.8–10; 89. 7.

5 There can be little doubt that this Huram was a believer in the true God (see ver. 12), whose glorious attributes Solomon here celebrates; but if an idolater, Solomon well sustains his character of a preacher of truth with a view to his conversion.—*C.*

k 1 Ki. 8.27. ch. 6. 18. Is. 66. 1.

6 Heb. *hath retained*, or *obtained strength.*

l 2 Sa. 7. 18. 1 Ch. 29. 14. 2 Co. 2. 16; 3. 5. Ge. 32. 10. Ep. 3.8.

m 1 Ch. 22. 3; 28. 21.

n 1 Ki. 5.6. ver. 9, 16.

o Or, *Almuggim*, 1 Ki. 10. 11, 12. ch. 9. 10, 11.

7 The precise kind of wood is unknown. Some suppose it the *lignum vitæ*, others the *cypress*; others *sandal-wood*, and this is the opinion of the Jewish rabbins.—*C.*

8 Every employment, even the most simple, requires practice and skill, both for facility and health. Even could Solomon have claimed or enforced a right to cut timber in the forests of Lebanon, his people were unprepared for the labours both of cutting and transport. He therefore bargains with Huram for this part of the work, and sends his own people as for assistants.—*C.*

p Heb. *great and wonderful*, ver. 5; ch. 7.21. 1 Ki. 9.8. 1 Ch. 22. 5; 29.1.

9 There have been greater buildings in point of *extent*—none ever so great in *plan*—for it came from God; nor so great by its *owner*—for he was God himself.—*C.*

1 There is no discrepancy between this statement and that of 1 Ki. 5. 10. The first passage records a present or payment in kind to Huram; the second the supplies for his workmen in Lebanon.—*C.*

2 Although correspondence among persons of distinction was, in these early times, carried on by confidential messengers, yet we find that epistolary intercourse did exist, and that kings could read and write in what were called by the proud and insolent Greeks and Romans, barbarous nations. But nearly 2000 years after this we find a king in England who could not sign his own name.—*P.*

q 1 Ki. 5. 7. Ge. 1. ii. Ex. 20. 11. Ne. 9. 6. Ps. 33. 6. Is. 37. 16; 42. 5; 66. 1. Ac. 14. 15. Re. 4. 11. Je. 32. 17.

3 Heb. *knowing prudence and understanding.*

r ch. 4. 16.

s 1 Ki. 7. 14. Ex. 31. 3–5. ver. 7. Is. 60. 10.

4 Skilful artists.—*C.*

t ver. 10, 1 Ki. 5. 11.

5 Heb. *according to all thy need.*

u Heb. *Japha*, Jos. 19. 46. Ezr. 3. 7. Jonah 1. 3. Ac. 10. 32.

6 A town in the tribe of Dan, and one of the most ancient seaports in the world. Jos. 19. 46. It is about 40 miles west of Jerusalem, so that the land carriage would be comparatively easy. It contains at present about 5000 inhabitants, and is surrounded with beautiful and productive gardens.—*C.*

x As ver. 2. 1 Ki. 9. 20–23; 5. 13–16. ch. 8. 7. 1 Ch. 22. 2. The building of the temple by accursed Gentiles, was typical of their chiefly constituting the New Testament church.

7 The relics of the ancient inhabitants (ch. 8. 7) and immigrants from the surrounding nations, and who had, most probably, become proselytes to Judaism.—*C.*

y ver. 2. 1 Ki. 5. 15, 16. But here 300 superior overseers are also mentioned.

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writing a single Hebrew letter would have created all the difference. *P.*]

REFLECTIONS.—The more God does for us, the more we ought to do for him, in order to testify our affection and gratitude. A reign, or an undertaking, begun with the solemn service of God, and with earnest prayer for his direction and assistance, is likely to turn out happily. And great is the influence of a good magistrate's example. It is not outward appearances, but inward desires, that most certainly characterize persons. And if we have faith, we shall count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ, and for skill to serve him in our station. And as the eminency of our predecessors or stations render remarkable qualifications necessary, so the infinite mercy of our God, and his promise, encourage us to seek such things. God readily gives his people exceedingly above what they ask or think: and the most disinterested prayers turn out most to our advantage: while those who eagerly pursue the things of this world are apt to lose them, or to have them turned into a curse. And he that increaseth horses, chariots, or trade, often spreads snares and temptations for souls.

CHAPTER II. [Ver. 13. The construction is here difficult, and expositors are not agreed as to the meaning. The Hebrew may be translated literally as follows:—'And now I have sent a skilled man, endued with understanding, Huram my father.' There can be no doubt that the artificer's name was *Huram*. The Hebrew prefix which is translated 'of' is only a sign of the accusative. But then the difficulty arises, why is the expression 'my father' added? Some reply that the Hebrew word so translated is part of the man's name, *Huram-Abi;* others say the king calls the artist *my father*, because of his great skill. Both the Septuagint and Vulgate read 'Huram my father.' Taking this verse in connection with ch. 4. 16, I conclude that the artist's full name was *Huram-Abi. P.*]

Ver. 17, 18. [Ver. 17, 18 explain 1 Ch. 22. 2. The strangers resident in Palestine were collected to perform the work to which they were originally devoted. They had been permitted to reside within the bounds of the land of Israel only on condition of becoming slaves or helots to the Israelites. Their labour was now turned to good account. The magnitude of the undertaking required them all. The mere erection of a temple would have been a small thing; but the site selected was such that a vast artificial platform had to be constructed by building walls round the shelving sides of Mount Moriah, in some places to the enormous height of 200 feet, and then filling up the interior. The platform was 1000 feet square. The stones for the building were of enormous size—some of them

thousand *to be* hewers in the mountain, and three thousand and six hundred overseers to set the people a work.

CHAPTER III.

1 *The place and time of building the temple.* 3 *The dimensions and ornaments of the house.* 11 *The cherubims.* 14 *The vail and pillar.*

THEN Solomon[a] began to build the house of the LORD at Jerusalem [b]in mount Moriah, where *the LORD* appeared unto David his father, in the place that David had prepared in the thrashing-floor of Ornan the [c]Jebusite.

2 And he began to build [d]in the second *day* of the second month, in the fourth year of his reign

3 ¶ Now these *are the things wherein* Solomon was instructed for the building of the house of God: the length by cubits, after the first measure,[2] *was* threescore cubits,[3] and the breadth twenty cubits.[4]

4 And the [e]porch that *was* in the front *of the house*, the length *of it was* according to the breadth of the house, twenty cubits, and the height *was* an hundred and twenty:[5] and he overlaid it within with pure gold.

5 And the greater[6] house[7] he [h]ceiled with fir-tree, which he overlaid with fine gold, and set thereon palm-trees and chains.[8]

6 And he garnished[9] the house with precious stones for beauty:[1] and the gold *was* gold of Parvaim.[2]

7 He [i]overlaid also the house, the beams, the posts, and the walls thereof, and the doors thereof, with gold; and graved cherubims on the walls.

8 ¶ And he [k]made the most holy house,[3] the length whereof *was* according to the breadth of the house, twenty cubits,[4] and the breadth thereof twenty cubits: and he overlaid it with fine gold, *amounting* to six hundred talents.[5]

9 And the weight[6] of the nails[7] *was* fifty shekels of gold. And he overlaid the upper chambers with gold.

10 And[1] in the most holy house he made two cherubims of image-work,[8] and overlaid them with gold.

11 And the [m]wings of the cherubims *were* twenty cubits long: one wing *of the one cherub was* five cubits, reaching to the wall of the house; and the other wing *was likewise* five cubits, reaching to the wing of the other cherub.

12 And *one* wing of the other cherub *was* five cubits, reaching to the wall of the house; and the other wing *was* five cubits *also*, joining to the wing of the other cherub.

13 The wings of these cherubims spread themselves forth twenty cubits: and they stood on their feet, and their faces *were* [n]inward.[9]

14 ¶ And he made the [o]vail *of* blue, and purple, and crimson, and fine linen, and [1]wrought cherubims thereon.

15 ¶ Also he made before the house [p]two pillars of thirty and five cubits high,[2] and the chapiter that *was* on the top of each of them *was* five cubits.

16 And he made chains, *as* in the oracle, and put *them* on the heads of the pillars; and made an [q]hundred pomegranates, and put *them* on the chains.

17 And he [r]reared up the pillars before the temple, one on the right hand, and the other on the left; and called the name of that on the right hand Jachin,[3] and the name of that on the left Boaz.[4]

CHAPTER IV.

1 *The altar of brass.* 2 *The molten sea supported by twelve oxen.* 6 *The ten lavers, candlesticks, and tables.* 9 *The courts, and the instruments of brass.* 19 *The instruments of gold.*

MOREOVER he made an [a]altar of brass, twenty cubits the length thereof, and twenty cubits the breadth thereof, and ten cubits the height thereof.

2 ¶ Also[b] he made a molten sea of ten cubits from brim to brim, round in compass, and five cubits the height thereof; and a line of thirty cubits did compass it round about.

3 And[c] under it *was* the similitude of [1]oxen, which did compass it round about: ten in a cubit, compassing the sea round about. Two rows of oxen *were* cast when it was cast.

4 It stood [d]upon twelve oxen, three looking toward the north, and three looking toward the west, and three looking toward the south, and three looking toward the east: and the sea *was set* above upon them, and all their hinder parts *were* inward.

5 And the thickness of it *was* an hand-breadth, and the brim of it like the work of the

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A.M. 2993. B.C. 1011.

CHAP. III.

a 1 Ki.6.1, &c.
b Ge. 22. 2. 2 Sa. 24. 16, 1 Ch.21.15.
c Or, *Araunah*, 2 Sa. 24.18.
d 1 Ki. 6. 1. Just 2993 years after the creation.
1 The first,' that is, the Mosaic measure. The books of Chronicles were drawn up, or revised and arranged by the prophets, after the Babylonish captivity; and the Babylonish cubit was a *palm* or *one-sixth* shorter than that of Moses; a circumstance that will serve to reconcile several apparent discrepancies in the sacred history, with respect to the estimate of measures.—*C.*
2 109 feet 6 inches.
3 36 feet 6 inches.
g 1 Ki.6.3-22.
4 219 feet. It was a very high steeple.
5 Less holy place.
6 The outer apartment of the temple as distinguished from the most holy place (see ver. 8), for the ark, mercy-seat, and cherubim.—*C.*
h 1 Ki.6.15,21,22.
7 The account of the building of the temple given here, and that given in 1 Ki. vi. vii., are evidently independent records. The arrangement of the two narratives is quite distinct. In Kings the external building is first described, and then the historian takes up the internal decorations. In Chronicles the two are mixed up. The writer after giving the size of the building, describes the porch, and then the internal decorations. The one account cannot be regarded as complete without the other; the two together form a pretty full and accurate description of the whole structure.—*P.*
9 Heb. *covered.*
1 This, most probably, refers to the pavement of the temple.—*C.*
2 This country or city is now unknown, and conjecture is useless.—*C.*
i 1 Ki. 6. 20-22, 30. Eze.7.20.1 Ch.29.1;22. 5.
k 1 Ki.6.5,19,20.
3 House of holiness of holinesses, or oracle.
4 36 feet 6 inches.
5 About 25 ton, in value £3,285,000 sterling.
6 Each nail, *i.e.* near one pound eleven ounces.
7 In modern language, *bolts.*—*C.*
l 1 Ki.6.23-28.
8 Or (as some think) *of movable work.*
m 1 Ki. 6. 23-28. These two cherubims of olive-tree were added to the golden ones formed by Moses, Ex.25.18; 37.7-9. They represented angels and ministers wondering at, and serving in, the work of our redemption.

A.M. 2994. B.C. 1010.

n Or, *toward the house*, Ex.25.20.
9 Looking towards one another, Ex.25. 20. Being the emblems of angelic attendance, Is.6.5;Mat. 26. 53; intellectual study, 1 Pe.1.12; spiritual worship, Is. 6. 3; He.1.6; and winged obedience, Is. 6. 2, 6. The cherubim do also set forth, by their very attitude, the communion of saints with God and with one another, Ja. 4.23.1 Jn.1.7.—*C.*
o Ex.26.31-35;36.35, 36. Mat.27. 51. 1 Ki. 6. 21.
1 Heb. *caused to ascend.*
p 1 Ki. 7. 15-22. Je. 52. 21-23. 2 Ki. 25. 13. ch.4.12,13.
2 Heb. *long*, taken together, and each was near eighteen cubits.
q 1 Ki.7.20. Je.52.22. 2 Ki.25.17.
r 1 Ki.7.21.
3 That is, *He shall establish.*
4 That is, *In it is strength.* They represented Christ, his word, ordinances, and ministers, as the establishers and strength of his church.

CHAP. IV.

B.C. 1006.

a Ex.27.1-8;38. 1-7. 1 Ki. 8.22,64;9. 25. It represented Christ in his debased and suffering state.
b 1 Ki. 7. 23-26. Ex. 30.17-21;38. 8. Zec.13. 1. Re 1.5;7.14. Tit.3.5-7.1 Jn.1.7.
c 1 Ki. 7. 23-25. Re 21. 14. Ep. 2.20. Ac.9. 15. Mar.16.15.
1 In 1 Ki. 7. 24 we find, twelve 'knops;' here, twelve oxen. Some expositors account for this variation, by the supposed error of a transcriber mistaking one word for another, to which, in the original, it bears a considerable similitude. But where is the necessity for this unauthorized violence? May there not have been both 12 *knops* and 12 *oxen* corresponding to each other, or in some way so identical as to be called indifferently by the one name or the other? It is right to observe, that Houbigant asserts an error in the translation, and restores it according to the Arabic, not *oxen*, but *grapes*, the *cluster* of which might well correspond to the *knop* in the former narrative; but the correctness of this criticism is denied by Dr. A. Clarke, who solves the difficulty by supposing an error in a transcriber—a mode of solution the most common, but most judiciously to be watched, and seldom if ever admitted.—*C.*
d ver.3. Mar. 16. 15. Is.49.6;45.22-25. Ps. 22. 27;98. 2,3. This sea and the lavers typified Jesus' blood and Spirit, carried about in the gospel, to the various parts of the earth.

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weighing upwards of 100 tons. They were hewn in the quarries in the mountains around Jerusalem. In addition to the mere building, there were enormous cisterns excavated in the solid rock, and aqueducts constructed to bring water from Etam. *P.*]

REFLECTIONS.—We should always prefer the honour of God, and the welfare of his church, to our own accommodations. It is very desirable to make our fathers' creditable friends our own: and if we have the knowledge of the true God, we should labour to make others acquainted with it. Revelation will recommend itself, on trial, to every wise man. But whatever we do for God is in itself unworthy of his regard. And we ought to avoid giving others any ground to misapprehend his greatness and glory; yea, should bring all that we can to admire and adore him, and use their help in promoting his honour. And let us now rejoice that the Gentiles are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ.

CHAPTER III. REFLECTIONS.—Every circumstance in the worship of God must be ordered according to his appointment: and if God meet with us in a place or ordinance, let us hope that he will do it again if it be for his glory and our good. Meanwhile let me consider Jesus, who came in the promised time and spot, as the great temple of our fellowship with God. The dignity, glory, fulness, and usefulness of his person, particularly in his exalted state, infinitely transcend this astonishing structure of Solomon: and angels, ministers, and saints shall always admire his glory. With respect to the temple of his church, of his saints, and of heaven, he is the foundation, the wall, the door, the pillars, the ark, the table, the altars, the light, the sea, the laver, yea, the ALL in ALL.

CHAPTER IV. [Ver. 3. *Oxen.* A comparison of the parallel passages certainly suggests the idea that the readings in both were originally identical, in which case there can be no doubt the true reading was that in 1 Ki. 7. 24. The Hebrew words for 'knops' and 'oxen' are so nearly alike that a transcriber might easily mistake them. But if the text of Chronicles is here corrupt, the corruption must have taken place at a very early period, for all the ancient versions agree with the present text. *P.*]

REFLECTIONS.—What a mercy is it that Jesus, his church, and heavenly state, are suited to his people's condition! As the great atonement, and as the fountain which cleanses from all sin, he is openly exhibited

brim of a cup, with flowers of lilies; *and* it received and held three thousand baths.[1]

6 ¶ He made also [e]ten lavers, and put five on the right hand and five on the left, to wash in them: such things as they offered for the burnt-offering they washed in them;[2] but the sea[f] *was* for the priests to wash in.

7 And he made ten candlesticks of gold, according to their form,[3] and set *them* in the temple, five on the right hand, and five on the left.

8 He made also [g]ten tables, and placed *them* in the temple, five on the right side, and five on the left: and he made an hundred basons of gold.

9 ¶ Furthermore he made [h]the court of the priests, and the great [i]court, and doors for the court, and overlaid the doors of them with brass.

10 And he [k]set the sea on the right side of the east end, over against the south.

11 ¶ And Huram made [l]the pots, and the shovels, and the basons. And Huram finished the work that he was to make for king Solomon for the house of God;

12 *To wit,* [m]the two pillars, and the pommels,[4] and the chapiters *which were* on the top of the two pillars, and the two wreaths to cover the two pommels of the chapiters which *were* on the top of the pillars;

13 And[n] four hundred pomegranates on the two wreaths; two rows of pomegranates on each wreath, to cover the two pommels of the chapiters which *were* upon the pillars.

14 He [p]made also bases, and lavers made he upon the bases;

15 One[q] sea, and twelve oxen under it.

16 The [r]pots also, and the shovels, and the flesh-hooks, and all their instruments, did Huram his father[5] make to king Solomon, for the house of the LORD, of bright brass.[6]

17 In the plain of Jordan did the king cast them, in the [s]clay ground between Succoth and Zeredathah.[7]

18 Thus[t] Solomon made all these vessels in great abundance: for the weight of the brass could not be found out.

19 ¶ And[u] Solomon made all the vessels that *were for* the house of God, [x]the golden altar also, and [y]the tables whereon the showbread *was set;*

20 Moreover, [z]the candlesticks with their lamps, that they should burn after the manner before the oracle, of pure gold;

A.M. 2998. B.C. 1006.

1 See note on 1 Ki. 7. 26, to which may be added, that as the Jewish measures *after the captivity* had come to differ considerably from those *before it*, the two estimates may agree perfectly in quantity, while differing in name. The *Targum* supposes it held 3000 baths dry measure, and 2000 baths liquid measure; but such a solution seems inadmissible. Hence contrary to all practice of calculation.—*C.*

e Ex.30.17;38.8.1Ki. 7.38.1 Pe.1.2,18.Is.4.4. Ez.40.38.1 Jn.1.7.

2 As the priests must be washed, so must the sacrifices. We must not only purify ourselves for religious duties, but put away those vain motives and corruptions that poliute us. —*I.*

f ver. 2. 1 Ki. 7. 26. Re.1.5,6.He.9.14.1 Jn. 1.7.

3 According to the original model which God gave to Moses, Ex. 25. 31, to show that while many additions were made in the perfected and settled worship of the temple, beyond what was ordained in the wilderness, still nothing was done by man's invention or authority, but all by the wisdom and authority of God.—*C.*

g Ex.25.23–30;37.10 –16.1 Ki.7.48.Is.25.6.

h 1 Ki.6.36;7.12.

i For the people, ch.7.7;20.5.Ps.100.4.

k 1 Ki.7.39.

l 1 Ki.7.40,45.

m 1 Ki.7.41. ch.3.15 –17.

4 Most probably 'globes' surmounting the chapiters.—*C.*

n 1 Ki.7.42. Ps. 1. 3; 92.13. Ca.4.13. 1 Co.4. 12,13.2 Co.4.11–18.

p 1 Ki. 7. 43–46. ver. 2–9,11.

q ver.2–5.

r Ex. 27. 3. 1 Ch.28. 17. Zec.14.20. 1 Sa. 2. 13,14.

5 More correctly translated *Huram Abi.*—*C.*

6 Burnished brass. —*C.*

s Heb. *thicknesses of the ground,* Ge.33. 17.

7 See note on 1 Ki. 7. 46. —*Note,* Many Scripture difficulties would be obviated, and infidel objections answered, by observing the mode of speaking adopted in this passage, in which the work ascribed to Huram, ver. 11–16, as artificer is again ascribed to the king, because it was done by his order and authority. *C.*—*Zarthan.* This place is supposed to have been situated on the west of Jordan, south of Bethshan or Scythopolis, and not far from the river. Succoth we know was situated east of Jordan, in the tribe of Gad and district of Scythopolis. Zarthan and Succoth were probably nearly opposite to each other. In this place Hiram found that particular clay which was proper for his purpose.—*I.*

t 1 Ki.7.47. 1 Ch. 22. 14;.3.7.

u 1 Ki.7.48–50.

x ch. 26. 16, 18. Ex. 30.1–6.

y ver.8. Le.24.6–8.

z ver.7. Ex.25.31–37; 27.20,21. 1 Ki. 6. 5, 16, 17;8.6.

A.M. 2998. B.C. 1006.

8 Gold is of various qualities, according to the nature and quantity of alloy. Perfect gold might signify *gold without alloy,* but such gold would be too soft for use. The original, '*perfections of gold,*' most probably signifies gold hardened by alloy according to a royal standard, and then perfected in beauty by gilding, as fine gold articles usually are.—*C.*

9 Not the entrance or vestibule, but the *hinges* by which entrance was obtained. See 1 Ki.7.50.—*C.*

CHAP. V.
B.C. 1004.

a 1 Ki.7.51.

1 Three thousand years after the creation.

b What remained of that mentioned 1 Ch.2o.14;27.4,7; 29.20– 28.

c 1 Ki 8 1 11, &c. 1 Ch.13 1;15.3; 1:29.1. 2 Ki C. 10.13.

d 2 Sa.6.12. 1 Ch.16. 1.ch.1.4.

3 Jerusalem was built upon several hills. The largest and loftiest was Zion. On it stood the ancient citadel of the Jebusites which David captured and made the seat of his government. It was on this account called 'the city of David.' When the ark was brought up from the house of Obed-edom, it was placed in a tabernacle specially prepared for it by king David, and erected on Mount Zion, in all probability beside the palace. 2 Sa.6.12.1 Ch.16.1. Solomon having now completed the erection of the temple, the ark was removed from Zion and conveyed to its final resting-place on the summit of Mount Moriah in the holy of holies. —*I.*

e Le. 23. 34–36. Nu. 29.12–38.1 Ki.8.2.ch.7. 8–10.

4 In the feast of tabernacles, Le. 23. 34. which was celebrated in the seventh month of the ecclesiastical year called Ethanim.—*C.*

f 1 Ki.8.3. Jos.3.6;6. 6. Nu.4.15. Ex. 25.14; 37.5. 1 Ch.15.2, 14.

5 The Levites might carry the ark to the temple, but might not take it into the most holy place—this was lawful for the priests only, ver.7.—*C.*

g 1 Ch.29.21; 16. 1,2. 1 Ki.8.5.2 Sa.6.13.

h 1 Ki.8.6. Jos. 3. 6; 6.6.1 Ch.15.2,12,14.

i 1 Ki. 6.27, 4. 3. 10–13. Ex. 25. 18–22, *i.e.* the inmost and altogether dark apartment.

k Ex.25.12,15.Nu.4. 6.

l Or, *they are there,* as 1 Ki.8.8.

6 That is, until the time when the original account was written.—*C.*

m 1 Ki.8.9. Nu. 10. 33.De.10.2,5.He.9.4.

n Or, *where.*

8 Heb. *found.*

9 All that were found in the whole land were assembled, not by courses, as in the ordinary services, but in one general assembly, the emblem of that greater and more glorious company of the royal priesthood, 1 Pe. 2, 9, that shall yet assemble to witness the dedication of a more glorious temple, Re. 21.3,10,22,26.—*C.*

o Ge.35.2.Ex.19.10. *p* 1 Ch.xxiv.

21 And the flowers, and the lamps, and the tongs, *made he of* gold, *and* that perfect gold;[8]

22 And the snuffers, and the basons, and the spoons, and the censers, *of* pure gold: and the entry[9] of the house, the inner doors thereof for the most holy *place,* and the doors of the house of the temple, *were of* gold.

CHAPTER V.

1 *The dedicated treasures.* 2 *The solemn induction of the ark into the most holy place.* 11 *God being praised, giveth a visible sign of his favour.*

THUS all the work that Solomon made for the house of the LORD was [a]finished:[1] and Solomon brought in *all* the things that David his father had dedicated; and the [b]silver, and the gold, and all the instruments, put he among the treasures of the house of God.

2 ¶ Then[c] Solomon assembled the elders of Israel, and all the heads of the tribes, the chief of the fathers of the children of Israel,[2] unto Jerusalem, to bring up the ark of the covenant of the LORD [d]out of the city of David, which *is* Zion.[3]

3 Wherefore all the men of Israel assembled themselves unto the king [e]in the feast which *was* in the seventh month.[4]

4 And all the elders of Israel came; and the [f]Levites took up the ark.

5 And they brought up the ark, and the tabernacle of the congregation, and all the holy vessels that *were* in the tabernacle, these did the priests *and* the Levites bring up.[5]

6 Also [g]king Solomon, and all the congregation of Israel that were assembled unto him before the ark, sacrificed sheep and oxen, which could not be told nor numbered for multitude.

7 And the [h]priests brought in the ark of the covenant of the LORD unto his place, to [i]the oracle of the house, into the most holy *place, even* under the wings of the cherubims:

8 For the cherubims spread forth *their* wings over the place of the ark, and the cherubims covered the ark and the [k]staves thereof above.

9 And they drew out the staves *of the ark,* that the ends of the staves were seen from the ark before the oracle; but they were not seen without. And [l]there it is unto this day.[6]

10 *There was* nothing in the ark save [m]the two tables which Moses put *therein* at Horeb, when[7] the LORD made *a covenant* with the children of Israel, when they came out of Egypt.

11 ¶ And it came to pass, when the priests were come out of the holy *place;* (for all the priests *that were* [8]present[9] were [n]sanctified, *and* did not *then* wait [o]by course;

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before us, and accessible to us, in the ordinances of the gospel. By him, as such, we have access to dwell in God's house, enjoy his light, feed on his fulness, and live by his intercession, through which our services are accepted. Yea, under the gospel we have more than a [1]tenfold exhibition of Christ, in his cleansing virtue, his illuminating and soul-nourishing influence. He can make all tempers, gifts, and graces useful in his church—brass as well as gold. And great is their honour who lay out their eminent gifts in the service of Christ.

1 There were ten times as many lavers, candlesticks, and tables of showbread in the temple as in the tabernacle.

CHAPTER V. [Ver. 10. It has been objected that this passage does not accord with Ex. 16. 33 and He. 9. 4. It will be observed, however, that in Ex. 16. 33 it is not said the 'pot of manna' was to be placed *in the ark,* but only 'before the Lord.' It is probable, however, that while the Israelites were wandering through the wilderness, and while the ark remained without a settled place in Palestine, the pot of manna and rod of Aaron may have been placed within it for security; but upon being located permanently in

12 Also[p] the Levites *which were* the singers, all of them of Asaph, of Heman, of Jeduthun, with their sons and their brethren, *being* arrayed in white linen, having cymbals, and psalteries, and harps, stood at the east end of the altar, and with them an hundred and twenty priests sounding with [q]trumpets;)

13 It came even to pass, as the trumpeters and singers *were* as one, to make [r]one sound to be heard in praising and thanking the LORD, and when they lifted up *their* voice with [s]the trumpets and cymbals and instruments of music, and praised the LORD, *saying*, [t]For *he is* good, for his mercy *endureth* for ever; that *then* the house was filled with a cloud,[1] *even* the house of the LORD;[2]

14 So[u] that the priests could not stand to minister by reason of the cloud: for the glory of the LORD had filled the house of God.

CHAPTER VI.

1 *Solomon, having blessed the people, blesseth God.* 12 *Solomon's prayer at the consecration of the temple, upon the brazen scaffold.*

THEN said[a] Solomon, The LORD hath said that he would dwell in the [b]thick darkness.[1]

2 But I have built an house [c]of habitation for thee, and a place for thy dwelling for ever.

3 And the king turned his face, and [d]blessed the whole congregation of Israel: (and all the congregation of [e]Israel stood:)

4 And he said, [f]Blessed *be* the LORD God of Israel, who hath with his hands [g]fulfilled *that* which he spake with his mouth to my father David, saying,

5 Since[h] the day that I brought forth my people out of the land of Egypt I chose no city among all the tribes of Israel to build an house in, that my name might be there; neither chose I any man to be a ruler over my people Israel:[2]

6 But I have chosen [i]Jerusalem, that my name might be there; and have chosen David to be over my people Israel.

7 Now [k]it was in the heart of David my father to build an house for the name of the LORD God of Israel.

8 But the LORD said to David my father, Forasmuch as it was in thine heart to build an house for my name, thou didst [l]well in that it was in thine heart:

9 Notwithstanding [m]thou shalt not build the house; but thy son which shall come forth out of thy loins, he shall build the house for my name.

10 The LORD therefore hath performed his word that he hath spoken: for [n]I am risen up in the room of David my father, and am set on the throne of Israel, as [o]the LORD promised, and [p]have built the house for the name of the LORD God of Israel:

11 And[q] in it have I put the ark, wherein *is* the covenant of the LORD,[3] that he made with the children of Israel.

12 ¶ And [r]he stood before the altar of the LORD, in the presence of all the congregation of Israel, and spread forth his hands,[4]

13 (For Solomon had made a brazen [s]scaffold, of five cubits long, and five cubits broad, and three cubits high, and had set it in the midst of the [t]court; and upon it he stood, and [u]kneeled down upon his knees before all the congregation of Israel, and [z]spread forth his hands toward heaven,)

14 And said, O LORD God of Israel, [v]*there is* no God like thee in the heaven, nor in the earth; [z]which keepest covenant, and *showest* mercy unto thy servants that [a]walk before thee with all their hearts:

15 Thou which hast kept with thy servant David my father that which thou hast promised him; and spakest with thy mouth, and hast fulfilled *it* with thine hand, as *it is* this day.

16 Now therefore, O LORD God of Israel, [b]keep with thy servant David my father that which thou hast promised him, saying, [c]There shall not fail thee a man in my sight to sit upon the throne of Israel; yet so that thy children take heed to their way, [d]to walk in my law, as thou hast walked before me.

17 Now[e] then, O LORD God of Israel, let thy word be verified, which thou hast spoken unto thy servant David.

18 (But [f]will God in very deed dwell with men on the earth? Behold, [g]heaven and the heaven of heavens[5] cannot contain thee; how much less this house which I have built!)

19 Have [h]respect therefore to the prayer of thy servant, and to his supplication, O LORD my God, to hearken unto the cry and the prayer which thy servant [i]prayeth before thee:

20 That thine [k]eyes may be open upon this

A.M. 3001. B.C. 1003.

[p] 1 Ch.xxv.:6.18-47; 15.16-24; 16.4-6,41, 42. Ne.12.1-4.
[q] Nu.10.1-10. Le.25.9,10.
[r] ver.12. Is.52.8. Ac. 2.42,46. Ro.15.6. 1 Co. 1.10.
[s] Ps. 150. 2-4; 68. 25, 26. 1 Ch.15.16-21,28; 16. 5,42; 25.1-6.
[t] Ps.136.1-26. ch.20. 21.

1 God's covenant of light and life was written on a cloud. Ge. 9. 13. By a cloud God protected his people, Ex. 14. 20. In a cloud he exhibited the emblematic brightness of his glory, Ex. 16. 10, and from a thick cloud he spoke to Moses, Ex. 19. 9. From all which we learn that, even in the midst of light, there is still a mysterious darkness over the providence of the Almighty, and that even in our most sacred worship we can see but as through a cloud darkly. See ch. 6.1.—*C.*

2 The ancient versions (followed by Dathe), instead of *house*, read *glory*—by which the repetition of *house* is avoided. This suits better ver. 14. 'When the singers and musicians praised God with one sound, then the house was filled with the cloud. Where unity is, there the Lord commands the blessing' (*Henry*).—*I.*

[u] Ex.40. 34,35. ch.7. 1-3. 1 Ki.8.11. Re.15. 8. Jos.24.19. 1 Ti.6.16.

CHAP. VI.

[a] 1 Ki-8.12-50.
[b] Le.16.2. Ex.25.22. Ps.97.2;8,9,11.

1 Solomon here, by his ready reference and quotation, gives evidence of his intimate acquaintance with the Scriptures, and guards the people against any superstitious worship of the cloud, by directing them to God, who assumed it as his emblematical dwelling-place.—*C.*

[c] ch.2.4,6. 1 Ki.8.13. Ps.132.5,13,14. Re.21. 3,13. Mat. 16.18. 2 Co. 6.16.
[d] 1 Ki. 8. 14. 2 Sa.6. 18. Ps.134.3. Lu.24.50. Nu.6.23.
[e] Ju.3.20. Ps.89.7.
[f] 1 Ki.8.15,16. Ge.9. 26. Ps.72.18,19.
[g] ver. 15. Ps. 12. 6. Jos.23.14,15.
[h] 2 Sa.7.6,7. 1 Ch.17. 5,6.

2 The judges were not rulers supreme and hereditary as David, nor did the choice of Saul as a king originate with God, but in the folly, pride, and irreligion of the people, to whom he was sent as a scourge, rather in anger. But the choice of David originated altogether with God, who, in mercy, appointed him to deliver, feed, defend his people, and organize his worship.—*C.*

[i] ch. 12. 13; 7. 12,16; 33.4,7. De.12.5,11. Ps. 48.1; 78. 68-70; 76.1,2; 132.13,14. Ge.49.8,20.
[k] 2 Sa.7.2,3. 1 Ch.28. 2;17.1,2. 1 Ki.5.3;8.17.
[l] 2 Co. 8.12. 1 Ki.11. 4;8.18.
[m] 1 Ki.5.3;8.19. 2 Sa. 7. 5, 12, 13. 1 Ch.17.12; 22.8-10;28.6,10,20.

A.M. 3001. B.C. 1003.

[n] 1 Ki.1.ii. 1 Ch.xxii. xxix.ch.1.1.
[o] 2 Sa.7.12,13. 1 Ch. 28. 5. Ps.132.12.
[p] 1 Ki.vi.vii. ch. iii. iv.
[q] ch.5.5,7-10. 1 Ki.8. 3,6,9. He.9.4.

3 The two tables of the law, of which, together with the whole judgments contained Ex. xxi.-xxiii., the people had said (Ex. 24. 3), 'All the words which the Lord hath spoken will we do,' which covenant was confirmed when Moses (ver.8) took the blood and sprinkled it on the people, and said, 'Behold the blood of the covenant which the Lord hath made with you concerning all these words.'—*C.*

[r] 1 Ki. 8. 22-52. Ps. 29.1-10; xciii. xcvi.

4 In 1 Ki. 8. 22 it is said 'towards heaven,' as if to implore and receive assistance This custom in prayer has been almost universal.—*I.*

[s] 2 Ki.11.14. Ne.8.4.
[t] 1 Ki.7.9,12. ch.4.9.
[u] Ps.95.6;99.5. Da.6. 10. Mar.1.40. Lu.22.41.
[z] Ex.9.29. 1 Ti.2.8. Ex.9.29. ver.12,29.
[y] Ex.15.11;18.11. Ps. 35.10; 86.8-10; 89.6-8. 1 Ch.29.10-13.
[z] Da.9.4. Ne.1.5; 9. 32. Ps.89.28. Ex.20.6; 34.6,7. De.7.9,12.
[a] Ge. 5. 24. Ex.20.6. Ps.116.9. Lu.1.6. 2 Co. 1.12. 1 Th.2.10.
[b] 1 Ki.8.25. Eze.36. 37. Is. 45. 11. Mat.7.7-11. 1 Jn.5.14.
[c] 2 Sa.7.12. 1 Ki.2.4; 6.12. Ps.132.12.
[d] Ps.86.3; 119.1,5,6. Lu.1.6. 2 Co.1.12. 2 Pe. 1.4-10.
[e] 1 Ki.8.26.
[f] 1 Ki.8.27. Ps.113.5, 6. Ac.7.49. 1 Ti.3.16.
[g] ch.2.6. Is.66.1. Ac. 17.24. Je.23.24.

5 Accurately rendered, 'The heavens, and the heavens of heavens,' which expressions seem to imply (1) Simple systems of heavenly bodies, each composed of its sun, with its primaries, secondaries, and their secondaries. (2) A vast compound system, of which these simple systems, however extended, constitute mere local members. But we may not supply by conjecture knowledge that is 'too high for us.' One thing, however, is certain—no discovery of philosophy has ever yet found a philosophical error in the Bible, while the Bible has anticipated many a proud discovery of philosophy. *C.*—These words seem to imply that there are systems and systems of systems, each possessing its suns, its primary and secondary planets; all extending beyond each other in unlimited space, in the same regular and graduated order that we find in our solar system, which probably in its thousands of millions of miles in diameter, is to some others no more than the area of the lunar orbit to that of the Georgium Sidus.—*Clarke.*

[h] 1 Ki.8.28-30. Ps.4. 1;130.2. Da.9.17-19.
[i] Ps.20.1-3. 1 Ki.8.28.
[k] Ps. 33. 18; 34. 15. Da.9.18.

Jerusalem the rod and the manna were put in their proper positions 'before the Lord.' Hence it is truly said in this chapter, 'There was nothing in the ark save the two tables which Moses put therein at Horeb.' The emphatic manner in which this statement is made leaves the impression on the mind that at some previous period there had been other things in it. Paul, in the epistle to the Hebrews, speaks of the time when the manna and rod *were* in the ark. *P.*]

Ver. 14. [It is worthy of note that as at the dedication of the tabernacle in the wilderness, 'a cloud covered the tent of the congregation; and the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle; and Moses was not able to enter into the tent of the congregation because the cloud abode thereon;' so now, on the dedication of the temple, 'the house was filled with a cloud, so that the priests could not stand to minister by reason of the cloud; for the glory of the Lord had filled the house of God.' *P.*]

REFLECTIONS.—If we would inherit our godly parents' blessings we must religiously pursue their intentions. Dedicated things must never be alienated from the Lord's service. The most regularly framed and furnished churches are but desolate if they want the presence of Jesus Christ, the ark of God's strength, and the glory of his Father in him. But his faithful people, according to his promise, shall have him with them always unto the end of the world. And when God accepts us in Christ, and himself in him, we ought exceedingly to rejoice in and thank him, as then we shall taste joys unspeakable and full of glory. When everything else is put out of God's room, and we become hearty and unanimous in our prayers and praises, we may expect astonishing discoveries of his glory in our second, our great temple, CHRIST, in whom dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily!

CHAPTER VI. REFLECTIONS.—How honourable is it when we perform great enterprises, not from pride, but in prosecution of our parents' gracious purposes, and to fulfil the promise, obey the command, and honour the name of the Lord! And while we

house day and night, upon the place whereof thou hast said that thou wouldest put thy name there; to hearken unto the prayer which thy servant prayeth [l]toward this place.

21 Hearken therefore unto the supplications of thy servant, and of thy people Israel, which they shall [m]make toward this place: hear thou from thy dwelling-place, *even* from heaven; and when thou hearest, [n]forgive.[8]

22 ¶ If a man sin against his neighbour, [o]and an oath be laid upon him to make him swear, and the oath come [p]before thine altar in this house;

23 Then hear thou from heaven, and do, and judge thy servants, by [q]requiting the wicked, by recompensing his way upon his own head; and by [r]justifying the righteous, by giving him according to his righteousness.

24 ¶ And if thy people Israel [s]be put to the worse before the enemy, because they [t]have sinned against thee; and shall [u]return and confess thy name, and pray, and make supplication before thee in[9] this house;

25 Then hear thou from the heavens, and forgive the sin of thy people Israel, and [w]bring them again unto the land which thou gavest to them and to their fathers.

26 ¶ When the [v]heaven is shut up, and there is no rain, because they have sinned against thee; *yet* if they pray toward this place, and confess thy name, and turn from their sin, when[x] thou dost afflict them;

27 Then hear thou from heaven, and forgive the sin of thy servants, and of thy people Israel, when thou [a]hast taught them the good way wherein they should walk; and [b]send rain upon thy land, which thou hast given unto thy people for an inheritance.

28 ¶ If there [c]be dearth[1] in the land, if there be pestilence, if there be blasting, or mildew, locusts, or caterpillars; if their [d]enemies besiege them in the cities of their land; whatsoever sore or whatsoever sickness *there be:*

29 *Then* what prayer *or* what supplication soever shall be made of [e]any man, or of all thy people Israel, when every one shall know his own sore, and his own grief,[2] and shall [f]spread forth his hands [g]in this house:

30 Then hear thou from heaven thy dwelling-place, and forgive, and render unto every man according unto all his ways, whose heart thou knowest; (for thou only [h]knowest the hearts of the children of men;)

31 That[i] they may fear thee, to walk in thy ways, so long as[3] they live in the land[4] which thou gavest unto our fathers.

32 ¶ Moreover, concerning [k]the stranger, which is not of thy people Israel, but is come from a far country [l]for thy great name's sake, and thy mighty hand, and thy stretched-out arm; if they come and pray in this house;

33 Then hear thou from the heavens, *even* from thy dwelling-place, and do according to all that the stranger calleth to thee for; that all [m]people of the earth may know thy name, and fear thee, as *doeth* thy people Israel, and may know that this house which I have built is called[5] by thy name.[6]

34 ¶ If[n] thy people go out to war against their enemies by the way that thou shalt send them, and they [o]pray unto thee toward this city which thou hast chosen, and the house which I have built for thy name;

35 Then hear thou from the heavens their prayer and their supplication, and [p]maintain their [q]cause.

36 ¶ If[r] they sin against thee, (for *there is* [s]no man which sinneth not,) and thou be angry with them, and deliver them over before *their* enemies, and they carry them away [7]captives unto a land far off or near;[8]

37 Yet *if* [t]they bethink[9] themselves in the land whither they are carried captive, and turn and pray unto thee in the land of their captivity, saying, We have sinned, we have done amiss, and have dealt wickedly;

38 If they return to thee [u]with all their heart, and with all their soul, in the land of their captivity, whither they have carried them captives, and pray toward their land, which thou gavest unto their fathers, and *toward* the city which thou hast chosen, and toward the house which I have built for thy name:

39 Then hear thou from the heavens, *even* from thy dwelling-place, their prayer and their supplications, and maintain their cause, and forgive thy people which have sinned against thee.

40 ¶ Now, my God, let, I beseech thee, thine eyes be open, and *let* thine ears *be* attent unto the prayer *that is made* in this place.[1]

41 Now therefore arise, O LORD God, into thy resting-place, thou, and the ark of thy strength:[2] let thy priests, O LORD God, be clothed with salvation,[3] and let thy saints rejoice in goodness.

42 O LORD God, turn not away the face of thine anointed: remember the mercies of David thy [4]servant.[5]

CHAPTER VII.

1 God having given testimony to Solomon's prayer by fire from heaven, and glory in the temple, the people worship him. 4 Solomon's solemn sacrifice. 8 Solomon having kept the feast of tabernacles, and the feast of the dedication of the altar, dismisseth the people. 12 God appearing to Solomon giveth him promises upon condition.

NOW when[a] Solomon had made an end of praying, the [b]fire came down from heaven,

A.M. 3001. B.C. 1003.

l Or, *in this place*, ver. 21. Da. 6. 10.

m Heb. *pray*, ver. 20.

n Ps. 85. 2, 3. Is. 43. 25; 44. 22. 2 Co. 5. 19. Mi. 7. 18, 19.

[8] Solomon addresses God, acknowledging himself and the people to be sinners, and consequently unworthy of the mercies sought—a humility of mind that always accompanies justifying faith, Lu. 18. 13, 14. 1 Ti. 1. 15.—*C.*

o Heb. *and he require an oath of him*, 1 Ki. 8. 31, 32.

p Mat. 23. 18.

q 1 Ki. 8. 32. Is. 3. 11. Ro. 2. 8, 9. Pr. 11. 31; 13. 21; 5. 22.

r Ge. 25. 1. Le. 26. 7–14. 1 Ki. 8. 32. Is. 3. 10.

s Or, *be smitten*, 1 Ki. 8. 33, 34.

t De. 32. 15–25. Ps. 51. 4.

u Le. 26. 40, 41. Ps. 130. 1–4. Pr. 28. 13. Je. 3. 12, 13.

[9] Or, *toward*.

x Le. 26. 42, 45. De. 4. 29, 30; 30. 2–6. 2 Sa. 7. 10.

y De. 28. 23. 1 Ki. 8. 35, 36; 17. 1; 18. 45. Je. 14. 1–6. Mal. 3. 10. Joel 1. 10, 19, 20. Le. 26. 19, 20.

z ch. 33. 12. Ho. 5. 15; 6. 1. Je. 31. 18, 19.

a 1 Ki. 8. 36. Ps. 94. 12. Is. 26. 9. Pr. 6. 23. 2 Pe. 2. 21.

b Ja. 5. 18. Joel 2. 23. Zec. 10. 1. Je. 14. 22. Job 37. 11, 13. 1 Ki. 17. 14; 18. 41, 45.

c Ru. 1. 1. 2 Ki. 8. 1. Je. 14. 1. Le. xxvi. De. xxviii. 2 Ki. 8. 37–40.

[1] 'Persia is subject to have its harvest spoiled by hail, by drought, or by insects, either locusts or small insects, which they call *sirri*; they are small white lice, which fix themselves on the foot of the stalk of corn, gnaw it, and make it die.' *Chardin.*—The enumeration here and in the text so nearly resemble each other, that it is probable these small insects are what Solomon meant by the word translated caterpillars. Others, however, suppose that the '*locust*' refers to the grasshoppers brought by wind from other countries, the '*caterpillar*' to young locusts bred in the land.—*f.*

d De. 28. 52–57. Le. 26. 25. ch. 12. 2, xx.; 32. 1; 33. 11.

e Eze. 22. 30. 1 Ki. 8. 38. Ps. 1. 40. 3.

[2] As in many forms of bodily sickness, such as the *delirium* of fever, the man is not only ignorant of his disease, but frequently thinks himself in perfect health; so are those diseases of the mind, where there is equal ignorance of the malady, and equal error as to the spiritual condition. When Jesus calls as a physician (Mat. 9. 12), he reveals the sore of sin, while the Father applies the remedy of affliction (He. 12. 5–10), and the believer is taught 'out of the depths' of sin, sorrow, and salutary affliction, to cry for mercy and salvation.—*C.*

f Pray, ver. 12.

g Or, *toward this house*, ver. 20.

h 1 Ch. 28. 9. Ps. 11. 4. Je. 17. 10. He. 4. 13. Re. 2. 23. 1 Sa. 16. 7.

i Lu. 7. 47; 1. 74, 75. Ps. 119. 136. De. 6. 13; 10. 12, 20; 14. 23; 5. 29, 32.

[3] Heb. *all the days which.*

[4] Heb. *upon the face of the land.*

k 1 Ki. 8. 41–43. Ex. 12. 49. Nu. 15. 29. Le. 19. 34. Ru. 2. 10, 11. Mat. 2. 1. Jn. 12. 20. Ac. 8. 27. Ep. 2. 13.

A.M. 3001. B.C. 1003.

l Jos. 2. 9. Es. 8. 17. Zec. 8. 22, 23. Ps. 22. 27–31.

m Ps. 67. 2; 138. 4, 5. Is. 11. 9, 10; xlix. liv. lx. Zec. xiv. Ac. ii.–xix.

[5] Heb. *thy name is called upon this house.*

[6] Every house for the worship of the true God is a public witness to his being and perfections, and a public invitation to his worship. And while temples are often visited by strangers merely out of an idle curiosity, Solomon prays that their visit to that which he now dedicates may be blessed to their illumination and conversion.—*C.*

n 1 Ki. 8. 44, 45.

o Eze. 36. 37. Da. 6. 10. Ps. 50. 15; 91. 15.

p Is. 37. 21, 36. Ps. 7. 9, 10; 7. 12–14.

q Or, *right*, Ps. 9. 4. Re. 19. 11.

r 1 Ki. 8. 46–53.

s Pr. 20. 9. Ec. 7. 20. Ja. 3. 2. 1 Jn. 1. 8.

[7] Heb. *they that take them captives carry them away.*

[8] The partial differences between this prayer and the previous edition (1 Ki. viii.) have been alleged as arguments against the *verbal inspiration* of the Scriptures, but they furnish none. The differences are merely *omissions* or *additions*, or it may be, for aught we know to the contrary, *translations* from the dialect in which Solomon spoke; and these are all perfectly consistent with the strictest views of verbal inspiration.—*C.*

t De. 4. 29, 30; 30. 1, 2. Le. 26. 41. Lu. 15. 18. Je. 31. 18, 19; 3. 12–14, 22; 29. 12, 13. Pr. 28. 13. Ps. 32. 5.

[9] Heb. *bring back to their heart.*

u Je. 29. 12–14; 3. 12–14, 22. Ps. 78. 36, 37. Joel 2. 12. De. 6. 5. Da. ix. 6. 10.

[1] Heb. *to the prayer of this place.*

[2] The ark containing the tables of the covenant, gives prayer by the unchanging faithfulness and enforced by the almighty power of God.—*C.*

[3] The only salvation is the righteousness of God, which, by faith of Christ Jesus, whom Solomon prophetically foresaw, is unto all and upon all them that believe, Ro. 3. 22. Phi. 3. 9.—*C.*

[4] That is, turn not away unanswered the intercessions of Messiah, the Christ—the anointed one, through whom we pray. Remember—not 'the good deeds of David,' so would not David have prayed; so prayed not Solomon; but remember the mercies vouchsafed and promised to David, by raising up of his seed a King to reign for ever, Christ Jesus, the Lord of all, and Saviour of sinners.—*C.*

[5] The comprehensiveness of this prayer is remarkable. It embraces all possible trials and evils, and all needful blessings, temporal as well as spiritual. It has nothing in it of Jewish exclusiveness or sectarian prejudice. Solomon prays as a Christian rather than as a Jew; he embraces all mankind in the compass of his petitions.—*P.*

CHAP. VII.

a 1 Ki. 8. 54. Da. 9. 20. Is. 58. 9; 65. 24.

b Le. 9. 24. Ju. 6. 21. 1 Ki. 18. 38.

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view this temple as a figure of Christ, let us, whether Jews or Gentiles, deal with God only through him. Let us have fixed views of God's infinite perfection, power, faithfulness, omnipresence, omniscience, and of our own meanness and vileness before him. Let us trust in, love, fear, and honour this God of infinite excellences. In regard to his holiness and heart-searching eye, let us indulge no secret pollution. And, conscious of our sinfulness, let us make solemn prayer our first

and consumed the burnt-offering and the sacrifices; and the [c]glory of the LORD[1] filled the house.

2 And the priests [d]could not enter into the house of the LORD, because the glory of the LORD had filled the LORD's house.

3 And when all the children of Israel saw how the fire came down, and the glory of the LORD upon the house, they [e]bowed themselves with their faces to the ground upon the pavement, and worshipped, and praised the LORD, *saying,* [f]For *he is* good; for his mercy *endureth* for ever.

4 ¶ Then the king and all the people offered sacrifices before the LORD.

5 And king Solomon [g]offered a sacrifice of twenty and two thousand oxen,[2] and an hundred and twenty thousand sheep.[3] So the king and all the people dedicated the house of God.

6 And[h] the priests waited on their offices; the Levites also with instruments of music of the LORD, which David the king had made to praise the LORD, because his mercy *endureth* for ever, when David praised by their ministry;[4] and the priests [i]sounded trumpets before them, and all Israel stood.

7 Moreover, [k]Solomon hallowed the middle of the court that *was* before the house of the LORD: for there he offered burnt-offerings, and the fat of the peace-offerings, because the brazen altar which Solomon had made was not able to receive the burnt-offerings, and the meat-offerings, and the fat.

8 ¶ Also at the same time Solomon kept the[l] feast seven days, and all Israel with him, a very great congregation, [m]from the entering in of Hamath unto the river of Egypt.[5]

9 And in the [n]eighth day they made a solemn assembly:[6] for they kept the dedication of the altar seven days, and the feast[7] seven days.

10 And on the [o]three and twentieth day of the seventh month he sent[8] the people away into their tents, [p]glad and merry in heart, for the goodness that the LORD had showed unto David, and to Solomon, and to Israel his people.

11 Thus [q]Solomon finished the house of the LORD, and the king's house: and all that came into Solomon's heart to make in the house of the LORD, and in his own house, he prosperously effected.

12 ¶ And the [r]LORD appeared to Solomon by night,[9] and said unto him, I have [s]heard thy prayer, and [t]have chosen this place to myself for an house of sacrifice.

13 If [u]I shut up heaven that there be no rain, or if I command the locusts to devour the land, or if I send pestilence among my people;

14 If my people, which are called by my name, shall [z]humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land.

15 Now [y]mine eyes shall be open, and mine ears attent unto the prayer[9] *that is made* in this place.[1]

16 For now have [z]I chosen and sanctified this house, that my name may be there for ever: and mine eyes and mine heart shall be there perpetually.[2]

17 And as for thee, [a]if thou wilt walk before me, as David thy father walked, and do according to all that I have commanded thee, and shalt observe my statutes and my judgments;

18 Then will I stablish the throne of thy kingdom, [b]according as I have covenanted with David thy father, saying, There shall not fail thee a man *to be* ruler in Israel.

19 But[c] if ye turn away, and forsake my statutes and my commandments, which I have set before you, and shall go and serve other gods, and worship them;

20 Then will I [d]pluck them up by the roots out of my land which I have given them; and this house, which I have sanctified for my name, will I cast out of my sight, and will make it [e]*to be* a proverb and a byword among all nations.

21 And this house, which is high, shall be an astonishment to [f]every one that passeth by it; so that he shall say, [g]Why hath the LORD done thus unto this land, and unto this [3]house?

22 And it shall be answered, Because they [h]forsook the LORD God of their fathers, which brought them forth out of the land of Egypt, and laid hold on other gods, and worshipped them, and served them; [i]therefore hath he brought all this evil upon them.

CHAPTER VIII.

1 *Solomon's buildings.* 7 *The Gentiles which were left Solomon made tributaries, but the Israelites rulers.* 11 *Pharaoh's daughter removeth to her house.* 12 *Solomon's yearly solemn sacrifices.* 14 *He appointeth the priests and Levites to their places.* 17 *The navy fetcheth gold from Ophir.*

AND it[a] came to pass at the end of twenty years, wherein Solomon had built the house of the LORD, and his own house,

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A.M. 3001. B.C. 1003.

c Ex.40.34, 35. 1 Ki. 8.11.ch.5.13,14. Re.15. 8.

1 The cloud concealing, yet revealing the Shechinah, or sacred symbol of Him who 'covers himself with light as with a garment,' Ps. 104.2; yet, because of our weakness, hath ever 'clouds and darkness around him' (Ps. 97. 2). See Ex.24.17.—*C.*

d ver.1, 3. Ex. 24 17. Re.15. 8. Is.6.4.

e Ex.4. 31. Nu.16.22; 14.5. Ps.95.6.

f ch.5.13; 20.21, 22. 1 Ch.16.7,36. Ps.107.1,2; cxxxvi. cxlv.–cl. Is. 63.7.

g 1 Ki.8.62,63. 1 Ch. 16.1,2; 29.21. Ezr.6.17 ch.3.1,2; 15.7,8; 1. 6; 5. 6. Mi.6.7. Ep. 5.2. Re. 1.6. Ps.110.3.

2 Which could not all be offered in one day, when he made his prayer, but while the feast lasted, which was in the whole fourteen days. —*Patrick.*

3 See note on 1 Ki. 8.63. In confirmation of which, compare ch.5.6. Kl.8,5.—*C.*

h 1 Ch. 15. 16; 6. 31, 32; 16. 41; 23. 4, 5; xxv.

1 Heb. *by their hand.*

i ch.5. 12. Nu. 10. 1–10. Ps. 89. 15. Mar. 16. 15.

k 1 Ki.8.64. Mar.16. 15. 1 Jn. 2. 2. Ep. 5. 2. He.10,10,14;13.10,12.

l Of tabernacles, Le.23.34. Nu.29.13–38. 1 Ki.8.65,66.

m Ge.15.18. Jos.13.3 –5. Nu.34.5–8.

5 From north to south. *C.*——'The entering in of Hamath' is the opening in the great mountain chain, at the northern end of Lebanon, from the coast of the Mediterranean to the plain of Hamath. 'The river (or rather 'torrent-bed') of Egypt' is *Wady el-Arish*, not the *Nile*, which would be designated by a different Hebrew word. The whole extent of the country occupied by the Israelites was thus represented in this national assembly.—*P.*

n Le. 23.36. Nu. 29. 35–38. Jn.7.37–39.

6 Heb. *restraint.*

7 That is, the feast of tabernacles, which commencing, according to order, on the 15th, was completed on the 22d, and on the 23d the people were dismissed.—*C.*

o Le. 23. 34. Nu. 29. 13.35.

8 In 1 Ki.8.66, it is said, 'They blessed the king,' *i.e.* they wished him all temporal and spiritual happiness. They were contented with their king at peace among themselves, and happy in their God, so that they returned to their homes magnifying him for all his bounty to them, their country, and their king. How happy and prosperous would they have been had Solomon continued to walk uprightly before God. But, alas! the king fell, and his people fell with him.—*J.*

p Ps.105. 1–5; 107. 1–32; 136. 1–26; cxlv.–cl.; 40.5. Is.65.7.

q 1 Ki. 9. 1, &c. Ps. 127. 1.

r 1 Ki.9.2. Ge. 12. 7; 17. 1; 18. 1. He. 1. 1. 9 H.C. 791.

s Ps. 17. 1; 65.2. Is. 58. 9; 65.24. Da.9.21. Mat. 7. 7–11. Ac. 10 4.

A.M. 3013. B.C. 991.

t De.12.5, 11. Ps. 78. 68; 132.13, 14. ch.6.6; 33. 4, 7. Jer. 16.

u ch.6.26–31. De.28. 23. Joel 1.4, 12; 2. 2–11. Hag. 1. 11; 2.17. Am.4. 6–11; 1 4.2 Sa.21.1.

x Ja. 4. 9, 10. Le.26. 40, 41. Ps. 50. 15. Is. 45. 19. Eze. 36. 37; 33. 11. De.4.29,30; 30.1–3.

y ch.6.20, 40. De. 11. 12. Ps.65.9; 130.2.

9 Heb. *to the prayer of this place.*

1 That prayer ever was and is equally acceptable to God, in whatever place it may be offered, is the doctrine both of reason and of Scripture. Why then this special promise? Because prayer with sacrifice could now be only at the temple—and to this accompaniment the Lord refers, ver.18—an emblem of that one body and sacrifice of Christ, by which alone our prayers are acceptable to the Father, He. 9.24; 10, 19, 14–22.—*C.*

z ch.6.9; 1 Ki.9.3. Ps. 132.13, 14. Mat.3.17; 17. 5. 2 Co.6.16.

2 This is no mere figure, ascribing to God what he has not: it is a true description of 'God manifest in the flesh,' of him whose eyes wept, and whose heart yearned, over the sin and sorrow of the beloved but impenitent and devoted city.—*C.*

a Ps.132.12.1 Ki.2.3; 9.4,5; 11.38. Is.3.10. Ro. 2.7, 10. 1 Co.15.58. Mat. 24.13. 1 Sa.2.30.

b 1 Ch.17. 11–14. ch. 6.10. 2 Sa.7.12–14. Ps. 89.24–37. Je. 33.21–26.

c Le. 26. 14–39. De. 28.15 o 1.27, 1.8 28. 32. 1.—26. 1 Sa.12.25 1 Ki. 9.6–9. Ps.89.30 33. Ro 2.8,9.

d 2 Ki.17.20. 1 Ki.9. 7. Ps.5.5; 52.5. De.4.25–28; 8.19, 20; 28.25, 64; 29. 27, 28; 30.18; 32.20–26.

e Je.7.14; 2 Ki.25.9.

f La. 2.15.

g De.29.24. Je. 22.8, 9; 5.19; 13.22; 16.10-12.

3 National judgments insulcate great moral lessons, which are never more impressive than when seen in ruined churches, of which none have ever been destroyed, but as the just punishment of formality, worldliness, heresy, superstition, or idolatry.—*C.*——The temple itself is wholly destroyed. Not one stone of it has been left upon another. The rock on which it was founded on the summit of Moriah was left bare and desolate after the destruction of Jerusalem. In the seventh century a mosque was erected over the site of the great altar of burnt-offering. That mosque still stands, and its beautiful dome, surmounted by a gilded crescent. Thus the symbol of a lying prophet, the emblem of a false faith, is raised on high, as if in scorn and derision, above the very spot where the glory of Jehovah was once manifested. Well may the passer-by now say, 'Why hath the Lord done thus unto this land, and unto this house?'—*P.*

h De.29.25,26. Ju. 2. 13. Je.2.13,19; 4. 18; 5. 25; 13.27; 50.7.

i 2 Ki.17.18. ch.15.2; 36.15–17. La.1.8,18; 3. 39. Da.9.12.

CHAP. VIII.

a 1 Ki.9.10.

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and our last resource in all our straits. Even when distress has driven us to him he will in nowise cast us out. His unbounded forgiveness will make way for all necessary mercies to us. For though we may not expect to be heard for the sake of our prayers, yet must we not expect to be heard without them. And thanks be to God that Gentile strangers have an open and free access to him, even to his seat. Happy is that church where all ranks—princes, ministers, and people—are under the special influence of God, as their own and their fathers' God in Christ. Great is their salvation and sweet their joy.

CHAPTER VII. REFLECTIONS.—What pleasure God takes in the earnest and solemn prayer of faith!—he is always ready to give an honourable and gracious return! How infinite is the majesty of God! What solemn awe the manifestations of his presence do or should produce: and what high praises and cheerful aboundings in the worship of God! Always on this side hell praise is our duty: and if we delight in God's service we shall not think the time long. All our prosperity in our undertakings is from God: and when we make his glory our first concern we may expect success. He takes pleasure in the prosperity of his servants; and in keeping his commandments there is a great reward. But dreadful is the danger if, after

PALMYRA ROAD, LEADING TO TADMOR—BUILT BY KING SOLOMON. [II. CHRONICLES, viii : 4.]—"And he built Tadmor (Palmyra) in the wilderness, and all the store cities, which he built in Hamath." Palmyra in Old Testament times was called Tadmor. This city Solomon rebuilt 1000 B. C. in the wilderness east of Gilead between Damascus and the Euphrates. About 333 B. C. its name was changed to Palmyra. In A. D. 130 it submitted to Hadrian. In 260 Odenathus defeated Sapor King of Persia, and in 266 Zenobia the wife of Sapor took the title of Queen of the East. Between 272 and 273 Aurelian besieged and took it. Its ruins covered several miles. There was a Temple of the Sun here, 90 columns of which still remain. Above we have a view of the road that passes Palmyra immediately after it leaves Damascus.

2 That the cities which Huram [b]had restored to Solomon,[1] Solomon built them, and caused the children of Israel to dwell there.

3 And Solomon went to [c]Hamath-zobah, and prevailed against it.

4 And he built [d]Tadmor[2] in the wilderness, and all the store-cities which he built in Hamath.

5 Also he built [e]Beth-horon the upper, and Beth-horon the nether, fenced cities, with walls, gates, and bars;

6 And [f]Baalath, and all the store-cities that Solomon had, and all the chariot-cities, and the cities of the horsemen, and [g]all that Solomon desired to build in Jerusalem, and in Lebanon, and throughout all the land of his dominion.

7 ¶ *As for* all the people *that were* left of the [h]Hittites, and the Amorites, and the Perizzites, and the Hivites, and the Jebusites, which *were* not of Israel,

8 *But* of their children, who were left after them in the land, [i]whom the children of Israel consumed not, them did Solomon make [k]to pay tribute until this day.[3]

9 But [l]of the children of Israel did Solomon make no servants for his work; but they *were* men of war, and chief of his captains, and captains of his chariots and horsemen.

10 And these *were* the chief of king Solomon's officers, *even* [m]two hundred and fifty, that bare rule over the people.

11 ¶ And Solomon [n]brought up the daughter of Pharaoh out of the city of David unto the house that he had built for her: for he said, My wife shall not dwell in the house of David king of Israel, because *the places are* holy,[4] whereunto the ark of the LORD hath come.[5]

12 ¶ Then Solomon offered burnt-offerings unto the LORD on [o]the altar of the LORD, which he had built before the porch,

13 Even after a certain rate every [p]day, offering according to the commandment of Moses, on the sabbaths, and on the new-moons, and on the solemn feasts, [q]three times in the year, *even* in the feast of unleavened bread, and in the feast of weeks, and in the feast of tabernacles.

14 ¶ And he appointed, according to the order of David his father, the [r]courses of the priests to their service, and the Levites to their charges, to praise and minister before the priests, as the duty of every day required; the porters also by their courses at every gate: for [s]so had David the man of God[6] commanded.

15 And they departed not from the commandment of the king unto the priests and Levites concerning any matter, or concerning [t]the treasures.

16 ¶ Now all the work of Solomon was [u]prepared unto the day of the foundation of the house of the LORD, and until it was finished. *So* the house of the LORD was perfected.

17 ¶ Then went Solomon to [x]Ezion-geber, and to [y]Eloth, at the sea-side, in the land of Edom.

18 And Huram [z]sent him, by the hands of his servants, ships,[7] and servants that had knowledge of the sea; and they went with the servants of Solomon to [a]Ophir, and took thence four [b]hundred and fifty talents of gold, and brought *them* to king Solomon.

CHAPTER IX.

1 *The queen of Sheba admireth the wisdom of Solomon.* 13 *Solomon's yearly revenue in gold.* 15 *His targets.* 17 *The throne of ivory.* 20 *His vessels.* 23 *His presents.* 25 *His chariots and horse.* 26 *His tributes.* 29 *His reign and death.*

AND when [a] the queen of Sheba[1] heard of the fame of Solomon, she came to [b]prove Solomon with hard questions at Jerusalem, with a very great company, and camels that bare spices, and gold in abundance, and precious stones: and when she was come to Solomon, she communed with him of all that was in her heart.[2]

2 And Solomon told her all her [3]questions: and there was nothing [c]hid from Solomon which he told her not.

3 And when the queen of Sheba had seen the [d]wisdom of Solomon, and the [e]house that he had built,

4 And [f]the meat of his table, and the [g]sitting of his servants, and the attendance[4] of his ministers, and their apparel; his cup-bearers[5] also, and their apparel; and his [h]ascent by which he went up into the house of the LORD; there was no more spirit in her.[6]

5 And she said to the king, *It was* a true

A.M. 3014. B.C. 990.

b 1 Ki.9.11.

1 Solomon had ceded certain cities to Hiram, 1 Ki. 9. 12, with which Hiram expressed little satisfaction. And these being restored, either because Hiram did not like them, or by virtue of a treaty, Solomon rebuilt and colonized them with a part of the teeming population.—*C.*

c Nu.13.21;34.8.2 Sa. 8.3.

d 1 Ki.9.18,19.

2 The Palmyra of the Greeks (Josephus, *Antiq.* viii. 6). A splendid city situated in an *oasis*, or green fertile island, so to speak, in the midst of an ocean of sand. It is totally in ruins, but their extent and magnificence continue to attest what it was, and what God's judgments are upon proud and luxurious cities and nations.—*C.*

e 1 Ki.9.17–19. 1 Ch. 7.24. Jos.16.3,5.

f Jos.15.11,60; 18.14. 2 Sa.6.2.

g Heb. *all the desire of Solomon which he desired to build*, 1 Ki. 9.19. Ec.2.4–10.

h Ge.10.15,16; 15.19 –21. Ex.3.8;23.23. De. 7.1. Ps.106.34. Ju.1.19, 21,27–30;2.3,21.

i Ps.106.34. Ju.1.19–36.

k 1 Ki.5.13,14; 9. 21. ch.2,17,18. Ju. 1.28,30, 33.

3 The books of Chronicles embrace a period subsequent to the captivity; but even then these aborigines, under the name of the servants of David, seem to have continued under this vassalage. *C.*—It is probable that they had renounced idolatry, and were spared upon terms similar to those granted to the Gibeonites. They and their posterity seem to have been afterwards called 'Solomon's servants,' to distinguish them from the Nethinims. Ezr. 2.55–58. 1 Ki.9.21.—*I.*

l 1 Ki.9.22. Ex.19.5, 6. Le.25.39–43;26.13. De. 15.12,13.2.30.16. Jn. 8.33.

m 1 Ki. 9. 23. The 300 added, ch. 2. 18, are omitted here.

n 1 Ki.3.1;7.8;9.24.

4 Heb. *holinesses.*

5 At a time when Solomon still retained such feelings of piety (see also ver. 12–14), it is by no means probable that he would have chosen an idolatrous wife, as some suppose him he to intimate. Does he not rather remove her, that the 'house of David' may be rescued from mere domestic occupation, and dedicated to religious purposes?—*C.*

o ch.4.1.1 Ki.8.64.

p Ex. 29. 38–42. De. 16.16. Nu. xxviii. xxix. Le. xxiii. 1 Ki. 9. 25. 1 Ch.16.40.

q Ex.23.14,17;34.23.

A.M. 3014. B.C. 990.

r 1 Ch.6.31–33;9.17; xxiv xxvi.

s Heb. *so* was *the commandment of David the man of God*, 2 Sa.23.2. Ac.13. 22,36.

6 The man chosen in the wisdom and called to the service of God; raised up by his will to honour and power, instructed and endowed by his Spirit, renewed in his image, and authorized by his prophetic commission.—*C.*

t 1 Ki.7.51. 1 Ch. 26. 20,22,26;9.29.

u 1 Ki.5.18;6.7.

x 1 Ki.9.26;22.48. Nu. 33.35. ch.20.36.

y 2 Ki. 14. 22; 16. 6. De.2.8.

z 1 Ki.9.27,28. ch.9. 10,13.

7 How could Huram send ships from Tyre in the Mediterranean to Ezion-geber in the Red Sea? Without reference to the geographical possibility of sending them by the Cape of Good Hope, an answer is easy—he sent them from his fleets and settlements in the Red Sea, Persian Gulf, or Indian Ocean, Tyre being a kingdom of vast commercial enterprise, and of necessary consequence, of ships and colonies.—*C.*

a Ge.10.29;1 Ki.9.28; 10.11; 22. 48.1 Ch.29.4. Job 22.24;28.16. Ps.45. 9. Is.13.12.

b Of which 420 were clear gain, 1 Ki 9.28.

CHAP. IX.

a 1 Ki.10.1–23. Mat. 12.42. Lu.11.31. Ps.72. 10.

1 The honour of having given birth to this illustrious princess is claimed both by Arabia Felix and by Abyssinia. She appears in the annals of both countries, being called by the Arabians *Balkis*, and by the Abyssinians *Maqueda*. If, as Bruce informs us, there was a Saba in Ethiopia opposite the Saba of Arabia, and that these two coasts of the Red Sea formed at times but one kingdom, these opinions easily coalesce.—*I.*

b Pr.1.5;13.20.

2 See notes on 1 Ki. x.—*C.*

3 Heb. *words.*

c 1 Ki.3. 12; 4. 29–34. Col.2.3. Pr. 8. 12–14. 1 Co.1.24,30. Jn.5.20; 1. 18.

d 1 Ki.4.29–34.

e 1 Ki.6.38;7.1.

f 1 Ki.4.22,23. Pr.9. 5. Jn.6.53–57.

g 1 Ki.10.5. Re.3.21.

4 Heb. *standing.*

5 Or, *butlers.*

h 1 Ki.10.5.

6 Clarke thinks this means that she fainted with amazement, but it is simply a strong way of expressing the highest surprise and admiration. 'She was out of herself.'—*I.*

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remarkable favours received, we turn again to folly: and terrible the work that obstinate apostasy from God makes in nations, churches, and ordinances!

CHAPTER VIII. [Ver. 4. There can be little doubt that the city here mentioned is identical with the far-famed Palmyra of classic history, and the *Tadmor* of the modern Arabs. The position of the city bears some resemblance to that of Damascus. It lies along the base of a white limestone ridge, through which a deep glen cuts opposite the ruins. A sulphureous fountain bursts from a cliff, runs eastward, watering gardens and orchards of palms and pomegranates, and disappears in a salt marsh. On the undulating ground along the left or northern bank of this streamlet lie the ruins of Tadmor. On the east and south a desert plain, *not of sand* however, as is usually stated, extends to the horizon. Solomon was a commercial monarch. A secure route for the caravans that imported to his little kingdom the treasures of India, Persia, and Mesopotamia was of great importance; he therefore built Tadmor in the wilderness. Its situation, about midway between the Euphrates and Syria, and its copious fountain, made it a fit spot for the establishment of a commercial depôt and resting place. It was during the splendid period of Roman rule in the East that most of the temples and palaces which now adorn Palmyra were built. *P.*]

REFLECTIONS.—In the most profound peace we had need to prepare for war, spiritual or temporal. It is an honour for kings to manifest the utmost regard to their subjects. How certainly, however slowly, Noah's curse of servitude fixes at last upon the descendants of Canaan! They become slaves to the offspring of Shem through the influence of the Lord his God. It is necessary to set bounds to our desires after created things, as they are apt to become inordinate and insatiable. It is no less necessary to keep up proper distinctions between things sacred and common. And we shall find difficulty therein if we ally ourselves in marriage, or in any other way, with the ungodly. What an excellent foundation, for even external prosperity, is a prudent and active zeal for, and constant attendance on, the worship of God! But, alas! how great the folly that, while men will risk and do so much for earthly treasures, so little is done to obtain the riches which endure for ever!

CHAPTER IX. REFLECTIONS.—God honours such as honour him. They who know the value of divine wisdom and truth will grudge no pains to

report[7] which I heard in mine own land of thine acts,[8] and of thy wisdom:

6 Howbeit I [t]believed not their words until I came, and mine eyes had seen *it;* and, behold, the one half of the greatness of thy wisdom was not told me: *for* thou [k]exceedest[9] the fame that I heard.

7 Happy[1] *are* thy men, and happy *are* these thy servants, which stand continually before thee, and hear thy wisdom.

8 Blessed[m] be the LORD thy God,[1] which delighted in thee to set thee on [n]his throne, *to be* king for the LORD thy God:[2] because thy God loved Israel, to establish them for ever, therefore made he thee king over them, to do judgment and justice.

9 And [o]she gave the king an hundred and twenty talents of gold, and of spices great abundance, and precious stones: neither was there any such spice as the queen of Sheba gave king Solomon.

10 And the servants also of Huram, and the servants of Solomon, which brought gold from Ophir,[3] brought [p]algum-trees and precious stones.

11 And the king made *of* the algum-trees [q]terraces[4] to the house of the LORD, and to the king's palace, and harps and psalteries for singers: and there were none such seen before in the land of Judah.

12 And[r] king Solomon gave to the queen of Sheba all her desire, whatsoever she asked, besides *that* which she had brought unto the king.[5] So she turned, and went away to her own land, she and her servants.

13 ¶ Now the [s]weight of gold that came to Solomon in one year was six hundred and threescore and six talents of gold;

14 Besides *that which* chapmen and merchants brought: and all the [t]kings of Arabia, and governors[6] of the country, brought gold and silver to Solomon.[7]

15 ¶ And[u] king Solomon made two hundred targets *of* beaten gold: six hundred *shekels*[8] of beaten gold went to one target.

16 And three hundred shields *made he of* beaten gold: three hundred *shekels*[9] of gold went to one shield: and the king put them in the house of the forest of Lebanon.

17 ¶ Moreover, [x]the king made a great throne of ivory, and overlaid it with pure gold.

18 And *there were* six steps to the throne, with a footstool of gold, *which were* fastened to the throne, and stays[1] on each side of the sitting-place, and two lions standing by the stays.

19 And [y]twelve lions[2] stood there on the one side and on the other upon the six steps: there was not the like made in any kingdom.

20 ¶ And [z]all the drinking vessels of king Solomon *were of* gold, and all the vessels of the house of the forest of Lebanon *were of* [3]pure gold: none *were of* silver;[4] it was *not* any thing accounted[5] of in the days of Solomon.

21 For the king's ships went to [6]Tarshish with the servants of Huram: every three years [a]once came the ships of Tarshish, bringing gold, and silver, ivory,[7] and apes, and peacocks.

22 And king Solomon[b] passed all the kings of the earth in riches and wisdom.

23 ¶ And all the kings of the [8]earth [c]sought the presence of Solomon, to hear his wisdom, that God had put in his heart.

24 And they brought every man his [d]present, vessels of silver, and vessels of gold, and raiment, harness, and spices, horses, and mules, a rate year by year.

25 ¶ And Solomon [e]had four thousand [9]stalls for horses and chariots, and twelve thousand horsemen; whom he bestowed in the chariot-cities, and with the king at Jerusalem.

26 ¶ And he [f]reigned over all the kings, from the river[1] even unto the land of the Philistines, and to the border of Egypt.[2]

27 And the king [g]made silver in Jerusalem as stones,[3] and cedar-trees made he as the sycamore-trees that *are* in the low plains in abundance.

28 And[h] they brought unto Solomon [4]horses out of Egypt, and out of all lands.

29 ¶ Now the rest of the acts of Solomon, first and last, *are* they not written in the [5]book of Nathan the prophet, and in the prophecy of Ahijah the Shilonite, and in the visions of Iddo the seer against Jeroboam the son of Nebat?

30 And Solomon reigned in Jerusalem over all Israel forty years.

31 And Solomon slept with his fathers;[6] and he was buried in the city of David his father: and [i]Rehoboam his son reigned in his stead.

CHAPTER X.

1 The Israelites, assembled at Shechem to crown Rehoboam, by Jeroboam make a suit of relaxation unto him. 6 Rehoboam, refusing the old men's counsel, by the advice of young men answereth them roughly. 16 Ten tribes revolting kill Hadoram, and make Rehoboam to flee.

AND Rehoboam[a] went to Shechem:[1] for to Shechem were all Israel come to make him king.

2 And it came to pass, when Jeroboam the son of Nebat (who *was* in Egypt, [b]whither he had fled from the presence of Solomon the king) heard *it*, that Jeroboam returned out of Egypt.

3 And they sent and called him. So Jeroboam and all Israel[2] came and spake to Rehoboam, saying,

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A.M. 3014. B.C. 990.

7 Heb. *word.*
8 Or, *sayings.*
t 1 Ki.10.7, Jn.20.27. *k* 1 Co.2.9. 1 Jn.3.1. Zec. 9. 17. Ca. 5. 9-16. Pr.30.4.
9 Heb. *hast added to.*
l 1 Ki.10.8. Ps. 84.4; 9.2. De.33.27-29.
m 1 Ki.10.9. ch.5.12. Ps.72.18,19. Ep.1.3. Is. 9.6. Lu.1.31,33. 2 Co.9. 15. 1 Ti.1.17.

1 There is no reason whatever for supposing the queen of Sheba to have been an idolater, conforming, for the occasion, to the worship of Jehovah. It is much more natural to suppose her an inquirer after truth, whose heart the Spirit had opened, and who, being instructed by Solomon, embraces the doctrines of Moses and the worship of Jehovah.—*C.*

n 1 Ch. 17. 14; 28. 5; 29.23. ch.13.8.
2 God was King of Israel, but not one whit more than he is King of every king, and Governor of every nation; kings and judges are but stewards of his power, justice, and mercy, and must give an account to him, whether they acknowledge or reject his right.—*C.*

o 1 Ki. 10.10. Ps. 72. 10,15. *i.e.* £654,084 sterling.
3 We know not where Ophir was, and conjecture is vain.—*C.*

p ch.2.8. 1 Ki.10.11, 12.
q Or, *stays*, 1 Ki.10. 12.
4 Heb. *highways.*
r 1 Ki.10.13.
5 Is not the meaning that Solomon restored her all her presents? See the like generous conduct of Abraham, Ge.14.22.—*C.*

s 1 Ki. 10. 14. Ps. 72. 10, 15. *i.e.* about £3,634,382 sterling.
t Is.60.7,8. Ps.68.29; 72.10.
6 Or, *captains.*

7 It is a curious fact, that, from the passage of the Red Sea (Ex.15.1), till the battle of Meron (Jos. xi.), no mention is made of horses, but merely of camels, oxen, &c., as beasts of burden. The trade in horses established by Solomon (2 Ch. 1. 16; 10.28) will account for much of the traffic with the Arabian kings, and most probably for the origin of that species of horse for which Arabia has since become so distinguished.—*C.*

u 1 Ki. 10. 16,17; 14. 26,ch.12.9.
8 About nineteen pounds weight.
9 Nine pounds weight.
x 1 Ki. 10. 18-20. Ps. 45.6;9.7. Re.3.21;20.11.
1 Heb. *hands.*
y Re.21.12. Mat.19. 28. These might represent Christ's twelve apostles.

2 The prophetic and heraldic emblem of Judah, and, most probably, the origin of that kingship over the forest, that has been so generally ascribed to the lion. It is more interesting to observe that the lion has furnished a title to Christ (Re. 5. 5) as the mighty guardian of the throne of David, on the steps of which he stands, to the terror of his enemies, while in the midst of it he appears as a 'Lamb that had been slain,' thus prevailing as a lion, to open those seals of providence and redemption, which develop and glorify him as the Lamb 'that taketh away the sin of the world.'—*C.*

A.M. 3014. B.C. 990.

z 1 Ki. 10. 21-23. Is. 60.17. 2 Pe.1.4.
3 Heb. *shint sep.*
4 Or, there was *no silver* in them.
5 Nothing accounted of for drinking vessels, just as in most European countries it would be nothing accounted of for seals or such ornaments.—*C.*
6 See note on 1 Ki. 10.22.—*C.*

a 1 Ki.10.22. Job 28. 16,19.
7 Or, *elephants' teeth.*
b 1 Ki.10.23; 3.12,13; 4.30,31. Nu.24.7. ch.1. 12. Ps.89.27.
8 Not all the kings of the world, but of the surrounding countries, in which restricted application the word *world* is frequently used.—*C.*

c 1 Ki.4.34; 10.24. Is. 11.10; 52.15. Ge.49.10 Ps 16 11;17.15.
d Ps 72.10,15, with 1 Ki.10.25.
e 1 Ki.4.26; 10.26,ch. 1. 14,16,17. De. 17. 16. Ps.33.16,17; 20.7. Pr.21. 31.
9 In 1 Ki. 4. 26 the number of stalls is 40,000, which number, some expositors suppose, gives the separate stalls, while the 4000 stalls in the text is used for stables of 10 stalls each. This conjecture is too violent to be received. Others have recourse at once to the never-failing solution of a difficulty, 'the error of a transcriber.' Is it not much more reasonable to conclude that both accounts are correct; while that in 1 Ki. gives the sum total of the stalls throughout the kingdom, that in the text 4000 that were at Jerusalem?—*C.*

f 1 Ki.4.24; 8.65. Ge. 15.18. Ex 23.31. De.11. 24. Jos 13 ... Da.7 14. Re.11.15. Mat.28.18.
1 i.e. *Euphrates.*
2 B.C. 985.
g Heb. *gave*, 1 Ki. 10.27. ver.20,21; ch.1. 12,15.
3 See note on 2 Ch. 1.15.—*C.*

h 1 Ki. 10. 28. ch. 1. 16, with De.17.16.
4 Here was the beginning of Solomon's disobedience, and we see how one sin leads to another. He established a body of cavalry, which was forbidden (De. 17. 16), and horses were obtained from Egypt, with which the Israelites were forbidden to have intercourse. This connection with Egypt led to the marriage with Pharaoh's daughter; then followed marriages with other 'strange women.' These persuaded Solomon to build temples for their idolatrous worship, and afterwards for his own idolatry.'—*J.*
5 Heb. *words.*
6 B.C. 975.
i i.e. the enlargement of the people, ch.10.16.

CHAP. X.

a 1 Ki.12.1-19, with 1 Ch. 1.1 Mal 1. 7.
1 Why Shechem was selected for this great national assembly does not appear, but was probably from its situation between Gerizim and Ebal, where the blessings and the curses of obedience or disobedience were pronounced (De. 11. 29), and from the recollection of the solemn meeting and covenant before the death of Joshua (Jos. 24. 1-28), it had acquired and retained that sacred character which all nations come in time to attach to some particular city.—*C.*

b 1 Ki 11.40;12.2.
2 The heads and representatives.—*C.*

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search for it. They only are truly great whose piety and zeal for God distinguish them. And whatever gifts we enjoy they are but lent us for the edifying of the body of Christ, and ought to be employed with diligence and care. How comely is good, and especially religious, order in families, particularly those of princes! Happy are they who have constant access to, and intimacy with, the intelligent and zealous fearers of God! and we ought to be thankful for the gifts and

4 Thy [c]father made our yoke grievous:[4] now therefore ease thou somewhat the grievous servitude of thy father, and his heavy yoke that he put upon us, and we will serve thee.

5 And he said unto them, [d]Come again unto me after three days. And the people departed.

6 ¶ And king Rehoboam took counsel with the[e] old men that had stood before Solomon his father while he yet lived, saying, What counsel give ye *me* to return answer to this people?

7 And they spake unto him, saying, If thou be [f]kind to this people, and please them, and speak good words to them, they will be thy servants for ever.

8 But [g]he forsook the counsel which the old men gave him, and took counsel with the young men that were brought up with him,[5] that stood before him.

9 And he said unto them, What advice give ye that we may return answer to this people, which have spoken to me, saying, Ease somewhat the yoke that thy father did put upon us?

10 And the young men that were brought up with him spake unto him, saying, [h]Thus shalt thou answer the people that spake unto thee, saying, Thy father made our yoke heavy, but make thou *it* somewhat lighter for us; thus shalt thou say unto them, [i]My little *finger* shall be thicker than my father's loins.

11 For whereas my father put a heavy yoke upon you, I will put more to your yoke: my father chastised you with whips, but I *will chastise you* with scorpions.[6]

12 ¶ So Jeroboam and all the people came to Rehoboam on the third day, as the king bade, saying, Come again to me on the third day.

13 And the king answered them [j]roughly; and king Rehoboam forsook the counsel of the old men.[7]

14 And answered them [k]after the advice of the young men, saying, My father made your yoke heavy, but I [l]will add thereto: my father chastised you with whips, but I *will chastise you* with scorpions.

15 So the king hearkened not unto the people: for the [m]cause[8] was of God,[9] that the LORD might perform his word, which he spake by the [n]hand of Ahijah the Shilonite to Jeroboam the son of Nebat.

16 ¶ And when all Israel *saw* that the king would not hearken unto them, the people answered the king, saying, [o]What portion have we in David? and *we have* none inheritance in the son of Jesse: every man to your tents, O Israel: *and* now, David, see to thine own house. So all Israel went to their tents.[1]

17 But *as for* the children of Israel that dwelt in the cities of Judah, Rehoboam reigned over them.

18 Then king Rehoboam sent [p]Hadoram that *was* over the tribute;[2] and the children of Israel stoned him with stones, that he died: but king Rehoboam made speed[3] to get him up to *his* chariot, to flee to Jerusalem.

19 And Israel rebelled[4] against the house of David unto this day.[5]

A.M. 3029. B.C. 975.

c 1 Ki. 4. 7, 15, 22; 9. 22; 10. 7; 12. 4.

4 Of this no evidence appears; indeed the evidence is to the contrary: but Judah and Israel had never thoroughly amalgamated, and this is a mere pretence of grievance to effect their separation. *C.*

— Solomon's rage for building had the effect of oppressing and impoverishing the people, and this created a spirit of sedition and revolt. —*I.*

d 1 Ki. 12. 5. Ps. 112. 5.

e Job 32. 7; 8. 8, 9.

f Heb. *for good*, 1 Ki. 12. 7. Ne. 5. 19. Ps. 86. 17. Pr. 15. 1.

g Ec. 10. 16. Is. 3. 4, 5. Pr. 13. 20; 29. 6, 9.

5 The opinion of Calmet, that it was customary in eastern nations to associate certain fellow-students with the heirs of royalty, is by no means improbable. 1. It would be well suited to beget friendships, which, when sincere and honest, none require more than kings. 2. It would excite to emulation in study and all requisite accomplishments. 3. It would lead to the knowledge of the characters of those who might be future ministers and associates in government. The whole may be well combined in the expressive modern phrase, *school-fellows*, associates upon whom, under Providence, much of character, and success or disaster, invariably depends.—*C.*

h Pr. 21. 30. 2 Sa. 17. 7–13. Is. 19. 11–13.

i 1 Ki. 12. 10. Pr. 13. 16; 14. 16; 15. 1; 18. 12.

6 Your taxes shall be heavier, your services more burdensome, and your punishment more severe.

j Pr. 15. 1; 14. 16. Ec. 2. 18, 19.

7 When one said of a certain queen, 'she was great, wise, and prosperous;' another replied, 'she certainly had the merit of having wise counsellors.' 'Ah!' replied the other, 'did you ever know a *fool* who had wise counsellors?' Of this pungent remark the unhappy Rehoboam is a melancholy example. He was not wise, and he had not wise counsellors.—*C.*

k Ec. 10. 16. Is. 3. 4, 5. ch. 13. 7.

l Pr. 12. 13; 18. 7; 29. 11, 23. ver. 11.

m ch. 25, 20. Ps. 81. 12. Am. 3. 6. Is. 45. 7.

8 Heb. *wheeling about.*

9 'The cause was of God,' as a judicial act against a foolish, ill-advised, self-sufficient, and irreligious man.—*C.*

A.M. 3029. B.C. 975.

n 1 Ki. 11. 29–39.

o 1 Ki. 11. 11–13, 30–36; 12. 16. 2 Sa. 20. 1. 1 Sa. 22. 7. Jn. 6. 66. Phi. 3. 18, 19; 2. 21. 2 Ti. 1. 15.

1 That is, all the assembled heads or representatives retired to their tents in the valley of Shechem.—*C.*

p 1 Ki. 12. 18, and perhaps 4. 6; 5. 13, 14.

2 This completes the climax of Rehoboam's folly. He had neglected the advice of his father's counsellors, and the Ephraimites had renounced their allegiance on account of their burdens and taxes; and to appease them, he sends Hadoram, or Adoniram, who was over the tribute; of course, the most obnoxious man he could send.' —*Footmoyd.*

3 Heb. *strengthened himself.*

4 A few soft words, and a removal of a part of the oppressive taxes (for they said, 'Ease thou somewhat of the grievous servitude') would have secured this people to the state, and prevented the shedding of a sea of human blood, which was the consequence of the separation of this kingdom. Rehoboam was a fool; and through his folly lost his kingdom. He is not the only example on record; the Stewarts lost the realm of England much in the same way; and, by a different mode of treatment, the house of Brunswick continues to fill the British throne. May the thread of its fortune, woven by the hand of God, never be undone! and may the current of its power glide on to the latest posterity!—*Clarke.*

5 *i.e.* till the time of Ezra.

CHAPTER XI.

1 Rehoboam raising an army to subdue Israel, is forbidden by the prophet Shemaiah. 5 *He strengtheneth his kingdom with forts and provision.* 13 *The priests and Levites, and such as feared God, forsaken by Jeroboam, strengthen the kingdom of Judah.* 18 *The wives and children of Rehoboam.*

AND when[a] Rehoboam was come to Jerusalem, he gathered of the house of Judah and Benjamin an hundred and fourscore thousand chosen *men*, which were warriors, to fight against Israel, that he might bring the kingdom again to Rehoboam.

2 But the word of the LORD came to Shemaiah the [b]man of God, saying,

3 Speak unto Rehoboam the son of Solomon king of Judah, and to all Israel in Judah and Benjamin, saying,

4 Thus saith the LORD, Ye shall not go up, nor fight against your [c]brethren: return every man to his house; for this thing [d]is done of me.[1] And they obeyed the words of the LORD, and returned from going against Jeroboam.

5 ¶ And Rehoboam dwelt in Jerusalem, and [e]built cities for defence in Judah.[2]

6 He built even [f]Beth-lehem,[3] and [g]Etam, and [h]Tekoa,

7 And [i]Beth-zur, and Shoco, and Adullam,

8 And [k]Gath, and [l]Mareshah, and [m]Ziph,

9 And Adoraim, and [n]Lachish, and Azekah,

CHAP. XI.

B.C. 974.

a 1 Ki. 12. 21–24.

b Prophet, De. 33. 1. Ju. 13. 6, 8. 1 Sa. 2. 27.

c Ex. 2. 11. Le. 10. 6. Ro. 9. 3. He. 13. 1.

d Ge. 50. 20. Am. 3. 6. 1 Ki. 12. 15. Is. 45. 7.

1 See note on ver. 15.—*C.*

e Repaired, enlarged, and fortified, ch. 14. 6.

2 In kingdoms, times of danger produce great exertions for defence; just as in the church of God, times of persecution and controversy produce great devotedness, courage, zeal, study, and learning. —*C.*

f Ge. 35. 19. Mat. 2. 1.

3 There were two cities of this name: (1) Bethlehem-judah (Ju. 17, 7), so called to distinguish it from (2) another in Zebulun (Jos. 19. 15), called also Ephratah, or fruitful. Bethlehem-judah is about six miles south of Jerusalem, and contains about 300 inhabitants.—*C.*

g 1 Ch. 4. 31. Ju. 15. 8.

h 2 Sa. 14. 2. Je. 6. 1. ch. 20. 20.

i Jos. 15. 35, 58. Mi. 1. 15.

k 1 Ch. 18. 1; 20. 8.

l Jos. 15. 44. Mi. 1. 15.

m Jos. 15. 55. 1 Sa. 23. 19.

n Jos. 10. 5, 11; 15. 35, 39. Is. 37. 8.

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graces of God to others; especially if made instrumental for our good. Great souls are ever generous; and ought to be so, according to their stations and ability. But not the most engaging things on earth ought long to detain us from that home in which God calls us to act for his glory. What a transient blaze is all the glory and wealth of earth! 'Ere it be long Solomon's family shall be poor and contemned. Yet God seems, as it were, unwilling to remember those sins against Solomon or any of his people, of which they have sincerely repented. What a sudden gloom death spreads over the brightest honours on earth! But rejoice, my soul, that Jesus has wisdom, has wealth, has glory, and fame, which neither death nor eternity can ever sully or consume! Of him it may truly be said, the half has not been told us. Happy are they that wait around this exalted King of Israel—chosen through the love of the eternal Father—and placed to do justice and judgment, and to establish his people in eternal glory.

CHAPTER X. REFLECTIONS.—The best of rulers cannot give every one content. Men are readier to complain of the expense of government than to acknowledge the benefit which they receive from it; and turbulent and ungrateful spirits will find fault where they can scarcely find the shadow of a reason. Young heads are ordinarily too hot to be wise counsellors: and many ruin their own interests by trampling on and provoking their inferiors. Moderate counsels are generally the most safe and prudent. Soft answers disarm men's passions when harsh ones render them furious: and when the affairs of church or state are in a ferment rough proceedings do but make them worse and worse. Most men need no more to ruin them than to be given up to their own pride and passion. But O the wisdom and power of God, who can fulfill his counsels by men's folly and fury! Very uncertain are all earthly enjoyments: nor can the wisest secure them to his next heir. God often visits the iniquity of the fathers upon the children: but amidst all the heat of his anger he never breaks his promise.

CHAPTER XI. [Ver. 14. Jeroboam established an idolatrous worship in his kingdom. The Levites, it appears, would not conduct his services. They preferred banishment to servitude under such a master. The kingdom of Judah was thus materially strengthened. In addition to the powerful tribes of Judah and Benjamin, it had the Levites, and also the great bulk of Simeon and Dan. In compactness and natural strength of territory, in unity and courage, in devotion

10 And [o]Zorah, and Aijalon, and [p]Hebron, which *are* in Judah and in Benjamin fenced cities.[4]

11 And he fortified the strong holds, and put [q]captains in them, and store of victual, and of oil and wine.

12 And in every several city *he put* shields and spears, and made them exceeding strong, having Judah and Benjamin on his side.

13 ¶ And the priests and the Levites that *were* in all Israel resorted to him out of all their coasts.

14 (For the Levites left [r]their suburbs and their possession, and came to Judah and Jerusalem: for [s]Jeroboam and his sons had cast them off from executing the priest's office unto the LORD:

15 And he [t]ordained him priests for the high places, and for the devils,[5] and for the calves which he had made.)

16 And [u]after them, out of all the tribes of Israel, such as set their hearts to seek the LORD God of Israel came to Jerusalem, to sacrifice unto the LORD God of their fathers.

17 So they strengthened the kingdom of Judah, and made Rehoboam the son of Solomon strong, three years: for [x]three years they walked in the way of David and Solomon.[6]

18 ¶ And Rehoboam took him Mahalath the daughter of Jerimoth the son of David to wife, *and* Abihail the daughter of [y]Eliab[7] the son of Jesse;

19 Which bare him children; Jeush, and Shamariah, and Zaham.

20 And after her he took [z]Maachah the daughter of Absalom; which bare him Abijah, and Attai, and Ziza, and Shelomith.

21 And Rehoboam loved Maachah the daughter of Absalom above all his wives and his concubines: (for he took [a]eighteen wives, and threescore concubines, and begat twenty and eight sons and threescore daughters.)

22 And Rehoboam made Abijah the son of Maachah the chief, *to be* ruler among his brethren: for *he thought* to make him king.[8]

23 And he dealt wisely, and [b]dispersed of all his children throughout all the countries of Judah and Benjamin, unto every fenced city; and he gave them victual in abundance: and he desired [c]many wives.

A.M. 3030. B.C. 974.

[o] Jos.15.33;19.41,42.
[p] Ge.23.2. Jos. 10. 3; 14.14.

[4] These cities were situated along the southern and western borders of Judah. Two of them, Zorah and Aijalon, were in Benjamin. It would seem that the object of Rehoboam was chiefly to fortify his little kingdom against attacks from the south and west—the Edomites, Moabites, and Egyptians. The northern border, being near the capital, and being generally rugged and difficult, was easily defended. —*C.*

[q] ver.23; ch.14.7; 17. 19
[r] Jos.21.20–42.1 Ch. 6.66–81.
[s] ch.13.9. Re. 13,16. 1 Ki.12.28–33;13.33.
[t] 1 Ki.12. 31. Re. 17. 17, Ho.13.2. Ps.106.37.

[5] That is, literally, *hairy ones*, a name commonly applied to goats, but which well includes all the fabulous deities of heathenism, known by the names of *Pan, Silenus, Satyrs, Fauns*, &c. Herodotus informs us (ii. 46) that the he-goat was universally worshipped in Egypt, under the name of *Mendes*; and to some such disgraceful deities the text undoubtedly refers. See note on Le.17.7.—*C.*

[u] *i.e.* Those Levites, ver.14; ch. 15. 9; 30.11,18. Ps.69.32,36.
[x] ch.12.1,2. Ho. 6.4. Mat.13.18–22. Ps.78.34–37.

[6] That this book was written after the captivity, yet, comparatively, near to the days of Solomon, and under divine inspiration, there can, with Christians, be no doubt. It is delightful therefore to observe this incidental testimony to the religious character of Solomon, as it classes him with David—a sinner, for such is the way of man—a believer, a penitent, for such is the work of grace.—*C.*

[y] 1 Sa.16.6, 7; 17. 13, 28.1 Ch.27.18.2.13.

[7] Eliab was David's eldest brother, 1 Ch. 2, 13; 1 Sa. 17. 28, and David had seven elder brothers, 1 Sa. 17.13,14. By any computation therefore, as David began his reign at thirty (2 Sa. 5. 4), Abihail must have been, in point of fact, his granddaughter, or great grand-daughter, and his daughter only by adoption or heirship-at-law.—*C.*

[z] 1 Ki.15.2. ch.13.2; not of Absalom, 2 Sa. 14.27.
[a] De.17.17. 1 Ki.11. 1,3.
[b] Ge.25. 6. ch. 21. 3; ver.11.
[c] Heb. *a multitude of wives*, De.17. 17. 1 Ki.11. 3.

[8] The succession lay in the will of the king, and did not descend by order to the eldest son. Rehoboam might therefore make this selection; but, as the case of Adonijah and Absalom gave him warning, he dispersed his other sons, with ample maintenance, to separate commands, so that none of them might have an opportunity of acquiring such popularity in the capital, as might tempt them to rebellion. See 2 Sa. 15.1–13.—*C.*

A.M. 3034. B.C. 970.

CHAP. XII.

a ch.11. 11, 17. 1 Ki. 14.22. De. 32.15. Pr.2. 13, Je.2.13.
b 1 Ki.12. 17; 14. 22. Pr. 29. 11. The two tribes over which he reigned, as the other ten had done before.
c 1 Ki.14. 25, 26. Ju. 2.13.

[1] That is, Shishak was permitted, given over, to follow his own ambitious course of foreign conquest, and Rehoboam and his kingdom adjudged for their idolatry to suffer all the evils of invasion.—*C.*

d Ju.4.13. 1 Sa.13.5. 2 Sa.10.18.1 Ch.17.18.
e Eze.30.5. Na. 3.9. All Africans.

[2] *Lubims*, most probably the people called Libyans, a people of north eastern Africa. *C.*—Originally the Lubims were dependent on the Egyptians or Mizraim. They multiplied greatly, however, and became a great and powerful nation. Less civilized than the Egyptians, they were more attached to the arts of war than of peace. Being chiefly pastoral, they roamed over a very large section of northern Africa, and gave their name to a region supposed by ancient geographers to extend from the Nile to the Atlantic, and from the Mediterranean to the equator.—*P.*

[3] *Sukkiims*, rendered by the Septuagint *Troglodytæ*, or dwellers in caves, inhabitants of the mountain range on the west of the Red Sea, where Burkhardt seems to have found their descendants in the tribe called Bishareen. *C.*—I am more inclined to the opinion that the Sukkiim were a nomad people, and were so called because of their living in tents (*succoth*). They probably pastured their flocks along the western borders of the valley of the Nile.—*P.*

[4] *Ethiopians*, the descendants of Cush, some of whom dwelt on the Asiatic, others had migrated to the African side of the Red Sea.—*C.*

f Je.1.10. Na. 3. 12. ch.11.5–10.
g ch.11.2.1 Ki.12.22.
h ver. 1–4; ch. 15. 2. De.28. 25, 48, 52. Je.2. 13,19,24,18; 5. 19; 16. 10, 11. Am. 2.4.
i Ps.78. 34–38; 50. 15. 1 Ki.21.29;8.37,39. ver. 12; ch. 33. 12,13; 32.26. Ex.9.27. Le.26.40. Ho. 5.15.

[5] Or, *a little while.*
[6] All my wrath.
k De.28.47,48. Is.26. 13, Je.10.24. Ps.89.31.

[7] That they may know the difference of the two services by experience.—*C.*

l 1 Ki.14.26;15.18;7. 51. 2 Ki. 16.8;18. 15. 1 Ch.26.20–28.
m ch.9.15. 1 Ki. 10. 16,17.
n 1 Ki.14.27,28.

[8] B.C. 968.

CHAPTER XII.

1 *Rehoboam, forsaking the Lord, is punished by Shishak's invasion.* 5 *He and the princes repenting at the preaching of Shemaiah, are delivered from destruction, but not from spoil.* 13 *The reign and death of Rehoboam.*

AND it came to pass, [a]when Rehoboam had established the kingdom, and had strengthened himself, he forsook the law of the LORD, [b]and all Israel with him.

2 And it came to pass, *that*, in the fifth year of king Rehoboam, [c]Shishak king of Egypt came up against Jerusalem, because they had transgressed against the LORD,[1]

3 With [d]twelve hundred chariots, and threescore thousand horsemen: and the people *were* without number that came with him out of Egypt; the [e]Lubims,[2] the Sukkiims,[3] and the Ethiopians.[4]

4 And he took [f]the fenced cities which *pertained* to Judah, and came to Jerusalem.

5 ¶ Then came [g]Shemaiah the prophet to Rehoboam, and *to* the princes of Judah, that were gathered together to Jerusalem because of Shishak, and said unto them, Thus saith the LORD, [h]Ye have forsaken me, and therefore have I also left you in the hand of Shishak.

6 Whereupon the princes of Israel and the king [i]humbled themselves; and they said, The LORD *is* righteous.

7 And when the LORD saw that they humbled themselves, the word of the LORD came to Shemaiah, saying, They have humbled themselves; *therefore* I will not destroy them, but I will grant them some[5] deliverance; and my wrath[6] shall not be poured out upon Jerusalem by the hand of Shishak.

8 Nevertheless they shall be his servants; that they may know [k]my service, and the service of the kingdoms of the countries.[7]

9 So Shishak king of Egypt came up against Jerusalem, and took away [l]the treasures of the house of the LORD, and the treasures of the king's house; he took all: he carried away also the shields of gold which Solomon had [m]made.

10 Instead of which [n]king Rehoboam made shields of brass, and committed *them* to the hands of the chief of the guard, that kept the entrance of the king's house.[8]

11 And when the king entered into the house of the LORD, the guard came and fetched them, and brought them again into the guard-chamber.

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to God and purity of worship, the kingdom of Judah far surpassed that of Israel. *P.*]

Ver. 20. [Maachah was also the name of Absalom's mother, who was daughter of Talmai, king of Geshur. The name indicates that the Geshurites and Maachathites were closely related and originally of the same stock. In ch. 13. 2 there is a statement which at first sight seems to be at variance with this verse. Here it is said that Abijah was son of Maachah, daughter of Absalom, and the fact is corroborated by the parallel passage in 1 Ki. 15. 2; but in 2 Ch. it is said of Abijah that 'his mother's name was Michaiah, the daughter of Uriel of Gibeah.' The solution of the difficulty appears to be this:—Absalom's daughter Maachah was married to Uriel, and their daughter, also called Maachah, became the mother of Abijah. Her father, however, being a comparatively obscure person, his name is omitted in the ordinary history, and she is called the daughter of Absalom, who was her grandfather. *P.*]

REFLECTIONS.—How often is war too rashly undertaken! But it is in vain to withstand the purposes of God. And it is honourable to drop our darling attempts when he requires it. It is more prudent to make the best we can of what we have, and to take all lawful pains to secure it, than to fight for more. When nations are forsaking God, his faithful ministers are often singularly distressed; and yet none are more useful for strengthening a kingdom that deals kindly with them. It is proper that those who fear God should leave their country when his ministers and worship are expelled from it. No secular advantage ought to carry or keep us where we must make shipwreck of faith and a good conscience. That is really best for us which is best for our souls. And in all our choices religion should take the lead of outward advantages. If for God's sake we forsake our worldly all, we shall one day find ourselves great gainers. Such as suffer for righteousness' sake ought to be received by us with open arms. And never should we cleave more closely to Christ's faithful ministers than when they are persecuted. Seasons of persecution especially distinguish

TOMB OF KAIT BEY—A MODERN PHARAOH OF EGYPT. [II. CHRONICLES, xii: 9.]—"So Shishak king of Egypt came up against Jerusalem, and took away the treasures of the house of the Lord." The tomb of Kait Bey marks the resting place of one of the modern Pharaohs of Egypt. He was the successor in the respect that he was one of the last of the independent Mameluke Sultans of Egypt. He was in the line of succession from Shishak, who was the king of Egypt in the time of Rehoboam. This tomb is about eighty feet long and seventy feet wide. It has some fine mosaics, and is thought to be the finest piece of architecture in Cairo. The door has a bronze covering about forty-five feet in height. Kait Bey was Sultan of Egypt from 1468 to 1496. As a general and a diplomatist he successfully maintained his position against the Porte. He was compelled finally, however, to abdicate in favor of his son, Mohammed, a boy of fourteen.

12 And [o]when he humbled himself, the wrath of the LORD turned from him, that he would not destroy *him* altogether: [p]and also in Judah things went well.

13 ¶ So king Rehoboam strengthened himself in Jerusalem, and reigned: for [q]Rehoboam *was* one and forty years old when he began to reign, and he reigned seventeen years in Jerusalem, the city [r]which the LORD had chosen out of all the tribes of Israel to put his name there: and his mother's name *was* Naamah an Ammonitess.

14 And he did evil, because he [s]prepared[9] not his heart[t] to [t]seek the LORD.

15 Now the acts of Rehoboam, first and last, *are* they not written in the book[1] of [u]Shemaiah the prophet, and of Iddo the seer, concerning genealogies? [x]And *there were* wars between Rehoboam and Jeroboam continually.

16 And Rehoboam [y]slept with his fathers, and was buried in the city of David: and [z]Abijah his son reigned in his stead.

CHAPTER XIII.

1 *Abijah succeeding maketh war against Jeroboam.* 4 *He declareth the right of his cause.* 13 *Trusting in God he overcometh Jeroboam.* 21 *The wives and children of Abijah.*

NOW in[a] the eighteenth year of king Jeroboam began Abijah to reign over Judah

2 He reigned three years in Jerusalem. (his mother's[2] name also *was* [b]Michaiah,[3] the daughter of Uriel of [c]Gibeah:) and [d]there was war between Abijah and Jeroboam.

3 And Abijah set the battle in array,[4] with an army of valiant men of war, *even* [e]four hundred thousand chosen men: Jeroboam also set the battle in array against him with eight hundred thousand chosen men, *being* mighty men of valour.[5]

4 ¶ And Abijah stood up upon mount [f]Zemaraim,[6] which *is* in mount Ephraim, and said, Hear[g] me, thou Jeroboam, and all Israel;

5 Ought ye not to know that the LORD God of Israel [h]gave the kingdom over Israel to David for ever, *even* to him and to his sons by [i]a covenant of salt?[7]

6 Yet Jeroboam the son of Nebat, the servant of Solomon the son of David, is risen up, and hath [k]rebelled against his lord.

7 And there are gathered unto him [l]vain men, the children of Belial, and have strengthened themselves against Rehoboam the son of Solomon, when Rehoboam was [m]young[8] and tenderhearted, and [n]could not withstand them.

8 And now ye think to withstand [o]the kingdom of the LORD in the hand of the sons of David; and ye *be* [p]a great multitude, and *there are* with you golden calves, which Jeroboam made you for gods.

9 Have[q] ye not cast out the priests of the LORD, the sons of Aaron, and the Levites,[9] and have [r]made you priests after the manner of the nations of *other* lands? so that whosoever cometh [s]to consecrate himself with a young bullock and seven rams,[1] *the same* may be a priest of *them that are* no gods.

10 But as for us, [t]the LORD *is* our God, and we have not forsaken him; and the priests, which minister unto the LORD, *are* [u]the sons of Aaron, and the Levites *wait* upon *their* business:

11 And[z] they burn unto the LORD, every morning and every evening, burnt-sacrifices and sweet incense: the [y]show-bread also *set they in order* upon the pure table; and [z]the candlestick of gold, with the lamps thereof, to burn every evening: for we keep the charge of the LORD our God; but ye have forsaken him.

12 And, behold, God himself *is* with us [a]for *our* captain, and his priests with [b]sounding trumpets to cry alarm against you. O children of Israel, [c]fight ye not against the LORD God of your fathers; for ye shall not prosper.[2]

13 ¶ But Jeroboam caused [d]an ambushment to come about behind them: so they were before Judah, and the ambushment *was* behind them.

14 And when Judah looked back, behold,

A.M. 3036. B.C. 968.

o Le.26. 40-45. 1 Ki. 21.29. Pr.28.13. La. 3. 33,39-42.

p Or, *and yet in Judah there were good things*, Ge.18.24. Is.6.13;65. 9. Mat. 24. 22. Ho.11.12.

q 1 Ki 14. 21.

r De. 12. 5, 11. ch.6. 6;7.12,16;33.4,7. Ps.78. 68;48.1,2;76.1,2;132.13, 14.

s Or, *fixed*, Ps.78.37. Ho.10.2. Mat.7.18.

t The marginal translation is best, 'because he *fixed* not his heart' steadily and permanently in God's service. Being double-minded, he was unstable; being shallow of principle, the seed of repentance that sprung in the hour of trouble withered in the hour of prosperity. Ja. 1.8, Mat.13.21.—*C.*

t ch.11.16. Mat.7.7. Ac.9.11. Ps.24.6.

1 Heb. *words.*

u 1 Ki. 12. 22. ver.5; ch.9.29.

x 1 Ki. 12. 24; 14. 30; 15.6,7,16,32.

y ch.9.31. 1 Ki.2.10.

z ch. 11. 20, 22, or *Abijam*, 1 Ki.14.31, or *Abia*, Mat. 1. 7. 1 Ch. 3.10.

CHAP. XIII.

B.C. 958.

a 1 Ki.15.1,2.

2 For reconciliation of apparent difference, see note on 1 Ki.15.2.—*C.*

b Or, *Maachah*, ch. 11.20. 1 Ki.15.2.

3 See note on ch. 11.20.—*P.*

c Ju. 19.14. Jos.18.28.

d ch.12.15.

4 Heb. *bound together.*

e ch. 14. 9; 17. 14–18. 1 Ch.21.5.

5 The numbers of these armies seem so great as to afford in many a thoughtless infidels an occasion of cavilling. A little knowledge of the construction of Eastern armies would, however, remove all improbability. Besides, though each had so many of his own troops, or of auxiliaries, it does not follow that either had all his army assembled on one field of battle.—*C.*

f Jos. 18. 22. Ge.10. 18.

6 Mount Zemaraim is not to be confounded with the town of the same name, which was situated in the Jordan valley at the spot now marked by the ruins of *Sumrah*. The mount here mentioned appears to have been at or near the boundary of the two kingdoms, and not far distant from Bethel.—*P.*

g Ju.9.7. 2Sa.20.17. Ps.20.7. Ro.12.18.

h 1 Sa.16.12,13. 2 Sa. 7.12–16. Ps.132.12.

A.M. 3046. B.C. 958.

i Nu.18.19. Eze. 43, 24, *i.e.* a perpetual one of friendship.

7 See note on Le. 2.13.—*C.*

k 1 Ki. 11. 26; 12. 20, 27, ch.x.

l Ju.9.4;11.3. Job 30. 8. De.13.13. Pr.13.20.

m ch. 12. 13. Ec. 10. 16. Is.3.4. 2 Co. 14. 20. Ep.4.14.

8 Not young in years, for he was forty, but young in the knowledge and experience of human affairs.—*C.*

n ch.11.1–4.

o ch.9.8. 1 Ch.17. 14; 28.5;29.23. Ps.82.1.

p Is.31.1,3. Ps.33.16. 1 Sa.4.3,5. 1 Ki. 12.28. Ho.8.6.

q ch.11.14,15.

9 It is most probable that Jeroboam had deprived the Levites of their offices and possessions, not having been able to seduce them to the worship of the *calves*, or from their attachment to the temple service of Jehovah at Jerusalem.—*C.*

r 1 Ki.12.31;13.33.

s Heb. *to fill his hand*, Ex.29.1. Le. 8. 2.

1 The Aaronic priest was consecrated with the offering of one bullock and one ram, Le. 8. 22, Abijah seems to make mention of *seven* as if it were a kind of simoniacal bribe for obtaining the office.—*C.*

t Ex.19. 5–7. ch. 11. 16,17;12.6.

u Ex.xxix. Nu.18.1–7;iii.iv.viii.1 Ch.xxiii.–xxvi.

x ch.2.4. Ex. 29. 38–42.

y Le.24.6. Ex.25.30.

z Ex. 27. 20, 21. Le. 24.3.

a De. 20. 4. Ps.20.7. Ex.15.3,6. Ro.8.31. Is. 41.10.

b Nu.10.9;31.6.

c Ac. 5. 39. Job 9. 4; 40.2. 1 Co.10.22.

2 Three circumstances will account for Jeroboam's listening to this lengthened and accusatory address. 1. His conscience may have felt it, and deprived him, for the moment, of power to silence it by any noise in his army. 2. He may have been afraid to prevent his army from hearing the young king. 3. And, what is most probable, he may have been only listening in appearance to prevent Abijah's attention from the ambush, ver. 13, he was secretly laying against him.—*C.*

d Jos.8.4. Ju. 20. 29, 33,37. Pr.21.30, 31. Je. 4.22.

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the precious from the vile. Nothing so strengthens a nation as when all ranks concur to walk in the way of the Lord. But, alas! how often do princes weaken their kingdoms by their indulgence of sinful lust and following of long-rooted customs! And happy is it if those who begin foolishly would but end wisely in the right disposal of their children or their property!

CHAPTER XII. [Ver. 2. Shishak has been satisfactorily identified with *Sesouchis*, the first king of the Diospolitan dynasty. The name is found on Egyptian monuments in the form *Sheshouk*. In the temple of Karnak there is a large bas-relief portrait of the monarch presenting to the gods the chiefs of vanquished nations, among whom is one with the peculiar Jewish physiognomy, and the attached inscription has been rendered by Champollion 'King of Judæa.' *P.*]

REFLECTIONS.—They who in adversity appear faithful for God often forsake him in their prosperity. Nay, earthly prosperity is a common occasion of ruin to the soul. Human supports and fenced cities prove but refuges of lies when God withdraws or becomes our destroyer And to punish men's sins, he often turns their old friends, or even relations, into inveterate enemies. God's word comes to men with peculiar advantage when awakening providences concur with it: and stupid and self-conceited sinners must have the plainest providences explained to them before they understand them. They whom the Lord hath left ought to blame themselves as the guilty cause, and to humble themselves under his mighty hand: for it is vain to project means of defence if we continue unhumbled for our sins. The greatest kings and princes must either be humbled or ruined: and we are never humbled aright till we justify God in our sufferings. But how God's bowels yearn towards repenting prodigals! How forward he is to meet them with merciful deliverances who humble themselves before him! Whenever we have hearts humbled under troubles they have done their work, and shall either be removed or have their nature altered into tokens of kindness. And it is a great mercy to a sinful people if God but grant a partial deliverance. It is well if the guilt be removed, though we should smart in the flesh for it. They who reckon God a hard master, and his service burdensome, will find the slavery and wages of their lusts but a miserable exchange It is far more honourable and safe to endure the utmost hardships in obeying God than to risk the punishments of disobedience. But how easily God can restrain the fury of the most outrageous conquerors by his invisible arm, and set limits to their ravages! and happy is it when, in evil times, he preserves a remnant for himself. Judgments which make us learn righteousness are mercies in disguise. But if our heart be not engaged in the service of God all is naught. They who never had their heart fixed to him, and never made real religion their principal business, are easily drawn to anything evil. Though God's judgments may force men to their prayers, nothing but almighty grace can convert them to himself. And, alas! how many in his church do but cumber the ground while they live, and in a moment go down to their grave!

CHAPTER XIII. REFLECTIONS.—What multitudes do wicked princes render subservient to their lusts! Before men proceed to the extremities of war, every peaceable method of accommodation ought to be tried; as, at least, all the death on the one side is murder, and often so on both. Many can talk finely of God and his service who have no heart-love to them or any correspondent practice. What an advantage in war is it to have a righteous cause and a powerful and gracious God on our side; and when we evidence it by not forsaking him, but by cleaving to his ministers and ordinances! But dangerous is their case who have ambition that cannot be satisfied, and who are emboldened by mere success! Prosperous iniquity is but a short-lived joy. They who have God their

the battle *was* before and behind: and they cried[e] unto the LORD, and the priests sounded with the trumpets.

15 Then the men of Judah gave a shout: and as the men of Judah shouted, it came to pass, that God smote Jeroboam and all Israel before Abijah and Judah.

16 And the children of Israel fled before Judah; and God delivered them into their hand.

17 And Abijah and his people slew them with a great slaughter: so there fell down slain of Israel [f]five hundred thousand chosen men.[3]

18 Thus the children of Israel were [g]brought under at that time, and the children of Judah prevailed, because they [h]relied upon the LORD God of their fathers.

19 And Abijah [i]pursued after Jeroboam, and took cities from him, [k]Beth-el with the towns thereof, and Jeshanah with the towns thereof, and [l]Ephraim with the towns thereof.

20 Neither did Jeroboam recover strength again in the days of Abijah: and the LORD struck[m] him, and he died.[4]

21 ¶ But Abijah waxed mighty, and married fourteen[n] wives,[5] and begat twenty and two sons, and sixteen daughters.

22 And the rest of the acts of Abijah, and his ways, and his sayings, *are* written in the story[6] of the prophet [o]Iddo.

CHAPTER XIV.

1 *Asa succeeding destroyeth idolatry.* 6 *Having peace, he strengtheneth his kingdom with forts and armies.* 9 *Calling on God, he overthroweth Zerah, and spoileth the Ethiopians.*

SO Abijah [a]slept with his fathers, and they buried him in the city of David: and [b]Asa his son reigned in his stead. In his days the land was quiet ten years.

2 And Asa did *that which* [c]*was* good and right in the eyes of the LORD his God:[1]

3 For he took away [d]the altars of the strange *gods*, and the [e]high places, and brake down the images,[2] and cut down the groves;[3]

4 And [f]commanded Judah to seek the LORD God of their fathers, and to do the law and the commandment.

5 Also[g] he took away out of all the cities of Judah the high places and the images:[4] and the kingdom was quiet before him.[5]

6 ¶ And [h]he built fenced cities in Judah: [i]for the land had rest, and he had no war in those years; because the LORD had given him rest.

7 Therefore he said unto Judah, Let us build these cities, and make about *them* walls, and towers, gates, and bars, *while* the land *is* yet before us; [k]because we have sought the LORD our God, we have sought *him*, and he hath given us rest on every side: so they built and prospered.

8 ¶ And Asa had [l]an army *of men* that bare targets and spears, out of Judah three hundred thousand; and out of Benjamin, that bare shields and drew bows, two hundred and fourscore thousand: all these *were* mighty men of valour.[6]

9 ¶ And[m] there came out against them Zerah the Ethiopian, with an host of a [n]thousand thousand,[7] and three hundred chariots; and came unto Mareshah.

10 Then Asa went out against him, and they set the battle in array in the valley of [o]Zephathah at Mareshah.

11 And Asa [p]cried unto the LORD his God, and said, LORD, [q]*it is* nothing with thee to help, whether with many, or with them that have no power: help us, O LORD our God; for [r]we rest on thee, and in thy name we go against this multitude. O LORD, thou *art* our God; let not man prevail against thee.

12 So the LORD [s]smote the Ethiopians before Asa, and before Judah; and the Ethiopians fled.[8]

13 And Asa, and the people that *were* with him, pursued them unto Gerar:[9] and the Ethiopians were overthrown, that they could not recover themselves; for they were destroyed before the LORD, and before his host: and they carried away very much spoil.

14 And they smote all the cities round about Gerar;[1] for the fear of the LORD came upon them: and they spoiled all the cities; for there was exceeding much spoil in them.

15 They smote also the tents of cattle, and carried away sheep and camels in abundance, and returned to Jerusalem.

A.M. 3046. B.C. 958.

[e] Ex.14.10,15.ch.14.9.Ps.50.15.1 Ki.22.32.

[f] ch.14.12;20.22. Ps.3.8;33.16.Is.10.16-19.

3 Infidels have asserted the utter incredibility of such a slaughter, and believers have sought for modes of calculation to reduce the amount. There is no ground for the infidelity of the one class, nor necessity for the research of the other. The text does not say they were all slain in one battle, but includes the loss of life during the continuance of the war. See ver. 19, and comp. ch.14.1. When viewed thus, there will be no difficulty in admitting the calculation: examples of equal extermination may be found, alas! in all ages.—*C.*

[g] Heb. *humbled*, Ju.8.. Ps.106.42.

[h] 1 Ch.5.20. 2 Ki.18.5.Ps 22.4.Da.3.28. Le. 26.7,8.De.28.7.

[i] Jos.10.19.

[k] Ge.12.8. Jos.8.9. 1 Ki.12.29.

[l] Jn.11.54.ch.15.8. 2 Sa.13.23.

[m] 1 Sa. 25. 38. Eze. 24.16.1 Ki.14.20;15.9.—*L.*

[n] De.17.17.ch.11.21.

4 It is very evident that Jeroboam (and not Abijah) is meant, but though now stricken with disease, he did not die till two years after Abijah, 1 Ki.14.20;15.9.—*L.*

[o] De.17.17.ch.11.21.

5 B.C. 955.

6 Or, *commentary*,

[o] ch.12.15;13.29.

CHAP. XIV.

[a] 1 Ki.2.10. ch. 9.31; 12.16.

[b] 1 Ki.15.8-14.

[c] 1 Ki. 15. 11; 22. 33. ch.25.2.

1 Not in the sight of 'the Lord God,' but of 'the Lord *his* God,' to remind us that the act of mercy whereby God 'apprehends us in Christ Jesus' is accompanied by an act of faith whereby we 'apprehend' him of whom we are apprehended, Phi. 3. 12. 1 Co.13.12.—*C.*

[d] 1 Ki.11.7,8; 14. 22-24. Eze.20.28. 1 Pe.1. 18.

[e] Of strange gods, 1 Ki.15.14.ch.15.17.

2 Heb. *statues*.

3 'The groves,' in the Hebrew *Asherim*, were images of the goddess *Astarte*, one of the ancient deities of the Canaanites. The rendering in our authorized version is calculated to create an erroneous idea.—*P.*

[f] Jos.22.5. Ge.18.19. ch.31.21;30.12-33.Ezr. x.Ne v.viii.-xiii.

[g] ver.3,1.

4 Heb. *sun-images*.

5 The connection between the peace of the kingdom and its devotion to the worship of God is noteworthy. The Lord gave rest and peace so long as the people were faithful to him, and kept his covenant. 'Righteousness exalteth a nation.'—*P.*

A.M. 3049. B.C. 955.

[h] ch.8.2-6;11.6-12.

[i] ver.1,5. Ju.3.11,30; 5.31. Ps. 127. 1,2; 46.9. ch 15.15.

[k] Le.26.1-13.De.28. 1-14;iv.-vi.

[l] ch.11.1;13.3; 25. 5. But all this strength is soon tried.

6 It is not to be imagined he had such a standing army always organized, and like modern European armies totally withdrawn from agriculture and manufactures. David had but a twelfth part called out at one time, and this it is probable continued to be the model of his successors. See 1 Ch.xxvii.—*C.*

[m] ch.16. 8. Is. 18. 1, Eze. 30. 5. Who had lately subdued Egypt.

[n] ch.13.3; 17. 14-18. Ps.33.16.

7 This prodigious array would not, as in European armies, consist entirely of soldiers with a regular commissariat and a few camp followers, but would include, as is often the case with eastern armies, the entire population, or at least a vast retinue of servants, counted in the muster, but forming no part of the effective force.—*C.*

[o] Jos.15.44. Mi.1.15. Ju.1.17.

[p] Ex.14.15.ch.13.14. Ps.50.15;91.15;130.1.

[q] 1 Sa.14.6.Ps.62.11. Ro.8.31.

[r] 1 Sa.17.45.Ps.22.4; 2.11;34.8;118.10-13.ch. 20.22;16.8.Pr.18.10.Je. 32.17.Ac.9.4. Is.41.10-16.Ro.8.31.

[s] ch.13.15; 20.22; 16. 8. Le.26.7,8. De.28.7. Jos.23.9,10.

8 The infidel who objects that such an army would never be brought against such an inconsiderable land will be answered by the classical reader when he remembers Xerxes, Greece, and Marathon; and the believer will rejoice in the light of Scripture, which exhibits, not man's prowess, but God's mercy in every national deliverance.—*C.*

9 Gerar lay on the extreme south of the plain of Philistia towards Egypt. The valley of Gerar was a favourite camping-ground of Abraham. It would seem that the Ethiopians had invaded Palestine after the manner of a nomad tribe, with their families, tents, flocks, and herds. The latter were left on the rich pastures of Gerar, while the fighting men marched northward to the frontier town of Mareshah.—*P.*

1 It is evident that Zerah had not come as a mere invader, but as a settler, taking possession of lands and cities. The invasion and occupation of the Roman empire by the northern nations will afford an intelligible parallel.—*C.*

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enemy will find all human efforts in vain. And the fair warnings, that render them inexcusable in their obstinacy, will occasion their more distinguished ruin. How often are princes occupied in laying ambushments of war and death when they should be treating of solid and lasting peace! But earnest supplications to God are more powerful than carnal stratagems: and he often lets his people fall into the most imminent danger, to awaken their cries, exercise their faith, and make their deliverance the more glorious. But if we are enabled to trust in him we shall not be moved. The prayer of faith and shouts of victory are inseparable. Civil wars and disputes among brethren are generally the most bitter and bloody: and what multitudes of souls doth a furious war hurry headlong and thoughtless into an eternal state, and most of them into the depths of hell! Nor can the mightiest escape the strokes of God's wrath and darts of death.

CHAPTER XIV. [Ver. 3. In the parallel passage in 1 Ki. 15. 14 it is said, 'the high-places were not removed.' It is probable that two distinct kinds of high-places are spoken of—one dedicated to the worship of idols, which were removed; another dedicated to the worship of God, though in a manner not authorized, which were permitted to remain. Of the latter kind was perhaps the high-place at Bethel, and that on the top of the Mount of Olives. *P.*]

Ver. 9. [Mareshah was an ancient Canaanitish city, in the plain of Judah. It was one of those which Rehoboam fortified to defend his kingdom against the Egyptians, 2 Ch. 11. 8. It was situated near the city of Eleutheropolis, and its site is now marked by a conical hill, the summit of which is filled with caverns. Beside it is a broad and rich vale, running up between low ridges; and away to the south and west lies the broad plain of Philistia. *P.*]

REFLECTIONS.—What a mercy to a church and nation are pious and reforming princes! And it is comely and pleasing when those who attempt to reform others show themselves proper patterns of virtue and devotion: when they act with due patience and prudence, as well as holy zeal; seeking to draw men from their abominations, without offering violence to their persons. However difficult or dangerous it may appear to repress the torrent of iniquity, zeal for God, and dependence on his assistance, will work wonders. Nay, when princes act with due steadiness and zeal in the suppression of profaneness and idolatry, they often find less difficulty than they at first imagined. Men's consciences side with the reforming laws, even while their inclinations are against them. Outward peace and prosperity must be considered as a great mercy. And this reward of fidelity to and trust in God should be improved to promote true religion: yet in the most

CHAPTER XV

1 Asa with Judah and many of Israel, moved by the prophecy of Azariah the son of Oded, make a solemn covenant with God. 16 *He putteth down Maachah his mother for her idolatry* 18 *He bringeth dedicated things into the house of God, and enjoyeth a long peace.*

AND the[a] Spirit of God came upon Azariah the son of Oded:

2 And he went out to meet[1] Asa, and said unto him, Hear ye me, Asa, and all Judah and Benjamin; The [b]LORD *is* with you, while ye be with him; and [c]if ye seek him, he will be found of you; but [d]if ye forsake him, he will forsake you.

3 Now for [e]a long season[2] Israel *hath been* without the true God, and without a teaching priest, and without law:

4 But [f]when they in their trouble did turn unto the LORD God of Israel, and sought him, he was found of them.

5 And in those times *there was* [g]no peace to him that went out, nor to him that came in, but great vexations *were* upon all the inhabitants of the countries.

6 And [h]nation was destroyed[3] of nation, and city of city: for God did vex them with all adversity.

7 Be ye strong therefore, and let not your hands be weak: for your work shall be rewarded.

8 ¶ And when Asa heard these words, and the prophecy of [i]Oded[4] the prophet, he took courage, and put away the [k]abominable idols out of all the land of Judah and Benjamin, and out of the cities [l]which he had taken from mount Ephraim, and renewed the [m]altar of the LORD that *was* before the porch of the LORD.

9 And he gathered [n]all Judah and Benjamin, and the strangers with them out of Ephraim and Manasseh, and out of Simeon: (for they fell to him out of Israel in abundance, when they saw that the LORD his God *was* with him:[5]

10 So they gathered themselves together at Jerusalem in the [q]third month, in the fifteenth year of the reign of Asa.

11 And they [r]offered unto the LORD the same time,[6] of the spoil *which* they had brought, seven hundred oxen, and seven thousand sheep.

12 And they [s]entered into a covenant to seek the LORD God of their fathers with all their heart, and with all their soul;

A.M. 3059. B.C. 945.

CHAP. XV.

a 2 Sa. 23. 2. Eze. 3. 14. 2 Pe. 1. 21.

1 Heb. *before Asa.*

b ch. 13. 12; 32. 8. 1 Ch. 22. 18. Ja. 4. 8.

c ver. 4, 14. Mat. 7. 7. ch. 33. 12, 13. Ps. 32. 6. Je. 29. 12–14. Is. 55. 6.

d 1 Ch. 28. 9. 2 Ki. 21. 14. ch. 24. 20; 7. 19, 20.

e Ho. 3. 4. 1 Ki. 12. 28 3:14. 3.

2 The prophet does not mean long ago, in reference to the time of the judges, but addressing Judah and Benjamin, ver. 2, 8, he speaks of the separate kingdom of Israel under Jeroboam (comp. ver. 9), of the mutual calamities the two kingdoms inflicted upon each other (see ch. 13, 17), because of this national defection, and of God's mercy to such, in either nation, as believed the word of his law and prophets, and turned to him by repentance.—*C.*

f Ju. 3. 9, 15; 10. 10, 16. 1 Sa. 7. 4.

g Ju. 5. 6; vi. x. 1 Sa. xiii. ch. 12. 15; xiii.

h ch. 12. 15; 13. 17. Is. 10. 5. Am. 3. 6.

3 Heb. *beaten in pieces.*

i ver. 1.

4 'The se words,' that is, the words spoken by Azariah the son of Oded, ver. 1, and the 'prophecy' of Oded himself, who had likewise spoken, though the words of his prophecy are not given, while their happy effect is recorded.—*C.*

k Heb. *abominations,* 2 Ki. 23. 13.

l ch. 13. 19.

m ch. 4. 1; 8. 12.

n ch. 11. 16; 32. 9. Zec. 8. 23.

5 The 'strangers' here mentioned were Israelites belonging to tribes not included in the kingdom of Judah. It is singular to find some even out of Ephraim, the great rival tribe, coming to Jerusalem. It is evident that many in the northern kingdom were dissatisfied and shocked at the idolatry there practised, and now when they saw the pure worship of God re-established under Asa, they embraced the precious opportunity of journeying to Jerusalem to join in it. It is not to be inferred from the mention of 'strangers out of Simeon,' that the tribe and territory of Simeon were not included in the southern kingdom. They formed part of Judah; but it seems that some of the Simeonites had left their homes and settled in the northern kingdom. They are here called 'strangers.'—*P.*

q Es. 8. 9.

r Nu. 31. 28, 29. ch. 1. 6; 7. 5. 1 Ch. 26. 26, 27.

6 Heb. *in that day.*

s De. 5. 2, 3; 29. 1. ch. 29. 10; 34. 31, 32. Ne. 9. 38; 10. 28. Ps. 110. 3. Je. 50. 5. 2 Co. 8. 5.

A.M. 3064. B.C. 940.

t Ex. 22. 20. De. 13. 9; 17. 5; 20. 17.

7 The essence of the Jewish constitution was, that God was King, consequently every act of idolatry was considered as high treason, and therefore capitally punished, De. 13. 2—*C.*

u Ne. 5. 13; 10. 29. Ps. 119. 106.

x Ne. 8. 10. 2 Co. 1. 12. Pr. 3. 17. Ps. 32. 11.

y ver. 2, 4. Mat. 7. 7. Is. 45. 19. ch. 14. 6, 7.

z 1 Ki. 15. 13. ch. 14. 3, 5. De. 33. 9; 13. 6, 8. Ze. 13. 3.

a Grandmother, 1 Ki. 15. 2, 10.

8 In many eastern courts, the queen-mother is not a name of relation, but of a high and influential office. From such a dignity Maachah seems to have been removed.—*C.*

9 Heb. *horror.*

1 Literally, 'a *fear* in a grove,' that is, an object to be worshipped with fear, not the filial and ennobling fear which is due to God, but the slavish and degrading fear rendered to an abominable idol. There is little doubt that this idol was Ashtaroth.—*C.*

b 2 Ki. 23. 4, 6, 12.

c For worship of the true God, Le. 26. 30. De. 12. 13, 14. 1 Ki. 22. 43. 2 Ki. 12. 3; 14. 4. ch. 15. 17.

d 1 Ki. 7. 51; 15. 15.

2 Till the end of.

e Kingdom, 1 Ki. 15. 10, 32.

CHAP. XVI.

B.C. 939.

1 *viz.* from the rending of the ten tribes from Judah, over which Asa was now king.

a 1 Ki. 15. 17–22; 22. 27. ch. 11. 16.

b 1 Sa. 7. 17.

2 Baasha died in the twenty-sixth year of Asa, and so could not be at war with him in the thirty-sixth, 1 Ki. 15. 33; 16. 6, 8. The word, however, rendered 'reign,' may as properly be translated 'kingdom,' and the calculation may be from the formation of Judah and Benjamin into a separate kingdom under Rehoboam. This rendering will also apply to ch. 15. 19. *C.*—See note on 1 Ki. xv.—*P.*

c 2 Ki. 12. 18; 16. 8; 18. 15.

3 Heb. *Darmesek.*

d Ju. 2. 2. Is. 31. 2; 8. 12.

e 2 Ti. 6. 10.

4 Heb. *which were his.*

f 1 Ki. 15. 20; 9. 19. 2 Ki. 15. 29.

5 All the places and districts here mentioned were in the north of Israel, on the borders of Syria, and consequently more exposed to the attacks of Benhadad's forces. Finding it necessary to protect his kingdom on the Syrian frontier, Baasha not only relinquished his attempt to fortify Ramah, but left it in the hands of the Judahites.—*f.*

6 B.C. 935.

13 That [t]whosoever would not seek the LORD God of Israel should be put to death, whether small or great, whether man or woman.[7]

14 And they [u]sware unto the LORD with a loud voice, and with shouting, and with trumpets, and with cornets.

15 And all [x]Judah rejoiced at the oath: for they had sworn with all their heart, and sought him with their whole desire; and he [y]was found of them: and the LORD gave them rest round about.

16 ¶ And also *concerning* [z]Maachah the [a]mother of Asa the king, he removed her from *being* queen,[8] because she had made an [9]idol[1] in a grove: and Asa cut down her idol, and stamped *it*, and burnt *it* at the brook [b]Kidron.

17 But the [c]high places were not taken away out of Israel: nevertheless the heart of Asa was perfect all his days.

18 ¶ And he brought [d]into the house of God the things that his father had dedicated, and that he himself had dedicated, silver, and gold, and vessels.

19 And there was no *more* war unto[2] the five and thirtieth year of the [e]reign of Asa.

CHAPTER XVI.

1 Asa, by the aid of the Syrians, diverteth Baasha from building of Ramah. 7 *Being reproved thereof by Hanani, he putteth him in prison.* 11 *Among his other acts in his disease he seeketh not to God, but to the physicians.* 13 *His death and burial.*

IN the six and thirtieth year of the reign[1] of Asa, [a]Baasha king of Israel came up against Judah, and built [b]Ramah, to the intent that he might let none go out or come in to Asa king of Judah.[2]

2 Then [c]Asa brought out silver and gold out of the treasures of the house of the LORD and of the king's house, and sent to Ben-hadad king of Syria, that dwelt at Damascus,[3] saying,

3 *There is* [d]a league between me and thee, as *there was* between my father and thy father: behold, I have sent thee silver and gold; go, break thy league with Baasha king of Israel, that he may depart from me.

4 And Ben-hadad [e]hearkened unto king Asa, and sent the captains of his[4] armies against the cities of Israel; and they smote [f]Ijon, and Dan, and Abel-maim, and all the store-cities [5]of Naphtali.[6]

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profound peace it is proper to prepare for war: the clouds will return after the rain. God often tries his people with great danger and distress while they are proceeding in their duty in the work of reformation: but there is no craft or might that can prevail against the Lord their God. And in such cases he is ready to answer their prayer of faith, and grant them an easy victory over their enemies, spiritual or temporal. But how dreadful is the guilt of princes who rashly hurry multitudes of their subjects into ruin, death, and hell! Often they who assist the Lord's enemies against his people share in their just punishments: and the wealth of the sinner is laid up for the just.

CHAPTER XV. REFLECTIONS. — Let me observe that God grants peace and victory to his people to animate them to their duty; that none ever seek him in vain; but that the case of churches and nations is extremely bad when God forsakes them; and that the hurt which we or others have sustained by sin ought to deter us from it. God's work must be done with unanimity, cheerfulness, and resolution; and we must draw as many as we can into it. He must be served with the first and best of what providence brings to our hand: and all our religious performances are to no purpose except they be hearty and sincere. Notwithstanding the high obligations of God's law on our consciences, to the whole of our duty, it is often necessary that we bind our souls to it by bonds, oaths, and covenants with God, in order to fortify us against temptation, and engage us to holiness, or to renew those public covenants into which our fathers entered for themselves and us. Public covenanting with God is of great use in times of reformation; and ought always to be grounded on the covenant of grace and the great sacrifice of Jesus Christ; performed with much knowledge, faith, integrity, delight, and cheerfulness; and nothing engaged to in it but what is plainly warranted by God. It is both an honour and happiness for nations to be under such vows. And great care, faithfulness, and impartiality ought to be exercised in extirpating idolatry, and in punishing obstinate idolaters for their treasonable rebellion against God, the King of kings. National piety procures national happiness; yet none experience the real pleasures of religion but such as are sincere and upright in it; to such, though they be not sinless, God's service brings its own comfort and reward along with it.

CHAPTER XVI. REFLECTIONS.—The strongest faith may soon be shaken: and unbelief will make the best to fall into a variety of evils. What reliance

COFFEE GARDEN, ABANA RIVER. [II. CHRONICLES, xvi : 2.]—"Then Asa brought out silver and gold out of the treasures of the house of the Lord and of the king's house, and sent to Ben-hadad, king of Syria, that dwelt at Damascus." One of the things that will strike any traveler at Damascus is the great number of coffee gardens, which are found in different portions of the city. These gardens upon some one of their sides usually front the Abana River. The natives gather here to smoke the nargileh pipe or cigarette and to drink black coffee. These gardens are filled with large trees and adorned by beautiful flowering shrubs. Rose bushes grow in all of them, and roses are taken from these gardens with which to make the famous attar of roses. During the night, when the gardens are illuminated, they look as if they might be scenes of the Arabian Nights. The great charm of Damascus is its abundant supply of water.

5 And it came to pass, when Baasha heard it, that he left off building of Ramah, and let his work cease.

6 Then [g]Asa the king took all Judah; and they carried away the stones of Ramah, and the timber thereof, wherewith Baasha was a building; and he built therewith [h]Geba and Mizpah.

7 ¶ And at that time [i]Hanani the seer came to Asa king of Judah, and said unto him, [k]Because thou hast relied on the king of Syria, and not relied on the LORD thy God, therefore is the host of the king of Syria escaped[7] out of thine hand.

8 Were not [l]the Ethiopians and the Lubims a huge[8] host, with very many chariots and horsemen? yet, because thou didst rely on the LORD, he delivered them into thine hand.

9 For the [m]eyes of the LORD run to and fro throughout the whole earth, [n]to show himself strong in the behalf of *them* whose heart *is* perfect toward him. Herein thou [o]hast done foolishly: therefore from henceforth thou shalt have wars.

10 Then Asa was [p]wroth with the seer,[9] and put him in [q]a prison-house; for *he was* in a rage with him because of this *thing*. And Asa oppressed[1] *some* of the people [r]the same time.

11 ¶ And, [s]behold, the acts of Asa, first and last, lo, they *are* written in the book of the kings of Judah and Israel.

12 And Asa, in the thirty and ninth year[2] of his reign, was [t]diseased in his feet, until his disease *was* exceeding *great*:[3] yet in his disease he [u]sought not to the LORD, but to the physicians.[4]

13 ¶ And Asa slept with his fathers,[5] and died in the one and fortieth year of his reign.

14 And they buried him in his own sepulchres, which he had made[6] for himself in the city of David, and laid him in the bed which was filled with [x]sweet odours, and divers kinds *of spices* prepared by the apothecaries' art: and they made a very great [y]burning for him.[7]

CHAPTER XVII.

1 *Jehoshaphat, succeeding Asa, reigneth well, and prospereth.* 7 *He sendeth Levites with his princes to teach Judah.* 10 *His enemies being terrified by God, some of them bring him presents and tribute.* 12 *His greatness, captains, and armies.*

AND Jehoshaphat[a] his son reigned in his stead, and strengthened himself against Israel.

A.M. 3069. B.C. 935.

g 1 Ki.15.22.

h Jos.18.24,26. 1 Sa. 7.6,16.

i 1 Ki.16.1. ch. 19.2; 20.34.

k Is.31.1. Je.17.5,6.

7 Called in as auxiliaries, it would seem the Syrians had become marauders—not an uncommon result with such mercenary armies; and that Asa had been compelled to turn his arms against them (comp. ch. 16. 2), and that they had 'escaped' for the present to return in greater force against his kingdom.—*C.*

l ch.14.9–12.

8 Heb. *in abundance.*

m Pr.5.21; 15.3. Job 34.21. Zec.4.10. Je. 16. 17. He.4.13.

n Ps.18.25, 26; 32. 7; 113.6. Zec.2.5.

o 1 Ch.21.8. 1 Ki. 15. 32. 2 Sa.12.7–12.

p ch.26.19. Ps.141.5.

9 Even the heathen have said, that 'anger is a short *madness.*' Our Lord has, however, shown that it is still worse, and that, when causeless, it is *murder*, Mat. 5. 22. Here its heinous character still farther appears in its direct rebellion against the message of God.—*C.*

q ch.18. 26. Je. 20. 2; 29.2.

1 Heb. *crushed.*

r Ge.9.21,22;19.33. 2 Sa.11.4.

s 1 Ki.15. 23. ch. 24. 27; 25.26; 26. 22; 32. 32;33.18;35.27;36.8.

2 B.C. 916.

t Job 14.1. De.28.22. ch.21.18,19;24.25.

3 Some disease commencing in the feet and ascending (as the original intimates) upward to the body.—Disease is the offspring of sin, and every disease is either a corrective of sin, or a cultivator of grace, 1 Co.11. 30, 32. 2 Co. 4. 17. Disease should therefore lead to careful self-examination; and, if we have never yet drawn near to God, or fallen from our first love, it should warn us to seek him while he may be found.—*C.*

u 1 Ch.10.14. Je. 17. 5. Is.22.2.

4 Most probably foreigners, who were astrologers, and dealers in amulets and charms, a species of idolatry that led the king's heart away from God.—*C.*

5 B.C. 974.

6 Heb. *digged.*

x Ge.50.2. Mar.16.1.

y Je.34.5. ch. 21. 19; 32.33.

7 The context shows that 'the great burning' was of incense and perfumes. It was customary both in Egypt and Palestine to burn incense at the funerals of kings and great men. The quantity consumed at the burial of Asa seems to have been unusually large.—*P.*

CHAP. XVII.

a 1 Ki.15.24;22.41. 1 Ch.3.10. Mat.1.8.

A.M. 3030. B.C. 914.

b ch.11. 11, 12; 14. 7; 15.8; ver.19.

c ch.15.9. Ro.8.31.

d Not 2 Sa.xi.

1 Some read the passage—'of his father and of David;' others, for David, would substitute Asa. Houbigant renders it, 'first and last;' but there does not appear sufficient authority for any of these emendations. That the 'first ways' of Asa were religious, is recorded (ch. 14. 2), and may not David have been one of his names, generally dropped for the name of Asa, or the *physician*, a name probably derived from his following physicians to the neglect of God, ch.16. 12? *C.*—There can be no doubt that king David is here referred to. According to Hebrew idiom and eastern custom the word *father* has a very wide signification. It may mean any ancestor however remote. David was not merely one of Jehoshaphat's ancestors, but he was the head of the royal line.—*P.*

e ch.14.2;15.2. Lu.1. 6.1 Th.2.10.2 Co.1.12.

f 1 Ki. 12. 26–33; 13. 33; 16.25–34.

g 2 Sa. 7. 25. 1 Ki. 2. 12. Ps.72.7,11. Pe.5.10.

h 1 Sa.10.27. 1 Ki.4. 21. ch.1.15. Mat.6.33.

2 That is, *was encouraged.*

i Of idols, for 1 Ki. 22.43. ch.20.33.

3 B.C. 911.

k Is.49.23;60.13.

l Ne.8.7. ch.35.3.

4 The princes most probably taught the civil law, the Levites and the priests the nature and design of the ceremonies of the temple service: all was contained in the 'book of the law.' It forms a remarkable example of a public itinerant ministry, which appears to have been imitated, in some degree, in the reign of Edward VI.—*C.*

m De.17.18. Mal.2. 7. ch.35.3.

n Is. 8. 20. Jn. 5. 39. De.6.6–9. Mat.28. 20. 2 Ti.3.16,17. Ro.15.4.

5 'The book of the law of the Lord' was the full and well-known name of the Pentateuch—a name given to it by Jehovah himself (De. 31. 26; 30. 10; xi.); it was frequently mentioned by Joshua (ch. 1. 8, &c.), and by the sacred writers who succeeded him.—*P.*

o Ge.35.5. ch.14.14.

6 Heb. *was.*

p ch.9.14; 26.8. 2 Ki. 3.4.

q ver. 5, 11,13. 1 Ch. 29.25.

r ch.8. 2–6; 11.5–12; 14.6,7.

7 Or, *palaces.*

s 1 Ch.27.27–31.

8 By his judicious government he increased commerce and manufactures, and carried on much public improvement in all the cities.—*C.*

t Ge.12.2;13.16;15.5; 22.17; 0.4.

9 Not *with him* in Jerusalem, but subject to the monthly mustering, ordained by David (1Ch.xxvii.), and ready to be called out together for the defence of their country.—*C.*

2 And he [b]placed forces in all the fenced cities of Judah, and set garrisons in the land of Judah, and in the cities of Ephraim, which Asa his father had taken.

3 And the LORD was [c]with Jehoshaphat, because he walked in the [d]first ways of his father David,[1] and sought not unto Baalim;

4 But [e]sought to the *LORD* God of his father, and walked in his commandments, and not [f]after the doings of Israel:

5 Therefore the LORD [g]stablished the kingdom in his hand: and all Judah brought to Jehoshaphat [h]presents; and he had riches and honour in abundance.

6 And his heart was lifted up[2] in the ways of the LORD: moreover, he took away the [i]high places and groves out of Judah.

7 ¶ Also, in the third year[3] of his reign, [k]he sent to his princes, *even* to Ben-hail, and to Obadiah, and to Zechariah, and to Nethaneel, and to Michaiah, [l]to teach in the cities of [4]Judah.

8 And with them *he sent* Levites, *even* Shemaiah, and Nethaniah, and Zebadiah, and Asahel, and Shemiramoth, and Jehonathan, and Adonijah, and Tobijah, and Tob-adonijah, Levites; and with them Elishama and Jehoram, [m]priests.

9 And they taught in Judah, and *had* [n]the book of the law of the LORD with them, and went about throughout all the cities of Judah, and taught the people.[5]

10 ¶ And [o]the fear of the LORD fell[6] upon all the kingdoms of the lands that *were* round about Judah, so that they made no war against Jehoshaphat.

11 Also [p]*some* of the Philistines brought Jehoshaphat presents, and tribute-silver; and the Arabians brought him flocks, seven thousand and seven hundred rams, and seven thousand and seven hundred he-goats.

12 ¶ And Jehoshaphat [q]waxed great exceedingly; and he [r]built in Judah castles,[7] and cities of store.

13 And he had [s]much business in the cities of Judah:[8] and the men of war, mighty men of valour, *were* in Jerusalem.

14 And these *are* [t]the numbers of them, according to the house of their fathers: Of Judah, the captains of thousands, Adnah the chief, and with him[9] mighty men of valour three hundred thousand.

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can there be on an arm of flesh! What enticement is there, or even hiring of men, to perjury, and to murdering of God's people, by the plunder of his temple! But opposition to God's people, or murdering of them, though it should be by the hand of heathens, brings along with it the most fearful ruin. And often, particularly in carnal expedients to extricate themselves, even good men act against their experience, their knowledge, and their interest, all at once: often in pride they hate, and in passion they persecute, their faithful reprovers; and, even in distress, overlook God, and depend on means carnal or devilish. O what need we have to consider our ways, to keep our heart with all diligence, and to pray for peculiar grace to keep us to the end! All our departures from God spring from our evil heart of unbelief: and the very means which we use unlawfully to avert trouble will bring it more heavily upon us. Sinful wisdom will at last appear egregious folly. Passion, and impatience of reproof, will issue in bitter groans. Rewarding of God's messengers with imprisonment will issue in our own confinement on earth or in hell: and if our desperate wickedness of heart be indulged, it will mark us with lasting shame. But notwithstanding all their sad blemishes, the godly die in Christ, and must be had in honour by their survivors.

CHAPTER XVII. REFLECTIONS. — How glorious is it when remarkable piety and prosperity are so connected that they promote one another, and outward wealth and greatness lift up the heart to God! —when kings at the same time promote religion and advance the civil power of the nation!—when the personal piety of princes, and their zeal for reforming others, are equally conspicuous!—and when ministers and magistrates heartily concur in promoting the know-

15 And next to him[1] *was* Jehohanan the captain, and with him two hundred and fourscore thousand.

16 And next him *was* Amasiah the son of Zichri, [u]who willingly offered himself unto the LORD;[2] and with him two hundred thousand mighty men of valour.

17 And of Benjamin; Eliada a mighty man of valour, and with him armed men with bow and shield two hundred thousand.

18 And next him *was* Jehozabad, and with him an hundred and fourscore thousand ready prepared for the war.

19 These[3] waited on the king, besides *those* whom the king [x]put in the fenced cities throughout all Judah.[4]

CHAPTER XVIII.

1 Jehoshaphat, joined in affinity with Ahab, is persuaded to go with him against Ramoth-gilead. 4 Ahab, seduced by false prophets, according to the word of Micaiah, is slain there.

NOW Jehoshaphat had [a]riches and honour in abundance, and [b]joined affinity with Ahab.[1]

2 And[c] after *certain* years[2] he went down to Ahab to Samaria: and Ahab killed sheep and oxen for him in abundance, and for the people that *he had* with him, and persuaded him to go up *with him* to Ramoth-gilead.

3 And Ahab king of Israel said unto Jehoshaphat king of Judah, [d]Wilt thou go with me to Ramoth-gilead? And he answered him, I *am* as thou *art*, and my people as thy people; and *we will be* with thee in the war.

4 ¶ And Jehoshaphat said unto the king of Israel, [e]Inquire, I pray thee, at the word of the LORD to-day.

5 Therefore the king of Israel gathered together of prophets [f]four hundred men,[3] and said unto them, Shall we go to Ramoth-Gilead to battle, or shall I forbear? And they said, Go[g] up; for God[4] will deliver *it* into the king's hand.

6 ¶ But Jehoshaphat said, *Is there* not here a prophet of the LORD [h]besides, that we might inquire of him?

7 And the king of Israel said unto Jehoshaphat, *There is* yet [i]one man, by whom we may inquire of the LORD: but I hate him; [k]for he never prophesieth good unto me, but always evil: the same *is* Micaiah the son of Imla. And Jehoshaphat said, Let not the king say so.

8 And the king of Israel called for one *of his* officers,[5] and said, [l]Fetch quickly Micaiah the son of Imla.

9 And the king of Israel, and Jehoshaphat king of Judah, sat either of them on his throne, clothed in *their* robes, and they sat in a [m]void place at the entering in of the gate of Samaria; and all the prophets prophesied before them.

10 And Zedekiah the son of Chenaanah had made him [n]horns of iron, and said, Thus saith the LORD, With these thou shalt push Syria until they be consumed.

11 And all the prophets prophesied so, saying, [o]Go up to Ramoth-gilead, and prosper; for the LORD shall deliver *it* into the hand of the king.

12 And the messenger that went to call Micaiah spake to him, saying, Behold, the words of the prophets *declare* good to the king [p]with one assent; let thy word therefore, I pray thee, be like one of theirs, and speak thou good.

13 And Micaiah said, *As* the LORD liveth, [q]even what my God saith, that will I speak.

14 And when he was come to the king, the king said unto him, Micaiah, shall we go to Ramoth-gilead to battle, or shall I forbear? And he said, [r]Go ye up, and prosper, and they shall be delivered into your hand.[6]

15 ¶ And the king said to him, How many times shall I [s]adjure thee that thou say nothing but the truth to me in the name of the LORD?

16 Then he said, I did see all Israel scattered upon the mountains, as [t]sheep that have no shepherd: and the LORD said, These have no master; let them return *therefore* every man to his house in peace.

17 And the king of Israel said to Jehoshaphat, Did I not tell thee *that* he would not prophesy good unto me, but evil?[7]

18 Again he said, Therefore hear the word of the LORD; I saw [u]the LORD sitting upon his throne,[8] and all the host of heaven standing on his right hand and *on* his left.

19 And the LORD said, Who shall entice Ahab king of Israel, that he may go up and fall at Ramoth-gilead? And one spake saying after this manner, and another saying after that manner.

20 Then there came out a [x]spirit, and stood before the LORD, and said, I will entice him. And the LORD said unto him, Wherewith?

21 And he said, I will go out, and be [y]a lying spirit in the mouth of all his prophets. And *the LORD* said, Thou shalt entice *him*, and thou shalt also prevail: [z]go out, and do *even* [9]so.

22 Now therefore, behold, the LORD [a]hath put a lying spirit in the mouth of these thy prophets, and the LORD hath spoken evil against thee.

A.M. 3104. B.C. 900.

1 Heb. *at his hand.*

u Ju.5.2,9. Ps.110.3. Ac.2.41. In all, 780,000 of Judah, and 380,000 of Benjamin. The whole of his subjects could not therefore be less than 6,000,000 of men, women, and children.

2 That is, who did not choose war as a mere profession, or for the purposes of advancement, but solely in obedience to the Lord, when his providence or his word called him to the defence of his country.—*C.*

3 Officers.

x ver.2,12.

4 The organization of the army and defences of the kingdom were most complete. The army was not Kept as a modern standing army; it bore more resemblance to a militia. The soldiers were trained, ranked under leaders, and ready to be called out at a moment's notice; but during peace they were permitted to remain at their ordinary occupations, with the exception of a few who were placed as garrisons in fortified cities. The army was composed of five great divisions. Judah contributed 780,000 men in three divisions, and Benjamin 380,000 in two divisions.—*P.*

CHAP. XVIII.

B.C. 897.

a ch.17.5,12; 1.15. 1 Sa.2.30. Mat.6.33. 1 Ti. 4.8. Pr.10.22.

b 2 Ki. 8. 18. 2 Co. 6. 14. Ge.6.2.

1 Joram his eldest son married Athaliah, Ahab's daughter —a remarkable example of the danger of marrying into an irreligious family, as it led to the ruin both of father and son.—*C.*

c 1 Ki. 22. 2. Pr. 9. 6; 23.3; 13.20.

2 Heb. *at the end of years.*

d 1 Ki. 22. 4–35. ch. 19.2. 2 Ki. 3.7.

e 1 Ki. 22. 4–6. 1 Sa. 23.2,4,9. 2 Sa. 2.1; 5.19, 23.

f 1 Ki.18,19; 22.6.

3 That is, of those called prophets, from pretending to foretell future events. The word *it*, fixing the meaning of the response to Ramoth-gilead, is not in the original; so that, like other false oracles, these prophets could have defended their answer, whatever the event had been. Neither is any king specified, so that the delivery might have been to the king of Israel as readily as to the king of Israel.—*C.*

g Eze.13.3–10,19,22. Je.23.17. Is.30.10. Mi. 2.11; 3.11.

4 In 1 Ki. 22. 6 it is *Adonai*, *i.e.* the Lord, a name used with greater latitude than Jehovah. Perhaps Jehoshaphat suspected their character from their using that word, which might appy to Baal, or any heathen god, and therefore in the rest of the interview Zedekiah and the others employ the name Jehovah.—*I.*

h Heb. *yet*, or *more*, 1 Ki.22.7–27.

i 1 Ki. 20. 13, 22, 28, 35.

k Mi.2.11. Je.28.8,9. Ga.4.16, with 1 Ki.18. 17; 21.20; 22.8.

5 Or, *eunuchs.*

l Heb. *Hasten*, 1 Ki.22.9.

A.M. 3107. B.C. 897.

m Or, *floor*, 1 Ki. 22.10–12. Is.14.9. Eze. 26.16. Da.7.9. Mat.19. 28,29. The thrashing-floors among the ancient Jews were only, as they are to this day in the East, round level plats of ground in the open air, where the corn was trodden out by oxen. Such was the floor of Araunah the Jebusite, where David erected the altar. Hence a floor might well be near the entrance of Samaria, which was built on a hill, and might afford no improper place for the kings of Israel and Judah to hear the prophets in.—*I.*

n Je.27.2. Is.20.2–4. Eze.1v.v.1 Ki.22.11.

o 1 Ki. 22. 12. Pr. 24. 24,25. ver. 32–34. 2 Pe. 2.1. Jude 16. Re.16.13, 14; 22.8.

p Heb. *with one mouth*, 1 Ki.22.13.

q Je.23.28; 42.4. 1 Co. 11.23; 4.2. Mat. 28.20. Eze. 2 7;3.17. Ac.20.27. Is.8.20.

r 1 Sa. 4.21. Am. 4.4,5. Ec.11.9. 1 Ki.18.27; 22. 15.

6 Micaiah does not speak in the name of the Lord, but pointing to the false prophets, he repeats their words, as if he had said, Why ask me since these your chosen oracles have so spoken? Besides, he does not say, 'Go ye up' and ye shall 'prosper;' but, 'go ye up and prosper,' and, in that event, 'they shall be delivered;' but *the event* he does not foretell. The sentence merely requires to be read with the emphasis on *prosper*, and the prophet stands either from using irony or speaking untruth.—*C.*

s 1 Sa. 14. 24; 3. 17. Mat.26.63.

t Zec.13.7; 10.2. ver. 33,34. 1 Ki.22.17,36. Je. 23.1–3.

7 Or, *but for evil.*

u Da.7.9,10. Ps.103. 20,21. Is.6.1–4. Job 1.6; 2.1. 1 Ki.22.19–22.

8 This prophecy is an emblematic vision, such as is common in other prophecies, for example, in Nebuchadnezzar's vision of the empires, under the emblem of a compound image (Da. 2. 31–45), or Daniel's vision of the beasts (Da. vii.), or the still more complicated, because more particular, visions of John in the Apocalypse.—*C.*

x Job 1. 6; 2.1. 2 Co. 12.7; 2. 11. 2 Th. 2.9,11.

y Re.20.8; 12.9. Ho. 4.12. Zec.13.2. Ju.8.44.

z Ps.109.6,17. 2 Th. 2.10,11.

9 Not a permission, but a command, to inflict a judicial and deserved punishment upon a king who hated truth and loved lies. This does not, however, excuse the lying spirit, or make God the author of his lie: that lying spirit is himself judicially punished when given over, like wicked men, to follow his own wicked inclinations. See Ps.81.12. Ro.1.24, 26, 28. 2 Th. 2. 7–12.—*C.*

a Job 12. 16. Is. 19. 14. Eze.14. 9. Ju. 9. 23. Am.3.6. Ro.1. 24. Ps. 81.12.

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ledge and fear of God! Religion is a reasonable service; and in promoting reformation we must begin with instruction in the truths of God as laid down in his word. No dictates of men, but the lively oracles of God, must be produced as the ground of what we inculcate. What a powerful protection to nations is the terror of God impressed on their neighbours and enemies! No armed hosts are comparable to it. To what prodigious numbers had the Hebrews increased, had not their sin prevented it! and marvellous was the providence of God in maintaining such multitudes in so small a country as the lots of Judah and Benjamin!

CHAPTER XVIII. REFLECTIONS. — Marriages founded on pride and worldly-mindedness bring dreadful miseries along with them: and the strongest expressions of friendship from wicked men are to be suspected as methods of serving themselves. Their feasts as well as their kisses are deceitful: and even the best men are apt to be ensnared by their caresses and flattery. Often, while such men ought, and profess to consult the Lord, they do but really consult the devil and his agents. And they who are once become familiar

AGORA TEMPLE IN ATHENS, GREECE — WHERE MEGACLES WAS THE CHIEF ARCHON, WHEN AHAB AND JEHOSHAPHAT REIGNED OVER ISRAEL AND JUDAH. [II. CHRON., xviii: 1.] — "Now Jehoshaphat had riches and honor in abundance, and joined affinity with Ahab." Jehoshaphat succeeded Asa as king of Judah in 914 B. C. Ahab succeeded Omri as king of Israel in 918 B. C. In B. C. 912 an alliance was made between Jehoshaphat and Ahab. About the same time Megacles was the chief archon of Athens, and it was during this period that the Eupatrids arose in open revolt and besieged the Acropolis in Athens. Illustrating this contemporaneous Greek history we give a picture of the Agora temple in Athens which stands just beneath the Acropolis on the side of the north wall, and is doubtless in the very neighborhood of the revolt led by Cylon. Cylon was of the highest rank and position, and a man of great wealth who suddenly appeared in arms against the Athenian government. It is interesting thus to see what was taking place in Greece at the time Ahab and Jehoshaphat ruled in Judah and in Israel.

23 ¶ Then Zedekiah the son of Chenaanah came near, and [b]smote Micaiah upon the cheek, and said, Which way went the Spirit of the LORD from me to speak unto thee?

24 And Micaiah said, Behold, [c]thou shalt see on that day when thou shalt go into [d]an inner chamber to hide thyself.[9]

25 Then the king of Israel said, [e]Take ye Micaiah, and carry him back to Amon the governor of the city, and to Joash the king's son;

26 And say, Thus saith the king, Put this *fellow* in the [f]prison, and [g]feed him with bread of affliction, and with water of affliction, until I return in peace.

27 And Micaiah said, [h]If thou certainly return in peace, *then* hath not the LORD spoken by me. And he said, [i]Hearken, all ye people.[1]

28 ¶ So the king of Israel and Jehoshaphat the king of Judah went up to Ramoth-gilead.

29 And the king of Israel said unto Jehoshaphat, [k]I will disguise[2] myself, and will go to the battle; but put thou on thy robes.[3] So the king of Israel disguised himself; and they went to the battle.

30 Now the king of Syria had commanded the captains of the chariots that *were* with him, saying, Fight ye not with small or great, [l]save only with the king of Israel.[4]

31 And it came to pass, when the captains of the chariots saw Jehoshaphat, that they said, It *is* the king of Israel; therefore they [m]compassed about him to fight: but Jehoshaphat cried[n] out,[5] and the LORD helped him; and God [o]moved them *to depart* from him.

32 For it came to pass, that, when the captains of the chariots perceived that it was not the king of Israel, they turned back again from pursuing him.[6]

33 ¶ And a *certain* man drew a bow [p]at a venture,[7] and smote the king of Israel between the joints of the harness:[8] therefore he said to his chariot-man, Turn thine hand, that thou mayest carry me out of the host; for I am wounded.[9]

34 And[q] the battle increased that day: howbeit the king of Israel stayed[1] *himself* up in *his* chariot against the Syrians until the even: and about the time of the sun going down he died.[2]

A.M. 3107. B.C. 897.

b Je.20.2. Mar.14.65. Ac.23.2. 2Co.12.7. 1 Ki.22.24.

c Is.26.11. 2 Ki. 7.2. Je.28.15.

d Heb. *a chamber in a chamber*, 1 Ki. 20.30;22.25.

9 The prophet meekly answered that the event would determine which of them spake by the Spirit of God, and he would not need information on that head when he should have to conceal himself in the closest recess, 'a chamber or closet within a chamber,' for fear of those who sought his life, in order to punish him as a false prophet, and the cause of Ahab's death.—*Scott.*

e 1 Ki. 19.10; 22. 26. Re.2.10.ch.25.16.

f Je. 37.15. Mat.14.3.

g 1 Ki. 22.27. Is. 30. 20. Ps.80.6.

h Nu. 16. 29. Is. 44. 26.ch.25.16.

i Mi.1.2. Re. 2.7, 11, 29. Je. 22. 29. 1 Ki.22. 28.

1 That is, the prophet said *hearken*; thus putting his prophetical character to the test of public and undeniable failure or fulfilment of his prediction.—*C.*

k 1 Ki.22.30; 14.2;20. 38.ch.35.22; ver.30, 31. Ps.12.2;55.21. Pr.29.5.

2 The Hebrew text has, 'change thy garments and come,' but our translation is countenanced by all the ancient versions and is required by the context. The Sept. and Josephus say that Jehoshaphat wore the royal robes of Ahab, and ver. 31 countenances this, for he was taken for Ahab.

3 See note on 1 Ki. 22.30.—*C.*

l Horrid ingratitude, 1 Ki. 20, 32–34. Mat.6.6.Pr.12.10.

4 Thus does the wicked king seek to destroy the man that had spared his life, and restored him to liberty and a kingdom, 1 Ki. 20. 31, 34, 42. But ingratitude to man is inseparable from ingratitude to God, Ro.1.21.—*C.*

m Pr.9.6;13.20.

n Ex.14.15.ch.14.11. Ps.50.15.

5 See note on 1 Ki. 22.32. —*C.*

o Ge.22.14. Ps.46. 1; 50.1;91.15. 2 Co.1.10.

6 Heb. *from after him.*

p Heb. *in his simplicity.* 2 Sa.15.11. Pr. 10.9,33.

7 See note on 1 Ki. 22.34.—*C.*

8 Heb. *between the joints and between the breastplate.*

9 Heb. *made sick.*

q 1 Ki.22.35.

1 See note on 1 Ki. 22.35.—*C.*

2 This graphic narrative is given almost verbatim as here in 1 Ki. 22.1–35. In Kings a few more particulars are added in reference to the kingdom of Israel. In this place the historian confines himself almost exclusively to what concerns the kingdom of Judah.—*P.*

A.M. 3107. B.C. 897.

CHAP. XIX.

1 Should not this be a warning to nations that professing to be Christian, yet waste their treasure and expose the lives of their armies for defence and upholding of antichristian systems? The balance of power, for sake of which this course is followed, is but another name for an idol which politicians worship, to the neglect of the honour and worship of God. —*C.*

2 'The groves,' rather the 'images of Asarte,' which the Israelites in imitation of the Canaanites had set up in every part of the land as tutelary deities.—*P.*

3 Mount Ephraim, since the revolt of the ten tribes under Jeroboam, had become the northern boundary of the kingdom of David or Judah.—*C.*

4 Judges appointed by and accountable to the government, or occasional national assemblies, superseding either customary or hereditary jurisdictions, and the still more dangerous power of local parties, and temporary interests and impulses.—*C.*

5 That is, *with you*, if you seek him in faith and humility, and *with you* to see your actings and motives, and to hold you responsible, whether you acknowledge and seek him or not.—*C.*

6 It is always important in the reading and study of Scripture, that we compare and contrast ancient and modern things of the same kind. Viewed in this light, what Christian land can furnish such a royal speech—such a royal commission or charge?—*C.*

a Ge.14.1. Ac.6.1. 2.15. 1 Ch.26.30.ch.17.8.

b 2 Sa. 23. 3. Ex.18. 21. De.1.16,17; 17.8,9, 31;10.12. Ps.82.1–6. Ec. 5.8.

7 *Blood and blood*, injuries endangering or taking away life, in which, when the blood of one was shed, a demand was made for the blood of the guilty.—*C.*

8 'Between law and commandment, statutes and judgments,' that is, if there be any dispute as to the interpretation of the written law, or as to the bearing of a statute upon any particular case, these skilled and commissioned lawyers were to judge and decide. They were to constitute a court of appeal for the review and decisions of all questions of delicacy and difficulty. The political and ecclesiastical arrangements of Jehoshaphat were made with consummate wisdom, and inspired by a noble desire to promote at once the best interests of the kingdom and the glory of God. —*P.*

c Nu.16.46. Is. 3.11. Ro. 2. 8, 9. Jos. 22. 20. Eze.3.18. Ho.5.11.

d 1 Ch.6.11. Ezr.7.3.

CHAPTER XIX.

1 *Jehoshaphat, on his return, is reproved by Jehu.* 4 *He visiteth his kingdom.* 5 *His instructions to the judges,* 8 *to the priests and Levites.*

AND Jehoshaphat the king of Judah returned to his house in peace to Jerusalem.

2 And Jehu the son of Hanani the seer went out to meet him, and said to king Jehoshaphat, Shouldest thou help the ungodly, and love them that hate the LORD? therefore *is* wrath upon thee from before the LORD.[1]

3 Nevertheless there are good things found in thee, in that thou hast taken away the [2]groves out of the land, and hast prepared thine heart to seek God.

4 ¶ And Jehoshaphat dwelt at Jerusalem: and he went out again through the people, from Beer-sheba to mount Ephraim,[3] and brought them back unto the LORD God of their fathers.

5 ¶ And he set judges[4] in the land, throughout all the fenced cities of Judah, city by city;

6 And said to the judges, Take heed what ye do; for ye judge not for man, but for the LORD, who *is* with you in the judgment.[5]

7 Wherefore now let the fear of the LORD be upon you; take heed and do *it:* for *there is* no iniquity with the LORD our God, nor respect of persons, nor taking of gifts.[6]

8 ¶ Moreover, in Jerusalem did Jehoshaphat set of the Levites, and *of* the priests, and of the chief of the fathers of Israel, [a]for the judgment of the LORD, and for controversies, when they returned to Jerusalem.

9 And he charged them, saying, Thus shall ye do [b]in the fear of the LORD, faithfully, and with a perfect heart.

10 And what cause soever shall come to you of your brethren that dwell in their cities, between blood and blood,[7] between law and commandment, statutes and judgments,[8] ye shall even warn them that they trespass not against the LORD, and *so* [c]wrath come upon you, and upon your brethren: this do, and ye shall not trespass.

11 And, behold, [d]Amariah the chief priest *is* over you in all [e]matters of the LORD; and Zebadiah the son of Ishmael, the ruler of the house of Judah, for all the king's matters: also the Levites *shall be* officers before you. [f]Deal courageously, and the LORD shall be with the good.

e 1 Ch.26.30.ver.8. 13.2 Ti.2.1.Ep.6.10.

f Heb. *take courage and do*, Jos.1.6,9. 1 Ch.22.11,16,19. 1 Co.16.

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with the wicked, must involve themselves in great guilt and pollution; must often join in a patient hearing of the devil's preachers, and witness the injuries done to those who are faithful to Christ. But unhappy are those princes who are surrounded with flatterers and profane clergy! no plague is more ruinous. Let us therefore always encourage friends and ministers to deal faithfully with us. What astonishing power hath Satan, when God once gives up men to his awful delusions! Great multitudes, particularly of the clergy, he carries before him with great unanimity. But hard is the fate of God's faithful servants under rulers who are apostates from God, to be hated, reviled, buffeted, imprisoned, starved, or the like. Suffering for the truth is the hereditary portion of the honest servants of Christ. Yea, those godly persons who cultivate friendship with the wicked, must not wonder if their lives are sought or endangered by their means, and their flatterers lay snares for their life. But righteous are the judgments of God, and exact his fulfilment of his predictions and threatenings.—Men in vain contrive to escape when they have sinned against God.

CHAPTER XIX. [Ver. 8. *Judgment of the Lord*, such cases as are specified in Ex. 21. 1; xxii. xxiii. *Controversies*, that is, for the decision of controversies according to the principles of judgment contained in the law. (See De. 17. 8, 9, 11.) *When they returned*, that is, when Jehoshaphat and the princes returned from the royal progress or visitation, ver. 4. *C.*]

REFLECTIONS.—God often deals better with his people than they deserve; and brings them home in safety, when their apparently less endangered companions are sent into death and damnation! But they must expect, if entering into friendship with the haters of God, that it will expose them to manifold sufferings on earth, though not to hell. It is an honour when sufferings cannot discourage ministers or their children from faithfully reproving the greatest; and it is a great mercy for an offender to meet soon with a faithful reprover: and no less wise to receive sharp reproofs as a singular kindness; and to improve them,

CHAPTER XX.

1 Jehoshaphat in his fear proclaimeth a fast. 5 His prayer. 14 The prophecy of Jahaziel. 20 Jehoshaphat exhorteth the people, and appointeth singers to praise the Lord. 22 The great overthrow of the enemies. 26 The people, having blessed God at Berachah, return in triumph. 31 Jehoshaphat's good reign. 35 His convoy of ships, which he made with Ahaziah, according to the prophecy of Eliezer, are wrecked

IT came to pass after this also, [a]*that* the children of Moab, and the children of Ammon, and with them *other* besides the Ammonites,[1] came [b]against Jehoshaphat to battle.

2 Then there came some that told Jehoshaphat, saying, There cometh a great multitude against thee from beyond the sea[2] on this side Syria; and, behold, they *be* in [c]Hazazon-tamar, which *is* En-gedi.

3 And Jehoshaphat [d]feared, and set himself[3] to seek the LORD, and proclaimed a fast throughout all Judah.

4 And Judah gathered themselves together, to ask *help* of the LORD; even out of all the cities of Judah, they came to seek the LORD.

5 ¶ And Jehoshaphat stood in the congregation of Judah and Jerusalem in the house of the LORD, before the new court,[4]

6 And said, O LORD God of our fathers, *art* not thou God in heaven? and [k]rulest *not* thou over all the kingdoms of the heathen? and in thine hand *is there not* power and might, so that none is able to withstand thee?

7 *Art* not thou [l]our God, *who*[5] didst drive out the inhabitants of this land before thy people Israel, and [m]gavest it to the seed of Abraham thy [n]friend [o]for ever?

8 And they dwelt therein, and have [p]built thee a sanctuary therein for thy name, saying,

9 If,[6] *when* evil cometh upon us *as* the sword, judgment,[6] or pestilence or famine, we stand before this house, and in thy presence, (for thy name *is* in this house,)[7] and cry unto thee in our affliction, then thou wilt hear and help.

10 And now, behold, the children of Ammon and Moab, and mount Seir,[8] whom thou wouldest[r] not let Israel invade when they came out of the land of Egypt, but they turned from them and destroyed them not;

11 Behold *I say, how* [s]they reward us, to come to cast us out of thy possession, which thou hast given us to inherit.[9]

12 O our God, wilt thou not [t]judge them? for [u]we have no might against this great company that cometh against us; [x]neither know we what to do: but our eyes *are* upon thee.

13 And [y]all Judah stood before the LORD, with their little ones, their wives, and their children.

14 ¶ Then[z] upon Jahaziel the son of Zechariah, the son of Benaiah, the son of Jeiel, the son of Mattaniah, a Levite of the sons of Asaph, [a]came the Spirit of the LORD in the midst of the congregation;

15 And he said, Hearken ye, all Judah, and ye inhabitants of Jerusalem, and thou king Jehoshaphat, Thus saith the LORD unto you, [b]Be not afraid nor dismayed by reason of this great multitude; for the battle *is* not yours, but [c]God's.[1]

16 To-morrow go ye down against them: behold, they come up by the cliff[2] of Ziz; and ye shall find them at the end of the [3]brook, before the wilderness of Jeruel.

17 Ye [d]shall not *need* to fight in this *battle:* set yourselves, stand ye *still,* and see the salvation of the LORD with you, O Judah and Jerusalem: fear not, nor be dismayed: to-morrow go out against them; for the LORD *will be* with you.

18 And Jehoshaphat [e]bowed his head with *his* face to the ground: and all Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem fell before the LORD, worshipping the LORD.

19 And [f]the Levites, of the children of the Kohathites, and of the children of the Korhites, stood up to praise the LORD God of Israel with a loud voice on high.

20 ¶ And they [g]rose early in the morning, and went forth into the wilderness of [h]Tekoah: and as they went forth, Jehoshaphat stood and said, Hear me, O Judah, and ye inhabitants of Jerusalem; [i]Believe in the LORD your God, so shall ye be established; believe his prophets, so shall ye prosper.

21 And when he [k]had consulted with the people, he appointed singers unto the LORD, and that should praise[4] the [l]beauty of [5]holiness, as they went out before the army, and to say, [m]Praise the LORD; for his mercy *endureth* for ever.

22 ¶ And when they began to sing and to praise, the LORD [n]set ambushments[6] against the

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A.M. 3108. B.C. 896.

CHAP. XX.

[a] Ps.83.5-8. ch.14.3, 10;32.1. Is.7.1;8.9,10.

1 The Targum reads *Edomites*, which seems supported by ver. 10, 22, 23. Seir being the residence of the Edomites. Our ignorance, however, of minor geographical and genealogical distinctions renders such conjectural emendations dangerous.—*C.*

[b] ch.19.2. He. 12, 6. Re.3.19. Am.3. 2. Je. 10.2;15.27, 8.

2 The Dead Sea, which extended from north to south nearly the whole length of the land of Judah, and between Jehoshaphat and his confederate enemies.—*C.*

[c] Ge.14.7. Jos.15.62. On the south-east border.

[d] ch.19.2. Is.7.2.

3 Heb. *his face.*

4 There were as yet but two courts (2 Ki.21.5;23.12. 2 Ch. 33. 5), and one of these had been renewed with the altar (ch.4.8); of two other courts, of the women and of the Gentiles, there has been hitherto no mention in Scripture.—*C.*

[k] Da.4. 34, 35. 1 Ch. 29.12. Mat.6.13. Ex.18. 11. Ps.86.6-8,9;145.5.

[l] Ge.17.7. Ex.19.5-7; 20. 2. De.7. 6;14. 2;26. 18;28.9. Jos.vi.-xx.

5 Heb. *thou.*

[m] Ge.12.7;13.15. Ps. 44.2;78.55.

[n] Is. 41. 8. Ja. 2. 23. Ju.11. 11;15.13.

[o] Ge.17.8;48.4.

[p] ch.2.4;6.10.

[q] ch.6.28-31. 1 Ki.8. 37-42;29.30.

6 That is, 'the sword' of the invader, or any other such judgment, as of wild beasts, Le.26.22. Je.15.3. *C.*—Judgment must signify official judgment pronounced and executed upon them by the Lord on account of sin. Many instances of official judgments are recorded in Scripture. Almost every calamity that befell the nation was an express divine punishment for some open act of national sin.—*P.*

7 A man's house is his home; so, the house that is called God's, implies that, in a special manner, he dwells there.—*C.*

8 The ancient name of Edom was Mount Seir, so called apparently because of its wild and rugged character.—*P.*

[r] De.2. 4, 9, 19. Nu. 20.17-21.

[s] ch.32.25. Ps.109.4; 7.4. Je.18.20.

9 From a very early period the Edomites were the bitterest foes of the Israelites. Under David, Solomon, and Jehoboam they were kept in subjection; but afterwards they embraced every opportunity of harassing Israel. They attempted to establish settlements in the south of Palestine, and were in the end successful, notwithstanding their defeat by Jehoshaphat, and afterwards by Amaziah.—*P.*

[t] De.32.36. 1 Sa.3.15. Ps.50.13;135.14.

A.M. 3108. B.C. 896.

[u] 2 Co.3.5. 2 Ki.6.15, ch.14.11. 1 Sa.14.6.

[x] Ps.25, 15; 123. 1, 2; 119. 81. Jonah 2. 4. Is. 45.22.

[y] De.29.11. Jonah 3. 5. Or the whole family.

[z] Da.9.20, 21. Is. 58. 9;65.24.

[a] Nu.24.2;11.25. ch. 24.20.

[b] Ex. 14.13, 14. ver. 17. Is.37.6;41.10,14-16; 43.1,2. 1 Ch.22.13.

[c] Gained by his power, and for his honour, ver.22.

1 The object of this invasion was to expel the Israelites, and partition their land among the confederates (ver. 11); and it is by no means improbable that Jehoshaphat's zeal for reformation had provoked his heathen neighbours to this attack. His promise of the land, and his zeal for his own worship, rendered, therefore, the cause eminently that of God. —*C.*

2 Heb. *ascent.*

3 Or, *valley.*

[d] ver. 15, 22-24. Ex. 14. 13, 14. Ps.46.10. Is. 43.1,2; 41. 10. Nu.14.9. ch.15.2.

[e] Ex.4.31. ch.7.3. Ge. 47. 31. 2 Ch.21. 16. Nu. 14.15.

[f] 1 Ch. xxv.; 15. 16; 16.4-6;26.25;25.5.

[g] Ge.19.27,28; 21.14; 22.3;28.18. Ex.24.4. Ju. 20.19,21,4. Ec.9.10.

[h] 2 Sa.14.2. Je.6.1. 1 Ch.4.5. ch.11.6.

[i] Is.7.9;28.16;26.3. 1 Ch.22.11. Mar.5.36.

[k] 1 Ch. 13. 1. Pr. 11. 14;24.6.

4 Heb. *praisers.*

[l] Ex.15.11. Ps. 27. 4. Jos.24.19. De.32.4.

5 God has scattered beauty widely through creation. It is seen in the grass, the flowers, the trees, in birds and beasts, and in 'the human face divine.' It is united with sublimity in sun, and moon, and stars; and in all these it necessarily excites feelings of admiration, and receives our praise. But of all beautiful objects, holiness is the most beautiful, and therefore the most suitable subject for our most ardent song.—*C.*

[m] 1 Ch. 16. 41. Ps. 136.1-26.

[n] 2 Ki.6.17. Ps.35.5, 6, with ch.13.13.

6 The sense is obscure. The Hebrew word rendered 'ambushments' signifies 'liers in wait;' and it would seem from the whole scope of the passage that *angels* are meant. Reference could not be made to the Jews themselves, for it is expressly stated they were not to fight. The battle was the Lord's; the victory was the Lord's; consequently it is natural to conclude that the Lord's hosts were the agents. Though unseen they were mighty and irresistible. They excited too the mutual jealousies of the rival tribes, which had united for a common purpose.—*P.*

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and the just commendation mingled with them, in a speedy returning to the Lord, and an activity in his service. What a blessing to a nation is it to have proper courts of judicature everywhere established, and causes decided with the strictest impartiality! And great ability and integrity are necessary to qualify judges in either church or state, as they have to answer to God for all the crimes they connive at or overlook. Yea, it is needful to keep the affairs of church and state duly disengaged the one from the other. And to render judges upright in their administration, they ought to consider God as their pattern, witness, and rewarder; and his glory as the end of their work.

CHAPTER XX. [Ver. 1. The Hebrew is literally as follows:—'And it came to pass after this, the children of Moab, and the children of Ammon, and with them of the Ammonites.' The last clause has no meaning, for 'the children of Ammon' would evidently be the same as the 'Ammonites.' In some of the ancient Hebrew MSS. there is a variation in the reading in this word. One has *Edomites*, which greatly resembles *Ammonites*, and might easily be mistaken by a copyist. This reading is corroborated by the Targum. I think it highly probable that this was the original reading. The Septuagint has *Minaites*, who were a people of Arabia Felix. *P.*]

Ver. 2. [*Hazezon-tamar* was the ancient name which this city bore before the destruction of Sodom, Ge. 14. 7. It was so called because of its palm-trees. The site of Engedi is on the western side of the Dead Sea, about midway between the northern and southern extremities. It is marked by a fountain, whence its name ('the fountain of the kid'), and by some ancient ruins. *P.*]

Ver. 36. [In the parallel passage, 1 Ki. 22. 48, it is said, 'Jehoshaphat made ships of Tarshish to go to Ophir for gold, but they went not, for the ships were broken at Ezion-geber.' Here it is said he made 'ships *to go to Tarshish;* and *they made the ships at Ezion-gaber.*' This gives rise to a geographical difficulty. It is evident from a large number of incidental statements in Scripture that Tarshish was situated in the Mediterranean, Jonah 1. 3; 4. 2; Is. xxiii. &c. But Ezion-geber was on the Red Sea, which had then no

children of Ammon, Moab, and mount Seir, which were come against Judah;[7] and they were smitten.[8]

23 For the children of Ammon and Moab stood[o] up against the inhabitants of mount Seir, utterly to slay and destroy *them:* and when they had made an end of the inhabitants of Seir, every one helped to destroy[9] another.

24 And when Judah came toward the watch-tower in the wilderness, they looked unto the multitude, and, behold, they *were* [p]dead bodies fallen to the earth, and none escaped.[1]

25 And when Jehoshaphat and his people came to take away the spoil of them, they found among them in abundance both riches with the dead bodies,[2] and [q]precious jewels, (which they stripped off for themselves,) more than they could carry away: and they were three days in gathering of the spoil, it was so much.

26 ¶ And on the fourth day they assembled themselves in the valley of [r]Berachah;[3] for there they blessed the LORD:[4] therefore [s]the name of the same place was called, The valley of Berachah unto this day.

27 Then they returned, every man of Judah and Jerusalem, and Jehoshaphat in the [t]forefront of them, to go again to Jerusalem with joy; for the LORD [u]had made them to rejoice over their enemies.

28 And they came to Jerusalem with psalteries, and harps, and trumpets, unto the house of the LORD.

29 And the [x]fear of God was on all the kingdoms of *those* countries, when they had heard that the LORD fought against the enemies of Israel.

30 So the realm of Jehoshaphat was quiet; for his God [y]gave him rest round about.

31 ¶ And[z] Jehoshaphat reigned over Judah. *He was* thirty and five years old when he began to reign;[5] and he reigned twenty and five years in Jerusalem: and his mother's name *was* Azubah, the daughter of Shilhi.

32 And he [a]walked in the way of Asa his father, and departed not from it, doing *that which was* right in the sight of the LORD.

33 Howbeit the [b]high places were not taken away; for as yet the people [c]had not prepared their hearts unto the God of their fathers.[6]

34 Now the rest of the acts of Jehoshaphat, first and last, behold, they *are* written in the [d]book[7] of[e] Jehu the son of Hanani, who *is* mentioned[8] in the book of the kings of Israel.

A.M. 3108. B.C. 896.

Houbigant renders the passage: 'The Lord set against the children of Ammon and Moab ambushments, of those who came from Mount Seir against Judah, and the children of Ammon and Moab were smitten; but they afterwards rose up against the inhabitants of Mount Seir,' &c. That is to say, God let loose the mutual jealousies of these predatory bands, and they of Seir conspired against, and at first routed their associates, who afterwards destroyed their assailants, and thus their passions being roused, they extirpated one another.—*C.*

8 Or, *they smote one another.*

o Ju.7.22.1 Sa.14.20. Es.28.21,22.

9 Heb. *for the destruction.*

p Ex.14.13.Ps.50.22; 110.5,6.Is.37.36.

1 Heb. there was *not an escaping.*

2 For *dead bodies,* several Hebrew MSS. and ancient versions read *garments.*—*C.*

q Vessels of desire. 1 Ch.18.7,8.Pr.3.15.

r That is, *Blessing,* Ex. 15. 1–18. Re. 19.1,2.

3 Berachah lies about six miles north of Hebron, and is still called *Wady Bereikat,* manifestly a corruption of the old name. The valley is broad and open, and forms a fit scene for the signal act of divine judgment recorded in the text.—*P.*

4 The only true mode of celebrating a victory; for whatever be the numbers, the discipline, the courage, or the skill of a leader and an army, the victory is from God. But how few will either see or acknowledge thus his Almighty hand!—*C.*

s Ge. 28. 19; 32. 30. Re 19.10.1 Sa.7.12.

t Ex.6.6,15. Mi. 2.13. He.6.20.

u Ne.12.43.Is.35.10; 51.11.

x ch.14.14. Ge. 35. 5. Jos. 2.9–11.

y Job 34.29. ch.14.6, 7.

z 1 Ki.22.41,50.

5 B.C. 914.

a 1 Ki.15.11.ch.14.2; xvii.xix.

b High places for worshipping the true God were left standing by Asa and Jehoshaphat, but those for worshipping of idols were destroyed, 1 Ki.15.14.ch.14.5.

c ch.25.2. Ps.78.37. 2 Ti.3.5.Is.29.13.

6 They had not yet seen and felt the divine obligation, spiritual meaning, or privileges of the temple service; but still adhered to those local sacrifices that left them exposed to the temptations of the surrounding idolatry. *C.*—The idolatry was universally suppressed; but some of the places where that worship had been performed were not destroyed; and these to such a fickle people became the temptation to idolatry in reigns less propitious to truth and piety.—*J.*

d ch.12.14?0.3.

7 Heb. *words.*

e 1 Ki.16.1,7. ch. 19. 2.

8 Heb. *was made to ascend.*

A.M. 3108. B.C. 896.

f 1 Ki.22.48.ch.19.2.

9 B.C. 896.

g At first *Jehoshaphat* was unwilling, 1 Ki.22.49.

h 1 Ki.10.22.Is.xxiii.

1 The Targum places this Tarshish on the Great Sea, the Hebrew name for the Mediterranean; but this cannot be correct, as Ezion-gaber was on the Red Sea. But the name of *Tarshish* was undoubtedly applied to different places.—*C.*

i 1 Ki. 9. 26. Nu. 33. 35.De.2.8.

k ch. 19. 2, with Ge. 10.13;20.2.

l He. 12. 6. ch. 19.2; 15.2;16.9. Pr.9.6;13.20. Am.3.2.Ps.99.8.

CHAP. XXI.

B.C. 889.

a 1 Ki.22.50. 2 Ki. 8. 18,ver.4.

1 A large number of Kennicott's and De Rossi's MSS. read *Judah.* But the great accession to Judah from Israel proper, as recorded ch. 15. 9, may have led to the occasional adoption of the name of Israel for Judah. Or may not king of Israel have been still a title of the kings of Judah, as *king of France* so long remained a title of the *kings of England*?—*C.*

b Ge.25.6.ch.11.23.

c Jehoram made partner of the kingdom with his father, 2 Ki.8.16,17

d De.21.17.Ge.4.7.

e ch.12.1,13. Ju. 9. 5. Hab.2.12. Pr.28.15–17; 29.2,8,10,12.

2 What a truly diabolical thing is the lust of power! it destroys all the charities of life. That he might sit more secure upon his throne, this execrable man imbrues his hands in the blood of his brothers. There are more instances of this species of cruelty among bad Asiatic kings than among any other class of men. The history of every country abounds in proofs; even that of our own is not the least barren.—*Clarke.*

f In consort, 2 Ki. 8.17.

3 Jehoram became king during the life of his father, as Solomon during the life of David, 2 Ki. 8. 16, 17; 1 Ki. 1. 30–39; but before this period he may have been co-regent with him, and, in that sense, have 'begun to reign' several years before.—*C.*

g 1 Ki. 16. 25, 30–33. De.7.3,4.

h ch.22.2. 2 Ki.8.18, 27.

i 2 Sa.7. 12, 13. 1 Ki. 11.36. 2 Ki.8.19. Ps.132. 11;89.28.

4 Heb. *lamp* or *candle.*

5 Which promise was fulfilled in the princes of Judah till the usurpation of Herod the Idumean, and has ever been realized in Christ, 'the root and the offspring of David,' 'the true light which lighteth (shineth upon) every man that cometh into the world.'—*C.*

k Ge. 27. 40. 2 Ki. 8. 20–22.

6 Heb. *hand.*

l 1 Ki.8.21;3.5.18

7 He did not gain a victory, but, in modern phrase, 'cut his way through them and escaped;' so the Edomites continued in revolt.—*C.*

35 ¶ And after this [f]did Jehoshaphat king of Judah join himself with Ahaziah king of Israel, who did very wickedly.[9]

36 And[g] he joined himself with him to make ships to go to [h]Tarshish:[1] and they made the ships in [i]Ezion-gaber.

37 Then Eliezer, the son of Dodavah of Mareshah, prophesied against Jehoshaphat, saying, Because thou hast [k]joined thyself with Ahaziah, the LORD [l]hath broken thy works. And the ships were broken, that they were not able to go to Tarshish.

CHAPTER XXI.

1 *Jehoram, succeeding Jehoshaphat, slayeth his brethren.* 5 *His wicked reign.* 8 *Edom and Libnah revolt.* 12 *The prophecy of Elijah against him in writing.* 16 *The Philistines and Arabians oppress him.* 18 *His incurable disease, loathsome death, and burial.*

NOW Jehoshaphat[a] slept with his fathers, and was buried with his fathers in the city of David; and Jehoram his son reigned in his stead.

2 And he had brethren, the sons of Jehoshaphat, Azariah, and Jehiel, and Zechariah, and Azariah, and Michael, and Shephatiah: all these *were* the sons of Jehoshaphat king of Israel.[1]

3 And their father [b]gave them great gifts of silver, and of gold, and of precious things, with fenced cities in Judah: but the kingdom gave he to [c]Jehoram, because he *was* the [d]firstborn.

4 Now when Jehoram was risen up to the kingdom of his father, he [e]strengthened himself, and slew[2] all his brethren with the sword, and *divers* also of the princes of Israel.

5 ¶ Jehoram *was* thirty and two years old [f]when he began to reign; and he reigned eight years[3] in Jerusalem.

6 And he walked in [g]the way of the kings of Israel, like as did the house of Ahab; for he had the daughter of [h]Ahab to wife: and he wrought *that which was* evil in the eyes of the LORD.

7 Howbeit the LORD would not destroy the house of David, because of the covenant that he had made with David, and as he [i]promised to give a light[4] to him and to his sons for [5]ever.

8 ¶ In his days the [k]Edomites revolted from under the dominion[6] of Judah, and made themselves a king.

9 Then Jehoram went [l]forth with his princes, and all his chariots with him: and he rose up by night, and smote the Edomites which compassed him in, and the captains of the [7]chariots.

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communication by water with the Mediterranean except round the Cape of Good Hope. We can hardly suppose that even though the circumnavigation of Africa was known to the Phœnicians, they would have ever started from Ezion-geber to go to Tarshish in Spain, when they could proceed direct from the port of Joppa or Tyre. 'Ships of Tarshish' probably meant 'large ships,' like our 'Indiamen.' This would explain the statement in Kings; but it would not remove the difficulty from this passage. The true solution appears to be that there were two places called Tarshish: one in Spain, on the shore of the Mediterranean, the other on the coast of the Indian Ocean. This view is corroborated by 1 Ki. 9. 26 with 2 Ch. 9. 21 and 1 Ki. 10. 22. The imports landed at Ezion-geber from Tarshish prove that the ships must have visited India. *P.*]

REFLECTIONS. — Numerous, active, and subtle are the enemies of Christ's church: and danger is often at hand when we least expect it: yea, even when we are most faithful, we are apt to be involved in great difficulties, for the trial and honour of our faith. In danger and distress it is best to begin with solemn fasting and supplication to God for deliverance. The dangers which drive us to him will never ruin us. While we have a merciful God to flee to we never need despair. The cries of the oppressed will enter into the ears of the righteous Judge. And the more entirely

10 So the Edomites revolted from under the hand of Judah unto this day. The same time *also* did [m]Libnah[8] revolt from under his hand; because [n]he had forsaken the LORD God of his fathers.

11 Moreover [o]he made high places in the mountains of Judah, and [p]caused the inhabitants of Jerusalem to commit [q]fornication,[9] and compelled Judah *thereto*.

12 ¶ And there came[1] a [r]writing to him from Elijah the prophet,[2] saying, Thus saith the LORD God of David thy father, Because thou hast not walked in the [s]ways of Jehoshaphat thy father, nor in the ways of Asa king of Judah,

13 But hast [t]walked in the way of the kings of Israel, and hast made Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem to go a [u]whoring, like to the whoredoms of the house of Ahab, and also hast slain thy brethren of thy father's house, *which were* better than thyself;

14 Behold, with [w]a great plague will the LORD smite thy people, and thy children, and thy wives, and all thy goods.

15 And thou *shalt have* great sickness by disease of thy bowels, until thy bowels fall out by reason of the sickness day by day.

16 ¶ Moreover, the LORD stirred up against Jehoram the spirit of the Philistines, and of the Arabians, that *were* near the [v]Ethiopians:

17 And they came up into Judah, and brake into it, and [z]carried away all the substance *that was* found in the king's house, and his sons also, and his wives; so that there was never a son left him, save Jehoahaz, [a]the youngest of his sons.

18 ¶ And after all this the LORD smote him in his bowels with [b]an incurable disease.

19 And it came to pass, that in process of time, after the end of two years, his bowels fell out by reason of his sickness; so he died of sore diseases: and his people made no [c]burning for him, like the burning of his fathers.[3]

20 Thirty and two years old was he when he began to reign; and he reigned in Jerusalem eight years, and [d]departed without [e]being desired:[4] howbeit they buried him in the city of David, but [g]not in the sepulchres of the kings.

A.M. 3115. B.C. 889.

m Jos.21.13;15.48.

8 See note on 2 Ki. 8.22.—*P.*

n ch.13.10;15.2. He. 10. 38. Is.3.11. Je.2.17, 19;4.18;5.25.

o Ex.34.13. De. 7. 5; 12.3.2 Ki.17.9,10,19.

p Re. 2. 20; 13. 16. 2 Ki.21.11.

q Le.7.17. 2 Ki.9.22. ver.13. Eze.xvi.xxiii.

9 Impurity was a part of the worship of Ashtaroth and other ancient idols, and still abides in the worship of Juggernaut, &c., in modern India. So abiding in idolatry, so abiding in sin, because 'the carnal mind' still abides 'enmity against God, is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be,' Ro. 8.7.

1 B.C. 887.

r Which was written before his translation, 2 Ki.2.11.

2 Elijah was translated in the reign of Jehoshaphat (2 Ki. ii. iii.); but Jehoram was co-regent with his father for about three years (2 Ki. 8. 16, 17), and may then have begun his idolatrous practices, and so received this warning before the prophet's removal. Or, it is possible, the prophet, foreseeing the apostacy of this wicked king, may have left this warning to be delivered in his name. The idea of the letter being sent from heaven is a vain figment, unworthy of attention. —*C.*

s 1 Ki. 15. 11; 22. 43. ch.xvii. 3; xix.xx.

t 1 Ki. 16. 25, 30–33. ver.6,11.2 Ki.8.18,27.

u Ex. 34. 15. De. 31. 16. ver. 11.

w Heb. *a great stroke.*

y Or, *Midianites*, Nu.12.1.

z Heb. *carried captive.* Job 1. 15. 5. 3-5. xviii. xx., with ch. 24. 7.

a Or, *Ahaziah*, ch. 22. 1, or *Azariah*, ver. 6. *Prover* soon after, 2 Ki.9.9.

b ver. 14, 15. De. 28. 22,27. ch.16.12;24.25.

c ch.16.14;32.33.

8 Burning the dead was customary in ancient times, is still practised in India, and is often accompanied with much ceremony and expense. *C.*—'The burning' was not the burning of the dead body, which was rarely, if ever, practised among the Jews; but the burning of incense at a great state funeral. It would seem that the bodies were partially embalmed, and great quantities of sweet spices and perfumes were burned at the time of sepulture. This honour was not accorded to the wicked Jehoram.—*P.*

d Jos.23.15. 1 Ki.2.2.

e Heb. *without desire*, Pr.10.7. Je.22.18.

A.M. 3117. B.C. 887.

4 None lamented him as a public loss, for he never had been a public blessing.—*C.*

g ch. 24. 25; 28.27. 2 Ki.21.26.

CHAP. XXII.

B.C. 884.

a 2 Ki. 8. 24. De. 17. 14. ch.21.16,17.

b 2 Ki.8.26 It was the twenty-second of his age, but forty-second of the kingdom of his mother's family.

9 The very magnitude of the difference between this and the parallel account (2 Ki. 8. 26) leads to the conclusion that the two calculations must commence at different periods. See note on 2 Ki.8.26.—*C.*

c Grandchild, ch. 21. 6. 2 Ki.8.18,26,27.

d ch.7.10. 1 Ki.16.25, 30–33. Mi.6.16.

1 His relation to Ahab's family was the occasion of his wickedness and of his fall. When men choose wives for themselves, let them remember they are choosing mothers for their children. Perhaps Omri adopted and educated Athaliah, who was his grand-daughter, and the daughter of Ahab.—*I.*

e Ps.1. 1. Pr. 9. 6; 13. 20; 28.15-17; 29.2-12. 2 Ki.9.22.

f 2 Ki.8.28.

g 2 Ki.8.29.

2 Heb. *wherewith they wounded him.*

h Otherwise called *Ahaziah*, ver. 1, and *Jehoahaz*, ch. 21. 17. This is evidently a mistake for 'Ahaziah' or 'Jehoahaz,' as appears from the following context: and thus the Sept. Vulg. Syr. and twelve MSS.—*I.*]

3 Heb. *treading down.*

i 1 Ki.12.15. Ps.9.16. Pr.9.6;13.20.

4 A visible judgment of God upon his obstinacy, as he had probably been warned by some of the prophets to avoid undertaking the journey, or had been made aware of the sentence against Ahab and his house, which Jehu was commissioned to execute. —*C.*

k 2 Ki. 9. 7; ix. 1 Ki. 19.16,17.

l 2 Ki. 10. 13, 14. ch. 21.14.

m 2 Ki.9.27.

5 He had fled to both Megiddo and Samaria, and was buried at Jerusalem.

6 See note on 2 Ki. 9. 27. The phrase 'brought him to Jehu, may be rendered 'they caused him to be seen by Jehu,' *i.e.* as he attempted to escape in his chariot from Samaria, he was pointed out to the ruthless general, who, on seeing him, gave orders to shoot him in his chariot, as he had himself shot Joram at Jezreel.—*P.*

CHAPTER XXII.

1 *Ahaziah succeeding, reigneth wickedly.* 5 *In his confederacy with Joram the son of Ahab, he is slain by Jehu.* 10 *Athaliah, destroying all the seed royal, save Joash, whom Jehoshabeath his aunt hid, usurpeth the kingdom.*

AND the inhabitants of Jerusalem made Ahaziah[a] his youngest son king in his stead: for the band of men that came with the Arabians to the camp had slain all the eldest. So Ahaziah the son of Jehoram king of Judah reigned.

2 Forty[b] and two years old[9] *was* Ahaziah when he began to reign; and he reigned one year in Jerusalem: his mother's name also *was* Athaliah, the daughter [c]of Omri.

3 He also walked [d]in the ways of the house of Ahab:[1] for his mother was his counsellor to do wickedly.

4 Wherefore he did evil in the sight of the LORD like the house of Ahab: for they [e]were his counsellors, after the death of his father, to his destruction.

5 ¶ He walked also after their counsel, and [f]went with Jehoram the son of Ahab king of Israel to war against Hazael king of Syria at Ramoth-gilead: and the Syrians smote Joram.

6 And [g]he returned to be healed in Jezreel, because of the wounds which were given [2]him at Ramah, when he fought with Hazael king of Syria. And Azariah [h]the son of Jehoram king of Judah went down to see Jehoram the son of Ahab at Jezreel, because he was sick.

7 And the destruction[3] of Ahaziah was [i]of God,[4] by coming to Joram: for, when he was come, he went out with Jehoram against Jehu the son of Nimshi, [k]whom the LORD had anointed to cut off the house of Ahab.

8 And it came to pass, that, [l]when Jehu was executing judgment upon the house of Ahab, and found the princes of Judah, and the sons of the brethren of Ahaziah, that ministered to Ahaziah, he slew them.

9 And[m] he sought Ahaziah: and they caught him, (for he was hid[5] in Samaria,) and brought him to Jehu:[6] and when they had slain him,

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we are taken off from every self-dependence in the view of our wants and wretchedness, we are the more sure to find help in the time of need. If faith and hope look upward, the everlasting arms will be underneath us. In our cries to God for deliverance, let us therefore plead his tender promises to us, the grants he has made us, his ability to protect and deliver us; and the ingratitude, injustice, and violence of our enemies: for readily God bestows his answers of peace to his people: and happy are they who, renouncing their unbelieving fears, go forth, assured by faith that it shall be to them as he hath spoken. Unshaken faith is a certain cause of victory: and even songs of praise are excellent weapons in our spiritual warfare. God can easily deliver his people, and employ their strongly confederated enemies to destroy one another: yea, he can turn his people's distress into means of their enrichment, honour, safety, and peace. And it becomes us, in such noted deliverances, to join in solemn thanksgiving, and to set up some lasting memorials of his kindness.—But O, how hard is it to render reformation thoroughly complete; and to wean the best of men from sins which easily beset them, even when they have before smarted for them! But it is kind in God to continue a reprover to us: and it is great gain if our providential losses turn us from the path of evil.

CHAPTER XXI. [Ver. 16. The Arabians here joined with the Philistines were probably the nomad tribes which fed their flocks on the desert of Tih, between Palestine and the mountains of Sinai, and eastward as far as the Arabah. The Ethiopians, or *Cushites*, as it is in the Hebrew, dwelt partly in Africa, south of Egypt, and partly in southern Arabia. The latter are here referred to. *P.*]

Ver. 17. [Such incursions, for plunder of cattle and goods, and carrying off slaves, are, alas! still common in Africa, and still, by implication, patronized by nations called Christian! Lord, what is man! Arise, arise, plead thine own cause! Ps. 74. 22. *C.*]

REFLECTIONS.—What monsters are bred in the best of families; or, at least, are made so by unhallowed marriages! And none are such plagues to families and kingdoms as ungrateful heirs. Ambition is deaf to the cries of nature or humanity: and those whom duty and interest require to protect us, become our destroyers. But how tormented are the minds of tyrants, and how tottering those thrones which are established in blood! God can take the most unthought-of methods to threaten or to punish his inveterate enemies. And torment, misery, and disgrace most surely await them. Dreadful is the situation when tormenting agonies, an awakened conscience, and an opening hell, meet the sinner on his death-bed! But miserable are the happiest tyrants.—When alive they are hated; and when dead they are branded with infamy, and lost in despair!

CHAPTER XXII. REFLECTIONS.—Certain is their ruin who wilfully commit sin, and dread-

they buried him;[7] Because (said they) he *is* the son of Jehoshaphat, [n]who sought the LORD with all his heart. So the house of Ahaziah had no power to keep still the kingdom.

10 ¶ But[o] when Athaliah, the mother of Ahaziah, saw that her son was dead, she arose and destroyed all the seed-royal of the house of Judah.

11 But Jehoshabeath, the daughter of the king,[8] took[p] Joash the son of Ahaziah, and stole him from among the king's sons that were slain, and put him and his nurse in a [q]bed-chamber.[9] So Jehoshabeath, the daughter of king Jehoram, the wife of [r]Jehoiada the priest, (for she was the sister of Ahaziah,) hid him from Athaliah, so that she slew him not.

12 And he was with them [s]hid in the house of God six years: and Athaliah reigned over the land.

CHAPTER XXIII.

1 Jehoiada, having taken measures for his security, maketh Joash king. 12 Athaliah is slain. 16 Jehoiada restoreth the worship of God.

AND in[a] the seventh year Jehoiada strengthened himself, and took the captains of hundreds, Azariah the son of Jeroham, and Ishmael the son of Jehohanan, and Azariah the son of Obed, and Maaseiah the son of Adaiah, and Elishaphat the son of Zichri, into [b]covenant with him.

2 And they [c]went about in Judah, and gathered the Levites[1] out of all the cities of Judah, and the chief of the fathers of Israel, and they came to Jerusalem.

3 And all the congregation[2] made[d] a covenant with the king in the house of God: and he said unto them, Behold, the king's son shall reign, as the LORD hath [e]said of the sons of David.

4 This *is* the thing that ye shall do: A third[f] part of you entering on the sabbath, of the priests and of the Levites,[3] *shall be* porters of the doors;

5 And a third part *shall be* at the king's house;[4] and a third part at the [g]gate of the foundation:[5] and all the people *shall be* in the courts of the house of the LORD.

6 But let none come into the house of the LORD, save the priests, and [h]they that minister of the Levites; they shall go in, for they *are* holy:[i] but all the people shall keep the watch of the LORD.[6]

7 And [k]the Levites shall compass the king round about, every man with his weapons in his hand; and whosoever *else* [l]cometh into the house, he shall be put to death: but be ye with the king when he cometh in, and when he goeth out.

8 So the Levites, and all Judah, did according to all things that Jehoiada the priest had commanded, and took every man his men [m]that were to come in on the sabbath, with them that were to go *out* on the sabbath: for Jehoiada the priest dismissed not [n]the courses.[7]

9 Moreover, Jehoiada the priest delivered to the captains of hundreds spears, and bucklers, and shields, that *had been* king David's, which *were* in the house of God.[8]

10 And he set all the people, [o]every man having his weapon in his hand, from the right side[9] of the temple[1] to the left side of the temple, along by the altar and the temple, by the king round about.

11 Then they [p]brought out the king's son, and put upon him the crown, and [q]*gave him* the testimony,[2] and made him king: and Jehoiada and his sons anointed him, and said, [r]God save the king.

12 ¶ Now, [s]when Athaliah heard the noise of the people running and praising the king, she came to the people into the house of the LORD:

13 And she looked, and, behold, the king stood at [t]his pillar[3] at the entering in, and the princes and the trumpets by the king: and all the people of the land rejoiced, [u]and sounded with trumpets; also the singers with instruments of music, and such as taught to sing praise. Then Athaliah rent her clothes, and said, [x]Treason, treason!

14 Then Jehoiada the priest brought out the captains of hundreds that were set over the host, and said unto them, Have her forth of the ranges;[4] and [y]whoso followeth her, let him be slain with the sword. For the priest said, [z]Slay her not in the house of the LORD.

15 So they laid hands on her; and when she was come to the entering of the horse-gate[5] by the king's house, they slew [a]her there.[6]

16 ¶ And Jehoiada [b]made a covenant between him, and between all the people, and between the king, that they should be the LORD's people.

17 Then all the people went to the house of

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7 That is, his own subjects buried him. He had been first hid in Samaria (2 Ch. 22. 9); thence he had fled, and was, by Jehu's orders, mortally wounded at Gur; thence he fled to Megiddo, died there, and was buried in Jerusalem. 2 Ki. 27, 28.—*C.*

n ch.17.4,6;19.3.

o ver.7.2 Ki.11.1.ch. 21.4,14. Hab.2.12.

8 The daughter of king Jehoram and aunt of Joash.—*C.*

p ch.21.7.1 Ki.11.36. 2 Sa.7.12,13. Ps.132.11, 12; 89.28,29. Je.33.20–26.

q Eze.40.46.2 Ki.11. 8.

9 The priests had private apartments within the precincts of the temple. In one of these the infant son of Ahaziah was hidden, and there he remained secure for six years.—*P.*

r 2 Ki.11.4.ch.23.1.

s 2 Sa. 7. 13. 1 Ki.15. 4. Is.65.8. Job 5.13,14. Ps.27.5;32.10. Pr.21.30.

CHAP. XXIII.

B.C. 878.

a 2 Ki. 11. 4–16. ch. 22.12.

b Ge. 26. 28. 1 Sa.18. 3.

c Ps. 122. 5. Mat. 10. 16. Ep.5.15.

1 It is important to observe here, as in other places, the loyalty of the Levites. It is somewhat remarkable that no mention is made of them in the parallel passage in 2 Ki. 11. 4. Perhaps in the latter passage they are included in the guard of the temple.—*P.*

2 That is, all this select assembly of the chiefs.—*C.*

d 2 Ki.11.17. 2 Sa.5. 3.1 Ch.11.3.

e 2 Sa.7.17. 1 Ki.2.4; 9.5.ch.6.16;7.18.

f 2 Ki. 11. 5, 6. 1 Ch. 26.13–18;9.25.

3 The Levites had their turns or courses in the service of the temple; so that a certain number went out every Sabbath, to make room for another course. Jehoiada, having gained over the centurions and guards, or at least some of them, to his party, and having all the Levites at his command, took occasion at that time when the courses were to be changed, at daybreak, to arm both those that were coming out and those who were coming in; and thus effected the revolution he had so wisely planned.—*I.*

4 His residence within the temple. *C.* ——This means, as I suppose, the grand entrance from the palace on Zion to the temple court. A splendid bridge was thrown across the ravine of Tyropoeon and connected the two. See note on 2 Ki.10.5.—*P.*

g Ac.3.2.2 Ki.11.6.

5 The chief entrance of the temple, the emblem of Christ, at once the 'foundation' and the 'gate,' 1 Co.3.11. Jn.10.9.—*C.*

h 1 Ch. xxv. xxvi. 1 Ki.8.10.

i Heb. *holiness*, Nu.16.5. Ezr.8.28.

k 2 Ki.11.8,9.

6 Called the *watch of the Lord*, because it was under the

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sanction of his covenant (ver. 1), and was kept in his temple.—*C.*

l Ex.19.12,13;21.14.

m 1 Ch.9.25.2 Ki.11. 7,9.

n 1 Ch. xxiv.–xxvi. So two courses of priests, singers, and porters were in the court of the temple together.

7 He detained the outgoing party, whose course of service was completed; that so he might have at hand a double body-guard for the king.—*C.*

8 Arms that had been deposited in the temple by David as trophies of his victories, as was the case with the sword of Goliath, 1 Sa. 21. 9.—*C.*

o 2 Ki. 11. 11. Ne. 4. 17,18. Ep.6.10–19.

9 Heb. *shoulder.*

1 Heb. *house.*

p ch.22.11. Ps.89.39; 132.18.

q De.17.18. Ps.2.10–12. Is.49.24.

2 The words *gave him* are supplied by the translators; *put on* seems the proper expression; and consequently, instead of *testimony*, it should be some part of the royal dress corresponding to the *crown*, perhaps the *bracelet*. See 2 Sa. 1. 10.—*C.*

r Heb. *Let the king live*, 1 Ki.1.39.

s 2 Ki.11.13–16.

t 2 Ki. 23. 3. ch.6.13; 11.14.

3 Standing by a pillar seems to have been a favourite position with the kings of Israel, most probably as emblematic of stability and support. 2 Ki. 11. 14. *C.*—Or, 'on the tribunal,' as Boothroyd renders, who thinks this was the sort of rostrum erected by Solomon, mentioned ch.6.13.—*I.*

u Pr.11.10; 29.2. Re. 19.1,2;11.15;14.1–4.

x 1 Ki.18.17,18. Mat. 7.5. Ro.2.1,3.

4 From the ranks into which the guard was arranged (ver. 10), and within which none but the priests and Levites might come upon pain of death, ver. 6,7.—*I.* The ranges mean the walls or buildings round the temple.—*I.*

y Re.14.9,10;19.20.

z Nu.5.2; 19.14. ver. 19.

5 Professor Robinson has an investigation into the probable position of the ancient gates of Jerusalem in his *Biblical Researches in Palestine*, vol.1. p. 472. The notices respecting most of them, he thinks, are too indefinite to enable us to determine anything more than that some of them probably did not belong to the external city wall. Thus the *horse-gate*, says he, evidently lay between the temple and the royal palace, and in proof of this he refers to the present passage.—*I.*

a ch.22.10. Mat.7.2. Ge.9.5,6.

6 She was justly condemned as a murderer, ch.22.10.—*C.*

b 2 Ki. 11. 17. Ne. 9. 38. De.5.2,3;29.1,14,15. Jos.24.25. ch.15.12; 29. 10. Ezr.10.3.

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ful the consequences of unhallowed marriages with the ungodly. Behold how the woman, for whose sake Jehoshaphat had cultivated friendship with Ahab, reduces his glorious kingdom and numerous family, nay, his blessed reformation, to the brink of ruin! She had doubtless advised her husband to murder his brethren and princes, and to hurry himself through scenes of misery into endless woe. Now she counsels her son to do wickedly. Advised by her, he cultivates intimacy with Jehoram her brother, and involves himself and relations in his ruin. Behold the infuriated monster murdering princes, and imbruing her hands in the blood of her innocent, her orphan babes! And to the reproach of Judah, the savage murderer, the vile idolater, is permitted to fill the sacred throne without so much as a shadow of title! But, meanwhile, behold how God, for his promise' sake, preserves in his house a young and helpless descendant of David to wear the crown, and even usher in the Messiah in his time! Vain is every attempt of earth and hell to defeat the word of truth; not one jot or tittle of it shall ever fail.

CHAPTER XXIII. REFLECTIONS. — God will not suffer the fulfilment of his promise to be too long interrupted. And it is a great mercy in critical times to have one of great prudence, piety, fidelity, courage, and influence to be principal director. How astonishing is it to see religion and liberty all at once recovered from the wrecks of ruin. But is there anything too hard for the Lord? How mad for their opposers to rush headlong into immediate destruction! But hopeful is the view when idols are destroyed, idolaters ashamed, the true worship of God regularly established, and his worshippers first giving themselves to the Lord, and afterwards to magistrates and ministers, and to one another, by the will of God!

Baal, and [c]brake it down, and brake his altars and his images in pieces, and slew Mattan the priest of Baal before the altars.

18 Also Jehoiada appointed [d]the offices of the house of the LORD by the hand of the priests the Levites, whom David had distributed in the house of the LORD, to offer the burnt-offerings of the [e]LORD, as *it is* written in the law of Moses, with rejoicing and with singing, *as it was ordained* by David.[7]

19 And he set the [f]porters at the gates of the house of the LORD, that none *which was* unclean in any thing should enter in.[8]

20 And[g] he took the captains of hundreds, and the nobles, and the governors of the people, and all the people of the land, and brought down the king[9] from the house of the LORD: and they came through the high gate into the king's house, and set the king upon the throne of the kingdom.

21 And [h]all the people of the land rejoiced: and the city was quiet, after that they had slain Athaliah with the sword.

CHAPTER XXIV.

1 *Joash reigneth well all the days of Jehoiada.* 4 *He giveth order for the repair of the temple.* 15 *Jehoiada's death and honourable burial.* 17 *Joash, falling to idolatry, slayeth Zechariah the son of Jehoiada.* 23 *Joash is spoiled by the Syrians, and slain by Zabad and Jehozabad.* 27 *Amaziah succeedeth him.*

JOASH *was*[a] seven years old when he began to reign; and he reigned forty years in Jerusalem: his mother's name also *was* Zibiah of Beer-sheba.

2 And [b]Joash did *that which was* right in the sight of the LORD all the days of Jehoiada the priest.

3 And Jehoiada [c]took for him[1] two[d] wives; and he begat sons and daughters.

4 ¶ And it came to pass after this, *that* Joash was minded [e]to repair the house of the LORD.

5 And he gathered together the priests and the Levites, and said to them, Go out unto the cities of Judah, and gather of all Israel money to [f]repair the house of your God from year to year, and see that ye hasten the matter: howbeit[g] the Levites hastened *it* not.[2]

6 And the king called for Jehoiada the chief, and said unto him, [h]Why hast thou not required of the Levites to bring in, out of Judah, and out of Jerusalem, [i]the collection,[3] *according to the commandment* of Moses the servant of the LORD, and of the congregation of Israel, for the tabernacle of witness?

7 For the [k]sons of Athaliah,[4] that wicked woman, had broken up the house of God; and also all the dedicated things of the house of the LORD [l]did they bestow upon Baalim.

8 And at the king's commandment they made [m]a chest, and set it without at the gate of the house of the LORD.[5]

9 And they made a [n]proclamation through Judah and Jerusalem, to bring in to the LORD the collection *that* Moses the servant of God *laid* upon Israel in the wilderness.

10 And all the princes and all the people rejoiced,[6] and brought in, and cast into the chest, until they had made an end.

11 Now it came to pass, [o]that at what time the chest was brought unto the king's office by the hand of the Levites, and when they saw that *there was* much money, the king's scribe and the high priest's officer came and emptied the chest, and took it, and carried it to his place again. Thus they did day by day, and gathered money in abundance.

12 And the king and Jehoiada gave it to such as did the work of the service of the house of the LORD, and hired [p]masons and carpenters to repair the house of the LORD, and also such as wrought iron and brass to mend the house of the LORD.

13 So the workmen wrought, and [q]the work was perfected by them, and they set the house of God in his state, and strengthened it.[7]

14 And when they had finished *it*, they brought the rest of the money before the king and Jehoiada, whereof were made [r]vessels for the house of the LORD, *even* vessels to minister, and to offer *withal*, and spoons, and vessels of gold and silver: and they [s]offered[8] burnt-offerings in the house of the LORD continually all the days of Jehoiada.

15 ¶ But Jehoiada waxed old, and was [t]full of days when he died; an hundred and thirty years old *was he* when he died.[9]

16 And they buried him [u]in the city of David[1] among the kings, [x]because he had done good in Israel, both toward God, and toward his house.[2]

17 ¶ Now, [y]after the death of Jehoiada came the princes of Judah, and made obeisance to the king:[3] then the king hearkened unto them.

A.M. 3126. B.C. 878.

c 2 Ki. 10. 23; 11. 18. De. 13. 9. 1 Ki. 18. 40. Ca. 2. 15. Zec. 13. 3. Re. 19. 20.

d 1 Ch. xxiv.–xxvi.

e Ex. 29. 38–42. Le. i. Nu. xxviii. xxix.

7 Heb. *by the hand of David.*

f 1 Ch. 26. 14–18; 9. 23, 24.

8 The emblem of that godly discipline which the office-bearers of the church are appointed to administer and enforce. —*C.*

g 2 Ki. 11. 19.

9 The Targum says that the crown put on Joash was that which David took from the king of the Ammonites; in which was the precious attracting stone that had engraven on it the great and honourable NAME (Jehovah).—*I.*

h 2 Ki. 11. 20. Est. 8. 10. Ps. 58. 10; 59. 16. Pr. 11. 10; 29. 2.

CHAP. XXIV.

a 2 Ki. 11. 21; 12. 1, 21. [*Joash* is merely an alteration of *Jehoash*, the name which he elsewhere bears. As he was hid six years in the temple, and was only seven years old when he began to reign, he could not be more than a year old when secreted in the temple.—*I.*]

b ch. 25. 2. 2 Ki. 12. 2. Ps. 78. 36, 37. Jos. 24. 31. Ju. 2. 7, 10.

c Ge. 21. 21; 24. 4.

1 The rabbins say this was for himself, and they censure such conduct in the high-priest. But the words may as naturally be understood to refer to the wives he successively selected for Joash. His advanced age renders the rabbinical supposition highly improbable; for, having been born in the days of Solomon, and having lived during six successive reigns, he must on the lowest computation have been a hundred years old at the accession of Joash. He lived to the age of 130, ver. 15.—*I.*

d Ge. 4. 19. Mat. 19. 4–8.

e Heb. *to renew*, ver. 7.

f 2 Ki. 12. 4. ch. 29. 3; 34. 8.

g 2 Ki. 12. 6.

2 The cause of this dilatoriness does not appear, but may be referred either to the age and inactivity of Jehoiada, now above 100 years old, ch. 24. 15, or to the neglect of appointing some individual specifically to the duty.—*C.*

h 2 Ki. 12. 7, 8.

i Ex. 30. 12–14. Nu. 1. 50.

3 This was the poll-tax fixed by Moses, of half a shekel, which was levied off every man from twenty years old and upwards, and which was considered as a ransom for their souls, that there might be no plague among them.—*I.*

A.M. 3149. B.C. 855.

k ch. 21. 17; 22. 3, 4. Ps. 12. 8.

4 Most probably Ahaziah and his brethren, who did this before they were taken captive, ch. 21. 17. But Hales thinks it denotes her idolatrous adherents, 'sons of Belial.'—*I.*

l Ho. 2. 8. De. 32. 15, 17.

m 2 Ki. 12. 9. Mar. 12. 41. ver. 10.

5 That so every worshipper or visitor might, without difficulty, find his way to the treasury.—*C.*

n Heb. *a voice*, Ex. 36. 6; 30. 12–14.

6 A memorial to Christians when called upon to contribute to the cause of Christ; for 'God loveth a cheerful giver,' 2 Co. 9. 7.—*C.*

o 2 Ki. 12. 10–15.

p 1 Ki. 5. 15; 7. 40–47. 2 Ki. 22. 6.

q Heb. *the healing went up by their hand*, Ne. 4. 7.

7 By repairing the walls, joists, doors, &c. The emblem of that daily renewing and strengthening which the spiritual temple requires. 2 Co 4. 16. Ep. 3. 16.—*C.*

r 1 Ki. 7. 50, with 2 Ki. 12. 13, 14.

s Ex. 29. 38–42. Nu. xxviii. xxix.

8 It would seem from this that the daily morning and evening sacrifice had been previously intermitted, and that it was very much neglected after the death of Jehoiada.—*I.*

t Ge. 15. 15. 1 Ch. 23. 1. Job 5. 26. Ps. 91. 15, 16.

9 He had been born in the reign of Solomon, and had lived through six successive reigns (besides the usurpation of Athaliah), viz. Rehoboam, Abijah, Asa, Jehoshaphat, Jehoram, and Ahaziah. —*I.*

u 1 Ki. 2. 10. 1 Sa. 2. 30.

1 It was a mark of distinguished honour to be interred within a city, for the burial-places were without. —*Border.*

x Heb. 6. 10. Ne. 13. 14. 2 Ki. xi. xii. ch. xxiii. xxiv.

2 To render honour to the mortal remains of the great and good thus receives the sanction of God's word. It has an important influence upon the living. It stirs them up to imitate the noble acts, and to follow the footsteps, of those who have been distinguished by patriotism and devotion to God.—*P.*

y Ac. 20. 29. 2 Ti. 4. 3, 4. 1o. Ju. 2. 1o. Pr. 29. 12.

3 Flattered the king with feigned respect and deference till they seduced him to forget God, neglect his worship, and serve idols.—*Note.* Whenever Satan and his instruments can seduce any one to listen to the praise of self, an idol is set up in the heart that will soon supersede the service of God.—*C.*

CHAPTER XXIV. [Ver. 18. Jehoiada was gone. The weak-minded king now felt the want of an upright, determined, and God-fearing counsellor. Joash was bound as a king not merely to serve God himself, but to exercise his legitimate influence, and use his rightful power, to maintain the worship of Jehovah in the land. His weakness, his failure to do his duty faithfully and fearlessly in this respect, brought the wrath of God both upon him and upon his kingdom. *P.*]

Ver 24. [In 2 Ki. 12. 17, 18 we are told that Hazael, king of Syria, invaded Philistia, and after capturing Gath, was marching on Jerusalem when he was bought off by Joash, who gave him all the treasures of the temple. It is highly probable he returned again, defeated the army of Joash, and plundered the country. So, at least, I would conclude from the statement that he 'executed judgment against Joash.' *P.*]

REFLECTIONS.—It is a great advantage for young persons to be directed by those who are pious, prudent, and faithful. And the influence of education, the awe or example of friends, may often push those far into external appearances of religion who have no cordial regard to it: nay, in shows of devotion, empty hypocrites may outstrip real and noted saints. How many useful works in church and state would be utterly stopped, if God did not raise up a few active men to carry them forward! But it is an honour to do good in our time by promoting religion; and faithfulness is the great honour, and will be the lasting comfort, of such as are intrusted with public money, or employed in public business. The godly are often honourably interred with an appearance of distinguished respect and grief, and yet their example quickly disregarded. Pretended conversions, and hypocritical strictness, soon issue in fearful apostasy. Many conform to religion

TOMBS OF ZECHARIAH AND SAINT JAMES. [II. CHRON., xxiv : 20, 21.]—"And the Spirit of God came upon Zechariah the son of Jehoiada the priest, which stood above the people, and said unto them, Thus saith God, Why transgress ye the commandments of the Lord, that ye cannot prosper? because ye have forsaken the Lord, He hath also forsaken you. And they conspired against him, and stoned him with stones at the commandment of the king in the court of the house of the Lord." According to the traditions of the Jews, this tomb stands for the Zechariah who was stoned in the reign of Joash. It is a cubical, monolithic structure excavated from the natural rock. Christians look upon the tomb as standing for the Zacharias spoken of by our Lord in Saint Matthew, xxiii : 35. The tomb of Saint James is for the apostle by that name who was hurled to death in the valley below the tomb. This tomb is also an excavated chamber in the side of the cliff, having in front a porch supported by two columns and two half columns. The porch is eighteen feet wide by nine feet deep, and is approached by a door and staircase on the north side.

18 And they left the house of the LORD God of their fathers, and served groves and idols: and [s]wrath came upon Judah and Jerusalem for this their trespass.

19 Yet [a]he sent prophets to them, to bring them again unto the LORD; and they testified against them:[4] but they would not give ear.

20 And the Spirit of God came upon[5] Zechariah the son of Jehoiada the priest, which stood above the people, and said unto them, Thus[b] saith God, Why transgress ye the commandments of the LORD, that ye cannot prosper? [c]because ye have forsaken the LORD, he hath also forsaken you.

21 And they conspired against him, and stoned[d] him with stones, at the commandment of the king, in the court of the house of the LORD.[6]

22 Thus Joash the king [e]remembered not the kindness which Jehoiada his father had done to him, but slew his son: and when he died, he said, [f]The LORD look upon *it*, and require *it*.[7]

23 ¶ And it [g]came to pass at the end of the year,[8] *that* the host of Syria came up against him: and they came to Judah and Jerusalem, and destroyed all the princes of the people from among the people, and sent all the spoil of them unto the king of Damascus.[9]

24 For the army of the Syrians came [h]with a small company of men, and the LORD delivered a very great host into their hand, [i]because they had forsaken the LORD God of their fathers: [k]so they executed judgment against Joash.

25 And when they were departed from him, (for they left him in [l]great diseases,) his own servants conspired against him for [m]the blood of the sons of Jehoiada the priest, and slew him on his bed, and he died: and they buried him in the city of David, but they buried him [n]not in the sepulchres of the kings.[1]

26 And these *are* they that conspired against him, [o]Zabad the son of Shimeath an Ammonitess, and Jehozabad the son of Shimrith[2] a Moabitess.

27 ¶ Now *concerning* his sons, and the greatness of the [p]burdens[3] *laid* upon him, and the [q]repairing of the house of God, behold, they *are* written in the [r]story of the book of the kings: and Amaziah his son reigned in his stead.

CHAPTER XXV.

1 *Amaziah beginneth to reign well.* 3 *He executeth justice on the murderers of his father.* 5 *Having hired an army of Israelites against the Edomites, at the word of a prophet he loseth an hundred talents, and dismisseth them.* 11 *He overthroweth the Edomites.* 10, 13 *The Israelites, discontented with their dismission, spoil as they return home.* 14 *Amaziah, proud of his victory, serveth the gods of Edom, and despiseth the admonitions of the prophet.* 17 *He provoketh Joash to his overthrow.* 25 *His reign.* 27 *He is slain by a conspiracy at Lachish.*

AMAZIAH *was*[a] twenty and five years old *when* he began to reign; and he reigned twenty and nine years in Jerusalem: and his mother's name *was* Jehoaddan of Jerusalem.

2 And he did [b]*that which was* right in the sight of the LORD, but not with a perfect [1]heart.

3 ¶ Now it came to pass, when the kingdom was established to him,[2] that he [c]slew his servants that had killed the king his father:

4 But he slew not their children, but *did* as *it is* written in the law in the book of Moses, where the LORD commanded, saying, [d]The fathers shall not die for the children, neither shall the children die for the fathers, but every man shall die for his own sin.

5 ¶ Moreover, Amaziah gathered Judah together, and made them [e]captains over thousands, and captains over hundreds, according to the houses of *their* fathers, throughout [f]all Judah and Benjamin: and he numbered them from [g]twenty years old and above, and found them three hundred thousand[3] choice *men, able* to go forth to war, that could handle spear and shield.

6 He hired also an hundred thousand mighty men of valour out of Israel for an hundred talents[4] of silver.[5]

7 But there came [h]a man of God to him, saying, O king, let not the army of Israel go with thee: [i]for the LORD *is* not with Israel, *to wit, with* all the children of Ephraim.

8 But if thou wilt go, [k]do *it*, be strong for the battle;[6] God shall make thee fall before the enemy: [l]for God hath power to help, and to cast down.

9 And Amaziah said to the man of God,

A.M. 3159. B.C. 845.

s Ju.5.8.ch.19.2.Ho. 5.11. Is.3.11.
t ch. 36. 15,16. 2 Ki. 17.13-15. Je.44.4,5. Ne. 9.26. Zec.7.11,12.
[4] To bear testimony against personal or national sin is still the duty of God's ministers. It is always a difficult, sometimes an almost hopeless task—still it is duty—and oftentimes the good seed grows in fields where it could be least expected.—*C.*
u 1 Heb. *clothed.*
b 1 Sa.13.13,14.2 Sa. 12.9,10. Zec.7.11,12.
c De.29.25. ch. 15.2. Je.2.19;14.18;5.19,25;6. 19.
d Mat.21.35. Ac.7. 59.
[6] Idolaters have often been praised for liberality towards other forms of worship. And if it be a praise to judge all religions alike, infidelity may merit that praise. But if compassion, mercy, and gratitude be essential to liberality, then is idolatry ever most illiberal. The ingratitude and cruelty of Joash to the son of his preserver are only equalled by that illiberality that cannot bear the reproof of honesty and truth.—*C.*
e Ps.109.4.Jn.10.32.
f Ge. 9. 5. Je. 11. 20. Ps.9.12;10.12-15;7.6.
[7] The Lord will look upon it and require it; and so it was, for the princes were murdered by the Syrians, the king by his servants, ver. 23,25.—*C.*
g 2 Ki.12.17,18. De. 32.35. Re. 13. 10;16.6. Ge.9.4,6.ver.17,21,22.
[8] B.C. 839.
[9] Heb. *Darmesek.*
h De. 32. 30; 28. 25. Le.26.17. Is.30.17.
i ch.12.2;15.2. Je. 2. 13,17,19;4.18;5.19;25;16. 19;18.9,11 Sa.12.25.
k Is.10.5,6;13.11.
l ch.22.6;35.24;16.12; 21.18.
m ver.21. Ps. 10. 14. Re.16.6;13.10. Ge. 9.4, 6.
n 1 Sa.2.30. Pr.10.7. ver.16;ch.33.20;21.20.
1 What a striking and fearful example is this of divine judgment on both ruler and people on account of royal and national infidelity! The king neglected the duty which, as a king, he owed to God; the people, left without restraint, gave way to idolatrous practices. The whole land thus became corrupt and guilty. Swift judgment followed. The army was overthrown in battle; the country was desolated; the capital was spoiled; and at length the weak and guilty monarch himself was murdered by his own servants.—*C.*
o Or, *Jozachar*, 2 Ki.12.21.
[2] Or, *Shomer.* These traitors were the children of prohibited marriages.

A.M. 3159. B.C. 845.

p 2 Ki.12.18.ver.25.
[3] Did *burdens* here mean prophetic threatenings, they would scarcely be called *great.* They are to be interpreted rather of those *great diseases* mentioned (ver. 25), and the political disasters of his country arising from idolatry.—*C.*
q Heb. *founding*, ver.3-14.
r Or, *commentary*, ch.9.29;16.11;20.34.

CHAP. XXV.

B.C. 838.
a 2 Ki.14.1-6.
b ch.24.2;26.4.Ps.78. 36-38. Is. 58. 2; 29. 13. Re.3.16. Ho.10.2. Ja.1. 8.2 Ti.3.5.
1 He attempted to unite worldliness and godliness: he began well, but did not continue—he wished to do what was right, but yielded to obstacles and temptations to do wrong.—*C.*
2 Heb. *confirmed upon him.*
c ch. 24.25,26; 33.24, 25. Ge.9.5,6. Ex.21.14. Nu.35.16-21,31.
d De.24.16. 2 Ki.14. 5. Je.31.30. Eze.18.4, 20.
e 1 Ch.13.1.
f ch.11.1;17.14-18.
g Nu.1.3,18.1 Ch.21. 5.ch.11.1;14.8.
3 The muster and discipline had evidently of late been neglected, else the amount of the national strength had been known. Amaziah reorganizes the disposable force, and finds the kingdom miserably wasted, since, in the days of Jehoshaphat, the military census was upwards of a million.—*C.*
4 £34,218, 15*s.* sterling.
5 Taking the shekel at 2*s.* 6*d.* the talent was 3000 shekels (Ex. 38.25,26), or £375; a hundred talents = £37,500, which gives to each of 100,000 7*s.* 6*d.* per man. This, therefore, could not have been their pay, but merely a subsidy to the government, or earnest to the army.—*C.*
h 2 Sa.12.1. ch.15.1; 19.2.
i 1 Ki.12.28. ch.13.2. Is.28.1. Ho.5.13,14; 9. 12.
k Is.8.9,10.ch.18.14. 1 Ki.22.15.Ec.11.9.
6 This is no irony, but an earnest warning, in which the anxiety of the prophet omits the conjunctions. The meaning is, 'If thou wilt go, if thou wilt do, if thou wilt be strong for the battle (that is, if you think yourself strong, and confiding in it, go to the battle), then know that God shall make thee fall,' &c.—*C.*
l Ju.7.11. ch.14.11. 1 Sa.14.6. Ps.20.7; 33.16-20.

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when it is fashionable, who are glad of an opportunity to throw off the restraint. What an unspeakable loss to a church or nation is the death of a pious or faithful counsellor! and what a plague are complaisant and wicked flatterers! But in times of great degeneracy, God never wants some faithful witnesses, that they who hate to be reformed may be left without excuse: and great zeal for God is then needful, to oppose the torrent of ungodliness, and to render ministers duly faithful to souls: for ingratitude, injustice, and barbarity generally attend hatred of reproof and worshipping of idols. And God's prophets, if faithful, are sure to be marked with suffering or death: but quickly shall God resent the injuries done to them. Quickly, and in manifold forms, his judgment shall overtake the obstinate transgressors: and when he forsakes men they become an easy prey to every invader. Often he gives men blood to drink who have imbrued their hands in the blood of his saints; while his justice pursues them into everlasting woe. And scarcely doth anything more fearfully spread destruction than marriages with wicked women.

CHAPTER XXV. REFLECTIONS. — What multitudes are mere dissemblers in their religious appearances! For some carnal end they apply their tongue and hand to religion, while their heart hates it. But short-lived are the triumphs of murderers, particularly those of sovereigns. And strict equity ought to take place in the punishment of criminals, that the innocent may not be involved with the guilty. How fearfully sin diminishes and weakens nations! And rash undertakings, or alliances in war, make room for bitter repentance. Multitudes profit nothing when God is our enemy; and connection with his enemies but hastens the curse on our enterprises. But the loss of money goes very near the heart of worldlings, while they who trust in God find themselves gainers. How outrageous is the fury and cruel the tender mercies of the wicked. Such as are really unconcerned about piety feel their pride hurt when treated as profane and wicked: and the proud, when baulked of their expected honours and booty, are greatly enraged. The conquests made by nations are often really to their own hurt: and those whom we imitated in wickedness become the instruments of our punishment. But base is the cruelty, and sottish the folly, to dash idolaters to pieces, and preserve, nay, worship, the idols which could not protect their votaries from such barbarous severity. Wicked men heartily hate a faithful reprover: and much sooner will they part with large sums of money than with the most useless and despicable idol! But near and certain is their destruction whom God has left off to reprove, and in whom pride swells to the brim. They that would not hearken to God's servants will soon hearken to their own wicked counsellors and raging lusts, which hasten their temporal, nay, eternal destruction. And however wicked the instruments may be, the judgments are always righteous. They who go forth hastily to strive will

But what shall we do for the hundred talents which I have given to the army[7] of Israel? And the man of God answered, The LORD is able[m] to give thee much more than this.

10 Then Amaziah separated them, *to wit*, the army that was come to him out of Ephraim, to go home[8] again: wherefore their [n]anger was greatly kindled[9] against Judah, and they returned home [o]in great anger.

11 ¶ And Amaziah strengthened himself,[1] and led forth his people, and went to [p]the valley of Salt, and smote of the children of Seir ten [q]thousand.[2]

12 And *other* ten thousand *left* alive did the children of Judah carry away captive, and brought them unto the top of the rock, and cast them down from the top of the rock, that they all were [r]broken in pieces.[3]

13 ¶ But the soldiers of the army[4] which Amaziah sent back, that they should not go with him to battle, fell upon the cities of Judah, from [s]Samaria even unto Beth-horon, and smote three thousand of them,[5] and took much spoil.[6]

14 ¶ Now it came to pass, after that Amaziah was come from the slaughter of the Edomites, that he [t]brought the gods of the children of Seir, and set them up *to be* his gods, and bowed down himself before them, and burnt incense unto them.

15 Wherefore the anger of the LORD was kindled against Amaziah, and he sent unto him a[t] prophet, which said unto him, Why hast thou sought after the gods of the people, [u]which could not deliver their own people out of thine hand?

16 And it came to pass, as he talked with him, that *the king* said unto him, Art thou made of the king's counsel? [x]forbear; why shouldest thou be smitten? Then the prophet forbare, and said, I know that [y]God hath determined[7] to destroy thee, because thou hast done this, and hast not hearkened unto my counsel.

17 ¶ Then [z]Amaziah king of Judah took advice,[8] and sent to Joash, the son of Jehoahaz, the son of Jehu, king of Israel, saying, Come, let us [a]see one another in the face.[9]

18 And Joash king of Israel sent to Amaziah king of Judah, saying, The [b]thistle that *was* in Lebanon sent to the cedar that *was* in Lebanon, saying, Give thy daughter to my son to wife: and there passed by [c]a wild beast that *was* in Lebanon, and trode down the thistle.[1]

19 Thou sayest, Lo, thou hast smitten the Edomites, and thine heart [d]lifteth thee up to boast: abide now at home; [e]why shouldest thou meddle to *thine* hurt, that thou shouldest fall, *even* thou, and Judah with thee?

20 But Amaziah [f]would not hear; for it *came* of God,[2] that he might deliver them into the hand *of their enemies*, because they sought after the gods of Edom.

21 So Joash the king of Israel went up; and they saw one another in the face, *both* he and Amaziah king of Judah, at [g]Beth-shemesh, which *belongeth* to Judah.[3]

22 And Judah was put to the [h]worse before Israel, and they fled every man to his tent.

23 And Joash the king of Israel [i]took Amaziah king of Judah, the son of Joash, the son of Jehoahaz, at Beth-shemesh, and brought him to Jerusalem, and brake down the wall of Jerusalem from the gate of Ephraim to the corner-gate,[4] four hundred cubits.

24 And *he took* all [k]the gold, and the silver, and all the vessels *that were* found in the house of God with Obed-edom, and the treasures of the king's house, the [5]hostages[6] also, and returned to Samaria.

25 ¶ And[l] Amaziah the son of Joash king of Judah lived after the death of Joash son of Jehoahaz king of Israel fifteen years.[7]

26 Now the [m]rest of the acts of Amaziah, first and last, behold, *are* they not written in the book of the Kings of Judah and Israel?

27 ¶ Now after the time that Amaziah did turn away from following the LORD, they [n]made a conspiracy against him in Jerusalem; and he fled to Lachish: but they sent to Lachish after him, and slew him there.

28 And they brought him upon horses, and buried him with his fathers in the city of [o]Judah.

CHAPTER XXVI.

1 *Uzziah succeeding, and reigning well in the days of Zechariah, prospereth.* 16 *Waxing proud, he invadeth the priest's office, and is smitten with leprosy by God.* 22 *He dieth, and Jotham succeedeth him.*

THEN all the people of Judah took [a]Uzziah, who *was* sixteen years old, and made him king in the room of his father Amaziah.

2 He built Eloth,[1] and restored it to Judah, after that the king slept with his fathers.

3 Sixteen years old *was* Uzziah when he began to reign; and he reigned fifty and two years in Jerusalem: his mother's name also *was* Jecoliah of Jerusalem.

4 And he [b]did *that which was* right in the sight of the LORD, according to all that his father Amaziah did.[2]

A.M. 3166. B.C. 838.

7 Heb. *band.*
m Pr.10.22. De.8.18. ch.1.12.
8 Heb. *to their place.*
n 2 Sa.19.42. Job 5.2. Pr.29.22.
9 Because they were subjected to a long march, and disappointed of expected plunder.—*C.*
o Heb. *in heat of anger,* Ju.1.12; 8.1. 2 Sa.19.44. Pr.27.3,4; 29.9; 22.24.
1 B.C. 827.
p 2 Sa.8.13. 2 Ki.14.7. Ps.60. title.
2 'The Valley of Salt' lay at the southern end of the Dead Sea, along the base of a range of salt hills now called *Jebel Usdum,* 'the hills of Sodom.' East of the valley was Mount Seir, or Edom. The terrible punishment inflicted on the ten thousand captives is accounted for by the previous cruelty of the Edomites, and the hereditary enmity which subsisted between the two nations.—*P.*
q 1 Ch. 20. 3; 18. 13, with ch. 20. 20; 21. 8–10.
3 The sacred historian states the fact, but does not give any approbation. It was a delay and refinement of cruelty to which the late idolatrous apostasies had prepared the people. When we compare ver. 4 with this passage, we discover an example of Amaziah's imperfection of heart—merciful and anxious for the law in the one case, negligent of it and cruel in the other—add ver. 14, and his former zeal for Jehovah now committed with idolatry, having neglected the law of Moses in one case (De.7,25), which lately he had honoured in another.—*C.*
4 Heb. *the sons of the band.*
r 1 Ki.16.24,28,29; 9.17 ch.8.5.
5 The inhabitants.
6 Beth-horon stood on the northern boundary of the kingdom of Judah. Samaria was the very centre of Israel; it may be inferred, therefore, that Judah had previous to this time obtained possession of many cities in the northern kingdom, which were now captured and plundered. The spoilers did not venture within the proper bounds of Judah.—*P.*
s ch.28.23. Ex.20.3–5. De.7.5,25; 2 Sa.5.21.
t ver.7; ch.19.2; 20.37; 25.7,14,20.
u 1 Ps.115.4–7. Je.10.1–20. Is.46.1,2; 44.9–20; 45.21.
x 2 Ti.4.3. Pr.9.7,8. Is.30.10. Ho.4.17. ch.36.15,16.
y 1 Sa.2.25; 12.25.
7 Heb. *counselled.*
z 2 Ki. 14. 8–14. ver. 13; ch.10.11. Pr.20.3.
a 2 Sa. 2. 14. ver. 19, 20.
9 Not an invitation to meet, but a covert form of challenge, as may be seen from the insulting reply.—*C.*
b Or *furze-bush,* or *thorn.* Ju.9.8.
c Heb. *a beast of the field.* Ps 80.13.
1 The thistle denoted Amaziah—mean, yet mischievous; the cedar, Joash—powerful, yet peaceable. No similitude could better describe Amaziah than the thistle; a low, useless, neglected weed, but which having chanced to draw blood from some passing traveller, began to

A.M. 3178. B.C. 826.

affect an equality with the cedar, the glory of Lebanon.—*C.*
d ch.26.16. Pr.13.10; 28.25. Ja.4.1,6.
e 1 Ki.14.31. Pr.18.6,7; 22.10; 28.15–18; 29.8, 9; 25.8; 20.18.
f ver. 16. 14. 1 Sa. 2. 25; 12.25; ch.22.7; 24.24. Ps.81.11,12. 2 Th.2.10–12. Ho.11.2,7. 2 Ki.14.11.
2 God adjudged him, on account of his idolatry, to be delivered over to his own heart and ways, and to the temptations of Satan. In this judicial sense it was of God, but in no other. See Ja.1.13–15.—*C.*
g 1 Sa. 6. 9–20, not Jos.19.38.
3 Bethshemesh was far beyond the boundaries of the northern kingdom. Joash must have marched down the plain of Sharon into the great broad valley which runs from among the mountains at Bethshemesh to Ekron. There the army of Amaziah was concentrated, and having been defeated, the soldiers fled up into the mountains of Judah—'every man to his tent.'—*P.*
h Heb. *smitten,* 2 Ki.14.12–14.
i Pr.16.18; 18.12; 29.23. Lu.14.11.
4 Heb. *the gate of it that looketh.*
k ch.12.9. 2 Ki.14.14. Pr.20.25; 11.4,28; 13.7; 22.16; 23.5; 27.24. Is.10.14.
5 Heb. *sons of pledge* or *power.*
6 Hostages (that is, literally, prisoners of a high rank), in pledge of the future peaceable conduct of Amaziah.—*C.*
l 2 Ki. 14. 17, 18; 13. 10.
7 B.C. 825.
m ch.9.31; 12.15; 16. 11; 20.34; 24.27; 27.7; 26. 22; 28.26; 32.32; 33.18; 35.26,27.
n Heb. *conspired a conspiracy,* 2 Ki. 14. 19. ch.24.25; 33.24. [He became very unpopular after having lost the battle with the Israelites; the consequence of which was the dismantling of Jerusalem, and the seizure of the royal treasures. It is likely that the last fifteen years of his reign were greatly embittered; so that finding the royal city to be no place of safety, he endeavoured to secure himself in the fortress of Lachish.—*J.*]
o That is, *the city of David,* as 2 Ki.14. 20.

CHAP. XXVI.

B.C. 810.
a Or, *Azariah,* 2 Ki.14.21; 15.2–7.
1 The building of Eloth is placed in front of Uzziah's biography, as a distinguishing characteristic note. Eloth was a city on the northern point of the eastern gulf of the Red Sea, which David took when he conquered Edom, 2 Sa. 8. 14. It was one of Solomon's principal seaports, 1 Ki. 9. 26. It was a place of great importance under Justinian, but, under Arabian rule (being called Ailah), is now in ruins.—*C.*
b ch.25.2; 24.2. 2 Ti. 3.5.
2 He went as far as his father in what was right, but no further: and his father's 'heart was not perfect,' ch.25.2.—*C.*

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soon not know what to do when their neighbour has put them to shame. Man's pride will certainly bring him low: and it will fare ill at last with them who forsake God and his way. For traitors to God and religion are often treacherously hurried into death and hell.

CHAPTER XXVI. [Ver. 7. According to the Talmud Gur-baal was identical with Gerar, an old city on the southern border of Philistia. This however is doubtful. The *Mehunims*, or more properly *Maonites*, were an ancient nomad tribe allied to the Phœnicians, whose earliest settlements were in the vale of Sodom. They migrated, leaving their name at Maon in the south of Judah, where they may have settled for a time; and again at Beth-maon, on the plateau of Moab; and also at the town now called *Maân*, on the eastern border of Edom. The latter was probably the chief station of the Maonites. *P.*]

Ver. 23. [About a mile to the north-west of modern Jerusalem are shown the excavations called the sepulchres of the Hebrew kings. Whether these were really their sepulchres does not appear, except from uncertain tradition, and the evident costliness of the work. They

5 And he sought God in the days of Zechariah, who had understanding in the visions of God: and as long as he sought the LORD, God made him to prosper.[3]

6 And he went forth and warred against the Philistines, and brake down the wall of Gath, and the wall of Jabneh, and the wall of Ashdod, and built cities about Ashdod, and among the Philistines.

7 And [c]God helped him against the Philistines, and against the Arabians that dwelt in Gur-baal, and the Mehunims.

8 And the [d]Ammonites gave gifts to Uzziah: and his name spread abroad *even* to the entering in of Egypt; for he strengthened *himself* exceedingly.

9 ¶ Moreover, Uzziah built towers in Jerusalem [e]at the corner-gate, and at [f]the valley-gate, and at the turning *of the wall*, and fortified[4] them.

10 Also he built towers in the [g]desert,[5] and digged[h] many wells: for he [i]had much cattle, both in the low country and in the plains;[6] husbandmen *also*, and vine-dressers in the mountains, and in [k]Carmel:[7] for he loved husbandry.[8]

11 ¶ Moreover, [l]Uzziah had an host of fighting men, that went out to war by bands, according to the number of their account, by the hand of Jeiel the scribe, and Maaseiah the ruler, under the hand of Hananiah, *one* of the king's captains.

12 The whole number of the chief of the fathers of the mighty men of valour *were* two thousand and six hundred.

13 And under their hand *was* [m]an army, three hundred thousand, and seven thousand and five hundred, that made war with mighty power, to help the king against the enemy.

14 And Uzziah prepared for them, throughout all the host, shields, and spears, and helmets, and habergeons, and bows, and [n]slings *to cast* stones.

15 And he made in Jerusalem engines, invented by cunning men, to be on the towers, and upon the bulwarks, to shoot arrows and great stones withal:[9] and his name spread[1] far abroad; [o]for he was marvellously helped, till he was strong.

A.M. 3204. B.C. 800.

3 The Scriptures furnish a mirror for nations, as well as for individuals; and national prosperity and adversity they never fail to trace directly to obedience or disobedience, faith or infidelity.—*C.*

c Ps. 3:8:27, 1–3; 20:7; 118:10–12. 1 Ch. 5:20.

d Ge. 19:38. Ju. xi. ch. xx.; 1 Sa. xii. 12. 1 Ch. xix. xx.

e ch. 25:23. 2 Ki. 14:13.

f Ne. 2:13; 3:13.

4 Or, *repaired*.

g Of Arabia, ch. 21:16.

5 Places of defence for small garrisons for the protection of the shepherds and flocks, corn and vines, against the Arabian borderers.—*C.*

h Ge. 26:18–21.

i 1 Ch. 27:26–31. 2 Ki. 3:4.

6 The 'low country' is the *Shephelah*, or plain of Philistia, lying between the mountains of Judah and the Mediterranean. 'The plains,' in Hebrew *Mishôr*, is the specific name of the great plateau of Moab, stretching from the top of the ridge east of the Dead Sea and Jordan away into the Arabian desert. To this day these are the best pastoral districts of Palestine.—*P.*

k Or, *fruitful fields*, 1 Sa. 25:2, not 1 Ki. 18:19, 20.

7 See note on 1 Sa. 25:2.—*C.*

8 It is curious and instructive to observe how Uzziah's taste for husbandry led to most of his warlike arrangements, for which he seems to have had equal capacities. It is thus that Providence ever counteracts or modifies one propensity by another. His taste for war would have produced a desert; his taste for husbandry modifies his taste for war, produces fortified towns, fruitful fields, and commercial ports.—*C.*

l ch. 17:14–19; 25:5.

m Heb. *the power of an army*, 2 Sa. 24:9. ch. 11:1, 3; 14:8; 17:13–19; 25:5.

n Ju. 20:16. 1 Sa. 17:49.

9 These engines are known by the names of *balistæ* for shooting stones, and *catapultæ* for arrows and javelins, though these names and distinctive uses are frequently confounded. The principles were those of the cross-bow, either of wood or elastic steel, the recoil of twisted ropes tightened by the action of levers; or the sling (not the ordinary sling), which seems to have been a species of gigantic bow, made fast at one end, so that the other being violently drawn downward, and loaded with stones, might, by its sudden recoil, project them against an enemy to a distance proportioned to its length and elastic power.—*C.*

1 Heb. *went forth*.

o De. 32:10–15. Ps. 30:6.

A.M. 3241. B.C. 763.

p De. 32:15. ch. 25:19. Hab. 2:4. Pr. 16:18; 18:12; 29:23; 34:23. Ho 13:6.

2 Of all human passions or errors pride is the most destructive of success and happiness. It entered into the first sin, and led to the loss of paradise, and it is ever the characteristic of the 'old man' of 'the flesh,' which nought but the Spirit of God can mortify and remove, Ro. 8:13. Ga. 5:20. Ep. 4:22.—*C.*

q 2 Ki. 16:12, 13. Nu. xvi. xvii. 1 Sa. 6:19; 13:12. 1 Ki. 9:25; 13:1–4. He. 5:4.

3 B.C. 763.

r Mat. 14:4. 2 Sa. 12:1–12. Ex. 13:18. ch. 26:7–9; 30:9. 2 Ch. 24:20, 25, 26; 28:9.

s He. 5:4. Nu. 18:7. Ex. 30:7. 1 Ki. 13:1. 1 Co. 7:24.

t Ja. 4:6. 1 Sa. 2:30.

4 This was a bold and a noble act, worthy of the descendants of the men who stood by Moses for the honour of God in the wilderness. Uzziah was a prince of strong will and great power. The man who resisted him risked his life: but the Levites did not shrink from the attempt, and they have in so doing set an example to all the ministers of religion who are able to gain the ear of royalty.—*P.*

b ch. 26:10; 25:16.

c Nu. 12:3, 10; 31–35; 12:10. 2 Ki. 5:27. Da. 4:31.

5 On examining any treatise on medicine the reader must be struck with the frequency with which disease is attributed to *mental passions*, and not to *bodily causes*. Fear produces many disorders, not unfrequently death. The same is the case with anger, envy, and the gentler feelings of inordinate and misplaced affection—and visible causes there may undoubtedly be; but the real cause, and which truth discovers to faith, is the judgment of God either for punishment, ver. 20; correction, He. 12:9; prevention of sin, 1 Co. 12:7; or growth in grace, He. 12:11.—*C.*

d Nu. 12:10. 2 Ki. 5:27.

6 This was a very remarkable punishment. He aspired at honour, and was smitten with a loathsome disease. He invaded the priest's office, and now was smitten with a disease which was subject to their inspection. For coming into the sanctuary he was expelled the outer court, where the meanest subject might enter. Aspiring to be *priest* he ceased to be *king*.—*P.*

e Ex. 6:12. 1 Ki. 21:4.

f Le. 13:46. Nu. 5:2, 3; 12:15. 2 Ki. 7:3; 15:5.

g ch. 10:20; 12:15; 13:22; 20:11; 20:34; 25:26. Is. 1:1; 6:1.

h 1 Ki. 2:10. ch. 21:20; 28:27; 33:20.

CHAP. XXVII.

a 2 Ki. 15:32–38.

b ch. 26:4. 2 Ki. 15:34.

16 ¶ But [p]when he was strong, his heart was lifted up to *his* destruction:[2] for he transgressed against the LORD his God, and [q]went into the temple of the LORD, to burn incense upon the altar of incense.[3]

17 And Azariah the priest went in after him, and with him fourscore priests of the LORD, *that were* valiant men;

18 And they [r]withstood Uzziah the king, and said unto him, [s]*It appertaineth* not unto thee, Uzziah, to burn incense unto the LORD, but to the priests the sons of Aaron, that are consecrated to burn incense: go out of the sanctuary; for thou hast trespassed; neither *shall it be* [t]for thine honour from the LORD [4]God.

19 Then Uzziah was [b]wroth, and *had* a censer in his hand to burn incense; and, while he was wroth with the priests, the [c]leprosy even rose up in his forehead[5] before the priests in the house of the LORD, from beside the incense-altar.

20 And Azariah the chief priest, and all the priests, looked upon him, and, behold, he *was* [d]leprous[6] in his forehead, and they thrust him out from thence; yea, himself [e]hasted also to go out, because the LORD had smitten him.

21 And[f] Uzziah the king was a leper unto the day of his death, and dwelt in a several house, *being* a leper; for he was cut off from the house of the LORD: and Jotham his son *was* over the king's house, judging the people of the land.

22 ¶ Now[g] the rest of the acts of Uzziah, first and last, did Isaiah the prophet, the son of Amoz, write.

23 So Uzziah [h]slept with his fathers, and they buried him with his fathers in the field of the burial which *belonged* to the kings; for they said, He *is* a leper: and Jotham his son reigned in his stead.

CHAPTER XXVII.

1 *Jotham reigning well prospereth.* 5 *He subdueth the Ammonites.* 7 *His acts, reign, and death.* 9 *Ahaz succeedeth him.*

JOTHAM *was*[a] twenty and five years old when he began to reign; and he reigned sixteen years in Jerusalem: his mother's name also *was* Jerushah, the daughter of Zadok.

2 And he [b]did *that which was* right in the sight of the LORD, according to all that his

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still contain the remains of elaborate stone-coffins placed in side niches; and one of the doors remains, a carved and panelled marble moving upon two hinges like axles, part of the door-slab itself, and playing in the solid rock at top and bottom. From these, as a leper, Uzziah was excluded, and buried without in the adjoining field. *C.*——The real tombs of the kings must have been in the city of David, *i.e.* on Mount Zion; and could not therefore be those above mentioned. Tradition points out to this day the tomb of David on the summit of Zion, just outside the modern Zion Gate of Jerusalem. A large building, containing a mosque and a Christian church, stands on the spot, but the sepulchres are beneath, hewn in the rock. The fanaticism of the Mohammedans has hitherto prevented a full examination of them. They may contain some important relics. *P.*]

REFLECTIONS.—A godly, faithful, and prudent instructor is a great advantage to a youthful king: and a noted regard to the laws and worship of God lays an excellent foundation for prosperity: for God honours those that honour him: and as long as we cleave to him, he will be our assistant. And what extensive capacities God gives some men, that they can take care of a multitude of things at once? But how bewitching is pride! it can decoy men to their ruin in a thousand forms. And it is difficult to be prosperous and yet be humble. But seldom do men gratify their pride without bringing themselves to deserved shame. The offices and ordinances of God's church are sacred and appropriate: it is at our highest peril if we interfere with them without his call. And when God's ministers magnify their office, and boldly withstand the sinful attempts of the greatest monarchs, it is honourable and becoming. But how impatient are the proud of faithful reproof or zealous opposition! The most wise and just rebuke exasperates the wilful. And they who will not submit to admonition rush on their own ruin. God marks them with disgraceful punishments, answerable to their crimes. And when we feel his displeasure, it is madness to persist. Humiliation is our only door of escape. And sometimes when sins are pardoned of God, they leave an indelible stain among men.

CHAPTER XXVII. REFLECTIONS.—It is

father Uzziah did: howbeit he entered not into the temple of the LORD.[1] And the people did yet corruptly.

3 ¶ He built the high gate of the house of the LORD, and on the wall of [c]Ophel[2] he built much.[3]

4 Moreover, [d]he built cities in the mountains of Judah, and in the forests he built castles and towers.

5 ¶ He fought also with the [e]king of the Ammonites, and prevailed against them. And the children of Ammon gave him the same year an hundred talents of silver,[4] and ten thousand measures[5] of wheat, and ten thousand of barley. So much[6] did the children of Ammon pay unto him, both the second year and the third.

6 So Jotham became mighty, because [f]he prepared[7] his ways before the LORD his God.

7 ¶ Now the [g]rest of the acts of Jotham, and all his wars, and his ways,[8] lo, they *are* written in the book of the Kings of Israel and Judah.

8 He was five and twenty years old when he began to reign, and reigned sixteen years in Jerusalem.

9 ¶ And [h]Jotham slept with his fathers; and they buried him in the city of David: and Ahaz his son reigned in his stead.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

1 Ahaz reigning very wickedly is greatly afflicted by the Syrians. 8 Judah being captivated by the Israelites is sent home by the counsel of Oded the prophet. 16 Ahaz sending for aid to Assyria is not helped thereby. 22 In his distress he becometh still more idolatrous. 26 He dying, Hezekiah succeedeth him.

AHAZ *was* [a]twenty years old[1] when he began to reign; and he reigned sixteen years in Jerusalem: but he did not *that which was* right in the sight of the LORD, like David his father:[2]

2 For he [b]walked in the ways of the kings of Israel, and made also molten images for Baalim.

3 Moreover he [c]burnt incense in the valley of the son of Hinnom, and burnt his children in the fire,[3] after the abominations of the heathen whom the LORD had cast out before the children of Israel.

4 He [d]sacrificed also and burnt incense in the high places, and on the hills, and under every green tree.

A.M. 3246. B.C. 758.

1 That is, he imitated his father in agriculture, war, and all other things, with the exception of his father's proud and profane attempt to usurp the priest's office.—*C.*

c Or, *the tower*, Ne.3.26;11.21.

2 Some remarkable tower that formed a feature (so to speak) of the city, and a remarkable subject in its history. The Tower of London, and the Castle of Edinburgh, may furnish modern parallels and illustrations.—*C.*

3 Ophel was the southern continuation of Mount Moriah, outside the temple area. The massive wall which encompassed it has recently been discovered by Captain Warren of the Palestine Exploration Society. Probably the remains of towers which he is now laying bare may be those built by Jotham.—*P.*

d ch.26.9,10;14.7;11.5-10;8.2-6.

e ch.26.8, with 2 Ki.3.4;15.19.ch.2.10.

4 £34,218, *15s.* sterling.

5 Rather *cors*: the cor was the same as the homer, about 32 pecks.—*C.*

6 Heb. *This.*

f Or, *established*, ch.19.3.

7 Preparation always implies thought previous to action. This thought implies faithful looking to God, self-examination, and repentance, Ps.119.59.—*C.*

g ch.20.34;28.26,27;32.32,33;26.22,23.

8 It was in his days, according to 2 Ki.15.37, that Resin king of Syria and Pekah king of Israel began to cut Judah short.—*I.*

h 2 Ki.15.38.

CHAP. XXVIII.

B.C. 742.

a 2 Ki.16.1,2,&c.

1 See note on 2 Ki.18.2.—*C.*

2 Either David was a second name of Jotham (see examples of pluralities of names, 2 Ki. 14. 21, comp. 2 Ch. 26.1, also 2 Ch. 21. 17; 22. 1, 6, where one king has *two*, the other *three* names), or else the word *father* is used for *predecessor*.—*C.*

b 2 Ki.16.2.ch.21.6.

c Or, *offered sacrifice*, Je.7.31. Le.18.21. Ps.106.37,38. ch. 33. 2-6.

3 It is difficult for Christians to conceive what a cruel system is Idolatry. This burning still remains in the suttees of India, and the exposure or drowning of children is legalized.—*Note*, Let Christians beware, lest in their horror of heathenism they forget there are other idols as cruel and destructive as Moloch.—*C.*

d 2 Ki. 16.4; 17.9-11. 1 Ki. 14. 23, with Le. 26.30. De.12.2.

A.M. 3262. B.C. 742.

e 1 Ki.18.21. Mi.3.11. Ju.2.14.2 Ki.16.5. Is.7. 1,6.

4 Jehovah was his God by the Abrahamic covenant as well as by creation, and God's claim and title were not voidable by Ahaz' idolatrous apostasy.—*C.*

5 Heb. *Darmesek.*

f 2 Ki.15.37. Is.9.21. Mi.2.8,9.

6 This number is so great, and so utterly inconsistent with modern ideas of warfare, that the usual solution of a supposed error has been freely employed. There seems, however, no reason to question the account: the cruelty that could desolate the land by carrying off '200,000, women, sons, and daughters,' to sell them, or hold them for domestic, field, or colonial slaves, would feel little compunction for such a cruel and wholesale butchery of the 'sons of valour,' whose total extirpation would be the best safeguard of their conquerors. See ver.9. *C.*—It is possible there is a mistake in the number, though all the MSS. and versions agree. The whole people seem to have been given up into the hands of their enemies.—*I.*

7 Heb. *sons of valour.*

g ch.15.2. Je.2.19. 1 Ki.15.29,30. Is.24.5,6.

8 Heb. *the second to the king.*

h Mi.2.10. De.28.25, 41.

i 1 Ki. 20. 38-42. ch. 19.1,2.

k Ps.69.26. Is. 10. 5. Eze. 25. 12. Ob.10-16. Zec.1.15.

l Ezr.9.6. Ge. 4. 10. Re.18.5.

m Le.25.39,42.

n Je.25.29.1 Pe.4.17, 18.

o Is.58.6. He.13.1,3.

9 He reminds them of their own sins. It ill becomes sinners to be oppressors. Could they hope for mercy from God if they showed none to their brethren? Every man is our neighbour, every man is our brother. Slavery in every form is absolutely opposed to the law of love and the golden rule of equity.—*I.*

p Is.2.13. Ps.18.26,27. 2 Ki.23.26. Ezr.10.14.

q 1 Ch.13.1;28.1.

r Je.26.16.

s Nu.32.14. Jos. 22. 17,18. Mat. 23. 32. Da. ix.2 Ki.17.7-23. Ho.iv. -xiii. Is.1.-iii. v. Ja.

1 There are always some who, in the time of national defections, can discover the *signs* of approaching judgments; who 'sigh and who cry for all the abominations that are done in the land;' who do what they may to stem the 'iniquity that cometh in like a flood;' who sometimes, by grace, by the enforcement of repentance, succeed in averting national calamities; but who, if their country or church will not hear, are yet privileged to 'deliver their own souls.'—*C.*

5 Wherefore the LORD [e]his God[4] delivered him into the hand of the king of Syria; and they smote him, and carried away a great multitude of them captives, and brought *them* to Damascus:[5] and he was also delivered into the hand of the king of Israel, who smote him with a great slaughter.

6 For [f]Pekah the son of Remaliah slew in Judah an hundred and twenty thousand in one day,[6] *which were* all valiant men;[7] because[g] they had forsaken the LORD God of their fathers.

7 And Zichri, a mighty man of Ephraim, slew Maaseiah the king's son, and Azrikam the governor of the house, and Elkanah *that was* next to the king.[8]

8 ¶ And the children of Israel [h]carried away captive of their brethren two hundred thousand, women, sons, and daughters, and took also away much spoil from them, and brought the spoil to Samaria.

9 But a prophet of the LORD was there, whose name *was* Oded: and [i]he went out before the host that came to Samaria, and said unto them, Behold, [k]because the LORD God of your fathers was wroth with Judah, he hath delivered them into your hand, and ye have slain them in a rage *that* reacheth [l]up unto heaven.

10 And now ye purpose to keep under the children of Judah and Jerusalem for [m]bondmen and bond-women unto you: *but are there* not [n]with you, even with you, sins against the LORD your God?

11 Now hear me therefore, and [o]deliver the captives[9] again, which ye have taken captive of your brethren: [p]for the fierce wrath of the LORD *is* upon you.

12 Then certain of the [q]heads of the children of Ephraim, Azariah the son of Johanan, Berechiah the son of Meshillemoth, and Jehizkiah the son of Shallum, and Amasa the son of Hadlai, [r]stood up against them that came from the war,

13 And said unto them, Ye shall not bring in the captives hither: for whereas we have offended against the LORD *already*, ye intend [s]to add *more* to our sins and to our trespass: for our trespass is great, and *there is* fierce wrath against Israel.[1]

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happy when children imitate their parents' goodness, and carefully avoid their faults. But hard is the task to bring an obdurate people off from their corrupt customs. And often magistrates and ministers, who are tender and circumspect in their own lives, have not courage and zeal enough for doing what they might in the reformation of others. A fixed steadfastness in the truth is the most necessary, and at the same time the most excellent, mean for the resistance of evil and performance of good. What reward hath godliness?—it hath the promises of this life and that which is to come. But, alas! the best magistrates and ministers are often quickly removed, and that in order to make way for monsters to fill their place.

CHAPTER XXVIII. [Ver. 21. We read in the parallel passage, 2 Ki. 16, 9, that the King of Assyria hearkened unto' Ahaz. How is that statement reconciled with this verse? In this way: the assistance rendered to Ahaz was of no real service, though he hearkened to him in so far as Syria was concerned. The king of Assyria did not aid him against the Philistines, did not recover for him the captured cities of Judah, did not defend him from the invasions of the Edomites; while, at the same time, the treasures of the kingdom were exhausted by the bribes to the rapacious eastern monarch. *P.*]

REFLECTIONS.—How amazing is the strength of men's inward corruption, that can so trample upon a pious education and pattern! But fearful are the punishments which remain in store for such enormous transgressors: and miserable are the nations who have such monsters of impiety for their sovereigns. God makes the nations around concur to punish the apostasy of his professing people. Often the very persons or nations whom we have made our pattern in wickedness, are made the instruments of our punishment. And dreadfully are the mightiest numbered to the slaughter when the Lord fighteth against them. But how tender his compassion towards his offending people, even while he smites them! He observes and is provoked with those who inhumanly murder or abuse them, especially if they be brethren, or act from principles of hatred or revenge. And he constantly seeks by his word and spirit to render their most outrageous enemies kind and generous to them. They who are made sensible of their own sins will sympathize with their brethren's sufferings. It is better to take warning late than never: and the victory of self-denial is more glorious than the necks of vanquished enemies. It is the greatest honour to the mighty to be merciful. But

COFFEE GARDEN, DUMMAR, DAMASCUS—TO WHOSE GODS AHAZ, THE KING OF JUDAH, SARIFICED, AND BROUGHT RUIN TO HIS HOME AND PEOPLE. [II. CHRONICLES, xxviii: 23.]—"For he sacrificed unto the gods of Damascus, which smote him." Ahaz was the son of Jothan and the twelfth king of Judah. He reigned sixteen years, from B. C. 742 to B. C. 726. He introduced new sanctuaries and strange altars in Jerusalem, and burned incense in the temple courts to the heavenly bodies. He erected a new altar after the pattern of one he had seen in Damascus. He is said to have introduced the sun dial, which is about the only useful thing he contributed to his time. We give a picture above of a coffee garden in one of the suburbs of Damascus. This city was, perhaps, in the days of Ahaz, very much what it is to-day. It owes its existence to the Abana river, and has always been noted for its beautiful gardens filled with flowering shrubs. Damascus has always been a wicked city. People here have lived for pleasure, and the gods of Damascus to which Ahaz sacrificed were the ruin of him and of his people.

14 So the armed men left the captives and the spoil before the princes and all the congregation.

15 And the men which [t]were expressed by name rose up, and took the captives, and with the spoil [u]clothed all that were naked among them, and arrayed them, and shod them, and gave them to eat and to drink, and anointed them, and carried all the feeble of them upon asses, and brought them to [w]Jericho, the city of palm-trees, to their brethren: then they returned to Samaria.[1]

16 ¶ At that time did king Ahaz [x]send unto the kings of Assyria to help him.

17 For [y]again the Edomites had come and smitten Judah, and carried away captives.[2]

18 The [z]Philistines also had invaded the cities of the low country, and of the south of Judah, and had taken [a]Beth-shemesh, and Ajalon, and Gederoth, and Shocho with the villages thereof, and Timnah with the villages thereof, Gimzo also and the villages thereof; and they dwelt there.

19 For the LORD [b]brought Judah low, because of Ahaz king of Israel; for he made Judah naked,[3] and transgressed sore against the LORD.

20 And[c] Tilgath-pilneser king of Assyria came unto him, and distressed him, but strengthened him not.[4]

21 For Ahaz took [d]away a portion *out* of the house of the LORD, and *out* of the house of the king, and of the princes, and gave *it* unto the king of Assyria: but he helped him not.

22 ¶ And [e]in the time of his distress did he trespass yet more against the LORD: this *is that* king Ahaz.

23 For he sacrificed unto the gods of Damascus, which smote him;[5] and he said, [f]Because the gods of the kings of Syria help them, *therefore* will I sacrifice to them, that they may help me: but they were the ruin of him, and of all Israel.[6]

24 And Ahaz gathered together the vessels of the house of God, and [g]cut in pieces the vessels of the house of God, and [h]shut up the doors of the house of the LORD, and he [i]made him altars in every corner of Jerusalem.

25 And in every several city of Judah he made high places to burn[7] incense unto other gods, and provoked to anger the LORD God of his fathers.

A.M. 3263. B.C. 741.

t ver. 12.

u Ja. 2. 16. Mat. 25. 34-45. Job 31. 15-23. 2 Ki. 6. 22.

w De. 34. 3. 1 Ki. 16. 34.

1 One of the most beautiful narratives upon record, and a glorious lesson to Christian nations—a lesson which some in a degree have learned, but which others are still in vain called to consider and obey. The picture of the undaunted prophet, the noble-hearted princes, the generous army in the foreground, and the returning captives gently escorted in the distance, form a picture which the heart can draw, but boundlessly beyond the utmost effort of the pencil.—*C.*

x 2 Ki. 16. 5, 7. Is. 7. 1-7. Je. 17. 5.

y Le. 26. 18. ch. 25. 11, 12.

2 Heb. *a captivity.*

z Eze. 16. 27, 57. Jos. 15. 22-47.

a ch. 25. 22; 11. 7, 10. Jos. 15. 41, 48, 57.

b Ps. 106. 41-43. Is. 1. 5-9. Ex. 32. 25.

3 Nakedness, either partial or entire, was a part of idolatrous worship, as appears from Ex. 32. 25. And with this idolatry had Ahaz infected his kingdom, disrobed her of her beautiful garment of righteousness, and left her exposed to the scorn of her enemies, and the storm of divine displeasure. See Ho. 2. 3.—*C.*

c 2 Ki. 15. 29. Ho. 5. 13. Is. 7. 20; 22. Je. 17. 5.

4 He conquered for him Rezin and the Syrians (2 Ki. 16. 9), yet he did not help him against the Philistines or Israel, while he exhausted the royal and temple treasures for subsistence of his forces.—*C.*

d ch. 12. 9, 2 Ki. 18. 15, 16. Pr. 20. 25.

e Is. 1. 5. Je. 5. 3. 2 Ti. 3. 13. Re. 16. 11. Ps. 52. 7. Pr. 10. 7; 29. 1.

5 The Septuagint translates it: 'And king Ahaz said, I will seek to the gods of Damascus which have smitten me.' This view is preferred by many, as our translation seems to ascribe the power of smiting to idols. But there is no necessity, nor is there any good authority, for departing from the Hebrew or the authorized version. Who smote Job? Satan, Job i. And who is he? The very god of this world. And who were the gods of Damascus to whom Ahaz sacrificed? Devils, 1 Co. 10. 20. The very gods that smote him, as ever is their wont, Le. 17. 7. 1 Ch. 21. 1. Ps. 106. 37. 1 Co. 13. 10. Ep. 6. 12. 1 Ti. 3. 7. 1 Jn. 3. 8. Re. 9. 20; 12. 9.—*C.*

f 2 Ki. 16. 12. Ps. 115. 4-7. Hab. 1. 11. Je. 2. 19. ch. 25. 14, 15. Is. 44. 9-20; 46. 1, 2; 45. 21. De. 32. 15-22.

6 The reason of this strange act is explained in 2 Ki. 16. 10, where the account of Ahaz' visit to Damascus is given.—*P.*

g 2 Ki. 16. 8. Pr. 20. 25.

h ch. 28. 3.

i ch. 33. 3-5. Ho. 12. 11. Je. 2. 28.

7 Or, *to offer.*

A.M. 3263. B.C. 741.

k ch. 20. 34; 27. 7, 9.

l ch. 21. 20; 26. 23; 33. 20. 2 Sa. 2. 30. Pr. 10. 7.

8 See note on ch. 26. 23.—*C.*

CHAP. XXIX.

B.C. 726.

a 2 Ki. 18. 1-8.

1 See note on 2 Ki. 18. 2.—*C.*

b ch. 26. 5. Is. 8. 2.

2 The daughter of that godly and faithful prophet mentioned, ch. 26. 5. And a striking instance of the hereditary blessing so frequently derived from a godly mother.—*C.*

c 1 Ki. 15. 5; 11. 38. ch. 34. 2.

d Ec. 9. 10. Ps. 119. 59, 60. Pr. 8. 17. ch. 34. 3.

3 'What is well begun,' saith a common proverb, 'is nearly ended.' For to begin a work of reformation is the greatest difficulty. And yet 'the lion in the way' (Pr. 22. 13) is not so dangerous as procrastination, that promises for hereafter, but can attempt nothing now. Happy Hezekiah who begins well, and begins immediately.—*C.*

e ch. 28. 24. 2 Ki. 16. 14.

4 The public worship at the temple was entirely suppressed during the latter years of king Ahaz. The only reason advanced for a contrary opinion is this: it is not said that the sacred fire on the altar of burnt-offering was extinguished, or that it was rekindled by fire from heaven, as at the dedication of the temple. If, however, the service was not entirely put a stop to, the people in general were shut out from attending.—*I.*

f Ex. 19. 10, 15. 1 Ch. 15. 12.

g 2 Ki. 16. 12, *i.e.* idols, &c.

5 Ahaz had shut up the doors of the temple (ch. 28. 24; 29. 7); but before doing so, it may have been grossly defiled with his abominable sacrifices. But the gates and the courts being left open, and probably employed as a market-place (see Mat. 21. 13), there would be much accumulation of filthiness in the courts and chambers, which were all called by the common name of *holy places.*—*C.*

h ch. 28. 2-4, 23-25. Je. 2. 27.

6 Heb. *given the neck.*

i ch. 28. 24, with Le. 24. 1-8.

k ch. 24. 18; 28. 5, 6, 17-19. 1 Ki. 9. 8. Le. 26. 14-39. De. 28. 15-52.

l Le. 26. 17. ch. 28. 5-8, 17-19.

7 Alluding to the captivity, ch. 28. 5, and the terrible defeat, 28. 6.—*C.*

m 1 Ki. 8. 17, 2 Ki. 11. 17. ch. 15. 12; 34. 30-32. Ezr. 10. 3. Ne. 9. 2. 2 Co. 8. 5.

8 Speaking in the spirit of adoption, and exhorting them as a father would exhort his dear children.—*C.*

n Or, *be not now deceived*, 1 Co. 6. 10.

o Nu. 8. 14; 18. 2-6. De. 10. 8.

26 ¶ Now[k] the rest of his acts, and of all his ways, first and last, behold, they *are* written in the book of the Kings of Judah and Israel.

27 And Ahaz slept with his fathers, and they buried him in the city, *even* in Jerusalem; but they [l]brought him not into the sepulchres of the kings of Israel:[8] and Hezekiah his son reigned in his stead.

CHAPTER XXIX.

1 *Hezekiah's good reign.* 3 *He restoreth religion.* 5 *He exhorteth the Levites to cleanse the house of God.* 12 *They sanctify themselves, and cleanse the house of God.* 20 *Hezekiah offereth solemn sacrifices, wherein the Levites were more forward than the priests.*

HEZEKIAH began[a] to reign *when he was* five and twenty years old;[1] and he reigned nine and twenty years in Jerusalem: and his mother's name *was* Abijah, the daughter of [b]Zechariah.[2]

2 And he [c]did *that which was* right in the sight of the LORD, according to all that David his father had done.

3 ¶ He, in the [d]first year of his reign,[3] in the first month, [e]opened the doors of the house of the LORD, and repaired them.[4]

4 And he brought in the priests and the Levites, and gathered them together into the east street,

5 And said unto them, Hear me, ye Levites; [f]Sanctify now yourselves, and sanctify the house of the LORD God of your fathers, and carry forth [g]the filthiness out of the holy *place.*[5]

6 For [h]our fathers have trespassed, and done *that which was* evil in the eyes of the LORD our God, and have forsaken him, and have turned away their faces from the habitation of the LORD, and turned *their* backs.[6]

7 Also they have [i]shut up the doors of the porch, and put out the lamps, and have not burnt incense nor offered burnt-offerings in the holy *place* unto the God of Israel.

8 Wherefore the [k]wrath of the LORD was upon Judah and Jerusalem, and he hath delivered them to trouble, to astonishment, and to hissing, as ye see with your eyes.

9 For, lo, [l]our fathers have fallen by the sword, and our sons, and our daughters, and our wives, *are* in captivity for this.[7]

10 Now *it is* [m]in mine heart to make a covenant with the LORD God of Israel, that his fierce wrath may turn away from us.

11 My sons,[8] be[n] not now negligent: for the LORD hath [o]chosen you to stand before him,

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when God lays aside one instrument of correction, he often takes another in his hand; and turns the helps which we sinfully secure into ruinous plagues. When we forsake God, we must needs be disappointed in every other confidence. And desperately hardened must men be when both mercies and judgments render them worse and worse. Happy is that nation where their tyrannical monsters of wickedness are quickly cut off by death, to make way for better princes.

CHAPTER XXIX. REFLECTIONS.—What strange alterations the change of a sovereign may produce in a nation! And great is the mercy when God gives good men power after they have long been unwilling spectators of wickedness. It is highly honourable when those in high stations give to the Lord the first beginnings of their power and influence. And when God gives opportunity, with earnestness, humble grief, and holy zeal, should men reform their neglects and turn to the Lord. Corrupters of religion often leave the church and ordinances of God in the greatest confusion. And it is necessary to ponder the punishments of former sins in order to render us hearty and active in our reformation. And much may be done in a short time if all concerned be diligent. Honourable are those ministers whom God stirs up to be leaders in the work of reformation, to provoke their brethren to jealousy: and glorious is the sight when they cheerfully work to one another's hands in reforming the church; —when kings, princes, priests, and people vie with one another in improving Jesus Christ as the great propitiation for sins, and in serious repentance of former sins, and returning to the observance of all God's ordinances, grudging neither cost nor care! They will then find their work much more easy than they expected. But, alas! that priests, who ought to be

to serve him, and that ye should minister unto him, and burn[9] incense.[1]

12 ¶ Then the Levites arose, Mahath the son of Amasai, and Joel the son of Azariah, of the sons of the [p]Kohathites: and of the sons of Merari; Kish the son of Abdi, and Azariah the son of Jehalelel: and of the Gershonites; Joah the son of Zimmah, and Eden the son of Joah:

13 And of the sons of [q]Elizaphan; Shimri, and Jeiel: and [r]of the sons of Asaph; Zechariah, and Mattaniah:

14 And of the sons of Heman; Jehiel, and Shimei: and of the sons of Jeduthun; Shemaiah, and Uzziel.

15 And they gathered their brethren, and sanctified themselves, and came, according to the commandment of the king, [s]by the words of the LORD, to cleanse the house of the LORD.

16 And the priests went into the [t]inner part of the house of the LORD, to cleanse *it*,[2] and brought out all the uncleanness that they found in the temple of the LORD into the court of the house of the LORD. And the Levites took *it*, to carry *it* out abroad [u]into the brook Kidron.

17 Now they began on the first *day* of the first month to sanctify, and on the eighth day of the month came they to the [v]porch of the LORD: so they sanctified the house of the LORD in eight days; and in the sixteenth day of the first month they made an end.[3]

18 Then they went in to Hezekiah the king, and said, We have cleansed all the house of the LORD, and the [w]altar of burnt-offering, with all the vessels thereof, and the show-bread table, with all the vessels thereof.

19 Moreover, [x]all the vessels, which king Ahaz in his reign did cast away[4] in his transgression, have we prepared and sanctified, and, behold, they *are* before the altar of the LORD.

20 ¶ Then Hezekiah the king [a]rose early, and gathered the rulers of the city, and went up to the house of the LORD.

21 And they brought [b]seven bullocks, and seven rams, and seven lambs, and seven he-goats, for a sin-offering for the kingdom, and for the sanctuary, and for Judah:[5] and he commanded the priests, the sons of Aaron, to offer *them* on the altar of the LORD.

22 So they killed the bullocks, and the priests received the blood, and [c]sprinkled *it* on

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[9] Or, *offer sacrifice.*

1 Hezekiah acted the part of a God-fearing monarch. He used his influence and his power to promote the spiritual welfare of his kingdom. He became a father to the nation. He instructed the priests, and stirred them up to a discharge of their proper duties. He warned the people, by showing what calamities had befallen them on account of their neglect of religion. All this is an example and a lesson to Christian kings and rulers in our days.—*P.*

[p] 1 Ch.6.1;23.6–23.
[q] Le.10.4.
[r] 1 Ch.6.31–47; 2[nr].2, 3,9–31.
[s] Or, *in the business of the LORD*, ch.30.12.
[t] 1 Ki. 6. 33, *i.e.* the sanctuary and holy of holies.

2 The priests only, by divine command, might go into the inner part, the holy of holies, even to cleanse it—the emblem of Christ, by his Spirit, alone able to enter the heart, cleanse it from all inward pollution, carrying the love of the world out of it, and leaving behind nothing but "holiness to the Lord," 2 Co.7.1. Col.1.27. 1 Jn. 2.15. Ja.1.21.—*C.*

[u] De.9.21. 1 Ki.2.37. 2 Ki.23.6,12. ch. 15.16; 30.14.
[v] 1 Ki.6.3. Jn. 10.23. ver.7.

3 Requiring eight days more to cleanse the court. By which we learn that the heart and the hands, the inner and the outer man, require the same attention and cleansing, Is.1.16. Ja. 4.8.—*C.*

[w] ch. 4. 1, 8, 16–22. 2 Ki.16.14.
[x] ch. 28. 24. 2 Ki. 16. 14,17,18.

4 Ahaz had cut all the vessels in pieces—these they had prepared by recasting or ordering, and sanctified by washing for divine service. *C.*—The Targum says, 'All the vessels which king Ahaz had polluted and rendered abominable by strange idols, when he reigned in his transgression against the Word of the Lord, we have collected and hidden; and others have we prepared to replace them, and they are now before the Lord.' And so the Sept. and Vulg., instead of 'cast away,' have 'profaned.' And thus Boothroyd.—*I.*

[a] Ge.22.3. Ex. 24. 4. Jos.6. 12. Ec. 9. 10. Ps. 119. 59,60.
[b] 1 Ch.15.26. Le.4.3–14. 2 Co.5. 21. He. 10. 10–14; 9. 13–15. 1 Pe. 1. 18,19; 2.24;3.18. 1 Jn.2. 1,2; 4.10.
[c] Le.8. 14, 15, 19, 24. He.9.21,22.

5 There were two kinds of offering on the occasion, a sin and a burnt offering, ver.23,27. The seven bullocks, and the seven rams and seven lambs, were for the burnt-offering, Le.1.5,10. Now the law required but *one* of each as a sacrifice, but did not

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forbid the consecutive offering of any number. Then the seven goats were for the sin-offering (ver. 23), agreeably to Le. 9. 15, which might likewise be offered consecutively. These two offerings combined completed the emblematic atonement, Le.9.7; ver. 24; the seven representing time, work, rest, and blessing (Ex. 20. 11), completeness—the sacrifice representing him 'whose blood cleanseth from all sin,' 1 Jn.1.7.—*C.*

6 Heb. *near.*

7 Not the whole multitude, that would have been impracticable; but the congregation of the chiefs, as their representatives.—*C.*

[d] Le.4.15,24;1.4.
[e] Le.6.30;8.15. Ga.3. 13. Ep.1.13. Col. 1. 20. Jn. 3. 16. Ro. 5. 10, 11. He.2.17.
[f] 1 Ch.15.16,22; 16.4, 5,42;25.1–6.

8 Heb. *by the hand of.*

9 The temple psalmody was regulated with the concurrence of these other prophets, as well as by the appointment of David.—*I.*

1 Stood prepared to begin the sacred concert.—*Noyes*, Be ye also ready; for praise is comely and pleasant.—*C.*

[g] 1 Ch.23.5. Am.6.5.
[h] Nu.10.10. ch.5.12. Re.5.9,11.
[i] ch. 7. 3; 20. 21. Ps. cxxxvi.;81.1,2;150.3,5.

2 The simultaneous commencement of sacrifice and praise, is to teach that the Lord is to be praised on earth for the institution of the great sacrifice; for which even in heaven 'they sing a new song, saying, Thou art worthy, for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us unto God by thy blood,' Re.5.9.—*C.*

[k] Heb. *song*, Ps. 89.15.
[l] ch. 20.18; 7. 3; ver. 28,30. Ge.47.31. Ex. 4. 31.
[m] 1 Ch.16. 7–36. Ps. xcv. &c.

3 These noble and inspiring words are contained in 1 Ch. xvi.; also in Ps. cv. xcv.xcvi. The church and people of God in every age may adopt them in rendering praise to their heavenly King.—*P.*

[n] Ex.12.27. Le.3.16; 1.–iii. De.32.38.

4 The burnt-offering was wholly consumed upon the altar, Le. 1.9,13, the peace-offering was mostly allotted to the offerer and his friends. Compare Le.3.3,4,14, 15 with vii. 15, 16. Therefore he that presented the burnt-offering evinced the 'free heart,' the more generous spirit. —*C.*

[o] 1 Ki.8.63;3.4.

5 In this verse *burnt-offerings* and *a burnt-offering* are used as equivalent, which confirms the interpretation of ver. 21, that the whole sacrifice might consist of *consecutive sacrifices.*—*C.*

the altar: likewise, when they had killed the rams, they sprinkled the blood upon the altar: they killed also the lambs, and they sprinkled the blood upon the altar.

23 And they brought forth[6] the he-goats *for* the sin-offering before the king and the congregation;[7] and they laid their [d]hands upon them.

24 And the priests killed them, and they [e]made reconciliation with their blood upon the altar, to make an atonement for all Israel: for the king commanded *that* the burnt-offering and the sin-offering *should be made* for all Israel.

25 And[f] he set the Levites in the house of the LORD with cymbals, with psalteries, and with harps, according to the commandment of David, and of Gad the king's seer, and Nathan the prophet: for *so was* the commandment of the LORD by[8] his prophets.[9]

26 And the Levites [1]stood [g]with the instruments of David, and the priests with [h]the trumpets.

27 And Hezekiah commanded to offer the burnt-offering upon the altar. And when the burnt-offering began, the [i]song of the LORD began[2] *also* with the trumpets, and with the instruments *ordained* by David king of Israel.

28 And all the congregation worshipped, and the [k]singers sang, and the trumpeters sounded: *and* all *this continued* until the burnt-offering was finished.

29 And when they had made an end of offering, the king, and all *that were* present with him, [l]bowed themselves, and worshipped.

30 Moreover Hezekiah the king and the princes commanded the Levites to sing praise unto the LORD with [m]the words of David, and of Asaph the seer:[3] and they sang praises with gladness, and they bowed their heads and worshipped.

31 Then Hezekiah answered and said, Now ye have consecrated yourselves unto the LORD, come near, and bring [n]sacrifices and thank-offerings into the house of the LORD. And the congregation brought in sacrifices and thank-offerings; and as many as were of a free heart, burnt-offerings.[4]

32 And the [o]number of the burnt-offerings, which the congregation brought, was threescore and ten bullocks, an hundred rams, *and* two hundred lambs: all these *were* for a burnt-offering[5] to the LORD.

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leaders, are often the most unqualified and careless; and need so repeatedly to be stirred up to that which is peculiarly their work! But they who love God's altar will delight to support the service; and past neglects will quicken them to more abundant diligence.

CHAPTER XXX. [Ver. 1. It appears to me from the scope of the passage, that Ephraim and Manasseh are here mentioned not in their individual capacity, but as the representatives of the whole northern kingdom, just as Judah was the representative of the southern kingdom. Instead of addressing letters to each separate tribe, Hezekiah wrote to the chiefs of the two kingdoms. But in addition to this formal invitation, his messengers were instructed to go through all the cities of the land, and to address urgent verbal invitations to the whole people. *P.*]

REFLECTIONS.—God's ordinances ought not to be neglected on account of a mere circumstance. It is best to engage people to duty when they are in a proper temper. And we ought to stir up all whom we can to the worship and service of God, and that by the most engaging motives; representing to them the mercies and judgments of God, and his promises and threatenings. It is never too late for sinners to return while the calls of mercy are continued: and it is only impenitence persisted in that becomes fatal. If we do all that we can to encourage them, their blood must be on their own heads if they obstinately refuse. Better that our invitations should be derided than that God should be dishonoured, and one soul murdered by our sloth. And though few are saved, a remnant shall hear, fear, and humble themselves, and return to the Lord. What a shame it is, when, on the contrary, ministers, through their inactivity,

33 And the [p]consecrated things *were* six hundred oxen, and three thousand sheep.

34 But the [q]priests were too few, so that they could not flay all the burnt-offerings: wherefore their [r]brethren the Levites did help them,[6] till the work was ended, and until the *other* priests had sanctified themselves: for the Levites *were* more upright in heart to sanctify themselves than the priests.

35 And also the burnt-offerings *were* in abundance, with the [s]fat of the peace-offerings, and the [t]drink-offerings for *every* burnt-offering. So the service of the house of the LORD was set in order.

36 And Hezekiah [u]rejoiced, and all the people, that God had prepared the people: for the thing was *done* suddenly.[7]

CHAPTER XXX.

1 Hezekiah proclaimeth a solemn passover on the second month for Judah and Israel. 13 The assembly, having destroyed the altars of idolatry in Jerusalem, keep the feast fourteen days. 27 The priests and Levites bless the people.

AND Hezekiah sent to all [a]Israel and Judah, and wrote letters also to [b]Ephraim and Manasseh,[1] that they should come to the house of the LORD at Jerusalem, to [c]keep the passover unto the LORD God of Israel.

2 For the king had [d]taken counsel, and his princes, and all the congregation in Jerusalem, to keep the passover [e]in the second month.[2]

3 For they could not keep it at [f]that time, because the priests [g]had not sanctified themselves sufficiently, neither had the people gathered themselves together to Jerusalem.

4 And the thing pleased the king[3] and all the congregation.

5 So they established a decree to make proclamation [h]throughout all Israel, from Beersheba even to Dan, that they should come to keep the passover unto the LORD God of Israel at Jerusalem: for they had not done *it* of a long *time in such sort* as it was written.

6 So the posts[4] went with the letters from[5] the king and his princes throughout all Israel and Judah, and according to the commandment of the king, saying, Ye children of Israel, turn again unto the LORD God of Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, and he will return to the remnant of you that are escaped out of the hand of the kings of Assyria.[6]

7 And be not ye like your fathers, and like your brethren, which trespassed against the LORD God of their fathers, *who* therefore gave them up to desolation,[7] as ye see.

8 Now be ye not stiff-necked,[8] as your fathers *were, but* [i]yield yourselves unto the LORD, and enter into his sanctuary, which he hath sanctified for ever; and serve the LORD your God, that the fierceness of his wrath may turn away from you.

9 For if ye turn again unto the LORD, your brethren and your children *shall find* compassion before them that lead them captive, so that they shall come again into this land: for the LORD your God *is* gracious and merciful, and will not turn away *his* face from you, if ye return unto him.

10 So the posts passed from city to city through the country of Ephraim and Manasseh even unto Zebulun: but they [r]laughed them to scorn, and mocked them.

11 Nevertheless [s]divers of Asher, and Manasseh, and of Zebulun, humbled [g]themselves, and came to Jerusalem.

12 Also in Judah the [t]hand of God was to give them one heart to do the commandment of the king and of the princes, by the word of the LORD.[1]

13 ¶ And there assembled at Jerusalem much people to keep the feast of unleavened bread [u]in the second month, a very great congregation.

14 And they arose, and took away the [x]altars that *were* in Jerusalem, and all the altars for incense took they away, and cast *them* into the brook Kidron.

15 Then they killed the passover on the fourteenth *day* of the second month: and the [y]priests and the Levites were ashamed,[2] and sanctified themselves, and brought in the burnt-offerings into the house of the LORD.

16 And they stood in their place[3] after their manner, [z]according to the law of Moses the man of God: the priests sprinkled the blood, *which they received* of the hand of the Levites.

17 For *there were* many in the congregation that were not sanctified: therefore [a]the Levites had the charge of the killing of the passovers for every one *that was* not clean, to sanctify *them* unto the LORD.[4]

18 For a multitude of the people, *even* many of Ephraim, and Manasseh, Issachar, and Zebulun, [b]had not cleansed themselves, yet did they eat the passover otherwise than it was written: but Hezekiah [c]prayed for them, saying, The good LORD pardon every one

19 *That* [d]prepareth his heart to seek God, the LORD God of his fathers, though *he be* not *cleansed* according to the [e]purification of the sanctuary.[5]

20 And the LORD hearkened to Hezekiah, and [f]healed the people.

21 And the children of Israel *that were* present[6] at Jerusalem kept [g]the feast of unleavened bread seven days [h]with great gladness:

[f] Ja.5.16,17.Ps.103.3.Is.57.18. [6] Heb. *found.* [g] Ex.12.15.Le.23.6.1 Co.5.7.8. [h] Ne.8.10.ch.7.10;29.36;ver.26.

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[p] Peace-offerings, ver.31;ch.7.4,5.
[q] Sanctified ones, ver.5,6;ch.29.16,17.
[r] ch.35.11;30.17.
[6] Heb. *strengthened them.*
[s] Ex.29.13.Le.3.1.
[t] Ge.35.14.Le.23.13. Nu.15.5,10.
[u] 1 Ch. 29. 9,18. ch. 15. 15;23.18, 21;30. 21, 26.2 Co.1.12.1 Th.2.19, 20.
[7] Prepared them by his Holy Spirit to perceive the folly and sin of idolatry, and the wisdom and blessing of the worship of Jehovah; and so deep, so decided, and so *sudden* was this reformation, that all acknowledged it must be the hand of God.—*C.*

CHAP. XXX.

[a] ch.11.13,16.
[b] Ten tribes, ch.25.
[1] Ephraim and Manasseh lay contiguous to Jerusalem, but not nearer than Reuben and Gad, and not so near as Simeon and Dan. Three reasons seem to have produced this special notice of the invitation to Ephraim, of which Manasseh was a dependency, as Benjamin was of Judah. (1) After Judah Ephraim was the greatest tribe. (2) It seems to have been the most hopelessly addicted to idolatry, and therefore its omission might have been expected, Ho. 4. 17; 13. 1. (3) The king, by his pious and energetic letter, seeks to aid the noble efforts of Hosea for the reformation and salvation of his country. This special invitation to Ephraim seems to have arisen from the partial reformation produced by the preaching of Hosea, ch. 13, 12; 14. 8, in which Manasseh, a dependency of Ephraim, as Benjamin was of Judah, had, most probably, participated. See Ps.80.2.—*C.*
[c] Ex.xii. Nu.ix. De. 16.1–6.1 Co.5.7.
[d] 1 Ch. 13. 1. Pr. 11. 14.15.22;24.6.
[e] Nu.9.10,11.
[2] So it was provided that, in cases of uncleanness or temporary absence, the passover might be held in the second month instead of the first. Compare Ex. 12.2,18 with Nu. 9. 10, 11.—*C.*
[f] ch.29.3. 17. Ex. 12. 3,6,18.Le.23.5.
[g] ch. 29.34.
[3] Heb. *was right in the eyes of the king.*
[h] Ju.20.1. 1 Ki.4.25. 1 Ch.21.2,ch.7. 8. Hoshea did not hinder his subjects from worshipping the true GOD at Jerusalem, 2 Ki.17.2.
[4] Literally 'the runners;' they were king's messengers rather than posts. The soldiers of the king's guard were employed in this service.—*P.*
[5] Heb. *from the hand.*
[6] This implies that a portion of the people of the northern kingdom had already been carried off captive by the king of Assyria. This took place during the reign of Pekah, when Pul and Tiglath-pileser made captives of the tribes east of the Jordan, and portions of the northern tribes, 2 Ki.15.29.1 Ch.5.26.—*P.*
[i] Heb. *harden not your necks.*
[j] Heb. *give the hand,* 1 Ch.29.24.Ezr. 10.19.
[7] The poverty and misery of a country are always to be traced to the sins of

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that country, which may be either *personal,* as lewdness, drunkenness, lying, dishonesty; *conventional,* as quarrelsomeness, conspiracies, seditions; or *judicial,* as partiality, injustice, oppression. Some of these may exist apart, but are generally found united, for they almost necessarily generate one another, and in every form they originate from neglecting or despising the word and the worship of God.—*C.*
[k] Ge.19.14.ch.36.16. Mar.5.40.
[l] Ac.17.34.ch.11.16; ver.18.
[8] There are some to mock at every attempted reformation, and at every message from God; this, however, should never lead any one to be 'weary in well-doing;' for there are still some who will hear (see ver. 18), even as 'some mocked' when Paul preached Jesus and the resurrection; but Dionysius and Damaris, with others, clave to him, and believed, Ac. 17.32,34.—*C.*
[m] Ps.110.3. Ex. 12. 6. Ac.2.46.Je.32.39.
1 The true theory of all government. In the people one heart—by grace, the gift of God—implicit obedience to the king and the princes, the constituted authorities; but these authorities legislating for God, and requiring nothing of the people without or beyond the authority and sanction of 'the word of the Lord.'—*C.*
[n] Nu.9.10,11. ver. 2, 3,15,17,18.Ex.23.17.
[o] ch.28.14;29.16. Is. 2.17–21.
[p] ch.29.34.Is.1.29.
2 Ashamed of their past inaction, secularity, or compliance with idolatry. The absence of shame for sin is a sad symptom of spiritual death, Je. 6. 15. But the shame of any sin is a hopeful evidence of the effectual working of the Spirit of God, Ro.6.21.—*C.*
[3] Heb. *their standing.*
[q] Ex.12.3.Le.1.5.
[r] ch.29.34;35.11.
4 Many of those who assembled at Jerusalem to keep the feast had not prepared for it by ceremonial purification. They were probably ignorant of the minute requirements of the law. On being fully instructed after reaching Jerusalem, the heads of families found that they could not themselves slay the paschal lambs, because they were unclean. In all such cases the Levites acted in their stead, and the priests received the blood from the Levites and sprinkled it on the altar.—*P.*
[s] Nu.19.20. 1 Co.11. 28.
[t] Ge.20.7,17.Ja.5.16.
[u] 1 Ch.19.3. Ps. 51.16, 17;10.17.
[v] Le.xi.–xv.Nu.xix.
5 The end of all outward ceremonial purification was to reach the heart—means to an end. But we may not neglect the means under pretence that if the end be gained all is well. Hezekiah prayed, and God pardoned; but the very act of pardon proved the sin to be pardoned, so that the case is an evidence of mercy in God, and not an example to encourage neglect of his outward ordinances.—*C.*

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hinder the people in the service of God! But pleasant is the work when the worshippers of God have such delight in his service that they grudge neither cost nor time for it, and can hardly bear its conclusion. And God in mercy will provide his people with useful ministers, when many, who ought to be such, are scandalously negligent. He is a God of infinite grace; ready to accept our sincere confessions of our sins, hear our prayers, and forgive our transgressions. If

and the Levites and the priests praised the LORD day by day, *singing* with loud instruments[7] unto the LORD.

22 And Hezekiah spake [i]comfortably unto all the Levites that taught the [k]good knowledge of the LORD: and they did eat throughout the feast seven days, offering peace-offerings, and making[l] confession to the LORD God of their fathers.

23 And the whole assembly took counsel to[m] keep other seven days: and they kept *other* seven days with gladness.[8]

24 For Hezekiah king of Judah [n]did give to the congregation a thousand bullocks, and seven thousand sheep; and the princes gave to the congregation a thousand bullocks, and ten thousand sheep: and [o]a great number of priests sanctified themselves.

25 And all the congregation of Judah, with the priests and the Levites, and all the congregation that came out of Israel, and the strangers[p] that came out of the land of Israel, and that dwelt in Judah, rejoiced.[9]

26 So there was great joy in Jerusalem: for since the [q]time of Solomon, the son of David king of Israel, *there was* not the like in Jerusalem.[1]

27 ¶ Then the [r]priests the Levites arose and blessed the people: and their voice was heard, and their prayer came *up* to [s]his holy dwelling-place, *even* unto heaven.

CHAPTER XXXI.

1 *The people's zeal in destroying idolatry:* 2 *Hezekiah ordereth the courses of the priests and Levites, and provideth for their work and maintenance.* 5 *The people's forwardness in bringing in first-fruits and tithes.* 11 *Hezekiah appointeth officers to dispose of those offerings.* 20 *The sincerity of Hezekiah.*

NOW when all this was finished, all Israel *that were* present[1] went out to the cities of Judah, and brake the images in pieces, and cut down the groves, and threw down the high places and the altars out of all Judah and Benjamin, in Ephraim also and Manasseh, until they had utterly destroyed[2] them all.[3] Then all the children of Israel returned, every man to his possession, into their own cities.

2 ¶ And Hezekiah appointed the courses of the priests, and the Levites after their courses, every man according to his service, the priests and Levites for burnt-offerings and for peace-offerings, to minister, and to give thanks, and to praise in the gates of the tents of the LORD.[4]

3 *He appointed* also the king's portion of his substance for the burnt-offerings, *to wit*, for the morning and evening burnt-offerings, and the burnt-offerings for the sabbaths, and for the new-moons, and for the set feasts, as *it is* written in the law of the LORD.[5]

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7 Heb. *instruments of strength.*

i Heb. *to the heart of all*, &c. Is. 40. 1, 2. Ho. 2. 14. ch. 32. 6.

k 2 Ti. 4. 2. Ec. 9. 10, 11. Ro. 12. 1–3.

l Je. 3. 13. Ps. cv. cvi.; 50. 23. Da. 9. 4, 19.

m 1 Ki. 8. 65.

8 Not another passover, but seven days of 'peace-offerings and confession to the Lord God of their fathers' (ver. 22), whom they had idolatrously forsaken, and to whose worship they now returned with gladness.—*C.*

n 1 Ch. 15. 7, 8.

o ch. 29. 34.

p Proselytes, Ex. 12. 48, 49, with 43.

9 Three classes are mentioned as having kept the feast:—1. The whole people of Judah, *i.e.* of the southern kingdom, with the whole body of the priests and Levites. 2. All who joined them out of the northern kingdom, being Israelites. 3. Strangers, or proselytes, who had taken their abode within the bounds either of the northern or southern kingdom, and who conformed to the Jewish ritual.—*P.*

q 1 Ki. 8. 65. ch. 7. 8, 9.

1 The superiority of this passover to any solemnity since the days of Solomon, lay not merely in the additional seven days then also observed, 1 Ki. 8. 65; but also in the concourse of the tribes, that since the separation from Rehoboam, and the erection of the idols at Bethel and Dan, had never been so great or so encouraging as upon this occasion. 1 Ki. 12. 25, 26, 28–33. See also 2 Ch. 26. 1.—*C.*

r ch. 13. 9, 10. Nu. 6. 23–26.

s Heb. *the habitation of his holiness*, Ps. 68. 5. Is. 57. 15. 1 Ti. 6. 16.

CHAP. XXXI.

B.C. 725, &c.

1 Heb. *found.*

2 Heb. *until to make an end.*

3 This noble *iconoclast* expedition may be called, in one sense, a popular impulse, because it pervaded the people, as well as the king and the nobility. But it was no less on that account an impulse from God (ch. 30. 12), and it was strictly legal, by the supreme law of Heaven, however contrary to idolatrous custom, prerogatives, and ordinances. See Ex. 23. 24. De. 7. 5; 12. 3.—*C.*

4 'Of the camp of Jehovah.' The city and temple of Jerusalem, and all places where God is truly worshipped, are so called, in reference to the providential and mediatorial encampment of 'the angel of the Lord,' and his hosts around his people for protection and deliverance. See Ps. 34. 7. He. 1. 14.—*C.*

5 Hezekiah was a rich man. He had, in addition to the revenue of the kingdom, large private possessions, which are described in ch. 32. 27–29; out of these he contributed liberally, as was his duty, towards the maintenance of the worship of God. The offerings enjoined on the Israelites are minutely described in Nu. xviii.—*P.*

A.M. 3279, &c. B.C. 725, &c.

t Nu. 18. 9–21. Ne. 13. 10, 11. 1 Co. 9. 14. Is. 8. 20.

6 That 'they which wait at the altar are partakers with the altar,' is equally a maxim of the Old and New Testament (1 Co. 9. 7, 9, 11, 13, 14), that his servants may 'attend upon God without distraction,' and be 'encouraged in the law of the Lord.'—*C.*

7 Heb. *brake forth.*

f Ex. 23. 19. Le. 27. 30. De. 14. 28.

8 In the reign of the idolatrous Ahab, the temple being closed, and the priests and Levites dispersed, all provision for the service of God had ceased; now, in better times, the temple is reopened, the priests and Levites recalled, their legal provision restored; and as soon as the 'commandment comes abroad' the people, whose heart God had opened, 'brought in abundantly' for the support of his service.—*C.*

9 Or, *dates.*

g Le. 27. 30. De. 14. 28.

h Heb. *heaps heaps*, Ju. 15. 16.

i Le. 23. 16–24.

1 *Sivan*, the ninth of the civil year, answers to May and June, the commencement of the Jewish harvest.—*C.*

2 Tisri or Ethanim, the first month of the civil year, answering to September and October.—*C.*

3 The first-fruits of the field are here referred to. In the third month, just at the close of the wheat-harvest, they began to bring in the first-fruits, and to lay the foundations of the heaps; in the seventh month, at the close of the vintage, they completed their offerings.—*C.*

k 2 Sa. 6. 18. 1 Ch. 29. 13, 14. Ge. 14. 20. 1 Ki. 8. 14, 15.

l 1 Ch. 6. 14. 2 Ki. 25. 18. ch. 24. 6.

m Mal. 3. 10, 11. Hag. 2. 19. Pr. 3. 9–10. 1 Ti. 6. 8; 4. 8.

4 Whence it may be inferred, that until 'the commandment came abroad' (ver. 5), the priests were often in want of provisions. Now, by the blessing of God upon a pious king, they have 'enough to eat, and plenty left.' But the liberality and the abundance are both ascribed to the Lord.—*C.*

5 The disinterestedness of the priests was highly commendable, for they might easily have enriched themselves without being suspected. The whole transaction enlarges our idea of the blessing which had attended the solemnity; for before this the priests were generally careless and ungodly.—*I.*

6 Or, *storehouses.*

n 1 Ch. 26. 20–26.

7 Heb. *at the hand.*

o 2 Ki. 11. 6. ch. 23. 5.

p Heb. *holinesses of holinesses*, Le. 2. 3, [illegible]

[illegible] *by the hand of.*

q Jos. 21. 9–19. 1 Ch. 6. 54–60.

9 Or, *trust.*

1 Not that children of three years old entered into the temple for any service; but that provision was allotted to every member of a family when three years old, while his father was attending on the temple-service in his course.—*C.*

4 Moreover he commanded the people that dwelt in Jerusalem to give [t]the portion of the priests and the Levites, that they might be encouraged in the law of the LORD.[6]

5 ¶ And as soon as the commandment came abroad,[7] the children of Israel [f]brought in abundance[8] the first-fruits of corn, wine, and oil, and honey,[9] and of all the increase of the field; and the tithe of all *things* brought they in abundantly.

6 And *concerning* the children of Israel and Judah, that dwelt in the cities of Judah, they also brought in the tithe of oxen and sheep, and the [g]tithe of holy things, *which were* consecrated unto the LORD their God, and laid *them* [h]by heaps.

7 In the [i]third[1] month they began to lay the foundation of the heaps, and finished *them* in the seventh[2] month.[3]

8 And when Hezekiah and the princes came and saw the heaps, they [k]blessed the LORD, and his people Israel.

9 Then Hezekiah questioned with the priests and the Levites concerning the heaps.

10 And[l] Azariah the chief priest of the house of Zadok answered him, and said, [m]Since *the people* began to bring the offerings into the house of the LORD, we have had enough to eat, and have left plenty:[4] for the LORD hath blessed his people; and that which is left *is* this great store.[5]

11 ¶ Then Hezekiah commanded to prepare chambers[6] in the house of the LORD; and they prepared *them*,

12 And brought in the offerings, and the tithes, and the dedicated *things*, faithfully: [n]over which Cononiah the Levite *was* ruler, and Shimei his brother *was* the next.

13 And Jehiel, and Azaziah, and Nahath, and Asahel, and Jerimoth, and Jozabad, and Eliel, and Ismachiah, and Mahath, and Benaiah, *were* overseers, under the hand[7] of Cononiah, and Shimei his brother, at the commandment of Hezekiah the king, and Azariah the ruler of the house of God.

14 And Kore the son of Imnah the Levite, [o]the porter toward the east, *was* over the free-will-offerings of God, to distribute the oblations of the LORD, and the [p]most holy things.

15 And next him[8] *were* Eden, and Miniamin, and Jeshua, and Shemaiah, Amariah, and Shecaniah, in the [q]cities of the priests, in *their* set office,[9] to give to their brethren by courses, as well to the great as to the small;

16 Besides their genealogy of males, from three years old and upward,[1] *even* unto every one that entereth into the house of the LORD,

we are but sincerely desirous to honour him he will, through the blood of his Son, readily pardon our manifold infirmities. Yea, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous; who presents our persons and our services, and renders all acceptable in his sight.

CHAPTER XXXI. REFLECTIONS.—It is comfortable to go home from solemn work with the blessing of God upon us, and our heart inflamed with

his daily portion[2] for their service in their charges, according to their courses;[3]

17 Both to the genealogy of the priests by the house of their fathers, and the Levites from[r] twenty years old and upward, in their charges by their courses;

18 And to the genealogy of all their little ones, their wives, and their sons, and their daughters, through all the congregation: for in their [s]set office they sanctified themselves in holiness:[4]

19 Also of the sons of Aaron the priests, *which were* [t]in the fields of the suburbs of their cities, in every several city, the men that were expressed by name, to give portions to all the males among the priests, and to all that were reckoned by genealogies among the Levites.

20 ¶ And thus did Hezekiah throughout all Judah, and [u]wrought *that which was* good, and right, and truth, before the LORD his God.

21 And in every work that he began in the service of the house of God, and in the law, and in the commandments, to seek his God, he did *it* [z]with all his heart,[5] and [y]prospered.

CHAPTER XXXII.

1 *Sennacherib invading Judah, Hezekiah fortifieth himself, and encourageth the people.* 9 *Against the blasphemies of Sennacherib, by message and letters, Hezekiah and Isaiah pray.* 21 *An angel destroyeth the host of the Assyrians, to the glory of Hezekiah.* 24 *Hezekiah praying in his sickness, God giveth him a sign of recovery.* 25 *He waxing proud is humbled by God.* 27 *His riches and works.* 31 *His error in relation to the Babylonish ambassadors.* 32 *He dying, Manasseh succeedeth him.*

AFTER these[a] things, and the establishment thereof, [b]Sennacherib king of Assyria came, and entered into Judah, and encamped against the fenced cities,[1] and thought [c]to win them for himself.

2 And when Hezekiah saw that Sennacherib was come, and that [d]he was purposed to fight against Jerusalem,

3 He took counsel with his princes and his mighty men to [e]stop the waters of the fountains which *were* without the city; and they did help him.

4 So there was gathered much people together, who stopped all the fountains, and the brook[f] that ran[2] through the midst of the land,[3] saying, Why should the kings of Assyria come, and find much water?

5 Also he strengthened himself, and built up all the wall [g]that was broken, and raised *it* up to the towers, and [h]another wall without, and repaired [i]Millo *in* the city of David, and made [k]darts and shields in abundance.

A.M. 3279, &c. B.C. 725, &c.

2 Heb. *for the things of the day upon his day.*

3 The children of priests were allowed to enter the temple courts with their parents, and to partake of the food allotted to the priests. None, however, could enter until they had attained the age of three years. Levites were not permitted to enter on office as temple servitors under twenty years of age.—*P.*

r 1 Ch. 23. 24, 27. Nu. 8. 24; 4. 3.

s Or, *trust*, 1 Ch. 9. 22. ver. 15.

4 *Sanctity* is the same as holiness, and means separation from the world, and dedication to God.—*Note*, A worldly servant of God is a grievous contradiction: ye cannot serve God and mammon.'—*C.*

t Le. 25. 34. Nu. 35. 2–5.

u 2 Ki. 20. 3. 1 Ki. 15. 5. Jn. 1. 47. Ac. 24. 16. 2 Co. 1. 12.

x 1 Ki. 2. 4. 1 Ch. 22. 19. Ec. 9. 10.

5 The real meaning of 'decision of character'—an essential ingredient in all true religion.—*C.*

y Ne. 9. 20–22. Pr. 3. 9, 10. Hag. 1. 5–19. Mal. 6. 33. 1 Ti. 4. 8. Mal. 3. 10, 11.

CHAP. XXXII.

B.C. 713.

a ch. xxix.–xxxi.

b 2 Ki. 18. 13, &c. Is. 36. 1, &c. ch. 20. 1; 14. 9.

1 Hezekiah had given him no cause of offence; but Sennacherib most probably desired a position on the Mediterranean Sea, and thereby access to Africa and Europe; or it may be he was compelled by mere lust of conquest, or to give employment to his armies; or what is more probable still, by zeal on behalf of his idols, which Hezekiah had so boldly and effectually cast down. See ver. 12.—*C.*

c Heb. *to break them up*, Is. 37. 24, 25.

d Heb. *his face* was *to war*, 2 Ki. 12. 17.

e ver. 4. Is. 22. 8–11. 2 Ki. 20. 20.

f ver. 30.

2 Heb. *overflowed.*

3 Deep wells would be easily filled up, but how to stop a running brook (supposed to be Kidron or Gihon) is not so easily conceived. The collecting of 'much people,' and the implied 'hiding' of the brook, seem to indicate that, by a subterraneous passage, the water was conducted into the city, for the purpose of enabling it to stand the expected siege, while the want of water would distress or destroy the invaders. This view is corroborated by ver. 30, in which we have one of the earliest examples of *civil engineering* upon record.—*C.*

g ch. 25. 23.

h 2 Ki. 25. 4. Je. 39. 4.

i 2 Sa. 5. 9. 1 Ki. 11. 27; 9. 15.

k Or *swords*, or *weapons*, ch. 26. 14, 15.

A.M. 3291. B.C. 713.

4 Heb. *spake to their hearts.*

l Jos. 1. 6, 9. 1 Co. 16. 13. Ps. 33. 16. 2 Ki. 6. 16. 1 Jn. 4. 4.

5 Referring, no doubt, to the ministry of angels, from whose numbers God is called the 'Lord of hosts,' Ge. 32. 1, 2. *C.* —'We have more power than they have.' These words he quotes from the prophet Elisha, 2 Ki. 6. 16. It soon proved to be true, by the slaughter made by the angel of the Lord in the Assyrian camp. —*I.*

m Je. 17. 5, 7. ch. 13. 12. Ro. 8. 31. Is. 2. 22; 41. 10.

n Heb. *leaned*, ch. 20. 20. Mar. 5. 36.

o 2 Ki. 18. 17–35. Is. 36. 4–20.

6 Having received the tribute of silver and gold, mentioned 2 Ki. 18. 13, he withdrew his army, but soon after he sent Rabshakeh with a blasphemous message.—*I.*

7 While with his army he is at Lachish, by his envoys he negotiates with Jerusalem. Even as Satan, in his wrath against the church of Christ, persecutes the saints in one country, and cajoles the unwary and unsuspecting in another.—*C.*

8 B.C. 710.

9 Heb. *dominion.*

p Ps. 42. 3, 10; 71. 11.

q Are ye sitting Ge. 49. 24. 2 Sa. 2. 13. Jos. 1. 14.

1 Or, *in the stronghold.*

2 Why do ye abide in Jerusalem, 'in, or during the siege' of Lachish, and do not rather come out and make submission to Sennacherib as a resistless conqueror?—*C.*

r Ps. 115. 2, 3. Je. 3. 23; 32. 17, 27. 2 Co. 1. 10.

s 2 Ki. 18. 22. ch. 31. 1.

3 As Rabshakeh saw that the Jews placed the utmost confidence in God, he wished to persuade them that by Hezekiah's conduct Jehovah had departed from them.—*I.*

t De. 32. 31. Ps. 115. 4–8. 2 Ki. 19. 12, Je. 10. 2–16. Is. 44. 9–20; 45. 21. 1 Co. 8. 4.

4 Not denying that Jehovah was a god, but asserting his incapacity to resist the proud and blasphemous Sennacherib.—*C.*

u 2 Ki. 18. 29. Is. 36. 14, 15; 10. 7–11.

5 If the Lord had a mind to help them, he would 'have them believe that he was not able, because no gods had been able to deliver those that worshipped them from his power.—*Patrick.*

x Ex. 5. 2. Ps. 12. 3. Da. 3. 15. Jn. 19. 10, 11. Re. 13. 6.

y 2 Ki. 18. 27–35. Ps. 73. 9. Job 21. 14, 15.

5 That they were tolerated to speak appears strange; but the Jews were protected by a pious dependence upon God, who abhors violence, and by the sacred character with which ambassadors are conventionally invested. —*C.*

z 2 Ki. 19. 14. Is. 37. 14. Ne. 6. 5.

6 And he set captains of war over the people, and gathered them together to him in the street of the gate of the city, and spake comfortably to them,[4] saying,

7 Be [l]strong and courageous, be not afraid nor dismayed for the king of Assyria, nor for all the multitude that *is* with him: for *there be* more with us than with him.[5]

8 With him *is* an [m]arm of flesh; but with us *is* the LORD our God to help us, and to fight our battles. And the people [n]rested themselves upon the words of Hezekiah king of Judah.

9 ¶ After[o] this did Sennacherib[6] king of Assyria send his servants[7] to Jerusalem,[8] (but he *himself laid siege* against Lachish, and all his power[9] with him,) unto Hezekiah king of Judah, and unto all Judah that *were* at Jerusalem, saying,

10 Thus saith Sennacherib king of Assyria, [p]Whereon [q]do ye trust, that ye abide in the siege[1] in Jerusalem?[2]

11 Doth not Hezekiah persuade you to give over yourselves to die by famine and by thirst, saying, [r]The LORD our God shall deliver us out of the hand of the king of Assyria?

12 Hath not the same Hezekiah [s]taken away[3] his high places and his altars, and commanded Judah and Jerusalem, saying, Ye shall worship before one altar, and burn incense upon it?

13 Know ye not what I and my fathers have done unto all the people of *other* lands? [t]were the gods of the nations of those lands any ways able to deliver their lands out of mine hand?

14 Who *was there* among all the gods of those nations that my fathers utterly destroyed, that could deliver his people out of mine hand, that your God[4] should be able to deliver you out of mine hand?

15 Now therefore [u]let not Hezekiah [5]deceive you, nor persuade you on this manner, neither yet believe him: for no god of any nation or kingdom was able to deliver his people out of mine hand, and out of the hand of my fathers; [z]how much less shall your God deliver you out of mine hand?

16 And his servants spake [y]yet *more* against the LORD God, and against his servant Hezekiah.[6]

17 He [s]wrote also letters to rail on the

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holy zeal against everything sinful. And well bestowed is that labour or expense which we lay out in abolishing idolatry or restoring the true worship of God. How comely is it when great men, by their generous presents, encourage others to bestow their respective dues upon the service and servants of God! The gospel ministry might be easily and comfortably maintained did every one concerned minister according to his ability. And with great care ought sacred revenues to be preserved and managed, that none of Jesus' servants, or their families, may lack what is necessary: for it is scandalous that some should riot in luxury, while their brethren, more laborious and faithful, should be almost starved for want. But with great confidence may we expect that God will honour and succeed our religious endeavours when we engage in them with our whole heart.

CHAPTER XXXII. [Ver. 4. We may conclude from this passage, when taken in connection with ver. 30, and with the statements made in the apocryphal book of Ecclesiasticus, 48. 17, that there was a fountain called Gihon somewhere on the west of the city, whose waters originally flowed down the valley of Hinnom, 'through the midst of the land.' Nehemiah, 2. 13, speaks of the *Dragon Well* in the same direction, and this may have been another name for Gihon, or for one of a group of fountains. Hezekiah seems to have covered the fountains by constructing subterranean chambers similar to those at the pools of Solomon, and then to have conducted the waters by hidden canals into the city. The work was evidently of great magnitude. Perhaps the Pool of Hezekiah, which

LORD God of Israel, and to speak against him, saying, As the gods of the nations of *other* lands have not delivered their people out of mine hand, so shall not the God of Hezekiah deliver his people out of mine hand.

18 Then they [a]cried with a loud voice, in the Jews' speech, unto the people of Jerusalem that *were* on the wall, to affright them, and to trouble them; that they might take the city.

19 And they spake [b]against the God of Jerusalem, as against the gods of the people of the earth, *which were* the work of the hands of man.[7]

20 ¶ And [c]for this *cause* Hezekiah the king, and the prophet Isaiah the son of Amoz, prayed and cried to heaven.[8]

21 And[d] the LORD sent an angel,[9] which cut off all the mighty men of valour, and the leaders and captains in the camp of the king of Assyria: so he returned with shame of face to his own land. And when he was come into the house of his god,[1] they that came forth of his own bowels slew him[2] there with the sword.

22 Thus the LORD [e]saved Hezekiah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem from the hand of Sennacherib the king of Assyria, and from the hand of all *other*,[3] and [f]guided them on every side.

23 And many [g]brought gifts unto the LORD to Jerusalem, and presents[4] to Hezekiah king of Judah: so that he was magnified in the sight of all nations[5] from thenceforth.

24 ¶ In[h] those days Hezekiah was sick to the death, and prayed unto the LORD: and he spake unto him, and he [i]gave him a sign.

25 But Hezekiah [k]rendered not again according to the benefit *done* unto him; for [l]his heart was lifted up: therefore there was [m]wrath upon him, and upon Judah and Jerusalem.[6]

26 Notwithstanding Hezekiah [n]humbled himself for the pride[7] of his heart, (*both* he and the inhabitants of Jerusalem,) so that the wrath of the LORD came not upon them in the days of Hezekiah.

27 ¶ And Hezekiah had [o]exceeding much riches and honour: and he made himself treasuries for silver, and for gold, and for precious stones, and for spices, and for shields, and for all manner of pleasant jewels;[8]

28 Storehouses also for the increase of corn, and wine, and oil; and stalls for all manner of beasts, and cotes for flocks.

29 Moreover he provided him cities, and possessions of flocks and herds in abundance: for [p]God had given him substance very much.

A.M. 3291. B.C. 713.

a 2 Ki. 18.28-35. 1 Sa. 17.8.

b 2 Ki. 18.34,35. Is. 10.10-15, ver. 13-15.

7 Sennacherib seems to have been an atheist, as he expresses (ver. 13, 14, 17, 19) an equal contempt of all gods without distinction. Certain forerunners and leaders of the first French revolution seem to furnish a modern parallel.—*C.*

c 2 Ki. 19.4,15. Da. 9.2,3. Ps. 50.15. Mat. 6.9.

8 B.C. 710.

d 2 Ki. 19.35-37. Is. 37.36,37; 10.12-19,25-34; 29.5-8; 30.28-33; xxviii.; 17.12-14. 2 Sa. 24.16. Job 9.4,13.

9 Supposed by some to be Tirhakah king of Ethiopia, by others a pestilence, or the destructive wind called *simoom*. We can see no authority for calling any of these 'an angel,' and therefore conclude that the blasphemers were destroyed by direct angelic influence. *C.*—In 2 Ki. 19. 35, and Is. 37. 36, the number said to be seen destroyed is 185,000, but here there is mention only of the Assyrian commanders, whence some have concluded that the word elsewhere rendered *thousand* should be translated *chiefs*, and the passages would then harmonize. . . . The miraculous destruction of the Assyrian host is related by Herodotus as if it had been effected by the instrumentality of field-mice rendering their armour useless; but the scene is laid in Egypt.—*J.*

1 B.C. 709.

2 Heb. *made him fall.*

e Is. 10. 20-23; 31. 5; 37. 36.

3 His predatory auxiliaries, subsisting chiefly by plunder.—*C.*

f Ps. 77.20; 23.1.

g 2 Sa. 8. 10. 1 Ki. 4. 21. ch. 17. 11. Is. 39.1.

4 Heb. *precious things.*

5 All neighbouring nations.—*C.*

h 2 Ki. 20.1. Is. 38.1. Ps. 34.19. Job 4.17-22.

i Or, *wrought a miracle for him*, Is. 38.7,8,21,22. Ki. 20.7,11.

k Ps. 78. 11; 106. 13; 116.12,13. Lu. 17.18.

l ch. 25.19. He. 2.4.

m Ge. 20.7. 2 Sa. 24.1,15. Ps. 99.8. Am. 3.2. He. 12.6. Re. 3.19.

6 What an extraordinary discovery of the secret springs of Providence! One man's heart is *lifted up*, and this brings down *wrath* from heaven upon himself, his capital, and his whole realm! And is it so that the innocent multitude suffer for one man's sin? See Eze. 18.20. No; but the pride of the king infects the nobility and priesthood at Jerusalem, and thence it is propagated like the deadly *miasmata* of some imported disease until it has destroyed the religious and political health of the nation, and rendered them 'vessels of wrath,' self-fitted to destruction.—*C.*

n Je. 26.19; 13-14. 1 Ki. 21. 29. 2 Ki. 20.17-19. Le. 26.40,41.

7 Heb. *the lifting up.*

o ch. 17. 5, 12, 13. 1 Ch. 29. 25. Pr. 10.22. Mat. 6.33. 1 Ti. 4.8.

8 Heb. *instruments of desire.*

p De. 8.18. Pr. 10.22. Ps. 107.38. 1 Ch. 29.12.

A.M. 3291. B.C. 713.

q ver. 4. Is. 22.9. 1 Ki. 1.33,45. ch. 33.14.

9 See note on ver. 4.—*P.*

1 Heb. *interpreters.*

r 2 Ki. 20.12. Is. 39.1-8.

2 This does not mean, as commonly is said, that God 'withdrew the special aids of his grace and Spirit,' but literally, as is said, that 'God left him;' that is, God, for the pride of his heart, adjudged him for a time to be *left to* himself, Ps. 81. 12.—*C.*

s Ge. 22.1. Job 1. 12. Jn. 2.25. Ps. 33.13; 139.1, 2.

3 Not to 'try him,' as if God were ignorant of anything that was in his heart, but that Hezekiah himself might make discovery of his own weakness and folly, and feel the need of that Holy Spirit whose love his pride had grieved, and whose purifying fires it had laboured to quench, Ro. 15. 30. Ep. 4. 30. 1 Th. 5.19.—*C.*

t ch. 9. 29, 31; 12. 15; 13. 22; 16. 11; 18.34; 24. 27; 25.26; 26. 22, 23, 26, 27.

4 Heb. *kindnesses.*

5 Or, *highest.*

CHAP. XXXIII.

B.C. 698.

a 2 Ki. 21. 1-9. Je. 10.1. Is. 3.2, 12, with 1 Ch. 3.13. Mat. 1.10.

b Dt. 18.9-10. Le. 18. 3-28. ch. 28.2-4.

c Heb. *he returned and built*, Ec. 2.19.

d 2 Ki. 18.4; 23. ch. 31.1; 32.12.

e With De. 16.21. Je. 32.34,35. ch. 28.2-4.

1 'Male groves;' this will suggest a strange statement to the thoughtful reader. The real meaning of the Hebrew is, 'he made images of Astarte,' which many of the Israelites had adopted as their tutelary deity. Baal represented the sun, Astarte the moon, and all the host of heaven the stars.—*P.*

2 The splendour of sun, moon, and stars, especially in a bright eastern sky, together with their acknowledged influence on the seasons of the year, soon suggested to a people who 'did not like to retain God in their knowledge,' that these heavenly hosts were proper objects of their worship.—*C.*

f De. 12. 11. 1 Ki. 8. 29; 9. 3. ch. 6. 6; 7. 10, 16. 2 Ki. 21. 4. ver. 7.

g ch. 28. 2-4, 24, 25. Je. 2. 28.

h Le. 18. 21. De. 18. 10. 2 Ki. 21. 6; 23. 10. Is. 8. 19. Je. 7. 31; 32. 30-35.

3 That is, allowed himself to be cheated by a juggler, pretending to converse with a familiar spirit. Such wicked pretenders have in all ages, even to the present, found ignorant and superstitious people to admit their claims and sanction their impostures.—*C.*

4 From 2 Ki. 21. 7 we learn that this image was not a statue of himself, as the Targumists suppose, but an image of the Phœnician *Astarte*, equivalent to the abominable Grecian Venus.—*C.*

i 2 Sa. 7. 10. Ps. 132. 13, 14. 1 Ki. 8. 23. ver. 4.

30 This same Hezekiah also [q]stopped the upper water-course of Gihon, and brought it straight down to the west side of the city of David.[9] And Hezekiah prospered in all his works.

31 ¶ Howbeit in *the business of* the ambassadors[1] of the princes of Babylon, who [r]sent unto him to inquire of the wonder that was *done* in the land, God left [2]him, [s]to try [3]him, that he might know all *that was* in his heart.

32 ¶ Now [t]the rest of the acts of Hezekiah, and his goodness,[4] behold, they *are* written in the vision of Isaiah the prophet, the son of Amoz, *and* in the book of the Kings of Judah and Israel.

33 And Hezekiah slept with his fathers, and they buried him in the chiefest[5] of the sepulchres of the sons of David: and all Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem did him honour at his death: and Manasseh his son reigned in his stead.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

1 Manasseh's wicked reign. 3 He setteth up idolatry, and would not be admonished. 11 He is carried captive to Babylon. 12 Upon his prayer to God he is released, and putteth down idolatry. 18 His acts and prayer. 20 He dying, Amon succeedeth him. 21 Amon reigning wickedly is slain by his servants. 25 The murderers being slain, Josiah succeedeth him.

MANASSEH *was*[a] twelve years old when he began to reign; and he reigned fifty and five years in Jerusalem:

2 But did *that which was* evil in the sight of the LORD, like unto the [b]abominations of the heathen, whom the LORD had cast out before the children of Israel.

3 For [c]he built again the high places which Hezekiah his father had [d]broken down, and he reared up altars for Baalim, and made [1]groves, and worshipped all the host of heaven,[2] and served them.

4 Also he built altars in the house of the LORD, whereof the LORD had said, [f]In Jerusalem shall my name be for ever.

5 And he built [g]altars for all the host of heaven in the two courts of the house of the LORD.

6 And he [h]caused his children to pass through the fire in the valley of the son of Hinnom: also he observed times, and used enchantments, and used witchcraft, and dealt with a familiar spirit,[3] and with wizards: he wrought much evil in the sight of the LORD, to provoke him to anger.

7 And he set a carved image[4] (the idol which he had made) in the house of God, of which [i]God had said to David, and to Solomon his

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still exists, may have been excavated at that period to receive the water from the fountains. *P.*]

REFLECTIONS.—Never are Satan and his agents more ready to harass the people of God than when they are employed in the work of reformation: and thus God justly punishes his people for their hypocrisy and indifference in his service. Proud men hope to carry all to their mind if their first attempts are successful. But when war or danger is threatened, we must prepare for it by every proper mean, remembering, after all, to rest chiefly on the powerful protection and assistance of God. Strong faith in him will help us above the fear of man. If our adversaries discover their enmity to God and our souls by boasting and blasphemy, let us give ourselves to mourning and prayer: so shall the issue be terrible to them, and happy and honourable to us. But how criminal is ingratitude to God for his singular, his miraculous favours! The pride of his own children is especially odious and provoking to him; and it becomes us carefully to guard against and heartily to hate it. Astonishing is the wisdom of God, that can make sins, as well as sufferings, the means of his people's trial and humiliation. He delights to honour those whom his

POOL OF HEZEKIAH—BUILT BY THE KING OF JUDAH. [II. CHRONICLES, xxxii:30.]—"This same Hezekiah also stopped the upper watercourse of Gihon, and brought it straight down to the west side of the city of David. And Hezekiah prospered in all his works." The same pool is referred to also in II. Kings, xx: 20, where it says: "And the rest of the acts of Hezekiah, and all his might, and how he made a pool, and a conduit, and brought water into the city, are they not written in the book of the Chronicles of the kings of Judah?" This pool is 240 feet long by 144 feet wide, and is rather shallow. At the bottom is natural rock, which is leveled and covered with cement, and it is furnished with water by a small aqueduct from Birket Mamila. Dr. Thomson says the water which fills the pool is still brought by an underground conduit from what is supposed to be the upper Gihon.

son, In this house, and in Jerusalem, which I have chosen before all the tribes of Israel, will I put my name for ever:

8 Neither will I any more remove the foot of Israel from out of the land which I have appointed for your fathers; [k]so that they will take heed to do all that I have commanded them, according to the whole law, and the statutes, and the ordinances, by the hand of Moses.

9 So Manasseh [l]made Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem to err,[5] *and* to do worse than the heathen, whom the LORD had destroyed before the children of Israel.

10 ¶ And[m] the LORD spake[6] to Manasseh, and to his people; but they would not hearken.

11 Wherefore the LORD brought upon them the captains of the host [n]of the king of Assyria, which took Manasseh [o]among the thorns,[7] and bound[p] him with fetters, and carried him to Babylon.

12 And[q] when he was in affliction, he besought the LORD his God, and humbled himself greatly before the God of his fathers,

13 And prayed unto him: and he [r]was entreated of him, and heard his supplication, and brought him again to Jerusalem into his kingdom. [s]Then Manasseh knew that the LORD he *was* God.

14 ¶ Now after this he [t]built a wall without the city of David, on the west side of Gihon, in the valley, even to the entering in of the fish-gate, and compassed about [u]Ophel, and raised it up a very great height, and put captains of war in all the fenced cities of Judah.

15 And [x]he took away the strange gods, and the idol out of the house of the LORD, and all the altars that he had built in the mount of the house of the LORD, and in Jerusalem, and cast *them* out of the city.

16 And he [y]repaired the altar of the LORD, and sacrificed thereon peace-offerings and thank-offerings, and [z]commanded Judah to serve the LORD God of Israel.[8]

17 Nevertheless [a]the people did sacrifice still in the high places, *yet* unto the LORD their God only.

18 ¶ Now[b] the rest of the acts of Manasseh, and his prayer unto his God, and [c]the words of the seers[9] that spake to him in the name of the LORD God of Israel, behold, they are written in the book of the Kings of Israel;

19 His prayer also, and *how God* was entreated of him, and all his sins, and his trespass, and the places wherein he built high places, and set up groves and graven images, before he was humbled, behold, they *are* written among the sayings of the [d]seers.[1]

20 ¶ So Manasseh [e]slept with his fathers, and they buried him in his own house:[2] and Amon his son reigned in his stead.[3]

21 ¶ Amon[f] *was* two and twenty years old when he began to reign, and reigned two years in Jerusalem.

22 But he [g]did *that which was* evil in the sight of the LORD, as did Manasseh his father: for Amon sacrificed unto all the carved images which Manasseh his father had made, and [4]served them;

23 And [h]humbled not himself before the LORD, as Manasseh his father had humbled himself; but Amon [i]trespassed more and more.

24 And [k]his servants conspired against him, and slew him in his own house.

25 ¶ But the people of the land [l]slew all them that had conspired against king Amon; and the people of the land made Josiah his son king in his stead.[5]

A.M. 3306. B.C. 698.

k Le.26.1–13.De.28.1–14;30.1,4.Is.1.19.

l 2 Ki.21.9. Pr.29.12. 2 Ki.14.16;15.26;16.19, 25–33. Mi.6.16.

[5] That is, he made them sin through his example and influence; but having the law of God 'they were without excuse.'—*C.*

m 2 Ki. 21. 9–15. ch. 36.15,16. Je.44.4,5.

[6] He spake by his prophets and his providence, by his law and their own consciences.—*C.*

n Ne.9.32. De.28.36, Is.5.26–30;7.

o 2 Sa.23.6. 1 Sa. 13. 6.

[7] The Syriac and Arabic have it—he 'took Manasseh alive.' Our Hebrew text and translation seem, however, sufficiently intelligible. He took him among 'the thorns,' to which he had fled, in his own idolatrous 'groves.' *C.*—The Hebrew word translated 'thorns,' also signifies 'a hook' or 'ring,' and *an instrument used for binding and leading captives.* This latter may be its meaning in this place, and so it was understood by the ancient Jewish rabbins, by the authors of the Septuagint and Vulgate versions.—*P.*

p Ps, 107. 10,11. Job 36.8.2 Ki.17.33.

q Mi. 6. 9. Ho. 5.15; 14.1–3,8. Lu.15. 16–18. Je. 31.18–20;3.23. 2 Co. 7.11.

r Is.1.18. 1 Co. 6.11. Ps.34.6;50.15;91.15.

s Ps.46.10. Da.4. 25, 34.

t ch.32.5;11.5,11,12.

u Or, *the tower*, ch. 27.3. Ne.3.26,27,31;11. 21.1 Ch.9.2.

x Ho.14.3,8. Is.2.16–21.ver.2–7. Ps.119.67.

y 1 Ki. 18. 30. Le. 7. 12.

z ch.14.4, with ver. 9. Ex.20.3–5. ch. 34.30–32.Ge.18.19.

[8] To have been 'kept back' from sin (Ps.19.13) by restraining grace, is the greatest blessing; to have been led to repentance, is the next; and to make the best and fullest reparation in our power is the only evidence to man that our profession is sincere. Manasseh failed of the last; but, by the grace of God, he happily exemplified the other two.—*C.*

a 1 Ki.15.14; 22.43. 2 Ki. 12.3;14.4;15.4,35.

b ch.32.32,33; 28. 26, 27;27.7,[illegible]; [illegible].22,23; 28. 26,27;32.32,33.

c De.18.1,[illegible]. h. 31.15. Je.44.4.

[9] The words of the seers' are summarily recorded (2 Ki. 21. 10–15), with a sad recital of 'the rest of his acts' (ver. 16); but his 'prayer' is not extant. The prayer attributed to him in the Apocrypha is, by universal consent, admitted to be spurious. Is then a portion of Holy Scripture lost? No, nor does this and similar texts necessarily lead to such a conclusion. The words, *are written*, are supplied by the translators, and the Hebrew might as well be translated *were written*. Why they were expunged does not appear, nor is it of any importance for us to inquire or to know.—*C.*

d Or, *Hosai*, 1 Sa. 9.9.

[1] Manasseh's prayer is not preserved in the sacred writings. That which bears his name in the Apocrypha can hardly be identical with the one here referred to. It would rather seem to have been an attempt made by some later writer to supply a suitable prayer.—*P.*

e ch.9. 31; 12. 16; 16. 13; 21. 20; 25. 28; 26. 23; 28.27;32.33.

[2] Not in his palace, but in some detached and favourite summer-house situated in his garden, 2 Ki. 21.18.—*C.*

[3] B.C. 643.

f 2 Ki.21.19–25.1 Ch. 3.14. Mat.1.10.

g ver.2–9. Le.20.10.

[4] How astonishing is this! With his father's example before his eyes, he copied his father's *vices*, but not his *repentance*.—*I.*

h ver. 12. Je. 8. 12. Zec.7.11,12.

i Heb. *multiplied trespass*, 2 Ti. 3. 13. ch.28.22;ver.6.

k 2 Sa.4.5–7.2 Ki.12. 20,21. ch.24. 25; 25. 27, 28. Ps.55.23. Job 25.32, 33.

l Ju. 1. 7. Mat. 7. 2. Ge.9.5,6. Nu.35.16–21, 31.

[5] B.C. 641.

CHAP. XXXIV.

1 He carried on his reformation with a steady hand; *timidity* did not prevent him from going far enough, and *zeal* did not lead him beyond due bounds. He walked in the *golden mean*, and his moderation was known unto all men. He looked not to the right hand or the left, but inward, forward, and upward. Reader, let the conduct of this pious youth be thy example through life.—*I.*

2 No limit of age can be prescribed to the spirit and grace of God. The call to the vineyard may be not only in the eleventh hour of a nation, but of an individual, Mat. 20. 6. Lu. 23. 43. Still, early conversions are the most common and the most hopeful. A young king surrounded by all the fascinations of a court, yet fixing his heart on heaven; beset by flatterers, yet listening only to the word of truth, the Spirit of God, and his own conscience; tempted by the example of paternal idolatry, yet steadily determined upon a godly reformation;—such was Josiah—such is the beauty of early piety.—*C.*

[3] Or, *sun images.*

[4] The Hebrew word translated 'groves,' both here and in ver. 7, is *asherim*, which means 'images of Astarte.'—*P.*

CHAPTER XXXIV.

1 *Josiah's good reign.* 3 *He destroyeth idolatry.* 8 *He provideth for the repairs of the temple.* 14 *Hilkiah having found the book of the law, Josiah sendeth to Huldah to inquire of the Lord.* 23 *Huldah prophesieth the destruction of Jerusalem, but respite thereof in Josiah's time.* 29 *Josiah, causing it to be read in a solemn assembly, reneweth the covenant with God.*

JOSIAH *was* eight years old when he began to reign; and he reigned in Jerusalem one and thirty years.

2 And he did *that which was* right in the sight of the LORD, and walked in the ways of David his father, and declined *neither* to the right hand nor to the left.[1]

3 ¶ For in the eighth year of his [2]reign, while he was yet young, he began to seek after the God of David his father: and in the twelfth year he began to purge Judah and Jerusalem from the high places, and the groves, and the carved images, and the molten images.

4 And they brake down the altars of Baalim in his presence; and the images[3] that *were* on high above them he cut down; and the [4]groves,

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grace hath enabled remarkably to honour him. And noted piety and activity for God are the true way to be happy and prosperous in life, and to die revered and justly lamented.

CHAPTER XXXIII. REFLECTIONS.—What a grief it would be to many godly parents to return from death and behold the abominations of their children! Nations and churches readily relapse into their wonted abominations, from which they had been reformed with infinite pains. They become inhuman, unnatural, and infatuated when God gives them over to their own hearts' lusts. They turn from and provoke God, their best friend, and depend on Satan, their worst enemy. How quickly Hezekiah's boasted treasures are carried to Babylon, and his son to attend them! But O the mercy of God, in giving repeated warnings to the most vile and obstinate sinners; or in afflicting them, in order to awaken them! He can convert and forgive the greatest monsters of wickedness. But bitter are the griefs, and visible the fruits, of real repentance, particularly when the subjects were once remarkably wicked. What care to restore the worship of God which they have defaced, and to reform the persons whom they have seduced! Though God cast their sin behind his back, they never forget it themselves, nor think themselves worthy of ordinary honours, whether in life or in death. And it may be useful for us to remember that our sins, with their aggravating circumstances, as well as our returns to our duty, are exactly marked in the registers of heaven. But with what a dreadful career and unremitting obstinacy do some men post to eternal ruin! They greedily copy their parents' wickedness, but never their repentance.

CHAPTER XXXIV. [Ver. 7. Josiah was the most thorough and successful reformer of Old Testament history. His piety and zeal were, under God, mainly owing to the wise and holy men who had charge of his early training. Never had there been in the Jewish court such a noble band of high-minded and God-fearing men. Shaphan, the scribe, was chief. He had charge of the finances, and trained the young prince in political economy. Hilkiah, the high-priest,

and the carved images, and the molten images, he brake in pieces, and made dust *of them*, and strowed *it* upon the graves of them that had sacrificed unto them.[5]

5 And he [a]burnt the bones of the priests upon their altars, and cleansed Judah and Jerusalem.

6 And *so* [b]*did he* in the cities of Manasseh, and Ephraim, and Simeon even unto Naphtali with their mattocks[6] round about.[7]

7 And when he had broken down the altars and the groves, and had beaten the graven images [c]into powder, and cut down all the idols throughout all the land of Israel, he returned to Jerusalem.

8 ¶ Now, [d]in the eighteenth year of his reign,[8] when he had purged the land, and the house, he sent Shaphan the son of Azaliah, and Maaseiah the governor of the city, and Joah the son of Joahaz the recorder, to [e]repair the house of the LORD his God.

9 And when they came to Hilkiah the high priest, they [f]delivered the money *that was* brought into the house of God, which the Levites that kept the doors had gathered of the hand of Manasseh and Ephraim, and of all the remnant of Israel, and of all Judah and Benjamin; and they returned to Jerusalem.[9]

10 And they put *it* in [g]the hand of the workmen that had the oversight of the house of the LORD, and they gave it to the workmen that wrought in the house of the LORD, to repair and amend the house;

11 Even to the artificers and builders gave they *it*, to buy hewn stone, and timber for couplings, and to floor[1] the houses which the kings[h] of Judah had destroyed.[2]

12 And the men did the work [i]faithfully: and the overseers of them *were* Jahath and Obadiah, the Levites, of the sons of Merari; and Zechariah and Meshullam, of the sons of the Kohathites, to set *it* forward; and *other of* the Levites, [k]all that could skill of instruments of music.[3]

13 Also *they were* [l]over the bearers of burdens, and *were* overseers of all that wrought the work in any manner of service: and [m]of the Levites *there were* scribes, and officers, and porters.

14 And when they brought out the money that was brought into the house of the LORD, Hilkiah the priest [n]found a book of the law of the LORD *given* by[4] Moses.[5]

15 And Hilkiah answered and said to Shaphan the scribe, I have found the book of the law in the house of the LORD. And Hilkiah delivered the book to Shaphan.

16 And Shaphan carried the book to the king, and brought the king word back again, saying, All that was committed to[6] thy servants, they do *it*.

17 And they have [t]gathered together the money *that was* found in the house of the LORD, and have delivered it into the hand of the overseers, and to the hand of the workmen.

18 Then Shaphan[7] the scribe told the king, saying, Hilkiah the priest hath given me a book. And Shaphan read it[8] before[u] the king.

19 And it came to pass, when the king had heard the [w]words of the law, that he [y]rent his clothes.[9]

20 And the king commanded Hilkiah, and Ahikam the son of Shaphan, and [z]Abdon the son of Micah, and Shaphan the scribe, and Asaiah a servant of the king's, saying,

21 Go, inquire of the LORD for me, and for them that are [a]left in Israel and in Judah, concerning the words of the book that is found: for [b]great *is* the wrath of the LORD that is poured out upon us, because our fathers have not kept the word of the LORD, to do after all *that is* written in this book.

22 And Hilkiah, and *they* that the king *had appointed*, went to Huldah the [c]prophetess, the wife of Shallum, the son of Tikvath, the son of [d]Hasrah, keeper of the wardrobe;[1] (now she dwelt in Jerusalem in the [2]college;[3] and they spake to her to that *effect*.

23 ¶ And[e] she answered them, Thus saith the LORD God of Israel, Tell ye the man that sent you to me,

24 Thus saith the LORD, Behold, [f]I will bring evil upon this place, and upon the inhabitants thereof, *even* all the curses that are written in the book which they have read before the king of Judah:

25 Because [g]they have forsaken me, and have burned incense unto other gods, that they might provoke me to anger with all the works of their hands; therefore my wrath shall be poured out upon this place, and shall not be quenched.

26 And as for the king of Judah, who sent you to inquire of the LORD, so shall ye say unto him, Thus saith the LORD God of Israel *concerning* the words which thou hast heard;

27 Because thine heart was [h]tender,[4] and thou didst humble thyself before God, when thou heardest his words against this place, and against the inhabitants thereof, and humbledst thyself before me, and didst rend thy clothes, and weep before me; I have even heard *thee* also, saith the LORD.

A.M. 3363. B.C. 641.

5 There has been in all ages a desire amongst superstitious people of being buried in places of imaginary sanctity. The sun-worshippers seem to have prepared their tombs near their temples, and thus to have furnished a ready means for polluting the relics of their abominable idolatry.—*C.*

a 2 Ki.23.16,20.1 Ki 13.2.

b ch.30.1,10,11.

6 Or, *mauls*. By his friendship with the Assyrians, or through their weakness, he had power over these places.

7 Hammers, pickaxes, crowbars, and such instruments as could be employed to demolish idolatrous images and altars.—*C.*

c Heb. *to make powder*, De.9.21.Ex. 32.20.

d 2 Ki.22.3-7.

8 B.C. 623.

e 2 Ki. 12. 12; 22. 5, with ch.33.4,7.

f 2 Ki.22.4. ch.24.5. Phl.4.8.

9 Many MSS. and all the early translations read 'inhabitants of Jerusalem,' which being supported by sufficient authority, and required by the sense, is to be preferred to the authorized reading.—*C.*

g 2 Ki. 12. 11, 12, 14; 22.5,6.Ezr.3.7.

1 Or, *to rafter*.

h ch.33.2.22.

2 The ruin of the temple must have been nearly complete, as walls, roofs, and floors alike require to be repaired. The walls had probably been partially pulled down, as is known in similar cases, for the erection of other buildings. The flat roofs would suffer for want of repairs more speedily than those of angular form; and the destruction of the floors, independently of depredation, would soon follow from the free access of the rain.—*Note*. This is a sad picture of the ruin of the house of God. How much more sad the state of a soul which pride, or 'covetousness, which is idolatry,' or deceitful lusts, have destroyed!—*C.*

i 2 Ki.22.7,12 15.Ne. 7.2.Pr.28.20.2 Ti.2.2. 1 Co.4.2.

k 2 Sa.23.1,2.1 Ch.6. 31-48:xv.xxv.

3 Why the sacred musicians were the overseers is not declared, yet there must have been some reason for the selection. May it not have had reference to the fact, that as in building of the temple 'there was no sound of hammer nor axe, nor any tool of iron heard,' 1 Ki. 6. 7, so it should be in the repairing, and that the 'bearers of burdens' should march, and the other artificers work, to the sound of music and the voice of praise? See Zec.4.7.—*C.*

l ch.2.18;8.10.

m 1 Ch. 23.4,5; xxv. xxvi.

n 2 Ki.22. 8-14. De. 31.24,26.

4 Heb. *by the hand of*.

5 See note on 2 Ki. 22.8. There is every reason to conclude that this book was the autograph of Moses, for though there are fifteen places in the Old Testament where the 'law of Moses' and 'book of Moses' are mentioned, yet in this place alone is it called 'the book of the law, in, or by, the hand of Moses.' *C.*——This should be translated 'The Book of the Law of Jehovah by the hand of Moses,' and any unprejudiced reader would infer from the words that it was the *original copy*, which by the command of Moses had been laid up beside the ark. Kennicott says regarding the words of this verse:—'Its scarce possible for words more naturally to describe *a book written by Moses himself*, or to vouch more fully that the MS. of the law then found was in *the handwriting of Moses*. And perhaps all doubt will be removed when it is considered farther that, though there are fifteen places in the Old Testament which mention the words *law of Moses* or *book of Moses*, yet this one place only mentions *the book of the law in the hand of Moses*.'—*P.*

6 Heb. *to the hand of*.

t Heb. *poured out* or *melted*, 2 Ki.22.9.

7 Both priests and people omitting the reading of the law, publicly and privately (for the public omission caused a private neglect), no wonder that upon finding the book of the law, and hearing it read, they were startled at it, as if one were risen from the dead.—*Capellus in Patrick.*

8 Heb. *in it*.

u De.17.19. Jos.1.8. Ps.119.24,97-99. Je.36. 21.

w De.17. 19;28.3-68. Le.26.3-39.

y Ge.37.34. Ps.119. 120. Joel 2.13.

9 The Hebrew books being written on long rolls, the prophetic threatenings of Deuteronomy would, most probably, be unfolded first, and if so, they were well calculated to produce the deep emotion of the king. See ver. 24.—*C.*

z Or, *Achbor*, 2 Ki. 22.12.

a 2 Ki.17.6;22.13.ch. 33.11.

b De. xxviii.-xxxii. Le.xxvi.

c Ex.15.20. Ju. 4. 4. Ac.21.9.

d Or, *Harhas*, 2 Ki. 22.14.

1 Heb. *garments*.

2 Or, *in the school* or *in the second part*.

3 Literally, 'in the second,' viz. city, a phrase nearly akin to the English *Newtown* so frequently applied to a part of ancient cities. *C.*—See note on 2 Ki. 22. 14.—*P.*

e 2 Ki.22.15-20.

f ch.36.6,17. Is. 5. 5. De.xxviii.-xxxii.; 4.25 -28; 6. 14, 15; 8. 19, 20. Da.9.12. Le.xxvi.

g ch.12.2; 15.2; 33.3-9,22,23. Is.2.8. Mi.5.13. 2 Ki.23.26,27;24.4. Je. 15.4.

h De. 20. 3. 2 Ki.22. 19. Ps.51.16,17; 34.4,6. Le.26.40,41. Pr.28.13. 1 Ki.21.27,29.

4 *Tender* in receiving instruction as a little child; *tender* in trembling at the voice of an offended God; *tender* in acknowledging the justice of his sentence; *tender* in commiserating the self-induced evils of his country. See Mat. 18.3. Lu.19.41.—*C.*

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had charge of his religious education. Huldah, the prophetess, with her husband Shallum, were in close attendance as guides and advisers. The prince had a young companion, who for early piety, devoted patriotism, and clear insight into divine truth, had no superior in that or any other age—Jeremiah the prophet. Under such training, and in such society, Josiah could scarcely have failed to reform a corrupt church, and regenerate a degraded kingdom. *P.*]

REFLECTIONS.—Happy are they who hear and obey God's calls in the days of their youth! and indeed there are but few aged conversions. Happy is the nation whose sovereign sets before them the best example; zealously purges his dominion from temptations to destructive impieties; reforms the church in

28 Behold, I will gather thee to thy fathers, and thou shalt be gathered to thy grave [h]in peace, neither shall thine eyes see all the evil that I will bring upon this place, and upon the inhabitants of the same. So they brought the king word again.

29 ¶ Then[k] the king sent and gathered together all the elders of Judah and Jerusalem.[3]

30 And the king went up into the house of the LORD, and all the men of Judah, and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and the priests, and the Levites, and all the people, great and small;[4] and he read in their ears all the words of the book of the covenant *that was* found[5] in the house of the LORD.

31 And the king stood in [l]his place, and made[m] a covenant before the LORD, to walk after the LORD, and to keep his commandments, and his testimonies, and his statutes, with all his heart, and with all his soul, to perform the words of the covenant which are written in this book.

32 And he [n]caused all that were present[6] in Jerusalem and Benjamin to stand *to it*. And the inhabitants of Jerusalem did according to the covenant of God, the God of their fathers.

33 And Josiah [o]took away all the abominations out of all the countries that *pertained* to the children of Israel, and made[7] all *that were* present in Israel to serve, *even* to serve the LORD their God. *And* [p]all his days they departed not from following[8] the LORD, the God of their fathers.[9]

CHAPTER XXXV.

1 *Josiah keepeth a most solemn passover.* 20 *He, provoking Pharaoh-necho, is slain at Megiddo.* 25 *Lamentations for Josiah.* 26 *His acts.*

MOREOVER, Josiah kept a passover unto the LORD[1] in Jerusalem: and they killed the passover on the fourteenth *day* of the first month.

2 And he set the priests in their charges, and [q]encouraged them to the service of the house of the LORD;

3 And said unto the Levites that taught all Israel,[2] which were holy unto the LORD, Put[b] the holy ark in the house which Solomon the son of David king of Israel did build;[3] *it shall* not *be* a burden upon *your* shoulders: serve[c] now the LORD your God, and his people Israel;

4 And prepare *yourselves* by the houses of your fathers, after your courses, according to the writing of David king of Israel, and according to the writing of Solomon[4] his son;

5 And stand in the holy *place*, according to the divisions of the families of the fathers[5] of your brethren the people,[6] and *after* the division of the families of the Levites;

6 So kill the passover, and [d]sanctify yourselves, and prepare your brethren, that *they* may do according to the word of the LORD by the hand of Moses.

7 And Josiah [e]gave to the people, of the flock, lambs and kids, all for the passover-offerings, for all that were present, to the number of thirty thousand,[7] and three thousand bullocks: these *were* of the king's substance.

8 And [f]his princes gave[8] willingly unto the people, to the priests, and to the Levites: [g]Hilkiah, and Zechariah, and Jehiel, rulers of the house of God, gave unto the priests, for the passover-offerings, two thousand and six hundred *small cattle*, and three hundred oxen.

9 Conaniah also, and Shemaiah and Nethaneel, his brethren, and Hashabiah, and Jeiel, and Jozabad, chief of the Levites, [h]gave unto the Levites, for passover-offerings, five thousand *small cattle*, and five hundred oxen.

10 So the service was prepared, and the priests [i]stood in their place, and the Levites in their courses, according to the king's commandment.

11 And they killed the passover,[9] and the priests [k]sprinkled *the blood* from their hands, and the Levites [l]flayed *them*.

12 And they [m]removed the [1]burnt-offerings, that they might give according to the divisions of the [n]families of the people, to offer unto the LORD, as *it is* written in the book of Moses: and so *did they* with the oxen.

13 And they [o]roasted the passover with fire, according to the ordinance: but the *other* holy *offerings* sod they in pots, and in caldrons, and in pans, and [p]divided *them* speedily among all the people.

14 And afterward they made ready for themselves, and for the priests: because the priests the sons of Aaron [q]*were busied* in offering of burnt-offerings and the fat[2] until night; therefore the Levites prepared for themselves, and for the priests the sons of Aaron.

15 And the singers, the sons of Asaph, *were* in their place,[3] according to the [r]commandment of David, and Asaph, and Heman, and Jeduthun the king's seer;[4] and the porters [s]*waited*

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i Is.57. 1, 2. 2 Ki. 22. 20. Ps. 37. 37. Je. 34. 5. ch. 34. 28. He died in peace with God and his own conscience.

k 2 Ki.23.1–3. ch.30. 1. Jos.23.2;24.1, &c.

3 B.C. 623.

4 Heb. *from great, even to small.*

5 Undoubtedly there were many copies of the law of God in Israel, as reference is so familiarly made to it in the reign of Hezekiah, see ch.30.16,18, 19, 22; 31.3,4,21; yet weneed not be surprised at the excited attention now directed to it; as a similar relic of antiquity, even in a land the most familiarized with books, would still be found an object calling forth intense curiosity in all, and make a new and deepened impression upon minds piously disposed.—*C.*

l 1 Ki.11.14;23.3. ch. 6.13.

m De. 5. 2, 3; 29. 1. Jos.24.25. ch.15.12; 29. 10. Ezr.10.3. Ne.9.38.2 Co.6.

n ch.14.4;33.16. Ec. 8.2.2 Ki.23.3.

6 Heb. *found.*

o 2 Ki.23.4–20. ver.3

7 By the instrumentality of his exhortations, his example, and his piety, whereby the Spirit of God wrought this blessed reformation.—*C.*

p Jos.24.31. Ju.2.7.

8 Heb. *from after.*

9 Josiah's reign was an exact counterpart to that of Manasseh. The latter tolerated and established every form of worship except the true: Josiah established the true religion, and proscribed all others. He uprooted idolatry in the whole land. He was as thorough an iconoclast as John Knox. He shattered all images to pieces; he overthrew all altars; he desecrated all idol sanctuaries, and he summarily punished all idolatrous priests and people. He did not stop here. He was more than a mere destroyer of false systems. He was a restorer. He rebuilt the temple, re-established the national religion, reorganized the priesthood, and adopted all possible means for the instruction of the whole body of the people in the law of the Lord.—*P.*

CHAP. XXXV.

1 The true character of a religious commemoration—not to flesh and blood, but 'to the Lord.'—*C.*

a ch.30.2;31.4.1Ch. 22.13;28.20.

2 An important notice, implying the distribution of the Levites through all the tribes, and the office of teachers in which they were engaged. Still more important is their character as teachers; they were 'holy unto the Lord.'—*C.*

b ch.5.7. 1 Ch.23.26. It had been taken out of its place.

c 1 Ch.23.26–32.

3 Had Amon removed it, as some think, to make room for an idol, it would most probably have been destroyed; had the priests, in idolatrous times, removed it for safety, the pious act would scarcely have been unnoticed. The conclusion therefore is, that it had been removed by Josiah, during the cleansing and repairs of the temple, and was now restored to its appointed place.—*C.*

4 This interference of David and Solomon in the regulation of divine worship, does not sanction either kings or ecclesiastics to model God's service after their own imaginations. David and Solomon were both prophets of the Lord, and, in that character, and not in virtue of their office as kings, did they enact those pious and orderly forms which Josiah is now restoring.—*C.*

5 Heb. *the house of the fathers.*

6 Heb. *the sons of the people.*

d ch.29.5,13; 30. 3,5. Ex.19.10. Ge.35.2.

e ch. 30. 24. 1 Ch. 22. 14;29.3,4.1 Ki.8.63.

7 According to the Jewish calculation that not fewer than ten, nor more than twenty, were to join for one kid or lamb, the probable number at this solemnity would be 450,000.—*C.*

f 1 Ch.29.6–9. Ezr.2. 68,69.2 Co.9.7.

8 Heb. *offered.*

g 2 Ki.22.4;23.4. ch. 34.15.

h Heb. *offered.* In all 3800 bullocks and 37,600 small cattle, Mi.6.7,8.1 Ki.8.63.

i ch. 30. 16. 1 Ch. xxiii. xxvii. 6. 31, 32. 41.49; 15.14–24; 16.4–6, 37–42.

9 The people themselves might slay their own paschal lambs, and these present the blood to the priests, that they might sprinkle it before the altar; and the Levites flayed them, and made them ready for dressing.—*Clarke.*

k ch.29.22. He.9.21, 22.

l ch.29.34. Mi.3.3.

m Le.3.4,10,11.

1 Of the burnt-offerings, neither priest nor people were to partake. They were entirely consumed by fire, Le. 1. 9; 13. These were accordingly *removed*, or set apart from the peace-offerings, freewill-offerings, or vow-offerings, Le. 7. 15, 16, of which the offerer was authorized to partake.—*C.*

n ver. 5,7,13. Ac. 10. 34. Ga.3.28.

o Ex.12.8,9. De.16.8. Ps. 22.14. Is. 53.10.

p Heb. *made them run.* Ec. 9. 10. Ro.12. 11. Ps.119.32,59,60.

q Ac.6.2,4; 20.24,31. 2 Ti.4.2. Jn.4.31.

2 That is, the *fat* of the peace-offerings (Le. 3. 3, 4, 9, 15) and of the trespass-offerings (Le.7.3,4).—*C.*

3 Heb. *station.*

r 1 Ch.25.1–31; 23. 5; 6.31,32; 15.16–24; 16. 5, 41.

4 Or rather, 'seers,' for Asaph and Heman are also so designated at ch.29.30; 1 Ch. 25. 1, 5. This is also the reading of all the ancient versions (except the Chald.) and of a MS. of Kennicott.—*L.*

s 1 Ch.9.17,18;26.14 -19.

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his nation; trembles at the words of the God of Israel; and under the apprehensions of his denounced wrath humbles himself; and labours to have all his subjects taught divine truths, fixed in them, and preserved from wickedness. And it is pleasant, after great prevailing impiety, to behold kings, ministers, and people harmoniously and heartily zealous for the instituted purity of God's worship, and solemnly devoting themselves, upon a new-covenant footing, to his service.

CHAPTER XXXV. REFLECTIONS.—Alas! how often neither ministers nor people show due forwardness in observing the solemn ordinances of God! Yet much might be done for the excitement of others by one in high station, who so loves him that he grudges no expense nor labour in his service. And magistrates, by their example and zealous exertions, might effectually instigate and encourage even ministers to do their duty; yea, where many difficulties are in the way. No one ought to become a hypocrite for the sake of carnal advantage: but certainly such as appear sincere ought to meet with peculiar encouragement. Care should be taken, by all concerned, that none be deprived of God's ordinances on account of their poverty; and that none, by public service, injure his own soul's edification. But great labour and pains are necessary in reducing all ranks and things to due order in the observation of God's ordinances after they

at every gate; they might not depart from their service;[5] for their brethren the Levites prepared for them.

16 So all the service of the LORD was prepared the same day, to keep the passover, and to offer burnt-offerings upon the altar of the LORD, according to the commandment of king Josiah.

17 And the children of Israel *that were* present[6] kept[t] the passover at that time, and the feast of unleavened bread seven days.

18 And there [u]was no passover like to that[7] kept in Israel from the days of Samuel the prophet; neither did all the kings of Israel keep such a passover as Josiah kept, and the priests, and the Levites, and all Judah and Israel that were present, and the inhabitants of Jerusalem.

19 In[x] the eighteenth year of the reign of Josiah was this passover kept.

20 ¶ After[y] all this, when Josiah had prepared the temple,[8] Necho king of Egypt came up to fight against Carchemish by Euphrates: and Josiah went out against him.[9]

21 But he sent ambassadors to him, saying, What[z] have I to do with thee, thou king of Judah? *I come* not against thee this day, but against [a]the house wherewith I have war; for God[b] commanded me to make haste: forbear thee from *meddling with* God, who *is* with me, that he destroy thee not.

22 Nevertheless Josiah would not turn his face from him, but [c]disguised himself, that he might fight with him, and hearkened not unto the words of Necho from [d]the mouth of God,[1] and came to fight in the valley of [e]Megiddo.

23 And the archers shot at king Josiah; and the king said to his servants, Have me away; for I am sore [f]wounded.

24 His servants therefore took him out of that chariot, and put him in the second chariot that he had; and they brought him to Jerusalem, and he [g]died, and was buried in *one of* the sepulchres[2] of his fathers: and [h]all Judah and Jerusalem mourned for Josiah.[3]

25 ¶ And Jeremiah lamented for Josiah: and all the [i]singing-men and the singing-women spake of Josiah in their lamentations to this day, and made them an ordinance in Israel: and, behold, they *are* written in the Lamentations.[4]

26 ¶ Now the rest of the acts of Josiah, and his [k]goodness, according to *that which was* written in the law of the LORD,

27 And [l]his deeds, first and last, behold, they *are* written in the book of the Kings of Israel and Judah.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

1 *Jehoahaz succeeding, is deposed by Pharaoh, and carried into Egypt.* 5 *Jehoiakim reigning ill, is carried bound into Babylon.* 9 *Jehoiachin succeeding, reigneth ill, and is brought into Babylon.* 11 *Zedekiah succeeding, reigneth ill, despiseth the prophets, and rebelleth against Nebuchadnezzar.* 14 *Jerusalem, for the sins of the priests and the people, is wholly destroyed.* 22 *The proclamation of Cyrus for building the temple.*

THEN the people of the land took [a]Jehoahaz the son of Josiah, and made him king in his father's stead in Jerusalem.

2 Jehoahaz *was* twenty and three years old when he began to reign; and he reigned three months in Jerusalem.

3 And the king of Egypt [b]put him down[1] at Jerusalem, and condemned[2] the land in an hundred talents of silver, and a talent of [3]gold.

4 And the king of Egypt made Eliakim his brother king over Judah and Jerusalem, and turned his name to Jehoiakim. And Necho took [c]Jehoahaz his brother, and carried him to Egypt.[4]

5 ¶ Jehoiakim[d] *was* twenty and five years old when he began to reign; and he reigned eleven years in Jerusalem: and he did *that which was* evil in the sight of the LORD his God.

6 Against him [e]came up Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, and bound him in fetters,[5] to carry him to Babylon.

7 Nebuchadnezzar[f] also carried off the vessels of the house of the LORD to Babylon, and put them in his temple at Babylon.

8 Now the rest of the acts of Jehoiakim, and [g]his abominations which he did, and that which was found in him, behold, they *are* written in the book of the Kings of Israel and Judah: and [h]Jehoiachin his son reigned in his stead.

5 Or, *chains*. *f* 2 Ki.24.1, 2. Je. 22. 18,19;36.29-31. Eze.19. 5-9. *g* ver.5;ch.35.27. *h* Or *Jeconiah*, 1 Ch.3.16, or *Coniah*, Je.22.24.

A.M. 3381. B.C. 623.

5 An admonitory note, worthy of all observance. For if a Jewish porter might not depart from his service, much less may a Christian minister give up to secularities, whether of amusement or profit, that time and those energies which are all due to the Lord. Mat.25.15.—*C.*

6 Heb. *found*.

t Ex.12.6-20;13.6,7; 23.14. Le. 23.5-8. De. 16. 1-8. Nu. 28. 14-25. ch.30.21, 1 Co.5.7,8.

u 2 Ki. 23. 22, with ch. 30. 26, 27. So exactly observed.

7 The superiority of this passover lay, 1. In the number of sacrifices *presented to the people*, which was greater than David, Solomon, or Hezekiah had given. Hezekiah's offerings are specially enumerated, and they amounted but to 19,000 in all; those of Josiah to 41,000. 2. In the more perfect preparation of priests, Levites, and people, compare ver. 16 with 2 Ki. 23.21,22. 3. In the more perfect observance of the Mosaic order, ver. 13. 4. In the kindly dispositions whereby one class became servants to the other for the Lord's sake, ver. 14, 15.2 Co.4.5. 5. In the spirit of deep devotion that pervaded all ranks.—*C.*

x ver. 1; ch. 34. 8. 2 Ki.23.23.

y 2 Ki.23.29. Je.46.2.

8 Heb. *house*.

9 B.C. 610.

z 2 Sa.16.10. Jn. 2.4. Mat.8.29.

a Heb. *the house of my war*, Is.36.10.

b 2 Ki.18.25. And it was Josiah's duty to obey, De.5.32.

c ch.18.29. 1 Ki.14.2. 1 Sa.28.12.

d ver. 21. Jn. 11. 50, 51.

1 Josiah cannot be accused of rashly entering upon an unjust war; for Necho was marching an army through his territory without leave, and about to attack the king of Babylon, from whom he must have held the northern parts of his kingdom, ch.34. 6. Nor did Necho's ambassadors give any evidence that they had a divine command for their expedition, they merely assert it; and the expression, 'from the mouth of God' (Elohim) is not used in Scripture for a divine message, which is uniformly 'from the mouth of Jehovah.' See ch. 36.12.—*C.*

e 2 Ki.9. 27. Zec. 12. 11.

f Heb. *made sick*, 1 Ki.22.34. 2 Ki.8.29.

g 2 Ki.23.30. Ps. 36. 6. Ec.9.7,8.14.

2 Heb. *among the sepulchres*.

h Zec.12.11.

i Job 3. 8. Ec. 12. 5. Je.9.17-21. Mi.1.8,9.

3 The battle took place in the plain of Esdraelon, at or very close to the spot consecrated in national history by the great victory of Barak. It would seem that there was on the battle-field an ancient sanctuary of the two Syrian gods Hadad and Rimmon, and that the city of Megiddo was not far distant. We have no details of the battle. One melancholy event absorbs the attention of the sacred writer. Josiah disguised himself, as kings were then accustomed to do when entering battle. The Egyptian archers fired upon and mortally wounded him. He was put into another chariot, and driven rapidly off towards Jerusalem. But all was in vain. The good monarch died; and all Judah and Jerusalem mourned for him.—*P.*

4 Not in the book called *Lamentations of Jeremiah*, but in some other of that name, used by the 'singing-men and singing-women,' and not included in the sacred canon.—*C.*

k Heb. *kindnesses*, ch.32.32.

l ch. 9. 29; 12. 15; 13. 22;16. 11;20. 34;33.18.

CHAP. XXXVI.

a Or, *Shallum*, 1 Ch.3.15. Je.22.11. 2 Ki 23.30-34.

b Heb. *removed him*, 2 Ki.23. 33. Eze. 19,3,4.

1 Dethroned him for some cause not recorded.—*C.*

2 Heb. *mulcted*.

3 *i.e.* £37,693, 15*s.* sterling.

c Eze.19.3,4. Je. 22. 10-12.

4 Immediately after the battle of Megiddo Pharaoh-Necho continued his march against the king of Assyria. The Jews were thus left to themselves, and they placed Jehoahaz on the throne. His reign was very short, but it was very wicked. Instead of imitating the noble example of his father, he gave way to the follies and vices of the worst of his predecessors, 2 Ki. 23.32. Necho returned in three months from his victorious campaign. Encamping for a time at Riblah, on the northern border of Canaan, he gave orders to dethrone Jehoahaz, probably because he had not himself nominated him; and then he placed Eliakim, another son of Josiah, on the vacant throne. The change of name to Jehoiakim was the badge of a tributary prince; he became the vassal of Necho.—*P.*

d 2 Ch.3. 15. Mat. 1. 11. 2 Ki. 23. 36, 37. Je. 22. 13-17; 26. 21-23; XXVI.

e 2 Ki.24.1, 2. Je. 22.

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have been long neglected. The very best of men rarely leave the world without some visible blemish. How affecting it is to see this great man die in an unjust war, after he had received from God fair warning of his danger! But God in his sovereign wisdom often makes his people's sinful rashness the mean of their own happiness and of their survivors' misery. Many lament the loss of their mercies who never rightly improved them in the enjoyment; and grieve for the misery which they see coming on their nation, who will not take the proper methods of repentance to prevent it.

CHAPTER XXXVI. [Ver. 6. It was in the third year of Jehoiakim's reign that Nebuchadnezzar took Jerusalem, Da. 1. 1, and put fetters on the king. At first it was the intention of the conqueror to take Jehoiakim to Babylon, but for some reason he changed his purpose, and restored the crown to him. Many Jews of high rank were at that time taken captive, and among them was the prophet Daniel, Da. 1. 1–7. A large proportion of the treasures and sacred vessels of the temple were also taken and placed in the great temple of Babylon. Jehoiakim became tributary to Nebuchadnezzar for three years. He then, taking advantage of some troubles in Assyria, ventured to rebel; Judea was invaded, Jerusalem captured, Jehoiakim slain, and his son Jehoiachin placed on the throne. *P.*]

Ver. 17. [The details of the terrible sufferings to which the people of Jerusalem were exposed during the long siege, which is only just referred to in this passage, may be learned by a careful study of the prophecies of Jeremiah and the history of Josephus. The siege lasted two years. It has been ever since regarded as the darkest period of Jewish history; and is still commemorated by a fast. Famine and pestilence committed frightful ravages in the city. Jeremiah was in prison, but received a daily supply of bread by order of the king, Je. 37. 21; 38. 9. The children died of hunger in the streets. Parents devoured the flesh of their own children, Eze. 5. 10. At length the enemy effected an entrance; Zedekiah with the royal family escaped in the night, fled through the wilderness, but were captured at Jericho. The king's fate was a cruel one. Jerusalem and its temple were completely destroyed. The captivity dates from the third year of Jehoiakim, B.C. 607, nineteen years previous to the final siege and destruction of Jerusalem. *P.*]

REFLECTIONS.—For the transgressions of a land many and unprofitable are the princes of it. Quickly do things ripen for the ruin of nations when their day of punishment is at hand. But to what obstinate and aggravated wickedness are they permitted to arrive

HALL OF THE ROYAL MUMMIES—CONTAINING THE MUMMY OF RAMESES II. THE OPPRESSOR OF THE CHILDREN OF ISRAEL. [II. CHRONICLES, XXXV : 20.]—"After all this, when Josiah had prepared the temple, Necho, king of Egypt, came up to fight against Charchemish by Euphrates: and Josiah went out against him." Necho was one of the Pharaohs of Egypt. This view of the Hall of the Royal Mummies, Gizeh Museum, is given because it contains the remains of many of the Egyptian kings. This hall is one of the large rooms in the Palace of Gizeh, a building which is said to have been erected at a cost of nearly twenty-five million dollars. It was built as a harem for the great Egyptian Pasha who assisted DeLesseps in opening the Suez canal, and who brought such a load of debt upon Egypt that he was deposed by the Sultan and taken to Constantinople. This building was confiscated by the government and is now used to house the valuable collection of Egyptian antiquities which make up the marvelous contents of the museum.

9 ¶ Jehoiachin[t] *was* eight years[6] old when he began to reign; and he reigned three months and ten days in Jerusalem: and he did *that which was* evil in the sight of the LORD.

10 And when the year[7] was expired, king Nebuchadnezzar sent and brought him to Babylon,[8] with the goodly vessels[9] of the house of the LORD, and made [k]Zedekiah his brother king over Judah and Jerusalem.[1]

11 ¶ Zedekiah[1] *was* one and twenty years old when he began to reign, and reigned eleven years in Jerusalem.

12 And he did *that which was* evil in the sight of the LORD his God, *and* [m]humbled not himself before Jeremiah the prophet, *speaking* from the mouth of the LORD.

13 And he also [n]rebelled against king Nebuchadnezzar, who had made him swear by God: but he stiffened his neck, and hardened his heart, from turning unto the LORD God of Israel.

14 ¶ Moreover, all the chief of the priests, and the people, transgressed [o]very much after all the abominations of the heathen; and polluted the house of the LORD, which he had hallowed in Jerusalem.

15 And[p] the LORD God of their fathers sent to them by his messengers,[2] rising[3] up betimes,[4] and sending; because he had [q]compassion on his people, and on his dwelling-place:

16 But they [r]mocked[5] the messengers of God, and despised his words, and misused his prophets, until the wrath of the LORD arose against his people, till *there was* no remedy.[s]

17 Therefore he brought upon them the king of the Chaldees, who slew their young men[6] with the sword in the house of their sanctuary,[7] and had no compassion upon young man or maiden, old man, or him that stooped for age: he gave *them* all into his hand.

18 And [t]all the vessels of the house of God, great and small, and the treasures of the house of the LORD, and the treasures of the king, and of his princes; all *these* he brought to Babylon.

19 And they [u]burnt the house of God, and brake down the wall of Jerusalem, and burnt all the palaces thereof with fire, and destroyed all the goodly vessels thereof.

20 And them that had escaped from the sword[8] carried he away to Babylon, where they were servants [x]to him and his sons until the reign of the kingdom of Persia;

21 To fulfil the word of the LORD by the mouth of [y]Jeremiah, until the land [z]had enjoyed her sabbaths:[9] *for* as long as she lay desolate she kept sabbath, to fulfil threescore and ten years.[1]

22 ¶ Now,[a] in the first year[2] of Cyrus king of Persia, (that the word of the LORD *spoken* by the mouth of [b]Jeremiah might be accomplished,) [c]the LORD stirred up the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia, that he made [d]a proclamation throughout all his kingdom, and *put it* also in writing, saying,

23 Thus saith Cyrus king of Persia, All the kingdoms of [e]the earth hath the LORD God of heaven given me; and he hath charged me to [f]build him an house in Jerusalem, which *is* in Judah: [g]who *is there* among you of all his people? the LORD his God *be* with him, and let him go up.

A.M. 3394. B.C. 610.

t 2 Ki.24.8-16.

6 In 2 Ki. 24. 8 he is said to have been *eighteen* years old when he ascended the throne; and the Syriac and Arabic versions have *eighteen*, as likewise have several MSS. of this verse. The statement of *eight* years in the text is accordingly pronounced a transcriber's error; it may, however, be as readily the error of our own ignorance of all the circumstances; as he may have been associated in the government even at *eight*, for some political purpose, and come finally to the sole possession at *eighteen*.—*C.*

7 Heb. *at the return of the year.*

8 B.C. 599.

9 Heb. *vessels of desire.*

k Or, *Mattaniah*, his uncle, 2 Ki. 24. 17. Je.37.1.

1 Jehoiachin's government did not satisfy the Babylonian monarch. Perhaps he may have aimed at independence, or he may have attempted to negotiate with Egypt. He was removed to Babylon after a reign of only three months.—*P.*

l 2 Ki. 24. 18, 19. Je. 52.1,2.

m Je.27. 3–22; 32. 1–6; xxxiv. xxxvii. xxxviii.

n 2 Ki.24. 20. Je. 52. 3. Eze.17.11 20.

o ch. 28. 2–7. Je. i.–xxiii. Eze. v.–xxiv. Mi.i.–iii.vi. Zep.i.iii.

p Je.25.3,4; 26. 5; 35. 15; 44.4.

2 Heb. *by the hand of his messengers.*

3 God is said to *arise*, when he puts forth any act of mercy or judgment, Ps.3.7;7.6;44.26. 'His rising up betimes and sending,' signifies the *early* notice of impending calamities, which he always sent by his prophets.—*C.*

4 That is, *continually and carefully.*

q 2 Ki. 13. 23. Ju. 10. 16. Ho.11.8.

r ch.30. 10. Je. 5. 12. 13; xl. xviii. xx. xxiii. xxvi. xxxvi.–xxxviii. Eze.11.3; 12.22; 20. 49; 33.30. Mat.21. 35, 36; 22. 31, 37. 1 Th.2.15.

s Heb. *healing.*

5 Mocking, in the lips of infidelity and licentiousness, is the invariable substitute for argument. When the reprover can be made ridiculous, the reproof is held contemptible. This cancer of the heart, the prophet pronounces incurable; it notes a 'vessel of wrath,' self-fitted for destruction.—*C.*

6 2 Ki. 25. 1–10, 18–22. Je.52. 4–17; xxxix. with Le.26.14–39. De. 28. 15, 68; 29. 18–28; 30. 18; 31. 10–18; 32. 15–28.

7 The temple was a place of great strength, and had been garrisoned as the chief or last place of defence.—*C.*

t Is.39. 6. Je. 27. 18–22. Da.5.3. 2 Ki.25.13–16.

u 2 Ki.25.9. Ps.79.1; 74. 6–8. Je.7.14; 17. 26. Eze.24.21; 7.20. 1 Ki.9. 7–9.

8 Heb. *the remainder from the sword.*

x Je.27.7;-5.11.

y Je.25. 9–12; 29. 10. Da.9.2.

z Le.26.34–43.

9 The land was entitled to a sabbatical year, Le. 25. 4; and this, it would appear, the Jews had not conceded. They were accordingly threatened by Jeremiah (25. 9–12; 29. 10) with a captivity of seventy years—an emblematic number—*seven* for the division of time, *ten* for the division of property.—*Note*, 'The days of our years are threescore years and ten,' and are they not the days of our spiritual captivity? Ro. 7. 24. But we have a greater than Cyrus, who has proclaimed 'deliverance to the captives' (Lu. 4. 18), and enriched the poor in spirit by his heavenly gifts, Ezr.1.5. Mat.5. 3. Ep. 4.8.—*C.*

1 The commencement of the 'threescore and ten years' was in B.C. 607, and its close in B.C. 536.—*P.*

a Ezr.1.1–3.

2 B.C. 536.

b Je.25.12,13; 29. 10. He.10.23.

c Is.44.28;45.1–4. Je. xxx.xxxi.

d ch.24.9. Es.3.12.

e Da.2. 21; 4. 35. Ps. 75.6,7.

f Is. 44. 28; 45. 13. Ezr.1.2;3.6,7–5.

g Zec.2.6,7. 1 Ch.22. 16. Ro.8.31.

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before the Lord measures his righteous justice upon them! None are usually more deeply involved in it than the rulers in church and state: and none share more of their contempt, hatred, and persecution than faithful ministers. But the righteous Lord at last marks their sins in their punishments; and makes up the loss of his honour, which he ought to have had from them, in the form or duration of his executed judgments. And yet in wrath he remembers mercy. Strangely he preserves his people's property for them against their return, even when they have provoked him to cast them out of it. In his providence he exactly adheres to his word. Nor will he, in his pardoning goodness, contend for ever, even where his honour requires him to contend long.

GENERAL VIEW OF ACROPOLIS AND THEATER, SARDIS—BURNED BY CYRUS, KING OF PERSIA, WHEN CRŒSUS WAS KING OF LYDIA. [EZRA, i: 1.]—"Now in the first year of Cyrus, king of Persia, that the word of the Lord by the mouth of Jeremiah might be fulfilled, the Lord stirred up the spirit of Cyrus, king of Persia, that he made a proclamation throughout all his kingdom, and put it also in writing." The proclamation of Cyrus referred to above had reference to building the Lord's house at Jerusalem. This is the Cyrus that captured Sardis, the capital of the kingdom of Lydia. Crœsus was king at the time. Cyrus condemned him to be burned alive. When bound to the stake Crœsus was heard to utter the name of Solon. Whereupon Cyrus inquired the reason. The unfortunate monarch replied by repeating a conversation which had taken place between himself and the Grecian sage on the instability of human happiness, which so affected Cyrus that he liberated Crœsus, and ever after retained him as one of his most intimate friends.

THE BOOK OF EZRA

Was probably written by himself. It contains a history of eighty years; and exhibits the divine fulfilment of all those predictions of Moses, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Micah, or others, which respected the deliverance from Babylon. It particularly informs us, (1) Upon what encouragement, and what numbers returned, i. ii. (2) How the temple was rebuilt and dedicated, notwithstanding repeated stops from their heathen neighbours, iii.–vi. (3) How Ezra, as Artaxerxes' deputy, came to Jerusalem, mourned over, and dissolved the marriages with heathen women, vii.–x. [The book of Ezra may be divided into two sections:—(1) Ch. i.–vi., containing an account of the return of the exiles from Babylon under the leadership of Zerubbabel and Joshua, with the erection of the temple and the re-establishment of the Jewish worship. (2) Ch. vii.–x., detailing the journey of a second caravan of exiles under the leadership of Ezra himself. *P.*]

CHAPTER I.

1 The proclamation of Cyrus for the building of the temple. 5 The people provide for their return. 7 Cyrus restoreth the vessels of the temple to Sheshbazzar.

NOW, in the first year of Cyrus king of Persia,[1] (that the word of the LORD by the mouth of Jeremiah might be fulfilled,) the LORD [a]stirred up the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia, that he [b]made a proclamation throughout all his kingdom, and *put it* also in writing, saying,

2 Thus saith Cyrus king of Persia, The LORD God of heaven hath given me all the kingdoms of the earth;[2] and he hath charged me to build him an house at Jerusalem, which *is* in Judah;

3 Who *is there* among you of all his people? his God be with him, and let him go up[3] to Jerusalem, which *is* in Judah, and build the house of the LORD God of Israel, (he *is* the God,) which *is* in Jerusalem.

4 And whosoever remaineth in any place where he sojourneth, let the men of his place help[c] him with silver, and with gold, and with goods, and with beasts, besides the free-will offering for the house of God that *is* in Jerusalem.

5 ¶ Then rose up the chief of the fathers of Judah and Benjamin, and the priests, and the Levites, with all *them* whose spirit [d]God had raised,[4] to go up to build the house of the LORD which *is* in Jerusalem.

6 And all they that *were* about them strengthened[e] their hands with vessels of silver, with gold, with goods, and with beasts, and with precious things, besides all *that* was [f]willingly offered.

7 ¶ Also Cyrus the king brought forth the vessels of the house of the LORD, [g]which Nebuchadnezzar had brought forth out of Jerusalem, and had put them in the house of his gods;

8 Even those did Cyrus king of Persia bring forth by the hand of Mithredath the treasurer, and numbered them unto [h]Sheshbazzar, the prince of Judah.

9 And this *is* the number of them: thirty chargers of gold, a thousand [i]chargers of silver, nine and twenty knives,

10 Thirty basons of gold, silver basons of a second *sort* four hundred and ten, *and* other vessels a thousand.

11 All[k] the vessels of gold and of silver *were* five thousand and four hundred.[5] All *these* did Sheshbazzar bring up with *them of* [l]the captivity, that were brought up from Babylon unto Jerusalem.

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CHAP. I.

1 Cyrus, the son of a king of Persia by a daughter of the king of Media, united these two kingdoms, and conquered Babylon. He was born 600 years before Christ, and reigned 30 years. His name and conquests were prophetically announced by Isaiah 200 years before his birth, and Josephus (*Antiq.* l.ii. c.2) attributes his partiality for the Jews to his reading these prophecies under the instruction of Daniel. —*C.*

a Ps.106.46. Pr.16.7. ch.6.22. Le.26.42. De. 4.30,31;30.3;32.36,43.

b Heb. *caused a voice to pass*, 2Ch. 36.22.

3 According to the best authorities, Cyrus at this time reigned over the Persians. Medes. Hyrcanians, Bactrians, Indians, Assyrians, Syrians, and all the countries called Lesser Asia: still these were far from being 'all the kingdoms of the earth.' The words are not, however, to be considered a mere eastern hyperbole, for they contain a literal statement, when the word *earth* is interpreted of its known or civilized countries. —*C.*

3 So far these verses are a repetition of the closing section of 2 Ch. Ezra is manifestly a continuation of the history given in Chronicles.—*P.*

c Heb. *lift him up*, Ga.6.2. Ro.15.1. Ex.3. 22.Ps.105.37. Is. 49.22; 60.4.

d Ne.2.12. Pr. 16.1. Ze.10.12. Ex.35.5,21. 1 Ch.29.2-9.

4 The Scriptures see God in everything. Cyrus was, no doubt, kind to the Jews, but the Lord 'stirred him up,' ver. 1. The Jews loved their country, but God 'raised up their spirit.'—*C.*

e That is, *helped them*, ver.4. Ex.*29.3*; Ro.12.16.

f ver. 4. Ex.25.2; 35. 5,21. 1 Ch.22.14-16; 28. 14 ;29.2-9. Ps.110.3. 2 Co.9.7.

g 2 Ki.24.13;25.16. 2 Ch. 36.7, 18. Je. 27.21, 22. Da. 1.2;5.2,3.

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h Zerubbabel. Sheshbazzar was his Babylonish name,ch. 2.2;3.8;5.14,16. Hag.1. 1.

i Nu. 7. 13, 19,25,31, 37,43, 49, 55, 61, 67, 73, 79.

k Ro.9.23. 2 Ti.2.19, 20.

5 This verse, like so many others, has been charged with the error of a transcriber, because all the vessels in ver. 9, to amount but to 2499. But there is no ground for the charge. All the vessels restored by Cyrus amounted but to 2499; but all the vessels brought up to Jerusalem were 5400, including all the people had bestowed. See ver.6.—*C.*

l Heb. the *transportation*, Mat. 1. 11, 12.ch.ii.

CHAP. II.

a Judea, ch.5.8.Ne. 1.3;7.6,8;c.2Ch.xxxvi. Je.xxxix.iii.

1 The empire was divided into provinces or governments (see Es. 1. 1.), of which Canaan seems to have been one, and Ezra naturally adopts the distinctive language of his time as that most intelligible to the generation that returned from the captivity. Some, however, by *province* understand Babylon; but had that been Ezra's meaning, he would scarcely have called his brethren 'children of the province.' See ch. 5.8.—*C.*

b Ec.4.9,10. Ac.2.42, 46;4.32.

2 These were the chiefs who were to conduct the people. Zerubbabel was the prince, and Joshua the high-priest, the grandson of Seraiah who was slain by Nebuchadnezzar. Nehemiah and Mordecai were not the persons whose names afterwards occur, the one as the author of the succeeding book, the other as the relation of Esther.—*I.*

c Or, *Azariah*, Ne. 7.7.

3 *Mispereth.*

4 *Nehum.*

d Ne. 7. 8. ch.10. 25; 8.3.

e Ne.7.9.ch.8.8.

f Ne.7.10;6.18.

CHAPTER II.

1 The number that return of the people, 36 of the priests, 40 of the Levites, 43 of the Nethinims, 55 of the children of Solomon's servants, 61 of the priests who could not show their pedigree. 64 The whole number of them, with their substance. 68 Their oblations for the temple.

NOW these *are* the children of the [a]province[1] that went up out of the captivity, of those which had been carried away, whom Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon had carried away unto Babylon, and came again unto Jerusalem and Judah, every one unto his city;

2 Which came with [b]Zerubbabel:[2] Jeshua, Nehemiah, [c]Seraiah, Reelaiah, Mordecai, Bilshan, Mizpar,[3] Bigvai, Rehum,[4] Baanah. The number of the men of the people of Israel:

3 The [d]children of Parosh, two thousand an hundred seventy and two.

4 The children of [e]Shephatiah, three hundred seventy and two.

5 The children of [f]Arah, seven hundred seventy and five.

CHAPTER I. [Ver. 7. We read in 2 Ki. 24. 13 that when in the reign of Jehoiachin Nebuchadnezzar captured Jerusalem, 'he carried out all the treasures of the house of the Lord, and the treasures of the king's house, and cut in pieces all the vessels of gold which Solomon king of Israel had made in the temple of the Lord;' yet Ezra says in this place that Cyrus returned the vessels. There is no contradiction. Nebuchadnezzar captured Jerusalem twice, once in the reign of Jehoiakim, and once in the reign of Jehoiachin. On the former occasion he took the golden vessels of the temple and placed them in the temple of his god at Babylon, 2 Ch. 36. 7; Da. 1. 2. These vessels Cyrus delivered up again to the Jews when returning from exile. On the second capture of Jerusalem Nebuchadnezzar appears to have stripped the gold plating from the larger vessels and furniture of the temple—from the altar of incense, the table of show-bread, the ark of the covenant, &c., he cut it in pieces and carried it away. *P.*]

REFLECTIONS.—Behold how God rules over the kingdoms of the earth, and always seeks to turn the hearts of princes and others for the good of his church! God is here exactly fulfilling the predictions of his word concerning the name of the deliverer; and the occasion, time, and manner of the deliverance. It is honourable for princes and men in authority to begin the exercise of their power in the service of God, as an acknowledgment of his bounty to them; and to overlook secular interests and customs of countries in order to put honour on Christ and his people. But in every good word and work the Lord must work in us to will and to do of his good pleasure. And he can procure

BABYLONIAN EMPIRE.
ASSYRIAN EMPIRE
ARMENIA
MEDIA
ELAM
SYRIA
BABYLONIA
JUDEA
EGYPT
Pteria
Tarshish
Carchemish
Nineveh
Nimrud
Asshur?
CYPRUS
Jerusalem
Babylon
Memphis
Sheba
SHEBA
Sabeans
SEBA
Sabeans
Ophir ?
R. Halys
R. Euphrates
R. Tigris
R. Nile
Franklin Co. Engrs., Chi.

6 The children of [g]Pahath-moab of the children of Jeshua *and* Joab, two thousand eight hundred and twelve.[5]

7 The children of [h]Elam, a thousand two hundred fifty and four.

8 The children of [i]Zattu, nine hundred forty and five.

9 The children of [k]Zaccai, seven hundred and threescore

10 The children of [l]Bani, six hundred forty and two.

11 The children of [m]Bebai, six hundred twenty and three.

12 The children of [n]Azgad, a thousand two hundred twenty and two.

13 The children of [o]Adonikam, six hundred sixty and six.

14 The children of [p]Bigvai, two thousand fifty and six.

15 The children of [q]Adin, four hundred fifty and four.

16 The children of [r]Ater of Hezekiah, ninety and eight.

17 The children of [s]Bezai, three hundred twenty and three.

18 The children of [t]Jorah, an hundred and twelve.

19 The children of [u]Hashum, two hundred twenty and three.

20 The children of [x]Gibbar, ninety and five.

21 The children of [y]Beth-lehem, an hundred twenty and three.[6]

22 The men[7] of [z]Netophah, fifty and six.

23 The men of [a]Anathoth, an hundred twenty and eight

24 The children of [b]Azmaveth, forty and two.

25 The children of [c]Kirjath-arim, Chephirah, and Beeroth, seven hundred and forty and three.[8]

26 The children of [d]Ramah and Gaba, six hundred twenty and one.

27 The men of [e]Michmas, an hundred twenty and two.

28 The men of [f]Beth-el and Ai, two hundred twenty and three.[9]

29 The children of [g]Nebo,[1] fifty and two.

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g Ne.7.11. ch.10.30; 8.4.

5 Two families appear to be united in this verse:—(1) The children of Pahath-moab, and (2) the children of Jeshua-joab. The verse may be translated as follows:—'The children of Pahath-moab to (or *with*) the children of Jeshua-joab, two thousand eight hundred and twelve.'—*P.*

h Ne.7.12. ch.10.26; 8.7.

i Ne.7.13.ch.10.27.

k Ne.7.14.

l Or, *Binnui*, Ne.7.15.ch.10.27,34.

m Ne.7.16.ch.10.28; 8.11.

n Ne.7.17.ch.8.12.

o Ne.7.18.ch.8.13.

p Ne.7.19.ch.8.14.

q Ne.7.20,ch.8.6.

r Ne.7.21.

s Ne.7.23.

t Or, *Hariph*, Ne.7.24.

u Ne.7.22.ch.10.33.

x Or, *Gibeon*, Jos.9.17,Ne.7.25.1 Ch.8.29.

y Ge.35.19. Ju. 17, 8; 19.1.Ne.7.26. Ru.1.19. 1 Sa.16.1. Mat. 2. 1, 6. Mi.5.2.

6 Bethlehem may have been the head of a family, or the name of a town. If the latter, then the people of it are mentioned as constituting one tribe or family. The same was the case in regard to Netophah, Anathoth, and all the others which follow.—*P.*

7 Why in ver. 22, 23, 27, 28, we find *men* instead of *children* does not appear. Amongst reasons that might be assigned for the change, one is the possibility that the men of these districts might have left their families behind, purposing to send for them when they had prepared commodious residences.—*C.*

z Ne. 7. 26. 2 Sa. 23. 28. Je.40. 8. 1 Ch. 2. 51, 54.

a Ne. 7. 27. Je. 1. 1. Jos.21.18. 1 K.2.26.

b Or, *Bethazmaveth*, Ne.7.28.

c Ne.7.29. Jos. 9.17; 15.60;18.25,26.

8 These were three cities of the Gibeonites, whose romantic story is told in Jos. ix.—*P.*

d Ne.7.30. Jos.18.24, 25.1 Sa.7.17.

e Ne.7.30. 1 Sa.13.5, 23. Is.10.28.

f Ne.7.32. Jos.7.1,2; 8.9,17.Ge.12.8;28.9.

9 The cities mentioned in ver. 26-28 were situated in the territory of Benjamin, a short distance north of Jerusalem, and within a few miles of each other.—*P.*

g Ne.7.33.

1 Nebo must not be confounded with Mount Nebo in Moab. There is a small village in the plain of Sharon, at the foot of the hills of Benjamin, now called *Beit-Nûbah*, 'the house of Nebo,' which is no doubt identical with the Nebo here mentioned.—*P.*

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k ver.7. Ne.7.34.

2 Or more probably 'The children of *Elamakher*' The Septuagint has *Elamar*.—*P.*

i Ne.7.35.ch.10.31.

k Ne.7.30; 11. 34, 35; 6.2.

3 Lod is the Lydda of the New Testament, celebrated as the scene of the miracle wrought by Peter on the paralytic Eneas, Ac. 9. 33. It is situated on the rich plain of Sharon, a few miles east of Joppa.—*P.*

l Ne.7.36.1 Ki.16.34, with Jos.vi.

m Ne.7.38.

4 Four only of the twenty-four courses (1 Ch.24.10) returned to Jerusalem; at least, only four that could establish their genealogy, ver. 62. But these, it is believed, were afterwards subdivided, so as to form again the full complement, according to the order of David.—*C.*

n 1 Ch.24.7.Ne.7.39. ch.10.18.

o 1 Ch. 24. 14. Ne. 7. 40.ch.10.20.

p 1 Ch.9.12.Ne.7.41. ch.10.22.

q 1 Ch.24.8.Ne.7.42. ch.10.21. Only four out of the twenty-four orders of priests returned. Comp. 1 Ch.24.7-18.

r Or *Judah*, ch.3. 9, or *Hodevah*, Ne. 7.43.

s Ne.7.44.1 Ch.25.2.

5 That the Jews in their captivity still retained their taste for sacred music, both vocal and instrumental, is manifest from Ps. 137. 2. Nor is there any exercise to which believers are more frequently called or more earnestly exhorted in the Scriptures, than that of singing the praises of Jehovah. See Ps. 95. 1; 96. 1; c., &c. &c. Ja. 5. 13. To unbelievers it is a witness and an attraction; to believers a duty, a privilege, and a delight.—*C.*

t Ne.7.45.1 Ch.xxvi.

u 1 Ch.9.2. Ne.7.46-56.

6 The name *Nethinim* signifies 'devoted,' and it is applied to those who were appointed to do the menial work of the sanctuary for the Levites. The Nethinims were the hereditary servants of the temple. They were chiefly the descendants of the Gibeonites, who by a clever trick induced Joshua to make a league with them; and who were condemned to be 'hewers of wood and drawers of water' to the Israelites.—*P.*

x Or, *Sia*, Ne.7.47.

y Or, *Shamlai*, Ne. 7.48.

30 The children of Magbish, an hundred fifty and six.

31 The children of [h]the other Elam,[2] a thousand two hundred fifty and four.

32 The children of [i]Harim, three hundred and twenty.

33 The children of [k]Lod,[3] Hadid, and Ono, seven hundred twenty and five.

34 The children of [l]Jericho, three hundred forty and five.

35 The children of [m]Senaah, three thousand and six hundred and thirty.

36 ¶ The priests:[4] the children of [n]Jedaiah, of the house of Jeshua, nine hundred seventy and three.

37 The children of [o]Immer, a thousand fifty and two.

38 The children of [p]Pashur, a thousand two hundred and forty and seven.

39 The children of [q]Harim, a thousand and seventeen.

40 ¶ The Levites: the children of Jeshua, and Kadmiel, of the children [r]of Hodaviah, seventy and four.

41 The [s]singers:[5] the children of Asaph, an hundred twenty and eight.

42 The [t]children of the porters: the children of Shallum, the children of Ater, the children of Talmon, the children of Akkub, the children of Hatita, the children of Shobai, *in* all an hundred thirty and nine.

43 ¶ The[u] Nethinims:[6] the children of Ziha, the children of Hasupha, the children of Tabbaoth,

44 The children of Keros, the children of [x]Siaha, the children of Padon,

45 The children of Lebanah, the children of Hagabah, the children of Akkub,

46 The children of Hagab, the children of [y]Shalmai, the children of Hanan,

47 The children of Giddel, the children of Gahar, the children of Reaiah,

48 The children of Rezin, the children of Nekoda, the children of Gazzam,

49 The children of Uzza, the children of Paseah, the children of Besai,

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from such as know him not the greatest kindness to his interests and people. What care he took to preserve the furniture of his temple, and maintain the princely dignity of Judah, even in Babylon! But much greater is his care of whatever pertains to Jesus and his people. And it is honourable when princes and ministers are peculiarly forward to rebuild God's temple and reform his church.

CHAPTER II. [Ver. 59. They may perhaps have been descendants of the first captives carried away by Tiglath-pileser from the northern kingdom; and who had preserved the tradition of their Israelitish origin, and also their attachment to their national faith, though they had lost their family records. *P.*]

Ver. 63. [The *Tirshatha* was the official name for the governor of Judea under the Persian rule. It is probable that Nehemiah is here meant, as he is twice called by that title, Ne. 8. 9; 10. 1. His decision was that those priests who could not prove from family registers their direct and pure descent, should not be permitted to perform priestly offices until divine sanction was obtained through the Urim and Thummim. *P.*]

REFLECTIONS.—Great is the honour God puts upon those who prefer his glory and the interests of his church to their own ease! And great are the privileges which those obtain who are enrolled in the Lamb's book of life, and go up with Christ from their captivity to sin, Satan, and the world! What care God took to keep clear the genealogies of his ancient people, till his Son was thereby manifested to spring of Judah and David! It is reasonable that those be excluded from office in the church who undervalue that honour, and want proper tokens of their spiritual birth. And there is need always to consult God himself in everything relating to his worship and service. To what a small and poor company had sin reduced the once numerous and wealthy tribes of Judah and Benjamin, at least such of them as were willing to appear for their God! And yet it is pleasing to see them in their poverty so willingly contributing to build a temple for God. And what is spent in God's work shall be returned with interest.

But was not this release and return of the Jews typical of the gathering of the nations to Christ, and of the church's deliverance from Antichrist, and the saints' release from death at the last day? Awakened and encouraged by the joyful sound of the gospel trumpet, what multitudes, in the apostolic and after ages, did, with mourning for sin, with hallelujahs of praise, and with the most cordial affection, join themselves to Christ and his church, to be built up a spiritual temple and meet habitation for God! With almighty power Jesus did, and still does, go forth conquering and to conquer, and to overthrow our spiritual enemies who hold us in slavery; making us free indeed, and willing to do whatever tends to his honour. In due time the instruments of God's wrath shall destroy the mystical Babylon, and restore the souls of men to the ancient

50 The children of Asnah, the children of Mehunim, the children of Nephusim,

51 The children of Bakbuk, the children of Hakupha, the children of Harhur,

52 The children of Bazluth, the children of Mehida, the children of Harsha,

53 The children of Barkos, the children of Sisera, the children of Thamah,

54 The children of Neziah, the children of Hatipha.

55 ¶ The children of Solomon's servants:[7] the children of Sotai, the children of Sophereth, the children of Peruda,

56 The children of Jaalah, the children of Darkon, the children of Giddel,

57 The children of Shephatiah, the children of Hattil, the children of Pochereth of Zebaim, the children of Ami.

58 All the Nethinims, and the children of Solomon's servants, *were* three hundred ninety and two.

59 And these *were* they which went up from Tel-melah, Tel-harsa, Cherub, Addan, *and* Immer; but they could not show their father's house and their seed, whether they *were* of Israel:[8]

60 The children of Delaiah, the children of Tobiah, the children of Nekoda, six hundred fifty and two.

61 ¶ And of the children of the priests: the children of Habaiah, the children of Koz, the children of Barzillai, (which took a wife of the daughters of Barzillai the Gileadite, and was called after their name:)

62 These sought their register *among* those that were reckoned by genealogy, but they were not found: therefore were they, as polluted, put from the priesthood.[9]

63 And the Tirshatha[1] said unto them, that they should not eat of the most holy things, till there stood up a priest with Urim and with Thummim.

64 ¶ The whole congregation together *was* forty and two thousand three hundred *and* threescore,[2]

65 Besides their servants and their maids, of whom *there were* seven thousand three hundred thirty and seven: and *there were* among them two hundred singing-men and singing-women.

66 Their horses *were* seven hundred thirty and six; their mules, two hundred forty and five;

67 Their camels, four hundred thirty and five; *their* asses, six thousand seven hundred and twenty.[3]

68 ¶ And *some* of the chief of the fathers, when they came to the house of the LORD which *is* at Jerusalem, [z]offered freely for the house of God, to set it up [a]in his place:

69 They gave [b]after their ability, unto the treasure of the work, threescore and one thousand drams[4] of gold, and five thousand pound of silver,[5] and one hundred priests' garments.

70 So the priests, and the Levites, and *some* of the people, and the singers, and the porters, and the Nethinims, dwelt in their cities, and all Israel in their cities.

CHAPTER III.

1 *The altar is set up.* 4 *Offerings frequented.* 7 *Workmen prepared.* 8 *The foundations of the temple are laid in great joy and mourning.*

AND when the [a]seventh month[1] was come, and the children of Israel *were* in the cities, the people gathered themselves together [b]as one man to Jerusalem.

2 Then stood up [c]Jeshua the son of Jozadak, and his brethren the priests, and [d]Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, and his brethren, and builded the altar of the God of Israel, to offer burnt-offerings thereon, as *it is* [e]written in the law of Moses the man of God.[2]

3 And they set the altar upon his [3]bases; (for[4] fear *was* upon them because of the people of those countries;) and they offered [f]burnt-offerings thereon unto the LORD, *even* burnt-offerings morning and evening.

4 ¶ They kept also the feast of tabernacles, as *it is* written, and *offered* the daily burnt-offerings by number, according to the custom, as the duty of every day required;

5 And afterward *offered* the continual burnt offering, both of the new-moons, and of all the set feasts of the LORD *that were* consecrated, and of every one that [h]willingly offered a free-will-offering unto the LORD.

6 From [i]the first day of the seventh month began they to offer burnt-offerings unto the LORD. But the foundation of the temple of the LORD was not *yet* laid.

7 ¶ They [k]gave money also unto the masons, and to the carpenters; and meat, and drink, and

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7 In 2 Ch. 8. 9 it is related that Solomon made servants, not of Israel, but of the remnants of the nations that had not been expelled. These, if converted to the faith, it was lawful to incorporate into the Jewish nation, and these 'servants of Solomon' are most probably their descendants.—*C.*

8 The reason of this exactness is plain from this, that such of the Jews as believed their prophets expected a return into their native land after a period of seventy years, and preserved their genealogies as the title on which they might resume their properties.—*Graver.* Je. 32. 14.

9 Not spiritually, but genealogically polluted. This exclusion presents the two emblematic lessons. 1. The necessity of proving our spiritual descent by being born again, Jn. 3. 3,5. 2. The duty of excluding or removing from the ministry of the gospel all who cannot afford scriptural evidence that they are themselves the subjects of that holy conversion which they enforce upon others.—*C.*

1 Castel supposes this title to be of Persian origin, and that it signifies *fear.*—*C.*

2 These separate numbers being added, give only 29,818; the numbers in Nehemiah 31,089; yet both agree in giving one grand total, 42,360. To reconcile these varying accounts, it is necessary to observe, 1. That as many priests failed in establishing their genealogy (ver. 61, 62), we may unquestionably infer, that many of the people were in the same predicament. 2. The number of these attainted priests is not given, so we may justly conclude of the unregistered people. 3. The persons enumerated obtain their hereditary estates in virtue of their genealogy. 4. The persons who cannot trace their descent, fail in establishing a right to any particular estate, but are not therefore excluded from the other rights of citizenship, but may settle as derivative tenants, or purchase for years, according to the jubilee law, or obtain new settlements in the unclaimed lands. Now these being added to the others, make up the sum of 'the whole congregation.' 5. When Ezra recounts 494 not mentioned in Nehemiah, and Nehemiah 1765 not mentioned in Ezra, these accounts may be easily reconciled, by supposing the two varying enumerations to relate to different periods of proof of genealogy and enrolment as citizens, the third to the period when the registry was completed.—*C.*

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3 From what is known of eastern caravans or caffilas, the horses would be for the necessary guard of cavalry, the mules for the richer class to ride, the camels for carrying food, camp furniture, &c., and the asses would be nearly all required for conveyance of the children. It is obvious the greater number of adults, both men and women, would be on foot. The whole presents a striking continuation of the statistics introduced by Moses, at the command of the Lord of God, Nu. 13. 2, 17–20; and while it exhibits the deep poverty of the returning remnant, it beautifully illustrates the power of grace to open the heart, and teach every man to contribute to the cause of God 'after his ability.' See ver. 69. 2 Co. 8. 2, 3. 1 Pe. 4. 11.

z Ex. 25. 2; 35. 5, 21. 1 Ch. 29. 3, 6, 9. 2 Co. 8. 3, 12; 9. 7. Ps. 110. 3.

a 2 Ch. 3. 1. 1 Ch. 21. 18. Ge. 22. 2, 14.

b 1 Co. 16. 2. De. 16. 17. 2 Co. 8. 3, 13, 14.

4 The Hebrew word here translated 'drams' denotes the Persian *daric*, a gold coin admitted to be the earliest known specimen of coined money. Its distinguishing mark was a crowned archer, his garb is the same which is seen on the sculptures at Persepolis. Specimens which have been weighed were found to be 15 grs. heavier than an English guinea, and their intrinsic value may therefore be reckoned at 25s. —*P.*

5 In all, £79,100.

CHAP. III.

a Le. 23. 24, 34–41. Ex. 23. 14–17; 34. 23. De. 16. 16. Nu. xxix.

1 Tisri or Ethanim, the first month of the civil year.—*C.*

b Zep. 3. 9. Ac. 4. 32; 2. 46. 1 Co. 1. 10.

c Or, *Joshua*, Zec. 6. 11. Hag. 1. 1, 12, 14; 2. 2, 4. 1 Ch. 6. 15.

d Or *Zerubbabel*, son of *Salathiel*, Mat. 1. 12. Lu. 3. 27. 1 Ch. 3. 17, 19. Hag. 2. 21, 23. Zec. 4. 6–10.

e De. 12. 5–7. 2 Ch. 6. 6. Ps. 48. 1, 2; 78. 68, 69; 132. 13, 14.

2 It is interesting to observe that 'the law of Moses,' *i.e. the Pentateuch*, was in the hands of the Jews on their return from exile. The priests had no doubt carried away with them the temple copy, had preserved it with religious care during the captivity, and had now brought it back with them to Jerusalem.—*P.*

3 This was an altar of stones, for it was builded (ver. 2), and unhewn (Ex. 20. 25). These formed the bases, being surmounted by the altar overlaid with brass, Ex. 27. 1, 2.—*C.*

4 Not *for*, but *though* fear was upon them, lest the Samaritans and others should be jealous of their religious assembly, or take offence at their peculiar and exclusive worship.—*C.*

f Ex. 29. 38–42. Nu. 28. 2–8. *h* ch. 2. 68. Ex. 25. 2; 35. 5, 21. 2 Co. 8. 12; 9. 7. *i* Le. 23. 24, 25. Nu. 29. 1–6. *k* 2 Ch. 2. 8–16. 1 Ki. 5. 1–9. 2 Ki. 12. 11, 12; 22. 5, 6.

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gospel liberty and rest. In the resurrection, awakened by the trump of God, all the ransomed millions, who are written among the living in Jerusalem, shall arise and be gathered to the Lord, and quickly after follow him into the celestial Canaan, to be built up as the everlasting habitation of God—Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

CHAPTER III. REFLECTIONS.—Let us learn to prefer the business of religion to our most pressing temporal affairs; and in the worship of God do what we can when we cannot do what we would. And let leaders in church and state be peculiarly active and zealous. Never should the fear of men hinder us from, but hasten us to, fellowship with God. The more enemies we have, the more need have we that God should befriend us. If we have been long secluded from the public or solemn ordinances of God, more readily should we improve opportunities when put into our hands; and by no means neglect the daily sacrifices of the closet and family. If God bring us out of the furnace of affliction our hearts should burn with love to him; and never should we grudge to spare from ourselves that we may have wherewith to honour him or to relieve his poor saints; always taking care to dispose of it to the best advantage. If a good work is to be done, let us set about it with all our might and without delay, be the difficulties ever so great. Never should we despise the day of small things, but encourage ourselves in the everlasting power and mercy of God; praising him for the beginnings of his returning mercy; assured that they will issue in perfection at last. And while we are in this world, where shouts of joy can scarcely be discerned from the groans of weeping, let us rejoice with them that rejoice, and weep with them that weep.

JAFFA, FROM HOTEL WINDOW—TO JAFFA WAS BROUGHT CEDAR TREES FROM LEBANON FOR THE REBUILDING OF THE TEMPLE IN JERUSALEM, UNDER ZERUBABEL. [EZRA, iii:7.]—"They gave money also unto the masons, and to the carpenters; and meat, and drink, and oil, unto them of Zidon, and to them of Tyre, to bring cedar trees from Lebanon to the sea of Joppa, according to the grant that they had of Cyrus, king of Persia." When Solomon originally built the temple, he had the assistance of Hiram, king of Tyre, who sent cedar from Lebanon by way of Joppa (Jaffa) to Jerusalem. So we find that when Zerubabel undertook the rebuilding of the temple, he had a grant from Cyrus, king of Persia, to bring cedar trees from Lebanon by way of Joppa to Jerusalem. We give an illustration of Jaffa from the hotel window. This city has a remarkable history. At different times it has been pagan, Jew, Moslem, Arab, Mamaluke, and Christian. There are beautiful gardens about this old city filled with towering palms, and orange and lemon trees.

oil,[4] unto them of Zidon, and to them of Tyre, to bring cedar-trees from Lebanon to the sea of Joppa,[5] according to the [l]grant that they had of Cyrus king of Persia.

8 ¶ Now, in the second year[6] of their coming unto the house of God at Jerusalem, in the second month, began [m]Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, and Jeshua the son of Jozadak, and the remnant of their brethren the priests and the Levites, and all they that were come out of the captivity unto Jerusalem; and appointed the Levites, from [n]twenty years old and upward, to set forward the work of the house of the LORD.

9 Then stood [o]Jeshua, *with* his sons and his brethren, Kadmiel and his sons, the sons of Judah,[p] [7]together,[8] to set forward the workmen in the house of God: the sons of Henadad, *with* their sons and their brethren the Levites.

10 And when the builders laid the foundation of the temple of the LORD, they [q]set the priests in their apparel with trumpets, and the Levites, the sons of Asaph, with cymbals, to praise the LORD, after the ordinance of David king of Israel.

11 And they [r]sang together by course, in praising and giving thanks unto the LORD; because *he is* good, for his mercy *endureth* for ever toward Israel. And all the people shouted with a great shout, when they praised the LORD, because the foundation of the house of the LORD was laid.

12 But many of the priests and Levites, and chief of the fathers, *who were* ancient men, that had seen the first house,[9] when the foundation of this house was laid before their eyes, wept[s] with a loud voice; and many shouted aloud for joy:

13 So that the people could not discern the noise of the shout of joy from the noise of the weeping of the people: for the people [t]shouted with a loud shout, and the noise was heard afar off.

CHAPTER IV.

1 *The adversaries, being not accepted in the building of the temple with the Jews, endeavour to hinder it.* 7 *Their letter to Artaxerxes.* 17 *The decree of Artaxerxes.* 23 *The building is hindered.*

NOW when the [a]adversaries of Judah and Benjamin[1] heard [b]that the children of the captivity builded the temple unto the LORD God of Israel,

2 Then they came to [c]Zerubbabel, and to the chief of the fathers, and said unto them, [d]Let us build with you: for we [e]seek your God, as ye *do;* and we do sacrifice unto him since the days of [f]Esar-haddon[2] king of Assur, which brought us up hither.

3 But Zerubbabel, and Jeshua, and the rest of the chief of the fathers of Israel, said unto them, [g]Ye have nothing to do with us to build an house unto our God; but we ourselves together will build unto the LORD God of Israel, as [h]king Cyrus the king of Persia hath commanded us.

4 Then the people of the land [4]weakened the hands of the people of Judah, and troubled them in building,[3]

5 And hired counsellers against them, to frustrate their purpose, all the days of Cyrus king of Persia, even until the reign of Darius king of Persia.

6 And in the reign of [4]Ahasuerus,[5] in the beginning of his reign,[6] wrote they *unto him* an accusation against the inhabitants of Judah and Jerusalem.

7 ¶ And in the days of Artaxerxes[7] wrote Bishlam,[8] Mithredath, Tabeel, and the rest of their [k]companions, unto Artaxerxes king of Persia; and the writing of the letter *was* written in the Syrian tongue, and interpreted in the Syrian tongue.

8 Rehum the chancellor, and Shimshai the scribe,[9] wrote a letter [l]against Jerusalem to Artaxerxes the king in this sort:

9 Then *wrote* Rehum the chancellor, and Shimshai the scribe, and the rest of their [m]companions; the Dinaites, the Apharsathchites, the Tarpelites, the Apharsites, the Archevites, the Babylonians, the Susanchites, the Dehavites, *and* the Elamites,[1]

10 And the rest of the nations whom the great and noble Asnapper brought over, and set in the cities of Samaria, and the rest *that are* on this side the river, and [n]at such a time.

11 ¶ This *is* the copy of the letter that they sent unto him, *even* unto Artaxerxes the king; Thy servants the men on this side the river, and at such a time.

12 Be it known unto the king, that the Jews which came up from thee to us are come unto Jerusalem, building [o]the rebellious and the bad city, and have [p]set up the walls *thereof,* and [q]joined the foundations.

13 Be it known now unto the king, that if this city be builded, and the walls set up *again,*

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4 God has wisely and mercifully diversified the productions of different countries, so that what one country wants another possesses, and they are thus rendered mutually dependent, and through common interest constrained to peace and good offices.—*C.*

5 The Phœnicians of Tyre and Sidon had rendered important service to Solomon in the building and decoration of the first temple: and here we find them again aiding in the erection of the second. They were accustomed to the felling of timber in Lebanon for the supply of their dockyards; they were also skilful mariners, and could thus convey timber from the ports of Phœnicia at the base of Lebanon to Joppa the port of Jerusalem.—*P.*

l ch.6.3–5.

6 B.C. 535.

m ver.2,9;ch.2.2–61; 3.2,3,5,8. Hag.1.12,14; 2.2,21,23. Zec.3.1;4.6–9.

n 1 Ch.23.24,27.

o ch.2.40;ver.2.

p Or, *Hodaviah,* ch.2.40.

7 Heb. *as one.*

8 *As one,* a beautiful illustration of that 'unity of the spirit in the bond of peace,' by which the church of Christ should ever be distinguished, Ac. 4. 32. —*C.*

q 1 Ch.15. 24, 27; 16. 5,6,37,6. 39; 25.1–7. Ex. 28.40–42. Nu.10.1–10. 1 Sa.22.18. 2 Ch.35.15.

r 2 Ch.7.3. Ex.15.21. Ne.12.24. 1 Ch. 16, 34, 41. Je.33.11. Lu.2.10–14. Zec.9.9. Ps.cxxxv. cxxxvi.cxlv.–cl.xlvii.

9 The temple was destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar (2 Ch. 36. 17, 21, A.M. 3416), and the rebuilding commenced in the second year of Cyrus (Ezr. 1. 1; 3, 8, A.M. 3470), a period of about 53 years inclusive. But this does not give the date of the captivity nor the commencement of the 70 years, 2 Ch.36.21. They are to be computed from the first captivity in the time of Jehoiakim, 2 Ki. 24. 1, 2, 2 Ch.36. 6, 7, A.M. 3398, which gives the full period of the prophetic denunciation.—*C.*

s Hag.2.3. Zec.4.10. Job 8.7. Mat. 13.31,32. Is.41.10,14–16;60.22.

t Zec.4. 7. Ps. 5. 11. Ne.12.43.

CHAP. IV.

B.C. 535.

a The Samaritans, ver. 7–9. Mat. 4.1–10. 2 Ki.17.24.

b Heb. *the sons of the transportation,* ch.ii.Ne.vii.

c ch.1.5;2.2;3.2,12.

1 The *Samaritans* are here meant. It is sometimes said that they were a mixed race, composed in part of the remnant of the ten tribes left in the kingdom of Israel after the first captivity, and in part of the new colonists introduced from Assyria. But for this opinion there is no historic evidence. In their letter to the king of Persia given below they describe themselves as 'the people whom the great Asnapper brought over and set in the cities of Samaria;' and when applying for permission to join in building the temple, they plead not their Jewish origin, but the fact that they had for a long period observed the Jewish ritual. This observance had been forced upon them by fear, as may be seen from the narrative of their settlement in 2 Ki. xvii.—*P.*

d Ez.8.17.

e 2 Ki.17.24–41. Jn.4. 20.

f Is.37.38. 2 Ki.19.37; 17.24.

2 We learn from 2 Ki. 17. 3, 6, 24, that not Esar-haddon, but Shalmaneser his grandfather originally settled the Samaritan colony. But this is perfectly consistent with the statement in the text, as Esar-haddon may have so enlarged and encouraged the settlement as to be considered its proper founder.—*C.*

g Ne. 2. 20. Jn. 4. 9. Pr.1.10. Ac.8.21. 1 Jn. 2.19.

h ch. 1. 1–4; 6. 3–5, with Matt.10.16.

i Re.12.13. Ps.2.1,2. Ac.24.1, with Ex. 5. 5–23.

3 B.C. 534.

4 Heb. *Ahashverosh,* i.e. *Cambyses.*

5 Ahasuerus is commonly held to be Cambyses the successor of Cyrus, and Artaxerxes to be the impostor Smerdis. It seems much more probable, however, they were Xerxes and Artaxerxes Longimanus, and that the transactions recorded in their reigns relate to events *posterior* to the reign of Darius, viz. not to the opposition to the building of the temple, but to the building of the walls. See Haweis' *Critical Observations,* and Hales' *Chronology.*—*C.*

6 B.C. 521.

7 Magus.

8 Or, *in peace.*

k Heb. *societies,* ver. 9,17.

9 Or, *secretary.*

l With Ps. 122. 6, 7. Zec.1.15–21. Ac.14.22. Ro.8.28. Jn.16.33. 2 Ti. 3.12.

m Chal. *societies,* 2 Ki.17.24–41. ch.5.6. Jn. 4.9. Lu.9.52,53.

1 Some of these colonists can still be traced in geography, but the original seats of others are totally unknown. They serve, however, to illustrate an important evidence of the divine origin of the Scriptures. These different nations were all soon amalgamated into one people, in which all distinctive characters were lost; but the Jews, according to prophecy, still remain a *separate* people, mixed with every nation, never combined with any. This the Spirit of God could alone foresee—this divine providence could alone produce.—*C.*

n Chald. *Cheeneth,* ch.5.11;7.12.

o Am.7.10. Lu.23.2. Ac. 24. 5, with Ps. 48. 1,2;52.2;120.3.

p Ne.1.2.

q Chald. *sewed together,* Ps.119.69.

CHAPTER IV. REFLECTIONS.—God's temple can never be built but Satan and his agents will rage and do all that they can to oppose it: and none are ordinarily more bitter opposers than pretended and mongrel professors. They will turn themselves into every shape to vent their malice; and will not spare money, labour, or villany to accomplish their purpose. Pretences of friendship, bribing of counsellors, flattery of princes, and boastful threatenings and reproaches are their common methods of working. Saints had therefore need to avoid intimacy with them, and to encourage themselves in the Lord their God, and be strong in him and in the power of his might. It is common for the faithful followers of Christ to be reproached as dangerous enemies to the state: and if once professors have done an ill thing, their successors in the church are sure to be upbraided with it, although they themselves should heartily condemn it. When princes desire occasions of stumbling the agents for hell will soon supply them therewith. And things the most false or improbable, are often readily believed by most against Christ and his church. Most kings neither can nor care to know the truth with respect to their religious subjects. To their great joy the attempts of persecutors are often successful for a time; and the friends of Christ and his truths are too easily checked in their reforming attempts.

CHAPTER V. REFLECTIONS.—It is highly desirable to have church and state concurring in the work of reformation: but the declaration of divine truths is always the principal mean. Faithful reprovers are profitable to obedient ears. When God,

then will they not [r]pay toll, tribute, and custom, and *so* thou shalt endamage the revenue[2] of the kings.

14 Now, because [s]we have maintenance from *the king's* palace, and it was not meet for us to see the king's dishonour, therefore have we sent and certified the king,

15 That search may be made in the book of the records of thy fathers: so shalt thou find in the book of the records, and know that this city *is* a rebellious city, and [t]hurtful unto kings and provinces, and that they have moved[3] sedition within the same[4] of old time; for which cause was this city destroyed.[5]

16 We certify the king, that if this city be builded *again*, and the walls thereof set up, by this means [u]thou shalt have no portion on this side the river.[6]

17 ¶ *Then* sent the king an answer unto Rehum the chancellor, and *to* Shimshai the scribe, and *to* the rest of their [x]companions that dwell in Samaria, and *unto* the rest beyond the river, Peace, and at such a time.

18 The letter which ye sent unto us hath been plainly read before me.

19 And I commanded,[7] and search hath been made, and it is found that this city of old time hath [y]made insurrection against kings, and *that* rebellion and sedition have been made therein.

20 There [z]have been mighty kings also over Jerusalem, which have ruled over all *countries* beyond the river; and toll, tribute, and custom, was paid unto them.

21 Give ye now commandment[8] to cause these men to cease, and that this city be not builded, until *another* commandment shall be given from me.

22 Take heed now that ye fail not to do this: why should damage grow to the hurt of the kings?

23 ¶ Now, when the copy of king Artaxerxes' letter *was* read before Rehum, and Shimshai the scribe, and their companions, they went up in haste to Jerusalem unto the Jews, and made them to cease [a]by force and power.

24 Then ceased[9] the work of the house of God which *is* at Jerusalem. So it ceased unto the second year of the reign of Darius king of Persia.

CHAPTER V.

1 Zerubbabel and Jeshua, incited by Haggai and Zechariah, set forward the building of the temple. 3 Tatnai and Shethar-boznai could not hinder the Jews. 6 Their letter to Darius against the Jews.

THEN the prophets, [a]Haggai the prophet, and Zechariah the [b]son of Iddo, prophesied unto the Jews that *were* in Judah and Jerusalem [c]in the name of the God of Israel, *even* unto them.[1]

A.M. 3483. B.C. 521.

r Chald. *give*, ch. 7.24. Ne.5.4. Lu.23.3.

2 Or, *strength.*

s Chald. *we are salted with the salt of the palace*, 1 Ti. 6. 10. Phi.2.21;3.19.

t Est.3.8. Ac.17.6,7. Ne.2.19;6.6. Da.6.13.

3 Chald. *made.*

4 Chald. *in the midst thereof.*

5 As is generally the case with the representations of enemies, these charges contained a mixture of truth and of falsehood. It was true that after the subjection of Judah to the kings of Babylon, the Jews had often manifested a very rebellious and treacherous spirit; but, so far as appears, it was not true that as yet they had begun to build the walls of the city. The Samaritans allude not to the real ground of the offence which they had themselves taken, but affect to be concerned solely for their sovereign's interest. The enemies of the church are always skilful in seeking plausible pretexts.—*J.*

u ver.20. 2 Sa.8.3. 1 Ki.4.24.

6 By the *river* here is generally understood the Euphrates, which meaning seems to be confirmed by ver. 20. *C.* —— This was the origin of that bitter enmity which has ever since existed between the Jews and Samaritans. In the days of our Lord the Jews had no dealings with the Samaritans. Even in the present day the small and feeble remnant of the Samaritan nation still living in the ancient city of Sichem, beneath the shadow of their sacred mountain, hate the Jews, and are hated by them.—*P.*

x Chald. *societies*, ver.7,9.

7 Chald. *by me a decree is set.*

y Chald. *lifted up itself*, 2 Ki.18.7; 24.20. Eze.xvii.

z 1 Ch.14.16,17;18.1, 4,1 Ki.4.21, &c.15.18.2 Ch.17.12;26.8.

8 Chald. *make a decree.*

a Chald. *by arm and power*, Zec.4.6.

9 That is, according to Hales, from the 2d of Cyrus till the 2d of Darius, a period of nearly 20 years, at the end of which the building of the temple was resumed and completed, and the building of the walls begun; which latter event, he supposes, produced the opposition in the reigns of Ahasuerus and Artaxerxes.—*C.*

CHAP. V.

B.C. 520.

a Hag.1.1.

b Grandson, Zec. 1. 1.

c Hag.1.ii. Zec.i.-iv. Mi.5.4. 2 Co.5.20. Mat. 28.20.

1 The subject of their prophecies or preaching was doubtless their neglect of duty in not proceeding with the building of the temple. The people had left off from fear. The prophets showed them they should fear God rather than man; and that their duty to him was to erect a house for his worship. Their words were effectual, for the building of the temple was at once resumed.—*P.*

A.M. 3484. B.C. 520.

d ch.3.2. Hag. 1. 12, 14;2.2,4.

e ch.4.12. Zec.4.6-9.

f Ec. 12. 11. 2 Co. 1. 24. 3 Jn.8.

g Ne.2.7. Mat.27.1.

2 Westward of Euphrates.

3 The Persian empire now extended to the Mediterranean on the west, so that the Euphrates divided it from the eastern dependencies which extended to the Indus. Darius Hystaspes divided the empire into provinces or satrapies, each paying a fixed tribute to the royal treasury. That Tatnai should be governor of *all* west of the Euphrates is not probable, as the western division included Egypt, part of Arabia, Phœnicia, Cyprus, and the whole of Asia Minor, to the Hellespont and the Euxine. But it is evident he was possessed of power over the Jewish governor, and it is known that Judea remained united to the satrapy of Cœle-Syria till the time of Alexander.—*C.*

h ch.3.10;ver.10.

4 The question of Tatnai and his fellow-commissioners evidently requires an *answer*, not a *question*, in return. Dr. A. Clarke accordingly renders the words —'These are the names,' &c. This rendering ✱ is confirmed by ver. 10.—*C.*

i 2 Ch.16.9. Phi.1.28. Ps. 34.15. Is. 41. 10-16; 43.1,2. He.13.5,6.

k ch.6.6-12.

l Societies, ch. 4. 7, 9,17.

5 Apharsachites—Persia proper is still called *Fars* or *Pars*, which was the name of its ancient capital; which name may be clearly discerned in the dignified patronymic of Tatnai's companions.—*C.*

6 The contrast is very striking between this letter and that which on a former occasion had been written by the Samaritans. This contains a candid statement of the circumstances of the case as the governor had found them. The letters and edicts of this book, it has been remarked, are very interesting specimens of the form and style of the official correspondence and state orders of a very ancient period.—*J.*

7 Chald. *in the midst whereof.*

m ch.2.1. Ne.7.6;11. 3.

n De. 32. 31; 10. 17. Ex.18.11. Da.2.47;4.2, 34,35;6.26.

8 Chald. *stones of rolling.*

o ver.3,4.

p Ps.119.46. Mat.10. 32. Lu.12.8. He.12.14; 1 Peter 3.

q 1 Ki.vi.vii.2 Ch.iii.-v.

r Is. 59.1,2. 2 Ki.21. 15. 2 Ch. 30. 16. De. xxviii. xxxii.

s 2 Ki.xxv. xxv. Je. xxxix lii. with Je. xxvi.1,De.xxviii.-xxxii. 1 Ki.2.7-9.

9 Tatnai and his companions were evidently men of great *accuracy*; for they write not in their own words, but in words that none but a Jew could have employed. But they seem likewise men of *piety*, for they detail the Jewish theology with a *good-will* that idolatry or infidelity would never admit.—*C.*

t ch.1.1-8;6.3-5.

u ch.1.7,8; 6.5, with 2 Ch. 36. 8,18. Da. 5. 2. Phi.1.12. Pr.21.1.

2 Then [d]rose up Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, and Jeshua the son of Jozadak, and [e]began to build the house of God which *is* at Jerusalem: and with them *were* the prophets of God [f]helping them.

3 ¶ At the same time came to them [g]Tatnai, governor on this side[2] the river,[3] and Shethar-boznai, and their companions, and said thus unto them, [h]Who hath commanded you to build this house, and to make up this wall?

4 Then said we unto them after this manner, What are the names of the men that make this building?[4]

5 But the [i]eye of their God was upon the elders of the Jews, that they could not cause them to cease, till the matter came to Darius: and then they [k]returned answer by letter concerning this *matter*.

6 ¶ The copy of the letter that Tatnai, governor on this side the river, and Shethar-boznai, and his [l]companions the Apharsachites,[5] which *were* on this side the river, sent unto Darius the king:

7 They sent a letter[6] unto him, wherein[7] was written thus; Unto Darius the king, all peace.

8 Be it known unto the king, that we went into [m]the province of Judea, to the house of the [n]great God, which is builded with great stones,[8] and timber is laid in the walls; and this work goeth fast on, and prospereth in their hands.

9 Then asked we those elders, *and* said unto them thus, [o]Who commanded you to build this house, and to make up these walls?

10 We asked their names also, to certify thee, that we might write the names of the men that *were* the chief of them.

11 And thus they returned us answer, saying, We are the [p]servants of the God of heaven and earth, and build the house that was builded these many years ago, which a great king of Israel builded [q]and set up.

12 But [r]after that our fathers had provoked the God of heaven unto wrath, he gave them into the hand of [s]Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon, the Chaldean, who destroyed this house, and carried the people away into Babylon.[9]

13 But [t]in the first year of Cyrus the king of Babylon, *the same* king Cyrus made a decree to build this house of God.

14 And [u]the vessels also of gold and silver of the house of God, which Nebuchadnezzar took out of the temple that *was* in Jerusalem, and brought them into the temple of Babylon, those did Cyrus the king take out of the temple of Babylon, and they were delivered unto *one*,

raises up faithful ministers to animate sluggish or disheartened professors there is hope that the church will be built up: and if his eye be on us for good we need not fear what man can do to us. His comfortable presence should animate us to the utmost diligence in his work: nor ought we to conceal the just manifestations of his displeasure against us or our fathers. It is a great mercy when the people of God have to do with enemies that make some conscience of telling the truth.

GENERAL VIEW OF THE ERECHTHEUM, ACROPOLIS — THE ERECHTHEUM WAS BURNED BY THE PERSIANS, LED BY DARIUS OR BY AHASUERUS, HIS SON, AND REBUILT IN THE TIME OF PERICLES. [EZRA, vi : 1.]—"Then Darius the king made a decree, and search was made in the house of the rolls, where the treasures were made up in Babylon." After the death of Cyrus, Cambyses was made king of Persia. He died of a small wound, and left no issue to succeed him, and his throne was usurped by Darius. Darius burnt Sardis, and thereby so enraged the Athenians that a war was kindled between Greece and Persia Darius was then so exasperated against the Greeks that a servant every day, by his order, repeated these words: "Remember, O King, to punish the Athenians." He was conquered at the celebrated battle of Marathon by 10,000 Athenians. We give a picture of a general view of the Erechtheum on the Acropolis to illustrate these facts of Grecian history and the connection of Darius with it. It is an interesting fact that the Persians burned down the temple of Erechtheus that stood on this very spot. It was afterwards rebuilt in the time of Pericles.

whose name *was* Sheshbazzar,[1] whom he had made governor;[2]

15 And said unto him, Take these vessels, go, carry them into the temple that *is* in Jerusalem, and let the house of God be builded in his place.

16 Then [x]came the same Sheshbazzar, *and* laid the foundation of the house of God which *is* in Jerusalem: and since that time even until now hath it been in building, and *yet* it is not finished.[y]

17 Now therefore, if *it seem* good to the king, let [z]there be search made in the king's treasure-house, which *is* there at Babylon, whether it be *so*, that a [a]decree was made of Cyrus the king to build this house of God at Jerusalem, and let the king send [b]his pleasure to us concerning this matter.

CHAPTER VI.

1 *Darius, finding the decree of Cyrus, maketh a new decree for the advancement of the building.* 13 *By the help of the enemies, and the directions of the prophets, the temple is finished.* 16 *The feast of the dedication is kept,* 19 *and the passover.*

THEN Darius[a] the king made a decree, and search was made in the house of the rolls,[1] where the treasures were laid up[2] in Babylon.

2 And there was found at Achmetha,[3] in the palace that *is* in the province of the Medes, a roll, and therein *was* a record thus written:

3 In the [b]first year of Cyrus the king, *the same* Cyrus the king made a decree *concerning* the house of God at Jerusalem, Let the house be builded, the place where they offered sacrifices, and let the foundations thereof be strongly laid; [c]the height thereof threescore cubits, *and* the breadth thereof threescore cubits;[4]

4 *With* [d]three rows of great stones, and a row of new timber; and [e]let the expenses be given out of the king's house:

5 And also [f]let the golden and silver vessels of the house of God, which Nebuchadnezzar took forth out of the temple which *is* at Jerusalem, and brought unto Babylon, be restored, and brought[5] again unto the temple which *is* at Jerusalem, *every one* to his place, and place *them* in the house of God.

6 Now[g] *therefore*, Tatnai, governor beyond the river, Shethar-boznai, and your companions[6] the Apharsachites, which *are* beyond the river, be ye far from thence:[7]

7 Let the work of this house of God alone; let the governor of the Jews and the elders of the Jews build this house of God in his place.

8 Moreover, I make a decree[8] what ye shall do to the elders of these Jews for the building of this house of God: that [h]of the king's goods, *even* of the tribute[9] beyond the river, forthwith expenses be given unto these men, that they be not [i]hindered.

A.M. 3484. B.C. 520.

1 Probably the military officer that conducted the people from Babylon, and had the oversight of the work; but some think Ezra is here meant.—*J.*

2 Or, *deputy.*

x ch.2.2;3.8;ver.2.

y ch.6.14.

z ch.4.15,19;6.1,2.

a Ex. 9.16. Nu.10.5, 6.

CHAP. VI.

B.C. 519.

a ch.5.17.

1 Chald. *books.*

2 Chald. *made to descend.*

3 Or, *Echatana*, chief city of Media; or *in a coffer.*—[Generally supposed to be the Echatana of ancient, and the Hamedan of modern history, where the tombs of Esther and Mordecai still continue to be pointed out to travellers. Some expositors, however, consider it a mere secretaire or book-case, in which the records of Media were kept at Babylon. *C.*——The name *Achmetha* was applied exclusively to cities having a fortress constructed to protect royal treasures. The city here referred to is the *Ecbatana* of the Apocryphal books and of Herodotus. 'The walls,' says the latter, 'were built circle within circle. The number of the circles was seven, and within the innermost was the palace of the treasury.' The site of Ecbatana is now occupied by the city of *Hamadan*, the capital of one of the provinces of Persia. It stands on a conical hill on the borders of a great plain. It still contains a large community of Jews, who claim to be descended from the Babylonian exiles.—*P.*]

b ch.1.1–4; 5.13–15.2 Ch.36.23. Is.44.28; 45.13.

c Is.60.12. Re.21.16.

4 There is no reason to conclude that this temple was larger than that of Solomon. The *apparent* difference lies in the different points from which the measurement is taken. If Solomon's 20 cubits were measured from inside to inside of the actual temple, and those of Cyrus from the inside to the inside wall of the outer and surrounding apartments, the difference disappears. The difference in height may be accounted for in the same way: Solomon's 30 cubits being from the basement course, the 60 cubits of Cyrus including all that was below it; or Solomon's to the body of the temple, those of Cyrus to the highest pinnacle.—*C.*

d 1 Ki.6.36.

e ch. 7.20. Ps.68.29, ver.8. Is.60.6,9. Hag.2.8.

f ch.1.7,8; 5.14. Je. 27.18–22. 2 Ch.36.8,18. Da.1.2.

5 Chald. *go.*

g Ps. 76.10. Pr. 21.1, 30. Je.5.22. Ro.8.31. 2 Ch.4.17.

6 Chald. *their societies.*

7 Do not approach to give any interruption.—*C.*

8 Chald. *by me a decree is made.*

h ver. 4. Ps. 68. 29. Hag.2.8. Is.60.6,9.

i Chald. *made to cease.*

9 The Jews, under the guidance of Haggai and Zechariah, inspired prophets of the Lord, do not

A.M. 3485. B.C. 519.

hesitate to receive, with thankfulness, even from a heathen monarch, a part of his 'tribute' for the building of their temple, and a legal endowment for its service, and the consequent support of its priesthood.—*C.*

1 I.e. i.–iv. Nu. xv. xxviii. xxix. 1 Ch.9.29; 10.40.

2 The terms occurring throughout the decree of Darius, imply his conviction that the God of the Jews was the true Jehovah. He did not, indeed, relinquish the worship of his idols, but he clearly believed Jehovah to be superior to them all. He seems to have acknowledged him to be the supreme. He makes provision for the daily sacrifices, the morning and evening burnt-offerings, which, according to the law, were to be made day by day continually; and he desires an interest for himself and for his sons in the prayers of Jehovah's worshippers.—*J.*

k Chald. *of rest.* Ge. 8.21. I.e 1.9,13,17;4.31; 5.15,21.8.28;17.6;23.13. Nu.15.7;-41.8.2.

l ch.7.23. Je.29.7. 1 Ti.2.2.

m ch.7.26. Da.3.28, 29;6.24,26.

3 Chald. *let him be destroyed.*

n Ps.78.58,69; 68.16; 132.13,14; 26.8; 76.1,2; 48.12. 2 Ch.6.6. 2 Sa.7. 16.

o Ps.5.10;83.9–18;92. 9;21.8–12;68.12,30;110. 5,6.

p Pr.21.1.ver.22. Es. 4.14.

q ver.13. Ec.9.10. Ps. 119.59,60.

r 2 Ki.17.24–34. ch.4 4.9. Ju.4.9. Lu.9.52,53.

s Es. 6.11. Job 5.12, 13. Pr.16.7. Ps.18.44.

t ch.3.8;4.3. Zec.4.6–9.

u ch.5.1,2. Hag.1.ii. Zec.i.–xiv.2 Ch.14.7.

x Is.44.28. Hag.1.8.

y Chald. *decree*, ver. 2–12.

4 Artaxerxes Longimanus, or the long-handed, as some suppose, from the extraordinary length of his hands, but more probably from the vast extent of his dominions. The building originally begun by Cyrus was finished, so far as mere building was concerned, by Darius—the finishing was reserved for Artaxerxes, the friend of Ezra, ch. 7. 12, 27.—*Note*, The overruling providence of God employs the enmity of the Samaritans to keep the temple of the Lord and his service so long before the eyes of the government, that it necessarily forces its claims to their attention. And even thus, in Christian times, the violence of persecutors has been overruled, to bring the nature, evidences, and excellences of Christianity before kings and judges, so that 'the blood of martyrs has become the very seed of the church.'—*C.*

z 1 Ch. xxii.–xxvii. ch.2.64,70.

a Nu.7.10,88.1 Ki.8. 63.

b ch.3.11,12.1 Ch.15. 28.2 Ch.7.10.

c Nu.7.1–88. 1 Ki.8. 63; 18, 31. ch.8.35.1 Ch. 16.1.2 Ch.29.22.

d Nu.3.6; 8.9, with 1 Ch.xxiv.–xxvi.

e Ex.12.2–49; 23.14, 15; 34.18. De.16.1,2,16. Le.23.5. Nu.9.2,3; 28. 16. 1 Co.5.7,8. Jos.5.10. 2 Ch.xxx.xxxv.

5 B.C. 515.

f 2 Ch. 29. 34; 35. 14. He.7.26,27.1 Pe.2.9.

9 And that which they have need of, [1]both young bullocks, and rams, and lambs, for the burnt-offerings of the God of heaven,[2] wheat, salt, wine, and oil, according to the appointment of the priests which *are* at Jerusalem, let it be given them day by day without fail;

10 That they may offer sacrifices [k]of sweet savours unto the God of heaven, and [l]pray for the life of the king, and of his sons.

11 Also I have made a decree, [m]that whosoever shall alter this word, let timber be pulled down from his house, and, being set up, let him be hanged[3] thereon; and let his house be made a dunghill for this.

12 And the God that hath caused [n]his name to dwell there [o]destroy all kings and people, that shall put to their hand to alter *and* to destroy this house of God which *is* at Jerusalem. I [p]Darius have made a decree; let it be done [q]with speed.

13 ¶ Then [r]Tatnai, governor on this side the river, Shethar-boznai, and their companions, according to that which Darius the king had sent, [s]so they did speedily.

14 And [t]the elders of the Jews builded, and they prospered through the [u]prophesying of Haggai the prophet, and Zechariah the son of Iddo: and they builded, and finished *it*, according to the [x]commandment of the God of Israel, and according to the [y]commandment of Cyrus, and Darius, and Artaxerxes[4] king of Persia.

15 And this house was finished on the third day of the month Adar, which was in the sixth year of the reign of Darius the king.

16 ¶ And [z]the children of Israel, the priests and the Levites, and the rest of the children of the captivity, kept the [a]dedication of this house of God [b]with joy,

17 And [c]offered at the dedication of this house of God an hundred bullocks, two hundred rams, four hundred lambs; and, for a sin-offering for all Israel, twelve he-goats, according to the number of the tribes of Israel.

18 And they set the priests in their divisions, and the Levites in their courses, for the service of God which *is* at Jerusalem; [d]as it is written in the book of Moses.

19 And the children of the captivity [e]kept the passover upon the fourteenth *day* of the first month.[5]

20 For the priests and the Levites were [f]purified together; all of them *were* pure, and killed the passover for all the children of the captivity, and for their brethren the priests, and for themselves.

21 And the children of Israel, which were

Christ's followers are never persecuted but when they are belied. Let their cause be but fairly stated and fairly heard and it will stand its ground against every opposition. And it is often false information and not malice that makes magistrates to issue forth persecuting edicts and sentences.

CHAPTER VI. REFLECTIONS.—Impartial search never hurts but helps the cause of truth: and God makes the attempts against his church the means

come again out of captivity, and all [g]such as had separated themselves unto them from the filthiness of the heathen of the land, to seek the LORD God of Israel, did eat,

22 And[h] kept the feast of unleavened bread seven days with joy: for the LORD had made them joyful, and [i]turned the heart of the king of [o]Assyria[7] unto them, to strengthen their hands in the work of the house of God, the God of Israel.

CHAPTER VII.

1 Ezra's pedigree from Aaron; he goeth up to Jerusalem. 11 *The gracious commission of Artaxerxes to him.* 27 *Ezra blesseth God for this favour.*

NOW after these things, in the reign of Artaxerxes[1] king of Persia,[2] Ezra[a] the son of [b]Seraiah, the son of Azariah, the son of [c]Hilkiah,

2 The son of Shallum, the son of [d]Zadok, the son of Ahitub,

3 The son of Amariah, the son of Azariah, the son of Meraioth,

4 The son of Zerahiah, the son of Uzzi, the son of Bukki,

5 The son of Abishua, the son of [e]Phinehas, the son of Eleazar, the son of Aaron the chief priest:

6 This Ezra went up from Babylon; and he *was* a [f]ready scribe[3] in the law of Moses, which the LORD God of Israel had given: and the king [g]granted him all his request, according to the hand of the LORD his God upon him.

7 And there [h]went up *some* of the children of Israel, and of the priests, and the Levites, and the singers, and the porters, and the Nethinims, unto Jerusalem, in the seventh year of Artaxerxes the king.

8 And he came to Jerusalem in the fifth month, which *was* in the seventh year of the king.

9 For [i]upon the first *day* of the first month began he to go up from Babylon, and on the first *day* of the fifth month[4] came he to Jerusalem according to the good hand of his God upon him.[5]

10 For Ezra had [k]prepared[6] his heart to seek the law of the LORD, and to do *it*, and [l]to teach in Israel statutes and judgments.

11 ¶ Now this *is* the copy of the letter that the king Artaxerxes gave unto Ezra the priest, the scribe, *even* a scribe of the words of the commandments of the LORD, and of his statutes to Israel.

12 Artaxerxes, [m]king of kings, unto [n]Ezra the priest, a scribe of the law of the God of heaven, perfect *peace*, and at such a time.

13 I make a decree, that [o]all they of the people of Israel, and *of* his priests and Levites, in my realm, which are minded of their own free will to go up to Jerusalem, go with thee.

14 Forasmuch as thou art sent of the [7]king, and of his [p]seven counsellors,[8] to inquire concerning Judah and Jerusalem, according to the law of [q]thy God which *is* in thine hand;

15 And to carry [r]the silver and gold, which the king and his counsellors have freely [s]offered unto the God of Israel, whose habitation [s]*is* in Jerusalem,

16 And[t] all the silver and gold that thou canst find in all the province of Babylon, with the free-will-offering of the people, and of the priests, offering willingly for the house of their God which *is* in Jerusalem;

17 That [u]thou mayest buy speedily with this money bullocks, rams, lambs, with their meat-offerings and their drink-offerings, and offer them upon the altar of the house of your God which *is* in Jerusalem.

18 And [x]whatsoever shall seem good to thee, and to thy brethren, to do with the rest of the silver and the gold, that do after the will[1] of your God.

19 The [y]vessels also that are given thee for the service of the house of thy God, *those* deliver thou before the God of Jerusalem.

20 And whatsoever more shall be needful for the house of thy God, which thou shalt have occasion to bestow, bestow *it* out of the king's treasure-house.[2]

21 And I, *even* I Artaxerxes the king, do make a decree to [z]all the treasurers which *are*

A.M. 3489. B.C. 515.

g ch. 9. 11. Ps. 93. 5. Ex. 12. 47–49. Ro. 12. 1, 2. 2 Co. 6. 14–18. Phi. 2. 15, 16.

h 2 Ch. 30. 21; 35. 17. Ex. 12. 18–20; 13. 6, 7; 23. 15; 34. 18. Le. 23. 6–8. Nu. 28. 17–25; 16. 3, 4. Jos. 5. 11. 1 Co. 5. 7, 8. 1 Pe. 2. 1, 2.

i Pr. 21. 1. Jn. 19. 11. ch. 9. 9; ver. 3–13.

6 Persia, which now included Assyria.

7 Persia now constituted the head of the Asiatic empire; but, owing to the provincial arrangement, the emperor legislated for Judea, as king of Assyria, the ancient name of one of his kingdoms.—*C.*

CHAP. VII.

B.C. 457.

1 Longhand.

2 An interval of about 58 years intervenes between the close of the sixth and the beginning of the seventh chapter. Ezra now takes up the thread of the narrative at the time when he left Babylon with a second caravan of returning exiles. He was a priest, a lineal descendant of Aaron. To gain for himself his rightful influence, and his proper place, he gives his genealogy.—*P.*

a ver. 6, 10; ch. viii. 1.

b 2 Ki. 25. 18. 1 Ch. 6. 4–14, 50–53.

c 2 Ch. 34. 9, 15.

d 1 Ch. 6. 8–12. He was descended from the high-priests.

e 1 Ch. 6. 4, 50. Nu. 25. 6–13. Ps. 106. 30. Jos. 22. 13. Ju. 20. 28.

f ver. 11, 21; ch. 8. 1, 9, 11. Ps. 45. 1.

3 Literally, *a speedy writer*, but applied to signify a learned expositor.—*C.*

g ver. 11–26; ch. 8. 22, 31. Ne. 2. 4–8.

h ch. 8. 1–28. Zec. 2. 6, 7.

i Pr. 3. 6. Is. 43. 1, 2; 41. 10; 46. 3, 4. Ps. 68. 22. He. 13. 5, 6. Ko. 8. 31.

4 If the time seem too long for the distance, let it be recollected the caravan under Ezra travelled with the aged and young of the families, and also with cattle.—*C.*

5 It is probable that the first date marks the time when Ezra began to make preparation for the departure of the exiles. The work of preparation would necessarily be tedious. Property acquired in Babylon would have to be disposed of; all matters of business must be arranged; goods and cattle intended for transport must be got ready. Even three or four months would be a limited period for all this work.—*P.*

k 1 Sa. 7. 3. 2 Ch. 19. 3; 27. 6. Pr. 4. 23. Mat. 7. 24.

6 The act of preparation is mentioned—the principle is implied, that is grace; which Paul declares to be the operative principle of all our good works, 1 Co. 15. 10.—*C.*

l Mal. 2. 7. 1 Ti. 3. 2. 2 Ti. 4. 2. 1 Ki. 2. 3.

m Ezr. 26. 7. Da. 2. 38. 2 Ki. 18. 19. Is. 10. 8.

n Or, *To Ezra the priest, a perfect scribe of the law of the God of heaven, peace, &c.* ch. 4. 7.

o ch. 1. 3. Is. 27. 13, 14; 45. 13. Ps. 110. 3. Ju. 5. 2–9.

7 Chald. *from before the king.*

p Es. 1. 14.

8 Seven Persian nobles discovered and conspired against the impostor Smerdis, and one of them was chosen king. Hence, it seems probable, *seven* became the ordinary number of the Persian privy-council.—*C.*—Princes who enjoyed the chief offices in the state. From the time of Darius Hystaspes, who was chosen out of seven nobles to be king, the kings of Persia ever had seven counsellors privileged as these nobles were. The names of these persons are given Es. 1. 10.—*I.*

q Da. 2. 47; 6. 20, 26; 3. 29.

r ch. 6. 4, 8–10. Ps. 68. 29. Is. 60. 6, 9. Re. 21. 24, 26.

9 They obviously entertained an exalted idea of the God of Israel, and earnestly desired his favour, although they did not worship him alone, but imagined that other gods had some power, though not so great as his.—*I.*

s 2 Ch. 6. 2, 6; 29. 6. ch. 6. 12.

t ch. 8. 25; 2. 68, 69. Ex. 25. 2; 35. 5, 21.

u ch. 6. 9. De. 14. 24–26. Le. i.–vi. Nu. xv. xxviii. xxix. 1 Ch. 9. 29; 12. 40.

x 2 Ki. 12. 15; 22. 7. 1 Co. 4. 1, 2.

1 It is remarkable that a heathen prince should lay no other restriction on Ezra and his brethren, in disposing of the treasures which they collected, except that they should be employed 'after the will of their God.' The whole commission implies a chartered right to the Jews of living according to their own laws.—*I.*

y 2 Ch. 32. 19. Je. 3. 17. ch. 8. 27, 30, 33, 34.

2 It is revealed (ch. 6. 22) that 'the Lord had turned the heart of the king, to strengthen their hands in the work of the house of God;' and here we find him endow the temple with the royal treasures necessary for the support of its priesthood and service.—*C.*

z ch. 5. 3, 6. Ne. 2. 7, 8.

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of her advantage and honour. He raises up unexpected instruments to accomplish his gracious purposes. And often his spiritual work is carried on by their means who have neither part nor lot in the matter. The prayers of the godly are, or ought to be, the great support of nations and their magistrates; and if magistrates understood their own interests they would carefully secure them in their favour. But dreadful is the curse which shall at last light upon all the enemies of Christ and his church. And it is high time to be active and bold in his work, when we are bound to it by his express command, shamed into it by repeated edicts of heathen magistrates, and encouraged in it by his faithful ministers. God will have his work finished at last, notwithstanding ten thousand obstructions. What a mercy is it when Christ's church is prepared for the exact observance of all his ordinances, the most solemn not excepted! And it is a matter of great joy to all his true friends, and an honour to a church, when ministers are remarkably holy and faithful. Yea, it is highly necessary that all of us solemnly dedicate ourselves for temples to God; and offer up the solemn prayers of faith for God's blessing on the ordinances of his grace, which we have, or expect to enjoy. Yet not upon our services in his church must our hopes and joys depend, but on Jesus, as our God-honouring and sin-expiating oblation, and our passover sacrificed for us. If we live on him as our all in all, and occupy ourselves diligently in his service, the Lord will provide friends for us, even where we least expected.

CHAPTER VII. [Ver. 1. *Seraiah, the son of Azariah.* This Seraiah was that high-priest who was slain by Nebuchadnezzar at Riblah, 2 Ki. 25. 18, 21, about 130 years before, and therefore could not be literally the father of Ezra. But by a principle of Jewish law, frequently exemplified in the Scriptures, when the intermediate parties died childless, and the family property or offices descended by heirship to a collateral branch, or in virtue of the law of adoption, as exemplified Ge. 48. 5, 6, a grandson or still more distant relative might be counted not as the son of his immediate father, but of his more remote ancestor. Among the many practical advantages of this system, was the facility which it afforded in tracing ancestry, and settling hereditary claims, by diminishing the links of proof necessary for their establishment. *C.*]

REFLECTIONS.—God richly endows men with proper gifts and grace when he intends them for distinguished work in his church. And that character is highly exalted in which great knowledge and activity meet with great holiness of heart and life. Yea, very excellent is a knowledge of the Scriptures when it is reduced to practice and employed in the instruction of others. If God calls us to a difficult service he can make all things concur to our encouragement. If his people want magistrates of their own religion, he can make heathens to compensate the loss, doing honour to his word as the rule; showing at once generous hearts and open hands, and punishing contemptuous despisers of him and his interests. But how thankful ought we to be when he thus makes the princes of this world nursing parents to his church, terrors to evil-doers, and a praise to them that do well! Surely then it is becoming in us to depend on him alone as our strength and salvation, and to ascribe the glory of all

beyond the river, that whatsoever Ezra the priest, the scribe of the law of the God of heaven, shall require of you, it be done speedily,

22 Unto an hundred talents of silver,[3] and to an hundred measures[4] of wheat, and to an hundred baths of wine, and to an hundred baths of oil, and salt without prescribing *how much.*

23 Whatsoever is commanded[5] by the God of heaven, let it be diligently done for the house of the God of heaven: for [a]why should there be wrath against the realm of the king and his sons?[6]

24 Also we certify you, that touching any of the priests and Levites, singers, porters, Nethinims, or ministers of this house of God, it[b] shall not be lawful to impose toll, tribute, or custom, upon them.

25 And thou, Ezra, after the wisdom of thy God that *is* in thine hand, set [c]magistrates and judges, which may judge all the people that *are* beyond the river, all such as know the laws of thy God; and [d]teach ye them that know *them* not.

26 And [e]whosoever will not do the law of thy God, and the law of the king, let judgment be executed speedily upon him, whether *it be* unto death, or to banishment,[7] or to confiscation of goods, or to imprisonment.[8]

27 ¶ Blessed[f] *be* the LORD God of our fathers, which hath put *such a thing* as this in the king's heart, to beautify the house of the LORD which *is* in Jerusalem;

28 And [g]hath extended mercy unto me before the king, and his counsellors, and before all the king's mighty princes: and I was strengthened as[h] the hand of the LORD my God *was* upon me; and I gathered together out of Israel chief men to go up with me.

CHAPTER VIII.

1 *The companions of Ezra, who returned with him from Babylon.* 15 *He sendeth to Iddo for ministers for the temple.* 21 *He keepeth a fast.* 24 *He committeth the holy treasures to the custody of the priests.* 31 *From Ahava they come to Jerusalem.* 33 *The treasure is weighed in the temple.* 36 *The king's commission delivered.*

THESE *are* now the chief of their fathers, and *this is* the [a]genealogy of them that went[1] up with me from Babylon, in the reign of Artaxerxes the king.

2 Of the sons of [b]Phinehas; Gershom: of the sons of [c]Ithamar; Daniel: of the sons of David;[d] Hattush.

3 Of the sons of Shechaniah, of the sons of Pharosh,[e] Zechariah; and with him were reckoned, by genealogy of the males, an hundred and fifty.

A.M. 3547. B.C. 457.

3 £34,218, 15*s.* sterling.

4 Chald. *cors.*

5 Heb. *Whatsoever is of the decree.*

a ch.6.10.Ps.68.29.

6 Here is an acknowledgment on the part of a heathen monarch of the great principle, that God is king of nations, and that he can justly claim national treasures for the support and promotion of his church. Ezra was empowered to draw from the public funds whatever might be required for the building of the temple and the re-establishment of the worship of God at Jerusalem. The great officers of the empire were commanded to afford Ezra every facility in his work, and to see that he was supplied with money. Ezra felt himself justified in accepting of and using the money. The concluding clause of ver.23 is especially deserving of note; it embodies a noble lesson, which kings and rulers in all ages and countries ought to learn—that the wrath of God is to be averted, and his blessing to be obtained, by a dedication to his glory of national treasures and power.—*P.*

b Ge.47.22.ch.11.23.

c Ex. 18. 21–29. De. 16.18, Ps.18.43. Is.14.1. Zec.2.11.

d Mal. 2. 7. Mat. 13. 52;28.20. Col.1.28,29. 2 Ti.4.2. Tit.1.9,2 Ch.17. 7.

e ch.6. 11. Da. 3. 28, 29; 6. 26. Ro. 13. 1–6. 1 Pe.2.13,14.

7 Chald. *to rooting out.*

8 This extraordinary favour to the Jews has generally been accounted for, by supposing this Artaxerxes to be the Ahasuerus of Esther, and the favour to have originated from his attachment to his young and beautiful Jewish queen. But besides that this is mere unsupported conjecture, it seems a strange forgetfulness of ch. 6. 22; 7. 27, where the whole is attributed to the grace and Spirit of the Lord. Why must an earthly motive be sought out for a spiritual act of reverence for God and his worship? Surely 'the king's heart is in the hand of the Lord, as the rivers of water; he turneth it whithersoever he will,' Pr.21.1.—*C.*

f 1 Ch.29.10. Ja.1.17. Pr.21.1.

g ch.9. 9. Ge. 43. 14. Ne.1.11.

h Ps.138.3. 2 Ti.4.17. Ne.2.8.ver.6.

CHAP. VIII.

a 1 Ch.4.33. ch. 7. 7. 13.

1 The whole number, according to the particulars here given, was 1754. These, however, being all males, and probably adult males, we may suppose that the whole party, including women and children, would amount to several thousand persons.—*I.*

b 1 Ch.6.4.

c 1 Ch.6.3.

d 1 Ch.3.1,22.

e ch.2.3;10.25. Ne.7. 8.

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f ch. 2. 6; 10. 30. Ne. 10.14;7.11.

2 There is no sufficient reason for imagining, without any authority from MSS., that here, or in ver. 10, any names have dropped out by neglect of transcribers. Shechaniah is the name of the head of the whole family—the son of Jahaziel, the most distinguished leader of his descendants.—*C.*

3 This was a person of great note, of whose family there went up almost twice as many as did of any other family.—*I.*

g ch.2.15. Ne. 10.16; 7.20.

h ch.2.7;10.26. Ne.7. 12.

4 Many from the same families, which are mentioned in this and in the succeeding verses, had previously gone up with Zerubbabel in the reign of Cyrus. See ch.ii.—*I.*

i ch.2.4. Ne.7.9.

k ch.2 6. Ne.7.11.

l ch.2.11. Ne.7.10.

m ch.2.12. Ne.7.17.

5 Or, *the youngest son.*

n ch.2.13. Ne.7.18.

o ch.2.14. Ne.7.19.

6 Or, *Zaccur.*

p Ps.137.1.

7 Supposed, from similarity of sound, to be Adeava, which is said by Ammianus to have given name to Adiabene, a province of Assyria. But though the particular river intended be unknown, surely it cannot be imagined that Ezra in setting out from Babylon (ver. 15), would appoint his rendezvous 250 miles from Babylon, and no less than 500 miles out of his direct way to Jerusalem. C.——Ahava is probably the same as *Ivah* or *Ava*, a town of Assyria, grouped with Sepharvaim and Hena, 2 Ki. 17. 31; 18. 34; Is. 37.13. Out of these cities Shalmaneser brought colonists to Samaria, to occupy the place of the captive Jews. The cities were in Babylonia, probably on the Euphrates; and therefore the 'river that runneth to Ahava' would be either the Euphrates itself, or one of its tributaries. Some would identify Ahava with the modern Hit, which stands on the Euphrates 100 miles above Babylon.—*P.*

8 Or, *pitched.*

q Pr.27.23. Ac.20.28. He.13.17.

r No more Levites, Nu.vii.ch.7,7ver.2.

9 Similarity of name has led to the supposition that this place was near the Caspian Sea. This conjecture is quite unreasonable, as the travelling distance between Babylon and the Caspian is much greater than from Babylon to Adiabene, and one that could not be performed in the allotted time. See ch. 7.9;8. 15, 31. The site of Casiphia is now unknown, but that it was near Babylon, and within the more populous and protected districts, there can be no doubt. See ver.22.—*C.*

s Heb. *I put words in their mouth*, 2 Sa. 14.3,19.

t ch.2.58,70;7.7,24. 1 Ch.9.2. Ne.7.60;11.3.

u ch.7.28. Pr.3.6.

x Ne. 8. 7,8; 9. 4, 5. Mal. 2. 7. 1 Co.3.10. 1 Ch.12.32.

y Ne.3.17;10.11.

4 Of the sons of [f]Pahath-moab; Elihoenai the son of Zerahiah, and with him two hundred males.

5 Of the sons of Shechaniah;[2] the son of Jahaziel,[3] and with him three hundred males.

6 Of the sons also of [g]Adin; Ebed the son of Jonathan, and with him fifty males.

7 And of the sons of [h]Elam;[4] Jeshaiah the son of Athaliah, and with him seventy males.

8 And of the sons of [i]Shephatiah; Zebadiah the son of Michael, and with him fourscore males.

9 Of the sons of [k]Joab; Obadiah the son of Jehiel, and with him two hundred and eighteen males.

10 And of the sons of Shelomith; the son of Josiphiah, and with him an hundred and threescore males.

11 And of the sons of [l]Bebai; Zechariah the son of Bebai, and with him twenty and eight males.

12 And of the sons of [m]Azgad; Johanan the son of[5] Hakkatan, and with him an hundred and ten males.

13 And of the last sons of [n]Adonikam, whose names *are* these, Eliphelet, Jeiel, and Shemaiah, and with them threescore males.

14 Of the sons also of [o]Bigvai; Uthai, and Zabud,[6] and with them seventy males.

15 ¶ And I gathered them together to [p]the river that runneth to Ahava;[7] and there [8]abode we in tents three days: and I [q]viewed the people, and the priests, and found there [r]none of the sons of Levi.

16 Then sent I for Eliezer, for Ariel, for Shemaiah, and for Elnathan, and for Jarib, and for Elnathan, and for Nathan, and for Zechariah, and for Meshullam, chief men; also for Joiarib, and for Elnathan, men of understanding.

17 And I sent them with commandment unto Iddo the chief, at the place Casiphia,[9] and [s]I told them what they should say unto Iddo, *and* to his brethren the [t]Nethinims, at the place Casiphia, that they should bring unto us ministers for the house of our God.

18 And, by the [u]good hand of our God upon us, they brought us [x]a man of understanding, of the sons of Mahli, the son of Levi, the son of Israel; and Sherebiah, with his sons and his brethren, eighteen;

19 And [y]Hashabiah, and with him Jeshaiah of the sons of Merari, his brethren and their sons, twenty;

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that we are or do in his service to his own power and grace.

CHAPTER VIII. REFLECTIONS. — How shameful it is to find such numbers of Jews still in Assyria after they had near eighty years' liberty of returning to Judea, where their brethren were and their God before them! And especially that the revenues for God's temple, even from heathens' hands, should be in more forwardness than Levitical ministers to bear or use them! But they who are backward to their duty must be stirred up. Every vacancy in the church ought to be speedily supplied with pastors according to God's heart. With the utmost care we ought to avoid everything that looks like distrusting of our God or dependence on an arm of flesh. We had better expose ourselves to difficulties than dishonour God, or give occasion of stumbling even to heathens. In perplexing circumstances let us apply to solemn fasting and fervent prayer. They who in a humble and dependent manner seek him, will find him a very present help in trouble. Let us therefore by faith cast all the care of our persons, families, and estates upon him. Only holy persons are duly qualified to take charge of

LYCABETTUS AND THE PALACE OF THE KING, FROM ACROPOLIS—IN SIGHT OF PLACE WHERE AHASUERUS WAS DEFEATED IN THE BATTLE OF SALAMIS. [EZRA, viii: 1.]—After the death of Darius, who was conquered by the Greeks in the battle of Marathon, Ahasuerus succeeded his father on the throne. Ahasuerus continued thewarlike operations of his father, and invaded Greece, but was conquered at the battle of Salamis on the 20th of September, B. C. 480. There is a mount whose base is washed by the sea, called Korydallos, in sight of the Acropolis and Mt. Lycabettus which has long borne the name of the Throne of Xerxes (Ahasueru) because it is said he sat upon the rocky brow of this hill in his silver-footed chair to watch the progress of the battle of Salamis. The Persian army was almost completely destroyed in this battle. Under the very eyes of Ahasuerus the Greeks destroyed the "bloom of all the Persian youth, in spirit the bravest, and in truth the noblest princes."

20 Also[s] of the Nethinims, whom David and the princes had appointed for the service of the Levites, two hundred and twenty Nethinims: all of them were expressed by name.

21 ¶ Then [a]I proclaimed a fast there, at the river of Ahava, that we might [b]afflict ourselves before our God, to [c]seek of him a right way for us, and for our little ones, and for all our substance.

22 For I was ashamed to require of the king a band of soldiers and horsemen to help us against the enemy in the way:[2] because we had spoken unto the king, saying, The hand of our God *is* upon all them for good that seek him; but his power and his wrath *is* against all them that forsake him.

23 So [d]we fasted, and besought our God for this; and he was entreated of us.[3]

24 ¶ Then I separated twelve of the chief of the priests, Sherebiah, Hashabiah, and ten of their brethren with them,

25 And [e]weighed unto them the silver, and the gold, and the vessels, *even* the offering of the house of our God, [f]which the king, and his counsellors, and his lords, and all Israel *there* present, had offered;

26 I even weighed unto their hand [4]six hundred and fifty talents of silver, and silver vessels an hundred talents, *and* of gold an hundred talents;

27 Also twenty basons of gold, of a thousand drams; and two vessels of fine copper,[5] precious as gold.[6]

28 And I said unto them, Ye *are* holy unto the LORD; the vessels *are* [g]holy also; and the silver and the gold *are* a free-will-offering unto the LORD God of your fathers.

29 Watch[h] ye, and keep *them*, until ye weigh *them* before the chief of the priests and the Levites, and chief of the fathers of Israel, at Jerusalem, in the chambers of the house of the LORD.

30 So took the priests and the Levites the weight of the silver, and the gold, and the vessels, to bring *them* to Jerusalem, unto the house of our God.

31 ¶ Then we departed from the river of Ahava on the [i]twelfth *day* of the first month, to go unto Jerusalem: and the [k]hand of our God was upon us, and he delivered us from the hand of the enemy,[7] and of such as lay in wait by the way.[8]

32 And we came to Jerusalem, and abode there three days.

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[s] ch.2.44. 1 Ch. 9.2. Jos.9.3,27.ver.17.
[a] 2 Sa.7.6.2 Ch.20.3. Jonah 3.6-8. Da.ix.x.
[b] Is.58.5. Le.16.29.
[c] Pr.3.6. Je.50.4,5.

2 These were chiefly the Bedouin Arabs, who still continue to infest the neighbourhood of Babylon and the deserts of the adjacent countries. True to their original character, 'their hand is still against every man.' Single travellers or weak parties dare not pass their haunts; even strong and numerous parties, well armed, or escorted by cavalry, cannot pass free, for when they fear to attack a well-guarded caravan, they are the most adroit pilferers by night, and carry off all stragglers whom they can seize by day. Their more general habit, however, is to avoid shedding blood, but to levy such contributions as amount to spoliation. To such robber hordes Ezra and his fellow-mourners presented a most tempting object, as their recorded treasure of gold and silver alone could not be less than £500,000.—*C.*

[d] Mat.7.7,9.15. Joel 2.12-14. Is.45.11. ver. 32.

3 What faith was here shown by Ezra! He well knew that the whole country between the banks of the Euphrates and Palestine swarmed with Arabs, with whom robbery was a trade. He knew also the immense value of the property the returning exiles were about to carry with them. Yet he would not ask a guard. He prayed to God. He had confidence in his power, his faithfulness, and his love to a penitent people. Thus set forth on that perilous journey over the exposed desert, and the God of Abraham conveyed his people in safety to the land of their fathers.—*P.*

[e] ch.1.8. Phi.4.8.ver. 29,33,34.
[f] ch.7.15,16.
[4] About £80,614 sterling.
[5] Heb. *yellow* or *shining brass.*

6 The precise nature of this compound metal is not now known, but is generally supposed to be that called *Corinthian brass*, a mixture of brass, copper, silver, and gold, found by Lucius Mummius after the burning of Corinth. Sir John Chardin mentions a compound metal found in Sumatra which he calls *calmbac*, and describes it as either as gold and steel, or copper and steel, or gold and copper; but which, whatever be its composition, is valued above gold, and is worn by royalty alone.—*C.*

[g] Re. 5. 15. ver. 25; ch.7.15,16.
[h] 1 Ch.26.20-26. Lu. 12.37,38. Ac.20.31. He. 13.17. Re. 2. 13,25;3.3, 11.
[i] ch.7.9, with 10.9.
[k] 2 Ch.16.9. Ps.91.1-11. ch.7.6,28; ver.22. Is. 46.3,4;43.1,2; 41.10-16. He.13.5,6.

7 The mode of the deliverance is not mentioned, for that could but satisfy curiosity; the fact alone is recorded, for that serves to strengthen faith.—*C.*

8 The march of the Israelites must have been known. The watchful Arabs were doubtless aware of the amount of treasure in the caravan. They appear to have laid their plans for surprise and attack, yet they were disappointed. Greater was He who was with the Israelites than all who could be against them. What a lesson does this teach timid and doubting Christians! It forms the best practical comment on the words of our Lord, 'Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness.'—*P.*—There were not only many enemies who hated them, and were desirous to cut them off, but many robbers who watched for a booty.—*J.*

[l] Ne.3.4;10.5.
[m] Ne.8.7.

9 Perhaps a public record was made of the treasures received, and the persons who brought the money and the vessels were discharged by a public instrument. Or perhaps the meaning may be, that there was an inventory taken of the goods belonging to the temple, which the priests were charged with, as the stewards of a family are wont to be with the goods belonging to it.—*J.*

[n] Ps.116.12-18. Lu. 1.74,75.
[o] c'.6.17. Nu.7.87.
[p] ch.7.21.
[q] Is.56.6;14.1;61.5,6. Zec.3.14-20. Re.12.16.

1 See note on ch. 7.23.—*P.*

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33 ¶ Now on the fourth day was the silver, and the gold, and the vessels, weighed in the house of our God, by the hand of [l]Meremoth the son of Uriah the priest; and with him *was* Eleazar the son of Phinehas; and with them *was* [m]Jozabad the son of Jeshua, and Noadiah the son of Binnui, Levites;

34 By number *and* by weight of every one; and all the weight was written[9] at that time.

35 *Also* the children of those that had been carried away, which were come out of the captivity, [n]offered burnt-offerings unto the God of Israel, [o]twelve bullocks for all Israel, ninety and six rams, seventy and seven lambs, twelve he-goats *for* a sin-offering: all *this was* a burnt-offering unto the LORD.

36 ¶ And they delivered the king's commissions unto the king's [p]lieutenants, and to the governors on this side the river; and they [q]furthered the people, and the house of God.[1]

CHAPTER IX.

1 *Ezra mourneth for the intermarriages of the people with strangers.* 5 *He prayeth unto God with confession of sins.*

NOW, when these things were done, the princes came to me, saying, The people of Israel,[1] and the priests, and the Levites, have not separated themselves from the people of the lands, *doing* according to their abominations, *even* of the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Jebusites, the Ammonites, the Moabites, the Egyptians, and the Amorites.

2 For they have taken of their daughters for themselves, and for their sons; so that the [f]holy[2] seed have mingled themselves with the people of *those* lands: yea, the hand of the princes and rulers hath been chief in this trespass.

3 And when I heard this thing, I [g]rent my garment and my mantle, and [h]plucked off the hair of my head[3] and of my beard, and [i]sat down astonied.

4 Then were assembled unto me every one that [k]trembled at the words of the God of Israel, because of the transgression of those that had been carried away; and I sat astonied until the evening sacrifice.

5 ¶ And at [l]the evening sacrifice I arose up from my heaviness; and, having rent my garment and my mantle, I fell [m]upon my knees, and spread out my hands unto the LORD my God,

6 And said, O my God, [n]I am ashamed, and blush to lift up my face to thee, my God: [o]for

CHAP. IX.

1 By comparing ver. 1, 2, the princes seem to have become first sensible of the popular sin in which they had been the original leaders. This is no uncommon event—men, for example, discover the evil of drunkenness, not so readily from their own feeling of its effects in themselves as from seeing them exemplified in the folly, madness, and ruin of others.—*C.*

[f] 1 Co.7.14. Ge. 6 2. Mal.2.7,8,11. ch.10.18-44.

2 So the Israelites were called, because of God's covenant with them, by which they were separated from all others and constituted a peculiar people.—*J.*

[g] Ge.37. 29, 34. Jos. 7.6.
[h] Job 1.20. Is. 15. 2. Je.7.29; 48. 37,38. Eze. 7.18. Mi.1.16.

3 This is still a common method of expressing grief in the East, and even in European nations it has been often used to express extreme agony of spirit.—*C.*

[i] Ne.1.4. Ps.143.4.
[k] Is.66.2;57.16. 2 Ki. 22.11,19. Ps.4.4. ch.10. 3.
[l] Ex.29.38. Da.9.21. He.9.26.
[m] 1 Ki. 8. 22, 38, 54. Jos.7.6.
[n] Ro.6.21. Eze. 16. 63;36.31. Job 42.5,6. Ps. 130.3;40.11,12.
[o] Ps.38.4. Da. 9.5. 2 Ch.28.9. Ge.13.13. Is.1. 18.2 Sa.24.10.

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holy things, and especially of precious souls. And the greatest accuracy and fidelity are necessary in every trust, as we must give account to God. But O how infinite in his goodness in bringing all believers safe through dangers, rendering their trustees honest and faithful, their companions devout, and their enemies friendly! And soon shall his gracious designs be complete, in bringing all the ransomed millions to the Canaan, the Jerusalem above, where they shall for ever behold, live on, and rejoice with Jesus, their all-comprehending sacrifice, and where they shall find none but furtherers of their work.

CHAPTER IX. REFLECTIONS.—It is vain to expect perfection in the militant church. And the comforts of saints on earth are quickly imbittered with a mixture of griefs. But how infatuated are many professed Christians, who think of no sin, no danger, in being unequally yoked with unbelievers! A little skin-deep beauty, or a little earthly wealth or honour, is often preferred to the image of Jesus Christ! And when the most ruinous sins become fashionable few are affected with them. But to such as are Israelites indeed, the word of God appears awfully important.

BRIDGE OVER THE ILISSUS—ONE OF THE FOUR MOST CELEBRATED RIVERS IN THE WORLD, THE OTHER THREE BEING THE TIBER, THE NILE AND THE JORDAN. [EZRA, ix : 1.]—"Now when these things were done, the princes came to me, saying the people of Israel, and the priests, and the Levites have not separated hemselves from the people of the lands, doing according to their abominations, even of the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Jebusites, the Ammonites, the Moabites, the Egyptians and the Amorites." About the time Ezra uttered the prayer recorded in this ninth chapter, confessing the sins of his people, the Spartans and the Boeotians were waging war against Athens. We give, as illustrating this Grecian history contemporaneous with the facts of the ninth chapter of Ezra, a picture of a modern bridge over the Ilissus. This is a small stream that flows at the bottom of a deep ravine, through the classic city of Athens. It is dry a part of the year, and yet is one of the most famous water courses on earth, made so by the great men who have lived on and about it.

our iniquities are increased over *our* head,[4] and our trespass is grown up unto the heavens.[5]

7 Since the [p]days of our fathers *have* we *been* in a great trespass unto this day; and for our iniquities have we, our kings, *and* our priests, been delivered into the hand of the kings of the lands, to the sword, to captivity, and to a spoil, and to confusion of face, as *it is* this day.

8 And now for a [q]little space grace hath been *showed* from the LORD our God, to leave us a remnant[6] to escape, and to give us[7] a nail[8] in his holy place, that our God may [r]lighten our eyes, and give us a little reviving in our bondage.

9 For [s]we *were* bondmen; yet our God hath not forsaken us in our bondage, but hath extended mercy unto us in the [t]sight of the kings of Persia, to give us a reviving, to set up the house of our God, and to repair the desolations thereof, and to give us [u]a wall in Judah and in Jerusalem.

10 And now, O our God, [x]what shall we say after this? for we have forsaken thy commandments,

11 Which thou hast commanded [y]by thy servants the prophets, saying, The land, unto which ye go to possess it, is an unclean land with the filthiness of the people of the lands, with their abominations, which have filled it from one end to another with their uncleanness.

12 Now therefore give not your daughters unto their sons, neither take their daughters unto your sons, nor seek their peace or their wealth for ever; [z]that ye may be strong, and eat the good of the land, and leave *it* for an inheritance to your children for ever.

13 And after all that is come upon us for our evil deeds, and for our great trespass, seeing that thou our God [a]hast punished us less than our iniquities[9] *deserve*, and hast given us *such* deliverance as this;

14 Should[b] we again break thy commandments, and join in affinity with the people of these abominations? [c]wouldest not thou be angry with us till thou hadst consumed *us*, so that *there should be* no remnant nor escaping?

15 O[d] LORD God of Israel, thou *art* righteous;[1] for we remain yet escaped, as *it is* this day: behold, we *are* before thee in our trespasses; for we cannot [e]stand before thee because of this.

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4 Even as exhalations from the earth are increased into dark clouds, charged with irresistible lightning ready to descend and destroy.—*C.*

5 That is, builded up as the tower of impious Babel, or as an enormous beast of prey, not merely devouring men, but if it were possible assailing heaven itself.—*C.*

[p] 2 Ch.xxxiii.xxxvi. Je. ii.–xxiii. xxxix. liii. De. xxviii.–xxxii. Le. xxvi. Ju.ii.2 Ki.xvii.

[q] Heb. *moment*, ch. i.–viii. Hag.i.ii. Zec.i.–iv.

6 Those that had returned were but a remnant of the whole people. The ten tribes, as such, were lost; and many even of Judah and Benjamin were still in Babylon.—*I.*

7 Or, *a pin*. That is, *a constant and sure abode*.

8 From consulting Is. 22. 23–25. 'the nail' seems to represent certain fixtures in the temple walls, for suspending the sacrificial vessels; and consequently it will here signify a permanent establishment of religious ordinances.—*C.*

[r] 1 Sa.14.27,29.

[s] Ne.9.36.Ps.136.23, 24;106.45,46.

[t] ch.1.1–8; 6. 1–12; 7. 6.11–26. Is. 14.1–3; xl.–lii. Je. iii. xxx.–xxxiii. Mi.iv.vii. Zep.iii.

[u] Is.5.2.Zec.2.5.

[x] La.3. 22. Da. 9. 4–16. Job 9.2,3. Ps. 130.3; 143.2. Ro.3.19,20.

[y] Le. xviii. De. 7. 3. Ex.23.32,33. Jos.23.12. Ju.2.2.

[z] De.6.1, 2. Is. 1. 19. Ps.103.17.

[a] Ps. 103. 10;106. 45, 46. La.3.22,32. Hab. 3. 2. Job 11.6.

9 Were God to punish in proportion equal to our iniquities, the judgment must be immediate as is the sin; and were he to send an evil for every sin, the life of the transgressor must be as constant in misery as in sinning. But the Lord is gracious, and full of compassion, and by his goodness leads us to repentance, Ps.103.8–10. Ro. 2.4.—*C.*

[b] Ro.6.1, 2. Jn.5.14.

[c] Le.26.18,23,24, 27–39. De.28.15–68; 32.21–28.

[d] Da.9. 4–16. Ps. 32. 5.

1 Merciful. Or, the next words may be rendered not 'for we remain,' but 'though we remain.' God's justice will not suffer us to escape, though for the present he forbear to punish us to the extent of our deserts. Though the Jews had endured many and heavy sufferings, yet they had been punished less than they deserved; for they had broken their covenant, and merited utter ruin.—*I.*

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[e] Ps. 130. 3; 143. 1, 2. Job 9.2,3. Ro. 3. 19,20, 23.

CHAP. X.

1 The sorrow and consternation of so eminent a person as Ezra, with his prayer and confession of deep criminality, were no doubt speedily reported all over the city; and this induced the people seriously to reflect upon their conduct and its consequences, so that numbers of their own accord gathered around the governor, and united with him in lamentations and humiliation before God. And the alarm becoming general, even the women and children joined the assembly in the court of the temple, probably fearing lest the wrath of God should immediately be poured out upon them.—*I.*

[a] Zec.12.10.Ps.32.5. Pr. 28. 13. 1 Jn. 1. 9, 10. Ho.14.1,2.

[b] 1 Ki.8.30?9.3.

[c] De.31.12. 2 Ch. 20. 13.

2 Under a deep feeling of guilt, dread of judgment, and hope of pardon, ver. 3.—*C.*

[d] Ne.13.23. Ge. 6. 2. Ex. 34. 12. De.7.2, 3. 2 Co.6.14.

[e] Is. 55. 10. La. 3.24. Ex.34.6,7.

[f] 2 Ki. 11. 17. Ne. 9. 38; 13.25–27. Jos.24.25. 2 Ch.15.12;29.10;34.31.

[g] ch.9.4. Is.66.2.

[h] De.7.3. Jos. 23.12. Is.8.20.

[i] Jos.7.10;1.6,9. 1 Ch. 19 13; 28. 10. Is.35.3,4. He. 12. 12, 13; 10. 24. 1 Th.5.14.

3 After love and humility, there is nothing more needful than courage in attempting any work of reformation. It is indeed faith working by love, and enduring, and hoping all things for the Lord's sake, and his people's sake.—*C.*

[k] ver.3. Ne. 5. 12; 9. 38; 13.25. He.6.16.

[l] Ne.13.5,7.

[m] Ne.3.1; 13. 18, 23; 13.4,7,28.

[n] Job 23.12. 2 Sa.12. 16. Da.ix.x.

[o] Ju.21. 5. 1 Sa.11.7. ch.7.26.

[p] Heb. *devoted*, Le. 27.28. Jos.6.19.

4 The marriage of a Jew with an idolater was contrary to the divine law (De. 7. 3), and he that sinned presumptuously had no right to sacrifice, and was by law cut off from the congregation (De. xxx. xxxi.) Infidels have called this law harsh and unjust; but out of their own mouth are they condemned: for they, being men, and in much ignorance, do form arbitrary rules, for neglect or violation of which members are excluded from their societies, and yet dare to accuse God, who of his infinite wisdom promulgates and enforces his laws, only in support of the eternal and unchangeable principles of holiness.—*C.*

[q] Excommunicated, Jn.9.22. Jude 19. 1 Co.5. 4, 5, 13. Mat. 18. 17.

CHAPTER X.

1 Shechaniah encourageth Ezra to reform the abuse of the strange marriages. 6 Ezra mourning assembleth the people. 9 The people, at the exhortation of Ezra, repent, and promise amendment. 15 The care to perform it. 18 The names of those who had married strange wives.

NOW when Ezra[1] had[a] prayed, and when he had confessed, weeping and casting himself down [b]before the house of God, there [c]assembled unto him out of Israel a very great congregation of men, and women, and children: for the people wept very sore.[2]

2 And Shechaniah the son of Jehiel, *one* of the sons of Elam, answered and said unto Ezra, [d]We have trespassed against our God, and have taken strange wives of the people of the land: yet now [e]there is hope in Israel concerning this thing.

3 Now therefore let us [f]make a covenant with our God, to put away all the wives, and such as are born of them, according to the counsel of my lord, and of those that [g]tremble at the commandment of our God; and let it be done [h]according to the law.

4 Arise;[i] for *this* matter *belongeth* unto thee: we also *will be* with thee: be of good courage, and do *it*.[3]

5 Then arose Ezra, and made the chief priests, the Levites, and all Israel, to [k]swear that they should do according to this word. And they sware.

6 ¶ Then Ezra rose up from before the house of God, and went into [l]the chamber of Johanan the son of [m]Eliashib: and *when* he came thither, he [n]did eat no bread, nor drink water; for he mourned because of the transgression of them that had been carried away.

7 And they made proclamation throughout Judah and Jerusalem, unto all the children of the captivity, that they should gather themselves together unto Jerusalem;

8 And [o]that whosoever would not come within three days, according to the counsel of the princes and the elders, all his substance should be [p]forfeited,[4] and himself [q]separated from the congregation of those that had been carried away.

9 ¶ Then all the men of Judah and Benjamin gathered themselves together unto Jerusalem

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And that which seems light or lawful to carnal professors lies heavy on tender consciences. These take grief and shame to themselves for such as are hardened in their sins: and to join with such in their sorrow and zeal is both our duty and honour: for the most fearful aggravations appear attending our sins and those of our land when we consider the matter as in the sight of God. It therefore becomes us faithfully and humbly to repent of and acknowledge our sins, over our great sacrifice, our great propitiation; once offered in the evening, the end of the world; and in the believing view of God's sacrificial relation and pardoning mercy, to justify him and condemn ourselves. But often-repeated provocations weary out the patience of God. And hopeless is their case when neither corrections humble nor mercies constrain.

CHAPTER X. [Ver. 11. The original cause of the law against mixed marriages evidently was the tendency of such marriages to draw the people away from the worship of the true God. All the nations among which the Israelites were placed were idolaters. Not only was their worship irrational, and sometimes inhuman, but their morals were most impure. Had the Israelites been permitted freely to intermarry with them, the natural and speedy result must have been universal degeneracy and degradation. The priesthood especially, as being the instructors and guides of the nation, required to be kept pure and spotless. Hence the intense desire and strenuous effort of Ezra to reclaim the erring among them. *P.*]

Ver. 17. ['They made an end with all the men,' that is, they completed the investigation of all the cases, and determined what should be done in each case. Probably in most cases the wives conformed to Judaism, and separated entirely from their Gentile relatives; but wherever the wives proved ignorant or stubborn, the rulers insisted on their being divorced. It became therefore, in regard to each wife, a choice between her idolatry and her husband; and in regard to each husband between carnal appetite and religious principle. *P.*]

Ver. 44. [*All these had taken strange wives, and*

within three days: it *was* the ninth month,[5] and the twentieth *day* of the month; and all the people sat in the street of the house of God, trembling[r] because of *this* matter, and for the great rain.[6]

10 And Ezra the priest stood up, and said unto them, Ye have transgressed, and have taken strange wives, to [s]increase the trespass of Israel.

11 Now therefore [t]make confession unto the LORD God of your fathers, and [u]do his pleasure; and [v]separate yourselves from the people of the land, and from the strange wives.

12 Then all the congregation answered and said with a loud voice, As thou hast said, [w]so must we do.

13 But the people *are* [y]many, and *it is* a time of much rain, and we are not able to stand without,[7] neither *is this* a work of one day or two: for we are many that have transgressed in this thing.[8]

14 Let now our [z]rulers of all the congregation stand, and let all them which have taken strange wives in our cities come at appointed times, and with them the elders of every city, and the judges thereof, until the fierce wrath of our God for this matter be turned from us.[9]

15 ¶ Only Jonathan the son of Asahel, and Jahaziah the son of Tikvah, were employed[1] about this *matter:* and Meshullam and Shabbethai the Levite helped them.

16 And the children of the captivity did so: and Ezra the priest, *with* certain chief of the fathers, after the house of their fathers, and all of them by *their* names, were separated, and sat down in the first day of the tenth month to examine[a] the matter.

17 And they made an end with all the men that had taken strange wives by the first day of the first month.[2]

18 ¶ And among the sons of the priests there [b]were found that had taken strange wives; *namely,* of the sons of [c]Jeshua the son of Jozadak, and his brethren, Maaseiah, and Eliezer, and Jarib, and Gedaliah.

19 And they [d]gave their hands[3] that they would put away their wives; and, *being* [e]guilty, *they offered* a ram of the flock for their trespass.[4]

20 And of the sons of [f]Immer; Hanani and Zebadiah.

A.M. 3547. B.C. 457.

[5] Answering to our December, and the coldest and most rainy season of the year. But did not Ezra act with inhumanity in calling out the people at such an inclement season? Does the commander of an army act with inhumanity when he retreats with his troops by forced marches, and in the most inclement season, from the presence of a superior force? No—we praise his promptitude and his skill, and count a well-managed retreat sometimes superior to victory. And shall the promptitude of Ezra be blamed, who will not wait an hour after the discovery of the national sin, but instantly calls upon the people to 'flee from the wrath to come?'—*C.*

r Ps. 119. 137. 1 Sa. 22. 17, 18.

[6] Heb. *the showers.*

s Nu. 32. 14. 1 Sa. 12. 19. 2 Ch. 28. 13, 22. Mat. 23. 32. 2 Th. 2. 13.

t Jos. 7. 19. Je. 3. 13. Da. 9. 8.

u Ro. 12. 2. Is. 1. 16, 17.

v 1 Co. 7. 12. De. 7. 3, 4. 1 Co. 6. 14–17. Is. 52. 11.

w ver. 3, 4. De. 5. 27–29. Ps. 78. 37, 57.

y Mat. 7. 13. ver. 18–44.

[7] They had assembled at Jerusalem in mid-winter. The houses of the city could scarcely contain a tithe of them. Hence the great body of the people were obliged either to live or to encamp in the open air, exposed to the cold and rain of the winter nights. At Jerusalem there are often sharp frosts, and even falls of snow.—*I.*

[8] Or, *we have greatly offended in this thing.*

x De. 17. 9; 19. 18, 19. 2 Ch. 19. 5.

[9] Or, *till this matter* be despatched.

[1] Heb. *stood.* Perhaps these were the only opponents. [The translation here seems doubtful, if not erroneous. The word translated *employed* literally means *stood.* Now Ezra and the others, as judges always do, 'sat down (ver. 16) to examine;' the meaning seems to be, that Asahel, &c., were the only persons opposed to the decision of Ezra and the princes.—*C.*]

a Job 29. 16. De. 13. 14.

[2] The Jewish year had thirteen months. This investigation must therefore have been very complicated, as it lasted three months.—*C.*

b Mal. 2. 7. Mat. 7. 23.

c ch. 2. 36; 3. 9. Zec. 3. 1.

d 1 Ch. 29. 24.

[3] In what mode the hands were given does not appear; but may probably be ascertained from 2 Ki. 10. 15, where Jehu says to Jehonadab, 'Is thine heart right, as my heart is with thy heart? If it be, give me thine hand. And he gave him his hand.' La. 5. 6.—*C.*

e Le. 4. 35; 16. 6.

f ch. 2. 37. Ne. 7. 40. 1 Ch. 24. 14.

[4] Ezra being himself a priest, manifests distinguished impartiality in beginning his reformation with the priesthood. He also showed great wisdom; for if the priesthood be not reformed, the people cannot be improved. A comparison of the reformed and unreformed kingdoms of Europe, or even of the miniature cantons of Switzerland, bears ample testimony to this fact.—*C.*

A.M. 3547. B.C. 457.

g ch. 2. 39. Ne. 7. 42. 1 Ch. 24. 8.

h ch. 2. 38. Ne. 7. 41; 10. 3.

i ch. 2. 40. Ne. 7. 43; 10. 10.

k ch. 2. 42. Ne. 7. 45.

[5] Ezra having first recorded the reformation of the priesthood, now records that of the people.—*Note,* That a more precise and scrupulous morality is required of the ministers of the gospel than of others, is a common but a most pernicious opinion. Christians should all be a 'peculiar people' (1 Pe. 2. 9), an 'holy priesthood,' 1 Pe. 2. 5.—*C.*

l ch. 2. 3. Ne. 7. 8.

m ch. 2. 7. Ne. 7. 12.

n ch. 2. 8. Ne. 7. 13.

o ch. 2. 11. Ne. 7. 16.

[6] About 113 in all are here named who had married strange wives, and some of them, it is said, had children by them. Whether the children were turned off with the mothers, as Shechaniah proposed, does not appear; it should seem not; it is, however, probable that the wives which were put away were well provided for according to their rank. One would think this grievance was now thoroughly redressed, yet we meet with it again, Ne. 13. 23; Mal. 2. 11; for such corruptions are easily and insensibly brought in, but not without great difficulty purged out again.—*Henry.*

p ch. 2. 10. Ne. 7. 15.

q ch. 2. 6. Ne. 7. 11.

r ch. 2. 32. Ne. 3. 11; 7. 35.

s ch. 2. 19. Ne. 7. 22.

t Perhaps not ch. 2. 10; ver. 29.

[7] Or, *Mahnadebai,* according to some copies.

u ch. 2. 29. Ne. 7. 33.

x ver. 13. Mat. 7. 13. Re. 13. 3. Pr. 9. 17, 18.

[8] Perhaps this observation is intended to show that only a *few* of them had children—so that the separation would be more easily effected. The names here given are supposed to be merely the principal persons, for all circumstances combine to induce an opinion that a far greater number were concerned than those here enumerated.—*I.*

21 And of the sons of [g]Harim; Maaseiah, and Elijah, and Shemaiah, and Jehiel, and Uzziah.

22 And of the sons of [h]Pashur; Elioenai, Maaseiah, Ishmael, Nethaneel, Jozabad, and Elasah.

23 Also of the [i]Levites; Jozabad, and Shimei, and Kelaiah, (the same *is* Kelita,) Pethahiah, Judah, and Eliezer.

24 Of the singers also; Eliashib: and [k]of the porters; Shallum, and Telem, and Uri.

25 Moreover of Israel:[5] of the sons of [l]Parosh; Ramiah, and Jeziah, and Malchiah, and Miamin, and Eleazar, and Malchijah, and Benaiah.

26 And of the sons of [m]Elam; Mattaniah, Zechariah, and Jehiel, and Abdi, and Jeremoth, and Eliah.

27 And of the sons of [n]Zattu; Elioenai, Eliashib, Mattaniah, and Jeremoth, and Zabad, and Aziza.

28 Of the sons also of [o]Bebai; Jehohanan, Hananiah, Zabbai, *and* Athlai.

29 And of the sons[6] of [p]Bani; Meshullam, Malluch, and Adaiah, Jashub, and Sheal, and Ramoth.

30 And of the sons of [q]Pahath-moab; Adna, and Chelal, Benaiah, Maaseiah, Mattaniah, Bezaleel, and Binnui, and Manasseh.

31 And *of* the sons of [r]Harim; Eliezer, Ishijah, Malchiah, Shemaiah, Shimeon,

32 Benjamin, Malluch, *and* Shemariah.

33 Of the sons of [s]Hashim; Mattenai, Mattathah, Zabad, Eliphelet, Jeremai, Manasseh, *and* Shimei.

34 Of the sons of [t]Bani; Maadai, Amram, and Uel,

35 Benaiah, Bedeiah, Chelluh,

36 Vaniah, Meremoth, Eliashib,

37 Mattaniah, Mattenai, and Jaasau,

38 And Bani, and Binnui, Shimei,

39 And Shelemiah, and Nathan, and Adaiah,

40 Machnadebai,[7] Shashai, Sharai,

41 Azareel, and Shelemiah, Shemariah,

42 Shallum, Amariah, *and* Joseph.

43 Of the sons of [u]Nebo; Jeiel, Mattithiah, Zabad, Zebina, Jadau, and Joel, Benaiah.

44 All[x] these had taken strange[8] wives: and *some* of them had wives by whom they had children.

some of them had wives by whom they had children. The comparatively small number who had married idolatrous wives seems to intimate that the transgression was but of recent origin; and this view seems corroborated by the statement that 'some of them had wives by whom they had children.' This statement also evidences the strictness of the investigation and enforcement of the law. But was it not cruel thus to divorce husbands and wives? No. For God had not joined them, God had forbidden their union. It was no more cruel than to divorce a bigamist, whose marriage is rendered null and void by virtue of a previous contract. Besides, there is no reason to conclude these wives and children would be sent away portionless, the uncompromising purity of the divine law being always consistent with the dictates of mercy. Ex. xxi. *C.*]

REFLECTIONS.—Wherever sin is seen and felt there is no ground for despair: yea, there may be good hope, through grace, where there is a burden of the most aggravated guilt. In mournful circumstances we ought to observe what makes for us as well as what makes against us. And even weaker saints may be instructors to those who are far stronger in gifts and grace. Mourning and reforming sinners ought to be encouraged; and leaders in church or state ought to be most active in promoting reformation. Men's sins, with the aggravations and danger of them, ought to be closely laid home to their consciences; for none will part with them till they perceive that they are undone if they persevere therein. Great men ought to take the good advice of their inferiors. Critical causes ought to be decided with great deliberation and caution; and reformations begun and carried on with much fasting, prayer, and solemn covenanting with God, promise good success. When we truly return to God he will return to us: he will at last pluck his people as brands out of the burning. They who have the cause of God at heart spare neither time nor pains to serve it. But how shameful is it to find priests, whose marriages were peculiarly restricted of God, ringleaders in unhallowed connections with heathen women! and yet it is highly commendable in them to prove at last patterns of repentance and reformation to others. Alas! that so few clergymen are disposed to imitate their example; but rather endeavouring by every possible shift to extenuate, excuse, or defend their own error and wickedness.

THE BOOK OF NEHEMIAH

Was probably written by himself. It commences twelve years after the dissolution of the unhallowed marriages: and, including at least twelve years of historical account, reaches to about the hundred and fourth after the return from Babylon. It represents (1) Nehemiah's deep concern for the desolations of Jerusalem, and the commission he obtained from king Artaxerxes to rebuild the wall of it, i. ii. (2) His building of the wall and dedicating it, notwithstanding great opposition from the heathens around, iii. iv. vi. xii. 27–43. (3) His redressing the people's grievances, their debts, and mortgages, v. (4) His taking account of those who returned from Babylon, vii. (5) His care to promote the solemn reading of the law, fasting, and renovation of their covenant with God, viii.–x. (6) His care to replenish Jerusalem, and settle the priests, Levites, singers, and porters in their proper work, xi. xii. (7) His care to check unhallowed marriages, procure the Levites their provision, and restrain profanation of the Sabbath, xiii.

CHAPTER I.

1 Nehemiah, informed by Hanani concerning the afflicted state of Jerusalem, mourneth, fasteth, and prayeth. 5 His prayer.

THE words of [a]Nehemiah the son of Hachaliah. And it came to pass in [b]the month Chisleu, in the [c]twentieth year, as I was in Shushan[1] the palace,

2 That [d]Hanani, one of my brethren, came, he and *certain* men of Judah; and I asked them concerning the Jews that had escaped, which were left of the captivity, and concerning Jerusalem.

3 And they said unto me, The remnant that are left of the captivity there in the [e]province *are* [f]in great affliction and reproach: the wall of Jerusalem also [g]*is* broken down, and the gates thereof are burnt with fire.

4 ¶ And it came to pass, when I heard these words, that I [h]sat down and wept, and mourned *certain* days, and fasted, and prayed before the God of heaven,[2]

5 And said, I beseech thee, [i]O LORD God of heaven, the great and terrible God, [k]that keepeth covenant and mercy for them that love him, and observe his commandments;

6 Let [m]thine ear now be attentive, and thine eyes open, that thou mayest hear the prayer of thy servant, which I pray before thee now, day[n] and night, for the children of Israel thy servants, and [o]confess the sins of the children of Israel, which we have sinned against thee: both I and my father's house have sinned.

7 We [p]have dealt very corruptly against thee, and have not kept the commandments, nor the statutes, nor the judgments, which thou commandedst thy servant Moses.

8 Remember,[q] I beseech thee, the word that thou commandedst thy servant Moses, saying, *If* ye transgress, I will scatter you abroad among the nations:[3]

A.M. 3559. B.C. 445.

CHAP. I.

a ch.10.1.

b Ezr.10.9.Zec.7.1.

c Of Artaxerxes, Ezr.7.7.ch.2.1.

1 Shushan or Susa, one of the ancient capitals of Persia, being the winter residence of the kings. It was taken by Alexander of Macedon, with all the chief treasures of the empire. The city called Shuster is now supposed to occupy its site.—*C.*

d ch.7.2.

e Ezr.2.1;5.8.

f Is.32.10. Ps.44.11–16.

g 2 Ki.25.10.Je.5.10; 39.8;52.13.

h 1 Sa.4.19,22. Zep. 3.18.Ro.12.15. Ps.69.9. La.2.10.Ezr.ix. Da.ix.

2 Genuine patriotism consists in grief for our country's sins and sufferings, with deep humiliation and earnest prayer before God for their pardon and deliverance.—*C.*

i ch.4.14. De.7.21. 1 Ch.17.21.Ps.47.2.

k Da.9.4. De.7.9,12. 1 Ki.8.22. Ex.20.6. ch. 9.32.Ps.89.2,28,33,34.

m 1 Ki.8. 29. Ps. 34. 15; 130.2; 119.132. ver. 11.

n Ps.55.17. Ep.6.18. Lu.18.1–7.

o Le. 26.40,41. Je.3. 13.Ps.51.4.

p Da.9.4–16. Ezr.9. 5–15.

q Ps.119.49;105.8.Is. 43.26.

3 A voice directly from heaven is not more decisive of a divine revelation than is the voice of prophecy and its historic fulfilment. Accordingly God has been pleased to spread this evidence over the history of the four great empires, the Assyrian, the Persian, the Grecian, and Roman, but to concentrate it chiefly upon the history of the Jews, whose whole condition, past and present, has been made the continual theme of prophetic announcement; and thus their separation, their captivities, their scattering abroad, with their still unsettled condition, are all prophecies whose literal fulfilment constitutes such irresistible evidence of the divine origin of the Scriptures that contain them, that reason must acknowledge they came from God.—*C.*

A.M. 3559. B.C. 445.

r Ps.78.68,69;132.13, 14.2Ch.6.6.

s Ex.19.5–7; 6.1; 13. 9;14.8;32.11.

4 Nehemiah prepared for a noble and patriotic enterprise by a humble and penitent confession of sin, and an earnest supplication for divine mercy, guidance, and strength. The act which is prompted by the love of God, initiated by earnest prayer, and prosecuted in faith, will and must eventually succeed.—*P.*

5 This was an office of great dignity at the court of the Medes and Persians. The person holding it was the chief confidant of the monarch, and introduced or excluded petitioners at his pleasure; it was consequently an office of great emolument, which will account for the vast riches of Nehemiah, of which he made such pious and generous use. See Herodotus, *Thalia*,34; Xenop. *Cyrop.* l. 3.—*L.*

CHAP. II.

a De. 16. 1. Es. 3. 7. Ps. 102. 18.

b ch. 1. 1. Ezr. 7. 1, 7, *i. e.* of Artaxerxes Longhand.

c ch. 1. 11. Ge. 40. 11.

1 It was the duty of the cup-bearer to take some of the wine in his left hand, and drink it before the king, as evidence that it did not contain poison. Xenop. *Cyrop.* l. 3.—*C.*

d Ge.40.7. Pr.15.13. Ec.7.3.

e Ps. 94. 18, 19; 61. 2; 55. 4, 5. As sadness was reckoned a token of some bad design.

2 Perhaps lest the king should suspect him of any treasonable design, or lest the request which he purposed to make should not be granted.—*J.*

f 1 Ki.1.31. Da.2.4.

3 Not a mere hyperbole in compliment, but a prayer for the perpetuation of his race and government, as in English law it is said the king never dies.—*C.*

g 1 Sa. 4. 20, 21. Ps. 137.5,6.2 Co.11.28,29.

h ch.1.11. 1 Sa.1.13. Ex.14.15.Ps.50.15.

i Ezr. 5.17. Es. 1.19; 5.4,8;8.5.

9 But *if* ye turn unto me, and keep my commandments, and do them, though there were of you cast out unto the uttermost part of the heaven, *yet* will I gather them from thence, and will bring them unto the [r]place that I have chosen to set my name there.

10 Now these *are* [s]thy servants, and thy people, whom thou hast redeemed by thy great power, and by thy strong hand.

11 O LORD, I beseech thee, let now thine ear be attentive to the prayer of thy servant, and to the prayer of thy servants, who desire to fear thy name; and prosper, I pray thee, thy servant this day, and grant him mercy in the sight of this man.[4] For I was the king's cup-bearer.[5]

CHAPTER II.

1 Artaxerxes, understanding the cause of Nehemiah's sadness, sendeth him with letters and a commission to build the walls of Jerusalem. 9 Nehemiah, to the grief of the enemies of the Jews, cometh to Jerusalem. 12 He vieweth secretly the ruins of the walls. 17 He encourageth the Jews to build in spite of the scorn of the enemies.

AND it came to pass in the [a]month Nisan, in the [b]twentieth year of Artaxerxes the king, *that* wine *was* before him: and I [c]took up the wine, and gave *it* unto the king.[1] Now I had not been *beforetime* sad in his presence.

2 Wherefore the king said unto me, Why *is* thy [d]countenance sad, seeing thou *art* not sick? this *is* nothing *else* but sorrow of heart. Then I [e]was very sore afraid,[2]

3 And said unto the king, [f]Let the king live for ever:[3] why [g]should not my countenance be sad, when the city, the place of my fathers' sepulchres, *lieth* waste, and the gates thereof are consumed with fire?

4 Then the king said unto me, For what dost thou make request? So I [h]prayed to the God of heaven.

5 And I said unto the king, [i]If it please the king, and if thy servant have found favour in

CHAPTER I. [Ver. 1. *Nehemiah the son of Hachaliah.* Some have supposed that Nehemiah was descended from a priestly family, because it is said in ch. 10. 8, after a list of names, 'these were the priests.' Nehemiah is the first name on the list; but a careful examination shows that his name was placed at the head not because he was a priest, but because he was *Tirshatha*, or recognized leader of the nation. In the translation of 2 Mac. 1. 21 he is called 'Nehemiah the priest.' This, however, is an error, for the Greek has it, 'Nehemiah ordered the priests.' He was probably of the tribe of Judah, and perhaps of the royal house of David, as his forefathers were buried at Jerusalem. Nehemiah was a man distinguished for piety, energy, tact, and courage. With the single exception of Ezra he conferred more signal benefits upon his country than any man of that age. He found the people oppressed, the country desolate, the walls of Jerusalem in ruins. He rebuilt the walls, and thus laid the foundation of national independence. By his vigilance and prudence he overcame the opposition of powerful

thy sight, that thou wouldest send me unto Judah, unto the city of my fathers' sepulchres, that I may [k]build it.

6 And the king said unto me, (the [l]queen also sitting by him,[4]) For how long shall thy journey be? and when wilt thou return? So it[m] pleased the king to send me; and I [n]set him a time.

7 Moreover, I said unto the king, If it please the king, let [o]letters be given me to the governors beyond the river, that they may convey me over till I come into Judah;[5]

8 And a letter unto Asaph the keeper of the king's forest, that he may give me timber to make beams for the gates of the palace which *appertained* to [p]the house, and for the [q]wall of the city,[6] and for [r]the house that I shall enter into. And the king granted me, [s]according to the good hand of my God upon me.

9 ¶ Then I came to the governors beyond the river, and gave them the king's letters. (Now the king had sent [t]captains of the army and horsemen with me.)[7]

10 When Sanballat the [u]Horonite, and Tobiah [x]the servant, the Ammonite, heard *of it*, it [y]grieved them exceedingly that there was come a man to seek the welfare of the children of Israel.

11 So I came to Jerusalem, and was there three[z] days.

12 ¶ And I [a]arose in the night, I and some few men with me; neither [b]told I *any* man what my God had put in my heart to do at Jerusalem:[8] neither *was there any* beast with me, save the beast that I rode upon.

13 And I went out by night by the [c]gate of the valley, even before the dragon-well, and to the [d]dung-port, and viewed the walls of Jerusalem, which [e]were broken down, and the gates thereof were consumed with fire.

14 Then I went on to the [f]gate of the fountain, and to the [g]king's pool: but *there* was no place for the beast *that was* under me to pass.

15 Then went I up in the night by the brook, and viewed the wall, and turned back, and entered by the gate of the valley, and *so* returned.[9]

16 And the rulers knew not whither I went, or what I did; neither had I as yet told *it* to the Jews, nor to the priests, nor to the nobles, nor to the rulers, nor to the rest that did the work.

17 ¶ Then said I unto them, Ye see the distress that we *are* in, how Jerusalem *lieth* waste, and the gates thereof are burnt with fire: [h]come, and let us build up the wall of Jerusalem, that we be no more [i]a reproach.

18 Then I told them [k]of the hand of my God which was good upon me; as also the king's words that he had spoken unto me. And they said, Let us rise up and build. So they [l]strengthened their hands[1] for *this* good *work*.

19 But when [m]Sanballat the Horonite, and Tobiah the servant,[2] the Ammonite, and Geshem the Arabian, heard *it*, they [n]laughed us to scorn, and despised us, and said, What *is* this thing that ye do? will ye [o]rebel against the king?

20 Then answered I them, and said unto them, The God of heaven, he will [p]prosper us; therefore we his servants will arise and build: but ye [q]have no portion, nor right, nor memorial, in Jerusalem.

CHAPTER III.

The names and order of them that builded the wall.

THEN Eliashib[a] the high priest rose up with his brethren the priests, and they builded [b]the sheep-gate: they sanctified it, and set up the doors of it; even unto the tower of [1]Meah they [c]sanctified it unto the tower of Hananeel.

2 And next unto him[2] builded the [d]men of Jericho: and next to them builded Zaccur the son of Imri.

3 But the [e]fish-gate did the sons of Hassenaah build, who *also* laid the beams thereof, and [f]set up the doors thereof, the locks thereof, and the bars thereof.

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[k] Hag.1.4.ch.iii.

[l] Heb. *wife*. Perhaps Esther, Es. 8. 1.

[4] In all probability this was Esther, of whose parentage the king was now aware, by her interference to counteract the wicked designs of Haman. Plutarch informs us that in the Persian court only the king's mother and wife were ever permitted to sit at table with him.—*C.*

[m] ch.1. 11. Is. 58. 9; 45.11. Ps.65.2; 18.6;34. 4.5.

[n] ch.5.14;13.6.

[o] Ezr.6.6;7.21.ver.9.

[5] Susa lay east of the Euphrates, and the whole country between that river and Palestine was infested with hordes of wild marauders, through whom the Jewish patriot could not have forced his way without a royal guard.—*P.*

[p] Temple, Ezr.10.6, 9.

[q] ch.iii.

[6] This is the first grant for building the wall, that of Cyrus being merely for building the temple. Haweis is followed by Hales in connecting this grant with the great naval victory of Cimon the Athenian (*Diod. Sic.* lib. 12) over the Persian fleet, which was followed by an honorable treaty excluding the Persians from the Mediterranean, and might prepare the mind of the king for adopting Jerusalem as a frontier fortress. This is probably true—but Nehemiah disregards the notice of mere human motives, and justly ascribes his success to 'the good hand of God.'—*C.*

[r] ch.5.14–16;7.2.

[s] Ezr.7.6,22. Pr.3.6; 21.1. Mat.7.7,11.

[t] Ezr.8.22.

[7] See note on Ezr. 8. 22.—*C.*

[u] Moabite, Is.15.5.

[x] Pr.30.22.

[y] Pr.27.4. Ac. 13.45. Nu.22.3,4. De. 23. 3,4. Eze.25.6,8.

[z] Ezr.10.8.

[a] Ps.119.60. Pr.10.4. Ro.12.11. Ec.9.10.

[b] Mat.10. 16. Ep. 5. 15. Am.6.13. Ec.3.7.

[8] *Secrecy* forms a striking characteristic of Nehemiah, and to a certain extent of every great mind. In Nehemiah it is accompanied with piety towards God, deliberation under his promised direction, self-decision rightly understood, and the absense of that vanity which, impatient for praise, so often defeats itself by premature discovery or empty boasting of its plans.—*C.*

[c] 2 Ch.26.9. Je.31.40.

[d] ch.3.13.

[e] ch.1.3. Ps.79.1. Je. 52.10;39.8; 1.14.

[f] ch.3.15. 2 Ch.32.14.

[g] Is.8.6;22.9,11. 2 Ki. 18.17;20.20.

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[9] Nehemiah's inspection appears to have embraced the whole circuit of the city. He went out by 'the gate of the valley' of Hinnom, which occupied the site of the present Joppa gate; turning southward he rode round the lower slope of Mount Zion, and then crossed the mouth of the Tyropœon to 'the fountain' of Siloam at the southern end of Ophel. There he entered the Kidron valley, here called 'the brook;' but as the narrow ravine was impassable for the animal he rode, probably on account of the ruins of the ancient wall that had rolled down into it, he dismounted and walked up the Kidron to the high ground on the north of the city, and after examining the wall there he turned back to where he had left his horse, and returned to the west gate.—*P.*

[h] Is.35.3,4;50.4. He. 12.12,13.1 Th.5.14.

[i] ch.1.3. Ps.80.6; 89. 41,50.51.

[k] ver.1–9. Ps.105.2.

[l] 1 Ch.11.10;19.13.

[1] They strengthened their hands by relying upon God with their hearts, and succeeded in effecting the good work, because they had faith to attempt it. 'Attempt,' said a good man, 'attempt great things for God, and you shall do great things for God.'—*C.*

[m] ver.10;ch.6.1,2.

[2] Horonaim was a considerable town in Moab, on the east of the Dead Sea (Is. 15. 5), of which Sanballat was probably either a native or the resident governor. As Tobiah is called the servant, he is supposed to have been a slave who had obtained his freedom. But whatever Sanballat and Tobiah were, they gave melancholy evidence of that characteristic wickedness of an unconverted heart—'envying and grieving at the good of their neighbours.'—*C.*

[n] Job 30.1. Ps.44.13, 14. Je. 20.7,8. Hc.11.37.

[o] ch.6.6. Ezr.4.15,16, 19. Lu.23.2. Ac.24.5.

[p] Ps.35.27;122.6. Is. 41. 10–16. 1 Ch. 22. 13, 16.

[q] Ezr.4.3. Ac. 8.21. Re.21.27.

CHAP. III.

[a] ver. 20, 21; ch.12. 10, 23; 13. 4, 7, 28, as 2 Ch.23.1,2.

[1] This tower lay a little north of the temple, and probably its site may be marked by the massive foundations now seen at the north-western angle of the Haram.—*P.*

[b] Jn.5.2.ch.12.39. Je.31.38. Zec.14.10.

[c] De.20.5. Ps.30.title. Pr.3.9.

[2] Heb. *at his hand.*

[d] Ezr.2.34.ch.7.36.1 Ki.16.34.

[e] ch.12.39. Zep.1.10.2 Ch.33.14.

[f] ch.6.1;7.1.

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enemies; and by the example of his energy and courage he roused the Jews from their ignominious lethargy. 'For pure and disinterested patriotism Nehemiah stands unrivalled. But in nothing was he more remarkable than for his piety, and the singleness of eye with which he walked before God. He seems to have undertaken everything in dependence upon God, with prayer for his blessing and guidance, and to have sought his reward only from God.'—*Shushan the palace. Shushan* was one of the most ancient cities in the world. It was the capital of the Elam mentioned in Ge. 14. 1. It was successively under the dominion of the Assyrians, Babylonians, and Persians. It became metropolis of the Persian empire, and was the scene of the romantic story of Esther. Its site is now marked by the extensive ruins of *Sus*, which cover a wide extent of plain between the rivers Eulæus and Shapur. See note on Es. 1. 2. *P.*]

REFLECTIONS.—Sad defects still remain in the militant church. But whenever God has work to be done, he can easily find or qualify instruments for it. Lively saints may often be found where we could least expect them—courts not excepted. And no dignity or distance can make such a one careless of the honour of the church of God. The poverty or persecution which discourages others awakens his zeal and concern. In seasons of public or private distress, fasting and tears should accompany our prayers. It is a great relief for a sorrowful spirit to pour out its complaints into the bosom of a compassionate God. While we have a God in Christ to go to, our case is never desperate. And if he pour out upon us his Spirit of grace and supplication, he will certainly hear us. Let us then, with holy and believing awe of his greatness and grace, rest on the stability of his promise. And let candid confessions of our sins and unworthiness attend our supplications for mercy. It is infinitely encouraging to us that we have to deal with a God who is our own God; a God who has done great things for us, and has pledged his promise to do more. Let us therefore put our own, and the hearts of all connected with the welfare of Zion, into his hand.

CHAPTER II. REFLECTIONS.—Strong grief can scarcely be concealed. And it becomes superiors or others to observe the appearances of distress in those around them, and to sympathize with them in it. Even Jesus marks his people's groans, and puts their tears into his bottle. There is therefore no reason either for fear or for shame when sorrow for sin and for the affliction of God's people burden our heart and sadden our countenance. Nothing is more comely than meek and humble answers when given by distressed minds to great men. And pious ejaculations to God are proper to be intermingled with all our important dealings. The prayer of faith is never in vain. God will afford us friends, and help us where we scarcely ever expected it. It is easy with him to render the greatest on earth friendly and helpful to his church in a time of need. But every favour shown to the servants of God awakens the envy and rage of the wicked. They so heartily hate the cause of God that they are vexed exceedingly if any take it by the hand and zealously promote it; and are ready to attack them with every arrow of envenomed malice, derision, slander, and threatening. What strong faith in God, zeal for his glory, bold

DRAGON'S FOUNTAIN, JERUSALEM—WHERE NEHEMIAH WENT TO VIEW THE WALLS OF JERUSALEM. [NEHEMIAH, ii: 13.]—"And I went out by night by the gate of the valley, even before the dragon well * * * and viewed the walls of Jerusalem, which were broken down, and the gates thereof were consumed with fire." In the center of the Ophel hill, in the Valley of Jehoshaphat, there is a fountain with an intermittent spring whose waters connect with the Pool of Siloam by a canal which runs through the hill. This fountain is called the Dragon's Well, because they have a tradition that a dragon swallows up the water when awake, the water rising again when he is asleep, and this waking and sleeping of the dragon causes the intermittent flow of the water. The water comes up in the bottom of a cave 25 feet deep excavated in the rock. By going down sixteen steps we reach a chamber 18 feet long by 10 feet wide and 10 feet high, its sides being built of old stones and its roof a pointed arch.

4 And next unto them repaired [g]Meremoth the son of Urijah, the son of Koz: and next unto them repaired Meshullam the son of Berechiah, the son of Meshezabeel: and next unto them repaired Zadok the son of Baana.

5 And next unto them the [h]Tekoites repaired; but their nobles put [i]not their necks to the work of their Lord.[3]

6 Moreover, the [k]old gate[4] repaired Jehoiada the son of Paseah, and Meshullam the son of Besodeiah; they laid the beams thereof, and set up the doors thereof, and the locks thereof, and the bars thereof.

7 And next unto them repaired Melatiah the Gibeonite, and Jadon the Meronothite, the men of [l]Gibeon, and of Mizpah, unto the [m]throne[5] of the governor on this side the river.

8 Next unto him repaired Uzziel the son of Harhaiah, of the goldsmiths: next unto him also repaired Hananiah the son of *one of* the apothecaries,[6] and they [n]fortified Jerusalem unto the broad wall.

9 And next unto them repaired Rephaiah the son of Hur, the ruler of the [o]half-part of Jerusalem.

10 And next unto them repaired Jedaiah the son of Harumaph, even over against his house: and next unto him repaired Hattush the son of Hashabniah.

11 Malchijah[p] the son of Harim, and Hashub the son of [q]Pahath-moab, repaired the other piece,[7] and the tower of the furnaces.

12 And next unto him repaired Shallum the son of Halohesh, the ruler of the half-part of Jerusalem,[8] he and [r]his daughters.

13 The [s]valley-gate repaired Hanun, and the inhabitants of [t]Zanoah; they built it, and set up the doors thereof, the locks thereof, and the bars thereof, and a thousand cubits on the wall unto the [u]dung-gate.

14 But the dung-gate repaired Malchiah the son of Rechab, the ruler of part of [x]Beth-haccerem; he built it, and set up the doors thereof, the locks thereof, and the bars thereof.

15 But the [y]gate of the fountain repaired Shallum the son of Col-hozeh, the ruler of part of [z]Mizpah; he built it, and covered it, and set up the doors thereof, the locks thereof, and the bars thereof, and the wall of [a]the pool of Siloah[9] by the king's garden, and unto the stairs that go down from the [b]city of David.

16 After him repaired Nehemiah the son of Azbuk, the ruler of the half-part of [c]Beth-zur, unto *the place* over against the [d]sepulchres of David, and to the [e]pool that was made,[1] and unto the [f]house of the mighty.[2]

17 And after him repaired the Levites, Re-

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[g] Ezr.8.33.ver.21.
[h] 2 Sa.14.2. 2 Ch.11.6. Je.6.1. Am.1.1.
[i] Ju.5.9, 23. 1 Co. 1.26;2.8.
[3] The figure is taken from refractory oxen which try to resist the putting on of the yoke upon their neck for labour. The Tekoite nobles appear to have been unwilling to submit to the manual labour which Nehemiah imposed upon the whole body of the Israelites. The result is not stated, but in all probability the proud Tekoites were in the end constrained by force, or by feelings of shame, to do the work assigned to them.—*P.*
[k] ch.12.39.
[4] Ten gates are enumerated. On the south:—(1) The *sheep-gate*, ver. 1. (2) The *fish-gate*, ver. 3. (3) The *old* or *corner gate*, ver. 6; ch. 12 39. 2 Ki. 14. 13. On the east side there were, (1) The *water-gate*, ver.26. (2) The *horse-gate*, ver. 11. (3) The *prison-gate*, ch.12.39. (4) Gate of *Miphkad*, ver. 31. On the western side there were, (1) The *valley-gate*, ver. 13. (2) The *dung-gate*, ver. 13. (3) The *fountain-gate*, ver. 15. There is no account of any gates on the northern side.—*C.*
[l] Jos. ix.;18.25,26. 2 Ch.16.6. Je.41.1,12.
[m] ch.2.8;4.16.
[5] That is, to the *palace* or residence of him who was governor on this the west side of the Euphrates.—*C.*
[6] The division of the goldsmiths and apothecaries is one of the earliest notices of the incorporation of professions. Such institutions, with certain powers of internal regulation, still exist in all civilized nations.—*C.*
[n] Or, *left Jerusalem unto the broad wall*, 2 Ch.25.23.
[o] ver.12.
[p] ch.10.5. Ezr.2.32.
[q] Ezr.2.6;8.4; 10. 30. ch.7.11.
[7] Heb. *second measure.*
[8] Whether Rephaiah (ver. 9) and Shallum were rulers, the one for Judah, the other for Benjamin, the joint proprietors of Jerusalem, does not appear. A somewhat similar division of authority may, however, be found exemplified in the joint shrievalty of some modern cities.—*C.*
[r] Ex.35.25. Ga.3.28. Phi.4.3.
[s] ch.2.13.
[t] Jos.15.34. Mi.1.11.
[u] ch.2.13.
[x] Je.6.1.
[y] ch.2.14. 2 Ch.33.14.
[z] Jos.18.26. Ju. 20.1, 3. 1 Sa.7. 6. 1 Ki.15.22, Je.40.6.
[a] Jn.9.7. Is.8.6. Lu. 13.4.
[9] The Siloam of the New Testament, Jn. 9. 7. It was situated on the east side of the city, and between it and the brook Kedron, and according to Chateaubriand, at the foot of Mount Zion. Richardson describes Siloam as higher up the valley of Jehoshaphat towards the north.—*C.*
[b] 2 Sa. 5. 7. 1 Ch. 11. 7. 1 Ki.11.27.
[c] Jos.15.58. 2 Ch.11.7.
[d] 2 Ch.16.14. Ac.2.29.
[e] 2 Ki.20.20. Is.22.11.
[1] In modern phrase, the reservoir, whence part of the city was supplied with water.—*C.*
[f] Ca. 2.7.
[2] 'House of the worthies.' — *Boothroyd.* The *worthies* of most Christian lands have been their martyrs, so that it is not possible to decide whether this designation be of military or religious origin. *C.* —The sepulchre of David was upon the southern brow of Zion, and the place 'over against it' appears to mean the section of the wall east of it, on the side of the ridge of Ophel. In that case 'the pool that was made' must be the great reservoir at the mouth of the Tyropœon.—*P.*
[g] Jos.15.44. 1 Sa.23. 1,2.
[h] Jos.18.26. Je.40.6. 2 Ch.16.6. See on ver. 15.
[3] Or, *Zaccai.*
[i] Ro.12.11. Ec.9.10.
[4] There are two very characteristic notes in this narrative, viz. (1) Where it is recorded (ver. 5) that while the Tekoites (the people) repaired, 'their nobles put not their neck to the work.' (2) This record of Baruch, that he 'repaired earnestly.' What a rebuke, and what an eulogy, in a few words! Oh! that all nobles, whether by honours, riches, or influence, would calculate their duties by their means of doing good! and that all who consent to labour in any work of faith would remember Baruch, and do it earnestly!—*C.*
[k] 2 Ch.26.9.
[l] ver.4.
[m] Ezr.2.61. ch.7.63.
[n] ch.6.2;12.28.
[5] Hebrew, 'the men of the circuit'—a name specially applied to the plain of the Jordan round Jericho. From a very early period Jericho had a colony of priests, and was famous as a school. The priests who resided in and around that city are here referred to.—*P.*
[o] ch.8.4,7.
[6] That which had been left by Azariah, after he had repaired the wall by his own house. It is probable that some of the principal people were either obliged or voluntarily stirred to repair those parts of the wall which were opposite or adjacent to their own houses. 'No man,' observes Pellicanus, 'can think that the names of them that repaired the walls of Jerusalem were set down unto us slightly as here they are, without some rational cause for it. And the reason was, because it was a work of great virtue to love and to do honour to their country; a work of piety to restore the holy city; a religious thing to defend the true worshippers of God, that they might serve him in quietness and safety; and a courageous thing, in the midst of so many enemies, to go on with this work in a pious confidence of the power of God to support them.'—*J.*
[p] ver.20.
[q] 1 Ki.7.1, ch.12.39. Je.32.2;39.15.
[7] So called, either because it was situated on higher ground than another royal palace, or because the building itself was unusually lofty.—*C.*
[r] Jos.9. 23, 27. 1 Ch. 9.2. Ezr.2.43.
[8] See note on 2 Ch. 27.3.—*C.*
[9] A tower projecting from the line of the wall, and serving the purposes of a modern bastion, and constituting a principal defence against escalade.—*C.*

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hum the son of Bani: next unto him repaired Hashabiah, the ruler of the half-part of [g]Keilah, in his part.

18 After him repaired their brethren, Bavai the son of Henadad, the ruler of the half-part of Keilah.

19 And next to him repaired Ezer the son of Jeshua, the ruler of [h]Mizpah, another piece, over against the going up to the armoury, at the turning *of the wall.*

20 After him Baruch the son of [3]Zabbai [i]earnestly[4] repaired the other piece, from the [k]turning *of the wall* unto the door of the house of Eliashib the high priest.

21 After him repaired [l]Meremoth the son of Urijah, the son of [m]Koz, another piece, from the door of the house of Eliashib, even to the end of the house of Eliashib.

22 And after him repaired the priests, the men of [n]the plain.[5]

23 After him repaired Benjamin and Hashub, over against their house: after him repaired Azariah the son of [o]Maaseiah, the son of Ananiah, by his house.

24 After him repaired Binnui the son of Henadad another[6] piece, from the house of Azariah unto the [p]turning *of the wall*, even unto the corner.

25 Palal the son of Uzai, over against the turning *of the wall*, and the tower which lieth out from [q]the king's high house,[7] that *was* by the court of the prison: after him Pedaiah the son of Parosh.

26 Moreover, the [r]Nethinims dwelt in [s]Ophel,[8] unto *the place* over against the [t]water-gate toward the east, and the tower that lieth out.

27 After them the [u]Tekoites repaired another piece, over against the great tower that lieth out,[9] even unto the wall of Ophel.

28 From above the [x]horse-gate repaired the priests, every one over against his house.

29 After them repaired Zadok the son of Immer over against his house: after him repaired also Shemaiah the son of Shechaniah, the keeper of the [y]east gate.

30 After him repaired Hananiah the son of Shelemiah, and Hanun the sixth son of Zalaph, another piece: after him repaired [z]Meshullam the son of Berechiah over against his chamber.

31 After him repaired Malchiah, the goldsmith's son, unto the place of the Nethinims, and of the merchants, over against the gate Miphkad, and to the going up of the corner.[1]

32 And between the going up of the corner unto the [a]sheep-gate repaired the goldsmiths and the merchants.[2]

[s] Or, *the tower*, 2 Ch.27.3;33.14.ver.27. [t] ch.8.1;12.37. [u] ver.5. [x] 2 Ki.11.16. Je.31.40. [y] Je.19.2. [z] ver.4. [1] Or, *corner chamber.* [a] ver.1;ch.12.39. Jn.5.2. [2] See note on ver.8.—*C.*

courage, and prudent discretion, are then necessary, in attempting any noted work for the Lord and his church. In this manner we bid fair to animate even cowards and sluggards to join with us in it! Many will second the labours of one that is zealous and active who had no courage to lead. Let us therefore instantly begin, as delays are dangerous: and let us carefully observe and acknowledge the kind interposals of Providence in all that we meet with.

CHAPTER IV.

1 While the enemies are wroth, and scoff, Nehemiah prayeth to God, and continueth the work. 7 Understanding the wrath and secrets of the enemy, he setteth a watch. 13 He armeth the labourers, 19 and giveth military precepts.

BUT it came to pass, that when Sanballat heard that we builded the wall, he [a]was wroth, and took great indignation, and mocked the Jews.

2 And he spake before his brethren, and the army of Samaria, and said, What do these feeble[b] Jews? will they fortify themselves?[1] will they sacrifice? will they make an end in a day? will they [c]revive the stones out of the heaps of the rubbish which are burnt?

3 Now Tobiah the Ammonite *was* by him, and he said, Even that which they build, if a fox[d] go up, he shall even break down their stone wall.

4 Hear, O our God;[2] for[e] we are despised:[3] and turn their reproach upon their own head, and give them for a prey in the land of captivity:

5 And [f]cover not their iniquity, and let not their sin be blotted out from before thee: for they have provoked *thee* to anger [g]before the builders.

6 So built we the wall; and all the wall was joined together unto the half thereof:[4] for the people[h] had a mind to work.[5]

7 ¶ But it came to pass, [i]*that* when Sanballat, and Tobiah, and the Arabians, and the Ammonites, and the Ashdodites, heard that the walls of Jerusalem were made up,[6] *and* that the breaches began to be stopped, then they were very[k] wroth,

8 And conspired all of them together to come *and* to fight against Jerusalem, and to hinder it.

9 Nevertheless we [l]made our prayer unto our God, and set a watch against them day and night, because of them.[7]

10 And Judah said, [m]The strength of the bearers of burdens is decayed, and *there is* much rubbish; so that we are not able to build the wall.

11 And our adversaries said, [n]They shall not know, neither see, till we come in the midst among them, and slay them, and cause the work to cease.

12 And it came to pass, that when the [o]Jews which dwelt by them came, they said unto us ten[p] times, From all places whence ye shall return unto us,[8] *they will be upon you.*[9]

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CHAP. IV.

a ch.2.10, 19. Ac. 5. 18.

b 1 Co.1.27. 1 Sa. 14. 11,1.:17.43,44.

1 Heb. *leave to themselves.*

c Ps.85.6; 102. 13,14. Hab.3.2.Eze.37.3.

d La.5.18. Mat.8.20. Ps.63.10. Ju.15.4.

2 All words receive their true meaning from the spirit, manner, and object of the utterer. The same identical words are praise or blame, according to the known object of the speaker. Thus must we judge of this prayer. Such a prayer in the lips of a saint might be impiety and blasphemy; but in the lips of a man humble, peaceful, and gentle, they become an emanation of faith, and a solemn appeal to the divine mercy against man's injustice and cruelty.—*C.*

e Ps. 123.3, 4. 44. 13, 14.Pr.18.3,6;27.3,4.

3 Heb. *despite.*

f Ps.109.14–18;50.21; 90.8. Je.18.23;10.19. Pr. 1.31;5.15–21,22.

g Is.36.11.12.

4 Not the half in circuit, but in height. *C.*—The sentence is somewhat obscure, but the meaning seems to be that the wall was now built the entire circuit of the city up to one-half its original height. This was thought sufficient to repel any sudden attack, and to give the inhabitants a sense of security.—*P.*

h Ps.110.3. 2 Ch. 29. 36.ch.6.15.

5 Literally, '*a heart* to work,' Col. 3.23.—*C.*

i ch.2.10, 19. Ezr.4.4 –16;5.6–17.

6 Heb. *ascended.*

k Ge.3.15. Ps.2.1–4. 2 Ch.20.1. Mar.5.9. Ac. 5.1717.54;13.45. ver.1–3;ch.2.10,19.

l Ps. 50.15. Mat. 26. 41. Ep.6.18. Lu.18.1. 1 Pe.5.8.

7 This is in every respect characteristic of Nehemiah. He first approached the throne of grace in prayer, supplicating divine power. This, however, he did not permit to interfere with the exercise of the utmost human prudence and watchfulness.—*P.*

m Nu.13.31;32.9. Je. 9.19. Mi.7.1.

n Ps.56.6. Pr.1.16;4. 16.

o Mi.7.2, 5. 2 Co. 11. 26.

p Often, Ge.31.7.

8 Or, *That from all places ye may return to us.*

9 The obscurity of meaning in this verse has led several critics of the highest order to adopt a change in a word, so as to produce greater clearness. The alteration of words, however, without overwhelming authority of MSS. or early translations, is never to be admitted. And does not the marginal translation render the words quite intelligible? viz. The Jews that dwelt in the neighbourhood of Samaria, &c., told their brethren ten times (frequently, continually), 'from all places,' that is, from the cities which ye have occupied under Nehemiah, 'ye must return to us,' and thus elude or conciliate the enemies that are plotting the ruin of Jerusalem. And that this was not a friendly admonition, but a treacherous attempt to bring over the Jerusalemites, the party of the Samaritans, appears highly probable from the record of the conspiracy between the Jewish nobles and Tobiah, ch.vi.—*C.*

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q Ps. 112.5. Mat. 10. 16. Is.28.29.

1 Heb. *from the lower parts of the place, &c.*

r ver.17,18. Ep.6.10 –20. Ca.3.7,8.

s Nu.14.9. De. 1. 21. Is.41.14,16.

t Is.8.20.7. Ex.15.3. Is. 52.12.

u 2 Sa.10.12. Ps.122. 8.

x Job 5.12–16. Ps.33. 10,11.

y Ro.12.11. Ec.9.10. Ps.144.1.

z ver.12.

a 1 Co.16. 13. Ep. 6. 10–20. Da.9.25. Ac.14. 22.

2 This would be literally impossible if it meant that while the right hand worked the left held sword, or spear, or bow, ver. 23. And where is the use of such a violent figure for 'equal readiness to work or fight?' But if the Hebrew employed the word translated *hands* as it is employed in English, that is for *workmen*, then the sense becomes plain, and merely signifies that every class was divided, just as every army in field or garrison is often divided into a working party and a covering party, which perfectly coincides with ver. 21.—*C.*

3 Heb. *on his loins.*

b Ex.14.14,25. De.1. 30. Ro.8.31. Is. 41.14–16.

c 1 Co.15. 10, 58. Ga. 6.9. Mat.24.13.

d ch.5.16. Mat.11.28, 29.

e Or, *every one* went *with his weapons* for *water*, Ju. 5. 11.

4 The last clause is very obscure. In fact the Hebrew words, as they at present stand in the received text, convey no precise meaning. The general sense of the whole verse is clear enough. The people worked day and night, taking it in turns. They did not undress lest they should be suddenly called to action. They only put off their clothes when it became necessary to have them washed. There is a reading in one of the MSS. examined by De Rossi which is worthy of note. It is as follows:—'We did not put off our garments except in order to send them to be washed.'—*P.*

CHAP. V.

a Job 24.12. Is. 5. 7. Ja.5.4.

1 The cry of the 'wives' is exceedingly striking. While their husbands worked or watched on the walls, they had to provide at home, and therefore first and most deeply felt that domestic calamity for redress of which both parties now joined.—*C.*

b Rich ones, Le.25. 35. De.15.7. Ja.2.6,15, 16.1 Jn.3.17.

13 ¶ Therefore [q]set I in the lower [1]places behind the wall, *and* on the higher places, I even set the people after their families with their [r]swords, their spears, and their bows.

14 And I looked, and rose up, and said unto the nobles, and to the rulers, and to the rest of the people, [s]Be not ye afraid of them: [t]remember the LORD, *which is* great and terrible, and [u]fight for your brethren, your sons, and your daughters, your wives, and your houses.

15 And it came to pass, when our enemies heard that it was known unto us, and God [x]had brought their counsel to nought, that we returned all of us to the wall, every one unto his work.

16 And it came to pass, from that time forth, *that* the half of my servants [y]wrought in the work, and the other half of them held both the spears, the shields, and the bows, and the habergeons; and the rulers *were* behind all the house of [z]Judah.

17 They which builded on the wall, and they that bare burdens, with those that laded, *every one* [a]with one of his hands wrought in the work, and with the other *hand* held a weapon.[2]

18 For the builders, every one had his sword girded by his side,[3] and *so* builded: and he that sounded the trumpet *was* by me.

19 And I said unto the nobles, and to the rulers, and to the rest of the people, The work *is* great and large, and we are separated upon the wall, one far from another.

20 In what place *therefore* ye hear the sound of the trumpet, resort ye thither unto us: [b]our God shall fight for us.

21 So we [c]laboured in the work: and half of them held the spears from the rising of the morning till the stars appeared.

22 Likewise at the same time said I unto the people, Let every one with his servant lodge within Jerusalem, that in the night they may be a guard to us, and labour on the day.

23 So neither [d]I, nor my brethren, nor my servants, nor the men of the guard which followed me, none of us put off our clothes, [e]*saving that* every one put them off for washing.[4]

CHAPTER V.

1 The Jews complain of their debt, mortgage, and bondage. 6 Nehemiah rebuketh the usurers, and causeth them to swear to make a full and free restitution. 14 He forbeareth his own allowance, and keepeth hospitality at his own expense.

AND there was a [a]great cry of the people and of their wives[1] against their [b]brethren the Jews:

CHAPTER III. REFLECTIONS.—It is a hopeful appearance when ministers are most forward in every good word and work; and when they undertake and go through their work with much solemn prayer and dependence on God. And it is very encouraging when multitudes of all ranks—tradesmen, ladies, nobles, and commons—unanimously concur in promoting the work of the Lord in an orderly manner. But how honourable is it if, like the men of Jericho, Gibeon, Mizpah, Zanoah, and the commons of Tekoah, we prefer the public interests to our own private concerns! or if, like the Tekoites and Meremoth, we help our brethren after finishing our own share! When the work is the Lord's we cannot be too zealously affected; and every person, if he be but hearty, may do something in it. None are so little as to be useless; and none are so high as to be above it. And it is highly disgraceful, even for the greatest, to shift or neglect what God calls them to do in his church.

CHAPTER IV. [Ver. 18. This verse is explanatory of ver. 17. Every workman, whether builder or attendant, was fully armed, ready at a moment's notice to defend the half-built walls against the enemy. I have seen examples of this in the East. When travelling through central Palestine, I saw the whole population of the fortress-village of Sanûr employed in repairing the shattered walls. The men were all armed, and they were all working—sheikhs and peasants, rich and poor. Women also were engaged bearing burdens, supplying the thirsty workmen with water, and in some cases holding the guns and pistols beside their husbands. *P.*]

2 For there were that said, We, our sons, and our daughters, *are* many; therefore we take[e] up corn *for them*, that we may eat, and live.

3 *Some* also there were that said, We have mortgaged our lands, vineyards, and houses, that we might buy corn, [d]because of the dearth.

4 There were also that said, We have borrowed money for the king's tribute, *and that upon* our lands and vineyards:

5 Yet now our [e]flesh *is* as the flesh of our brethren, our children as their children: and, lo, [f]we bring into bondage our sons and our daughters to be servants, and *some* of our daughters are brought unto bondage *already:* neither *is it* in our power *to redeem them;* for other men have our lands and vineyards.[2]

6 ¶ And I was [g]very angry when I heard their cry and these words.

7 Then I consulted[3] with myself,[4] and I rebuked[h] the nobles and the rulers, and said unto them, [i]Ye exact usury every one of his brother. And [k]I set a great assembly against them.

8 And I said unto them, We, after our ability, have [l]redeemed our brethren the Jews *which were* sold unto the heathen; and will ye even sell your brethren? or shall they be sold unto us? Then [m]held they their peace, and found nothing *to answer.*

9 Also I said, [n]It *is* not good that ye do: ought ye not to walk in the fear of our God, because of the reproach of the heathen our enemies?

10 I[o] likewise, *and* my brethren, and my servants, might exact of them money and corn: I pray you, let us leave off this usury.

11 Restore, I pray you, to them, even this day, their lands, their vineyards, their oliveyards, and their houses, also the hundredth *part* of the money,[5] and of the corn, the wine, and the oil, that ye exact of them.

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c 2 Ki.4.1. Hag. 1.6. Ge.47.19.

d Hag. 1. 9, 10, with Mal.3.8-11. Je.14.1-6. Joh 2.4.

e We are Jews as well as they, Is. 58. 7. 1 Co.6.8.

f 2 Ki. 4. 1. Mat. 18. 25, with Le.25.39.

2 Personal experience of oppression, so far from softening the heart of an unconverted man, only prepares him to oppress with less feeling should the power be committed to his hand. Grace, and grace alone, can tenderly compel us to 'be kind one to another,' Ep.4.32.—*C.*

g Ex. 11. 8; 32. 19. Mar.3.5. Ep.4.26.

3 Heb. *my heart consulted in me.*

4 Self-decision, when founded upon the promise of divine direction, is one of the most valuable qualities both in religion and worldly concerns. It does not proudly undervalue the counsel of a judicious friend, but where, as in the case of Nehemiah, that is scarcely to be had, it is thrown into no confusion, but retreats upon its own resources, stands self-collected when others are in confusion, and nobly independent of all but the grace of God.—*C.*

h Le.19.17. Ga.2.14. 1 Ti.5.20.

i Ex.22. 25. Le. 25. 35-37. De.23.19,20. Ps. 15.5. Pr.28.8. Je.15.10. Eze.18.8,13,17;22.12.

k 1 Ti.5.20. Pr. 27.5; 26.26. Mat.18.17.

l Le.25.47-49.

m Mat.22.12. Ro. 3. 19, Job 9.3. Lu.14.6.

n Pr.16.29; 17.26; 18. 5;19.2;24.23.

o Ro.13.7.

5 The general opinion of expositors is that this interest was paid monthly, and so amounted to 12 per cent. But if it was not 100th of all, but of each, viz. money, wine, oil, and corn, then would it amount to 48 per cent., and in Syria and the adjoining countries money is still frequently lent at an interest of 30 per cent. The idea of a monthly payment is, however, totally unsupported by authority. Is it not therefore much more likely that the word *hundredth* was equivalent to the phrase *per centage*, because 100 is the arithmetical basis upon which interest is calculated, and consequently that Nehemiah gives no intimation of the rate of interest, but

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according to the divine law (Ex. 22. 25) requires the remission of the whole? See ver. 12.—*C.*

p Lu.6.35.

6 Of whom was the oath taken? of the nobles or of the priests? Of the priests, that they, as expositors and administrators of the law of God, would see justice done upon the principles now admitted. See De. 17.8-11.—*C.*

7 This was a significant action, frequent among the Hebrews, and something of the same nature was practised among other nations. The action of Paul was of the same kind when he shook his raiment and said, 'Your blood be on your own head: I am clean,' Ac.18.6. —*I.*

q Zec.5.4,5.

8 Heb. *empty* or *void.*

9 From 445 to 433.

r 1 Co.9.4,15. Ro.13. 6,7.

1 This must have been the daily salary of the governor, and would amount to about £1800 per annum, which the generous, because pious, Nehemiah declined to accept. God had given him riches, and as God required them not again for himself, Nehemiah dealt them out for relief of his children—the poor and the afflicted of his people. See Pr.19.17.—*C.*

s Pr.16.6; 23.17. Ge. 42.18. Job 31.23. He.12. 28. De.6.13;10.12.

t 2 Ch.29.28. Ga.6.9.

u Ac.20.33. 1 Co.9.4, 15.

x Ro.12.13. 1 Pe.4.9. Is.32.8.

y 1 Ki.4.22,23.

2 Nehemiah, considering the depressed state of the people, refused to take from them the usual allowance of money and provisions, which as governor he had a right to claim. Throughout the Persian empire the dues of the government were paid partly in money and partly in provisions. Nehemiah refused the salary of the governor, and at his own expense maintained the dignity of the office.—*I.*

3 The Persian tribute, the military duty, and the labour on the walls.—*C.*

z ch.13.14,22,30. Ps. 78, 20, 24; 19. 11. 1 Co. 15.58. Ga.6.9.

4 Rather, to bless all that I have done. —*C.*

12 Then said they, We will restore *them*, and [p]will require nothing of them; so will we do as thou sayest. Then I called the priests, and took an oath of them,[6] that they should do according to this promise.

13 Also I shook[7] my lap, and said, So God [q]shake out every man from his house, and from his labour, that performeth not this promise, even thus be he shaken out, and [8]emptied. And all the congregation said, Amen, and praised the LORD. And the people did according to this promise.

14 ¶ Moreover, from the time that I was appointed to be their governor in the land of Judah, from the twentieth year even unto the two and thirtieth year of Artaxerxes the king, *that is,* twelve years,[9] I and my brethren have not eaten the [r]bread of the governor.

15 But the former governors that *had been* before me were chargeable unto the people, and had taken of them bread and wine, besides forty shekels of silver;[1] yea, even their servants bare rule over the people: but so did not I, [s]because of the fear of God.

16 Yea, also I [t]continued in the work of this wall, neither [u]bought we any land: and all my servants *were* gathered thither unto the work.

17 Moreover, *there were* [x]at my table an hundred and fifty of the Jews and rulers, besides those that came unto us from among the heathen that *are* about us.

18 Now *that* [y]which was prepared *for me* daily *was* one ox, *and* six choice sheep; also fowls were prepared for me; and once in ten days store of all sorts of wine: yet for all this required not I the bread[2] of the governor, because the bondage was heavy upon this people.[3]

19 Think[z] upon me, my God, for good, *according* to all[4] that I have done for this people.

REFLECTIONS. — God's faithful builders are sure to have a share of the world's ridicule and contempt; and one wicked man encourages another. But though scoffers make their bands strong, God will shortly cover them with shame and confusion. Let saints then never discompose their souls on account of the most bitter or insolent contempt: God observes it, and will quickly resent it. Let them in patience possess their souls, commit their way to God, and go on more briskly with their Christian work. God's blessing will more than compensate men's revilings. And much may be done in a little time if all be hearty in lending their assistance. What a pity then is it that the people of God should scarcely ever be as harmonious and active in the Lord's work as the wicked are in their opposition to it! Nay, his more active servants have often as much trouble with the fears of their friends as with the terrors of their enemies. And false friends are more dangerous than open enemies. But be the plots of enemies ever so well laid, or ever so secret, God can discover or defeat them. Let then his infinite power and unbounded goodness encourage us to go on with our work, notwithstanding all the craft and malice of our adversaries. In all our spiritual work, all our attempts of reformation, let us put on the whole armour of God, and watch and pray, that we enter not into temptation. Let us, in our respective stations, unanimously unite, with heart and hand, against the common enemy; and count neither ease nor life dear unto us, that we may finish our course with joy. Religion bids fair to prosper when the professors thereof make earnest work of it, and endure hardship as good soldiers of Jesus Christ.

CHAPTER V. [Ver. 2. The ground of complaint was this: The able-bodied men were kept at work on the walls. They received no pay, yet they had to provide food for themselves and families. They were obliged to buy, and to borrow the necessary money. Unscrupulous merchants and usurers took advantage of this, charged extravagant prices and exorbitant interest, so that many were obliged to mortgage their lands, and even give their children up to servitude. *P.*]

REFLECTIONS.—Hard times and hard hearts when met together render the poor miserable indeed. And it is cruel to take advantage of our brethren's distress, and to make their yoke heavier by usurious exactions. Alas! how we bring hardship and famine on ourselves by our sins, and then complain of it. Those who have great families and little substance must learn to live by faith on God's promise and providence. And those who have small families and much substance should make their abundance a supply for their neighbours' wants; for often poor housekeepers are in much greater straits than the most wretched vagrants. But what a scandal to our holy religion is a worldly-minded and niggardly professor! And deliberate and aggravated is that theft which lies in retaining that which we have unjustly gotten. There can be no uprightness towards God without restitution to the oppressed. It is proper that rulers show themselves angry at what is sinful, that their subjects may be deterred from it and excited to duty. But reproofs ought to be given with great consideration and temper, lest otherwise they fail of their end. And warm and rough, though not furious, measures are to be taken with hardened and presumptuous transgressors. It is highly criminal to expose the people of God, and interests of religion, to the reproach of their enemies. And the strongest bonds are necessary to restrain worldlings from their covetous courses. But how scandalous is it for magistrates to enrich themselves, or indulge their servants, to the public hurt! Those, whether magistrates or others, in whose hearts the fear and love of God remarkably reign, will discover it by the exemplariness of their lives. In times of public distress they will even remit what was their unquestionable due. But infallible are the gracious

CHAPTER VI.

1 *Sanballat practiseth by craft, by rumours, by hired prophecies, to terrify Nehemiah.* 15 *The wall is finished to the terror of the enemies.* 17 *Secret intelligence passeth between the enemies and the nobles of Judah.*

NOW it came to pass, when [a]Sanballat, and Tobiah, and Geshem the Arabian, and the rest of our enemies, heard that I had builded the wall, and *that* there was no [b]breach left therein, (though at that time I [c]had not set up the doors upon the gates,)

2 That Sanballat and Geshem sent unto me, saying, Come, let us [d]meet together in *some one of* the villages[1] in the [e]plain of Ono:[2] but they[f] thought to do me mischief.

3 And I [g]sent messengers unto them, saying, I *am* doing a great work, so that I cannot come down: why should the work cease, whilst I leave it, and come down to you?

4 Yet they sent unto me [h]four times after this sort; and I answered them after the same manner.

5 ¶ Then sent Sanballat his servant unto me, in like manner, the fifth time, with an open letter in his hand;[3]

6 Wherein *was* written, [i]It is reported among the heathen, and [k]Gashmu saith *it*, *that* thou and the Jews think to [l]rebel: for which cause thou buildest the wall, that thou mayest be their king, according to these words.[4]

7 And thou hast also appointed prophets to preach of thee at Jerusalem, saying, *There is* a king in Judah: and now shall it be reported to the king according to these words. Come now therefore, and let us [m]take counsel together.

8 Then I sent unto him, saying, There are no such things done as thou sayest, but thou feignest[n] them out of thine own heart.

9 For they all made us [o]afraid,[5] saying, Their hands shall be weakened from the work, that it be not done. Now therefore, [p]*O God*, strengthen my hands.

10 ¶ Afterward I came unto the house of Shemaiah[q] the son of Delaiah, the son of Mehetabeel, who *was* shut up;[6] and he said, [r]Let us meet together in the house of God, within the temple, and let us shut the doors of the temple: for they will come to slay thee; yea, in the night will they come to slay thee.[7]

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CHAP. VI.

a ch.2.10,19;4.1;ver. 2,6,12,14.
b ch.4.6.
c ch.3.3,6.
d Pr.26.24–26. Ps.37. 12. Ec.4.4.

1 Rather, in Cepherim, the name of a place; probably Chephirah in Benjamin, Jos.18.26.—*C.*

e 1 Ch.8.12. ch.3.22; 12.28;11.35.

2 Ono was a town of Benjamin, and is grouped with Lod or Lydda, Ezr.2.33. Ne. 7.37. It therefore lay in the great plain of Sharon. There is a small village with ancient ruins five miles north of Lydda, which may mark the site of Ono. The object of Sanballat was evidently to draw Nehemiah away from the mountain fastnesses into the open plain, where they might seize, and either imprison or murder him.—*P.*

f Ps. 12. 2. Mi.7.4,5. Je.41.2,Eze.33.31.
g Mat.10.16. Pr.14. 15.Ep.5.15.Ps.112.5.
h Pr. 4. 16; 1. 10, 16. Ro.3.15. Ge.39.12. Is. 59.7.

3 Eastern letters are rolled up and sealed with great accuracy; and when to persons of rank, inclosed in a silken bag. This letter being open, was an insult, and intended to give publicity to the slanderous libel contained in it.—*C.*

i Je.20.10;9.3,4.
k Geshem, ver. 1, 2; ch.2.19.
l ch. 2.19. Ezr. 4.13. 1 Ki.22.2. Ac.24.5. Jn. 19.12.

4 The words recorded in verse 7, 'There is a king in Judah,' a calumnious misrepresentation of the prophecies of Messiah. Ps. ii. cx. &c.—*C.*

m Pr.20.19; 1.11; 29. 5. Ac.23.15. Ps.140.2,4, 5;142.3;64.2,5; 59.3;57. 6;35.7.
n Ps. 52.2, 3. Job 13. 4.ver.10.
o Ps. 55. 3–5; 56.3. 2 Ti.1.7.ver.14.

5 'They all,' the alarmists, ver. 14. These made 'us' (the people) 'afraid;' but this strengthened *my* hands the more.'—*Boothroyd.*

p De.33.25.Ps.138.3. Zec.10.12.Phi.4.13.
q ver.12. Mat.7.15.

6 Either as a recluse pretending to great sanctity—a practice still common in the East; or, more probably, 'shut up,' under pretence of fear of the threatened invasion by Sanballat.—*C.*

r Pr.26.24. Ps.37.12; 12.2;120.2;55.21. ver.7, 8,19.

7 This wily traitor assumed the character of a prophet to entrap Nehemiah and ruin him. He pretended to be so overcome by fear that he shut himself up, and acted besides as if he were divinely warned. Had Nehemiah yielded to his advice, the people would have been left without a leader, they would have been completely disorganized and disheartened, and they would have fallen an easy prey to their enemies.—*P.*

s Pr.28.1. Ac.21.13,1 Co. 9. 25; 16. 13, with Ex.21.14.

8 Shall a man, honoured by the king's commission, and bound by the ties of patriotism to watch and labour for his poor countrymen, so far forget his dignity and duty as to flee like a coward? But, above all, shall a professed believer in God, and his promises and providence, bring disgrace upon his religion in the eyes of the heathen, and by basely deserting his post, prove that he cannot trust for protection to the God whom he worships?—*C.*

9 'Being as I am,' that is, being innocent as I am of all the guilt charged by Sanballat, would go into the temple, like a guilty culprit fleeing to the horns of the altar to save his life? 1 Ki.2.28.—*C.*

t 1 Co.2.15. Eze.13. 22.

1 He perceived the imposture, through the perturbation of the unsuccessful impostor.—*C.*

2 Because Tobiah and Sanballat had hired him.—*C.*

u 2 Ti.1.7. Pr.29.25. ver.9.
x Pr.22.1. Ec.7.1. Je. 18.18;20.10.
y ch.13.29; 4.4,5. Ps. 140.8–11.
z Eze.xiii. Is.56.10–12. Je.6.13;14.14;23.11–16. Mi.3.5. Re.2.20. 2 Pe.2.1.

8 See note on ch. 4. 4.—*C.*

a Pr.21.30. Phi.4.13. ch.4.1. Ps.1.3.
b Ex. 14. 25; 15. 15. Jos. 2.9,11; 5.1. Ac.5. 24. Ps.126.2.

4 There are often such evidences of a special providence that even wicked men are not able to deny them.—*C.*

c Heb. *multiplied their letters passing to Tobiah*, Mi. 7. 4–6. La.1.2. Je.9.2–6.
d Ezr.2.5.ch.7.10.
e ch.3.4,30.
5 Or, *matters.*
f ver.2,6,7,10,14.

CHAP. VII.

a ch.3.1–32;6.1.
b ch.12.27.

1 The second clause of this verse may be translated as follows: 'And there were appointed porters both the singers and the Levites:' *i.e.* those whose ordinary duty was to conduct the regular service and ritual of the temple, were now, in a time of great emergency, required to guard the city walls and gates.—*P.*

c ch.1.2.
d Governor's house, ch.2.8;3.25.
e ch.13.13;1 Co.4.2.
f ch.5.15. Ex.18.21;1 Ki.18.3. Ro.15.14. Phi. 3.14. Ep.4.13.

2 The true qualifications of a ruler, exactly corresponding with the divine prescription, Ex. 18. 21.2 Sa.23.3.—*C.*

11 And I said, Should [e]such a man as I flee?[8] and who *is there*, that, *being* as I [g]*am*, would go into the temple to save his life? I will not go in.

12 And, lo, I [t]perceived that God had not sent him;[1] but that he pronounced this prophecy against me: for Tobiah and Sanballat had hired him.[2]

13 Therefore *was* he hired, that I should [u]be afraid, and do so, and sin, and *that* [x]they might have *matter* for an evil report, that they might reproach me.

14 My [y] God, think thou upon Tobiah and Sanballat according to these their works, and on the [z]prophetess Noadiah, and the rest of the prophets, that would have put me in fear.[3]

15 ¶ So the wall was [a]finished in the twenty and fifth *day* of *the month* Elul, in fifty and two days.

16 And it came to pass, that when all our enemies heard *thereof*, and all the heathen that *were* about us saw *these things*, they were [b]much cast down in their own eyes: for they perceived that this work was wrought of our God.[4]

17 ¶ Moreover, in those days the nobles of Judah [c]sent many letters unto Tobiah, and *the letters* of Tobiah came unto them.

18 For *there were* many in Judah sworn unto him, because he *was* the son-in-law of Shechaniah the son of [d]Arah; and his son Johanan had taken the daughter of [e]Meshullam, the son of Berechiah.

19 Also they reported his good deeds before me, and uttered my words[5] to him. *And* Tobiah sent [f]letters to put me in fear.

CHAPTER VII.

1 *Nehemiah committeth the charge of Jerusalem to Hanani and Hananiah.* 5 *A register found of the genealogy of them which came at the first out of Babylon,* 9 *of the people,* 39 *of the priests,* 43 *of the Levites,* 46 *of the Nethinims,* 57 *of the children of Solomon's servants,* 63 *and of the priests which could not show their pedigree.* 66 *The whole number of them, with their substance.* 70 *Their oblations.*

NOW it came to pass, when the [a]wall was built, and I had set up the doors, and the porters, and the singers, and the Levites, [b]were appointed,[1]

2 That I gave my brother [c]Hanani, and Hananiah the ruler of the [d]palace, charge over Jerusalem: (for he *was* a [e]faithful man, and [f]feared God above many:)[2]

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rewards of sincere piety and disinterested benevolence from God, even when men overlook it. And it is pleasant to have them as a mark of our sacrificial relation to God.

CHAPTER VI. REFLECTIONS.—O the infernal subtlety and restlessness of Satan and his agents; and the need of heavenly wisdom and steady circumspection for resisting all their ensnaring and repeated solicitations! But business of consequence ought always to be preferred to matters of civility and compliment. It is common for the church's enemies to pretend friendship in order to ruin her; and no less so to represent her faithful ministers and members as traitors to government. But no lies, or malevolent reports, should weaken our hands from the work of God. They who have almighty power engaged for them may look up to God and be comforted. He will uphold them; and the more the enemies rage the more shall JEHOVAH'S strength be perfected in our weakness. Yea, they shall see, to their grief, that he cares for his people, and that when he works none can hinder it. However great the opposition, and weak the instruments, he can speedily effect his work. And much good may be done in a short time if people are hearty in it, and have a good God and a pious man at the head of it. But a most dangerous plague are pretended and unfaithful ministers, treacherous magistrates, and villanous professors. The treachery of pretended friends is more to be feared than the malice of open enemies. And happy are those who, directed and encouraged of God, escape being ensnared in their nets. But for this we must walk circumspectly, and try the spirits: and be ready to risk every danger, rather than injure the cause of God, or even bring a reproach on our holy character or office. God marks the iniquities of his enemies, and will turn their deep-laid schemes against his people to their own confusion. Nor shall those who have ensnared themselves by sinful connections, or who assist them in their purposes, long escape the judgment which lingereth not.

CHAPTER VII. REFLECTIONS.—The worship and service of God ought always to be preferred to our civil concerns, however important; and with great care ought princes and other rulers to make choice of their deputies: if possible they should fix upon such as are faithful and eminently fear God. Happy even amidst dangers are the cities and nations which have such to rule and protect them. Great caution is necessary for our own and the church's safety when we have

3 And I said unto them, [g]Let not the gates of Jerusalem be opened until the sun be hot; and while they stand by, let them shut the doors, and bar *them:*[3] and appoint watches of the inhabitants of Jerusalem, every one in his watch, and every one *to be* over against his house.

4 Now the city *was* [h]large and great: but the people *were* few therein, and the houses *were* [i]not builded.

5 ¶ And my God [k]put into mine heart to gather together the nobles, and the rulers, and the people, that they might be reckoned by genealogy: and I found a register[4] of the genealogy of them which came up at the first, and found written therein,

6 These[1] *are* the children of the province that went up out of the captivity, of those that had been carried away, whom Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon had carried away, and came again to Jerusalem and to Judah, every one unto his city;

7 Who came with [m]Zerubbabel, [n]Jeshua, Nehemiah, [o]Azariah, Raamiah, Nahamani,[5] Mordecai, Bilshan, Mispereth, Bigvai, Nehum, Baanah. The number, *I say,* of the men of the people of Israel *was this;*[6]

8 The children[7] of [p]Parosh, two thousand an hundred seventy and two.

9 The children of [q]Shephatiah, three hundred seventy and two.

10 The children of [r]Arah, six hundred fifty and two.[8]

11 The children of [s]Pahath-moab, of the children of Jeshua and Joab, two thousand and eight hundred *and* eighteen.[9]

12 The children of [t]Elam, a thousand two hundred fifty and four.

13 The children of [u]Zattu, eight hundred forty and five.[1]

14 The children of [x]Zaccai, seven hundred and threescore.

15 The children of [y]Binnui, six hundred forty and eight.[2]

16 The children of [z]Bebai, six hundred twenty and eight.[3]

17 The children of [a]Azgad, two thousand three hundred twenty and two.[4]

18 The children of [b]Adonikam, six hundred threescore and seven.[5]

19 The children of [c]Bigvai, two thousand threescore and seven.[6]

20 The children of [d]Adin, six hundred fifty and five.[e]

21 The children of [f]Ater of Hezekiah, ninety and eight.

22 The children of [g]Hashum, three hundred twenty and eight.[h]

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g With ch.13.19. Ps. 127.1; 112.5. *Pr.*14.15. Mat.10.16. Ep.5.15,16. 1 Co.16.13.

3 Most eastern towns are walled, and the gates are regularly closed about sunset, and opened at sunrise; and seldom opened during the night, unless upon special emergencies, and for persons of great distinction.—*C.*

h Heb. *broad in spaces,* ch. xi.

i Is.58.12.He.4.1.

k Pr. 3.6. 2 Co. 3. 5. Ps.32.8.

4 As this differs from that in Ezr. ii. the one might contain the number enrolled for the journey, and the other those that actually returned.

l Ezr. 2. 1, &c. Of Judea.

m Ezr. 3. 2. Hag. 2. 23.1 Ch.3.17,19.

n Zec.3.1.

o Or, *Seraiah, Reelaiah,* Ezr.2.2.

5 Not inserted in Ezra's register.—*C.*

6 For reconciliation of the apparent difference between this register and that of Ezra, see note on Ezr.2.64.—*C.*

7 Here is an account of the heads of the several families that first came up. Though it seem of little use to us now, yet then it was of great use, to compare what they had been with what they now were. We may suppose they were much increased by this time; but it would do well for them to remember their small beginnings, that they might acknowledge God in multiplying their families, and building them up. By this means likewise their genealogies would be preserved, and the destination of their families kept up, till Messiah should come, and then an end be put to all their genealogies, which were preserved for his sake, but afterwards were useless.—*I.*

p Ezr.2.3; 8.3; 10.25. ch.10.14.

q Ezr.2.4; 8.8.

r Ezr.2.5.ch.6.18.

8 In Ezra, 775.—*C.*

s Ezr.2.6; 8.4; 10.30. ch.10.14.

9 In Ezra, 2812.—*C.*

t Ezr.2.7; 8.7; 10. 26. ch.10.14.

u Ezr.2.8; 10.27.

x In Ezra, 945.—*C.*

x Ezr.2.9. ch.3.20.

y Or, *Bani,* Ezr. 2. 10; 10.29,34. ch.10.14.

2 In Ezra, 642.—*C.*

z Ezr.2.11; 8. 11; 10. 28.

3 In Ezra, 623.—*C.*

a Ezr.2.12; 8.12.

4 In Ezra, 1222.—*C.*

b Ezr.2.13; 8.13.

5 In Ezra, 666.—*C.*

c Ezr.2.14; 8.14.

d Ezr.2.15; 8.6.

e In Ezra, 454.—*C.*

f Ezr.2.16.ch.10.17.

g Ezr.2.19; 10.33.

h In Ezra, 223.—*C.*

6 In Ezr. 2056. *C.*—Some MSS. read 2056, as in Ezr. 2. 14. Referring to the discrepancies between the two accounts, Scott remarks, 'that should any conjecture that some ancient copyist had inserted the wrong register, and that his mistake had been generally followed, the very conclusion would show that such alterations are almost always liable to detection; and no reasonable man would think it the least objection to the divine inspiration of the sacred Scriptures.' The same commentator suggests this reflection on the laudable conduct of Nehemiah:—'Provision is made in the gospel and in the city of our God for far greater numbers than have yet been enrolled citizens; we should therefore be devising means for replenishing it with inhabitants, as well as for building its walls.'—*I.*

g Ezr.2.17.

9 In Ezra, 323.—*C.*

h Another name for Jorah, Ezr.2.18.—*C.*

i Another name for Gibbar, Ezr.2.20.—*C.*

k Ezr.2.21. Mat.2.1, 6.Ge.35.19.

1 In Ezra, 179.—*C.*

l Ezr.2.22. Jos.21.18. Je.1.1. Is.10.30.

m Or, *Azmaveth,* Ezr.2.24.

n Or, *Kirjath-arim,* Ezr.2.25. Jos.9. 17,15.60; 18.25,26. 1 Sa. 7.1,2.

o Ezr. 2.26. Jos. 18. 24,25.

p Ezr.2.27. 1 Sa. 13. 2. Is.10.28.

q Ezr.2.28. Jos.8.9.

r Ezr.2.29. Perhaps Nob, ch. 11. 32. Is. 10. 32.

s ver.12. Ezr.2.31.

t Ezr.2.33; 10.31.

u Ezr.2.34. Jos.6.1.1 Ki.16.34.

x Ezr.2.33.ch.11.34, 35; 6.2.1 Ch.8.12.

2 In Ezra, 725.—*C.*

y Ezr.2.35.

3 In Ezra, 3630. The children of Magbish, 157 (Ezr. 2. 30), are wanting in Nehemiah's register.—*C.*

z 1 Ch. 24. 7. Ezr. 2. 36; 10.18.

a Ezr.2. 37; 10. 20. 1 Ch.24.14.

b Ezr.2.38; 10.22.

c Ezr. 2. 39; 10. 21. 1 Ch.24.8.

d Ezr.2.40. ch. 11.15–18; 12.8,27.

e Or *Hodaviah,* Ezr. 2. 40, or *Judah,* Ezr.3.9.

f Ezr.2.41. 1 Ch. 25. 2. ch. 12. 8, 9, 24, 28, 29; 11.17.

4 In Ezra, 128.—*C.*

g Ezr. 2. 42. 1 Ch. xxvi. 9, 14, 17. ch.12.25; 11.19.

5 In Ezra, 139.—*C.*

h Ezr.2.43–54. 1 Ch. 9.2. Jos.9.23,27. Le.27. 2–8.

i Or, *Siaha,* Ezr.2. 44.

k Or, *Shamlai,* Ezr.2.46.

6 There are some families named here which are not in Ezra, as in ver. 22, and ver. 48, 49, 51, 52, which are all omitted in Ezra. For it must be considered that one of these accounts was taken by Ezra in Babylon, the other by Nehemiah in Judea. And therefore it is no wonder that a greater number are sometimes mentioned in Nehemiah than in Ezra, for in the first account that was taken of them many were ignorant of their genealogy; but before the last, the book of their genealogy was found. Lightfoot remarks, that the matter is to be apprehended thus: 'That Nehemiah found that list of those that came up in the first of Cyrus, as it was taken then, and that he called over the names of the families as they lay in order there. He observed the order of that list in calling and listing them.'—*I.*

23 The children of [g]Bezai, three hundred twenty and four.[9]

24 The children of [h]Hariph, an hundred and twelve.

25 The children of [i]Gibeon, ninety and five.

26 The men of [k]Beth-lehem and Netophah, an hundred fourscore and eight.[1]

27 The men of [l]Anathoth, an hundred twenty and eight.

28 The men of [m]Beth-azmaveth, forty and two.

29 The men of [n]Kirjath-jearim, Chephirah, and Beeroth, seven hundred forty and three.

30 The men of [o]Ramah and Gaba, six hundred twenty and one.

31 The men of [p]Michmas, an hundred and twenty and two.

32 The men of [q]Beth-el and Ai, an hundred twenty and three.

33 The men of the other [r]Nebo, fifty and two.

34 The children of the other [s]Elam, a thousand two hundred fifty and four.

35 The children of [t]Harim, three hundred and twenty.

36 The children of [u]Jericho, three hundred forty and five.

37 The children of [x]Lod, Hadid, and Ono, seven hundred twenty and one.[2]

38 The children of [y]Senaah,[3] three thousand nine hundred and thirty.

39 ¶ The priests: the children of [z]Jedaiah, of the house of Jeshua, nine hundred seventy and three.

40 The children of [a]Immer, a thousand fifty and two.

41 The children of [b]Pashur, a thousand two hundred forty and seven.

42 The children of [c]Harim, a thousand and seventeen.

43 ¶ The[d] Levites: the children of Jeshua, of Kadmiel, *and* of the children of [e]Hodevah, seventy and four.

44 The singers: the [f]children of Asaph, an hundred forty and eight.[4]

45 The [g]porters: the children of Shallum, the children of Ater, the children of Talmon, the children of Akkub, the children of Hatita, the children of Shobai, an hundred thirty and eight.[5]

46 ¶ The [h]Nethinims: the children of Ziha, the children of Hashupha, the children of Tabbaoth,

47 The children of Keros, the children of [i]Sia, the children of Padon,

48 The children of Lebana, the children of Hagaba, the children of [k]Shalmai,[6]

traitors amongst and within us: and every man's family ought to be his immediate concern. He has need to watch over them night and day that he may preserve them from the destroyer. Important records should be preserved, as they may be of use afterwards. But woe to those who, having given their names to the Lord, afterwards look back and return to the world! though God will compensate the loss of them to his church in the accession of others.

49 The children of Hanan, the children of Giddel, the children of Gahar,

50 The children of Reaiah, the children of Rezin, the children of Nekoda,

51 The children of Gazzam, the children of Uzza, the children of Phaseah,

52 The children of Besai, the children of Meunim, the children of [l]Nephishesim,

53 The children of Bakbuk, the children of Hakupha, the children of Harhur,

54 The children of [m]Bazlith, the children of Mehida, the children of Harsha,

55 The children of Barkos, the children of Sisera, the children of Tamah,

56 The children of Neziah, the children of Hatipha.

57 ¶ The [n]children of Solomon's servants: the children of Sotai, the children of Sophereth, the children of Perida,

58 The children of Jaala, the children of Darkon, the children of Giddel,

59 The children of Shephatiah, the children of Hattil, the children of Pochereth of Zebaim, the children of [o]Amon.

60 All[p] the Nethinims and the children of Solomon's servants *were* three hundred ninety and two.

61 And[q] these *were* they which went up *also* from Tel-melah, Tel-haresha, Cherub, Addon, and Immer; but they could not show their father's house, nor their seed,[6] whether they *were* of Israel.

62 The children of Delaiah, the children of Tobiah, the children of Nekoda, six hundred forty and two.[7]

63 ¶ And [r]of the priests: the children of Habaiah, the children of Koz, the children of Barzillai, (which took *one* of the daughters of Barzillai[s] the Gileadite to wife, and was called after their name,)

64 These sought their register *among* those that were reckoned by genealogy, but it was not found: therefore were they, as polluted, put from the priesthood.

65 And [t]the Tirshatha[8] said unto them, that they should not eat of the most holy things till there stood *up* a priest with [u]Urim and Thummim.

66 ¶ The [x]whole congregation together *was* forty and two thousand three hundred and threescore;

67 Besides their [y]man-servants and their maid-servants, of whom *there were* seven thousand three hundred thirty and seven; and they had two hundred forty and five singing-men and singing-women.

68 Their horses, seven hundred thirty and six; their mules, two hundred forty and five;

69 *Their* camels, four hundred thirty and five; six thousand seven hundred and twenty asses.

70 ¶ And[z] some[9] of[a] the chief of the fathers gave unto the work. The [b]Tirshatha gave to the treasure a thousand drams of gold, fifty basons, five hundred and thirty priests' garments.

71 And *some* of the chief of the fathers gave to the treasure of the work[1] twenty thousand drams of gold, and two thousand and two hundred pound of silver.[2]

72 And *that* which [c]the rest of the people gave *was* twenty thousand drams of gold, and two thousand pound of silver, and threescore and seven priests' garments.

73 So the priests, and the Levites, and the porters, and the singers, and *some* of the people, and the Nethinims, and all Israel, [d]dwelt in their cities; and when the [e]seventh month came, the children of Israel *were* in their cities.

CHAPTER VIII.

1 *The religious manner of reading and hearing the law.* 9 *Nehemiah, Ezra, and the Levites comfort the people.* 13 *The forwardness of them to hear and be instructed.* 16 *They keep the feast of tabernacles.*

AND all [a]the people gathered themselves together as one man into the street that *was* before [b]the water-gate; and they spake unto Ezra the [c]scribe to bring the [d]book of the law of Moses, which the LORD had commanded to Israel.[1]

2 And Ezra the priest [e]brought the law before the congregation, both of [f]men and women, and all that could hear with understanding,[2] upon the [g]first day of the seventh month.

3 And he [h]read therein before the street that *was* before the water-gate[3] from the morning[4] until mid-day,[5] before the men and the women, and those that could understand: and the [i]ears of all the people *were attentive* unto the book of the law.

4 And Ezra the scribe stood upon a [6]pulpit of wood,[7] which they had made for the purpose; and [k]beside him stood Mattithiah, and Shema, and Anaiah, and Urijah, and Hilkiah, and Maaseiah, on his right hand; and on his left

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l *Nephusim*, Ezr. 2.50.

m *Bazluth*, Ezr. 2.52.

n Ezr.2.55-57. 1 Ki. 9.21.ch.11.3.

o Or, *Ami*, Ezr. 2.57.

p Ezr.2.58. ch. 11.3. ver.57.

q Ezr.1.59,60.

6 Or, *pedigree*.

7 In Ezra, 652.—*Note*, These variations, so far from forming any *a priori* evidence against the divine inspiration and authority of Ezra and Nehemiah, afford, on the contrary, the strongest evidence, at least, of their integrity. Had they been forming a 'cunningly devised fable,' the one would have minutely copied the other; but as truth was the object of both, each copied the register he formed or found (see ch. 7. 5), and each was correct, according to the time and place at which it was taken, varying, as the one refers to leaving Babylon, the other to arriving at Jerusalem, but agreeing when the genealogical and congregational families were summed up together, and thus amounting to 42,360.—*C.*

r Ezr.2.61-63.

s 2 Sa.17.27; 19.31. 1 Ki.2.7.

t Or, *the governor*, ch.8.9;10.1. Ezr.2.63.

8 It is the opinion of Jacobus Capellus, that Zerubbabel is here meant by the Tirshatha. Whosoever he was, he expresses his hope that God might in time restore the Urim and Thummim (as he had done the nation), and so give answer about obscure and difficult matters, as he had done in former ages. But till then these priests were not admitted to partake of the most holy things, because it did not appear by good proof that they were of the family of the priests; and not to appear, and not to be, are the same thing in law. But the Talmudists, as the same person observes, interpret these words as if it had been said, Till the dead rise, or till the Messiah come. For after the first temple was destroyed the cities of the Levites, with their suburbs, were wanting, and so were Urim and Thummim, and the kings of the house of Judah (*Patrick*). The expression is by many understood as amounting to a perpetual prohibition, as if the Tirshatha had said that they should never eat of the most holy things.—*I.*

u Ex. 28. 30. Nu. 27. 21;7.89. Ju.1.1,4,9. Col.2. 3.

x Ezr. 2. 64–70, with 1 Ch.21.5. 2 Ch. 17. 14–18. Je.23.3;31.7.

y Is.14.1,2; 61.5. Je. 27.7.

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z What follows is different from Ezr. 2. 68–70.

9 Heb. *part*.

a 1 Ch.29.3,6,9. 2 Co. 8.3,12;7.9.

b ch.10.1.

1 The whole oblation amounted to about £60,000 sterling.

2 Ezra (Ezr.2.69) estimates the donations of the chieftains at 61,000 drams of gold, 5000 pounds of silver, but mentions no contribution from the Tirshatha or people. These differences, however, are no contradictions, but differ merely as all running accounts must do when taken at different periods.—*C.*

c Job 34.10. Ro.2.11. Ga.3.28. Col.3.11. 1 Pe. 1.17. 1 Ti.5.17.

d Ezr.2.70. ch.8.9;xi. xii. Zec.1.11,16. Is.12.1 -6.

e Le. 23. 24-42. Nu. xxix.

CHAP. VIII.

B.C. 444.

a Ezr.3.1. Ju.20.1.

b ch.3.26;ver.16.

c Ezr.7.6. Mat.23.2, 34.

d 2 Ch.34.15. Mal.4. 4. De.31.9-13.

1 Which God had not only commanded to be publicly, and with peculiar solemnity, read every seventh year (De. 31. 10), but which he had commanded them to 'teach diligently to their children,' to speak of in all places and upon all occasions, and bind for frontlets between their eyes, and inscribe on the posts of their doors and their gates, De. 6. 6–9.—*C.*

e De.31.11–13. Is. 8. 20.

f 1 Pe.3.7. Ga.3.28.

2 Heb. *that understood in hearing*.

g Le.23.24. Nu.29.1-6. 1 Ki.8.2.

h Ac.13.15,27;15.21.

3 The Water-gate appears to have been situated on the southern side of the temple court, leading from it into Ophel, where the priests and temple servants dwelt. A gateway has recently been discovered in the massive wall, with a channel for water hewn in the rock beneath it, and running down through Ophel. —*P.*

4 Heb. *from the light*.

5 The first day of the seventh month of the sacred year, answering to September and October, was the New-year's Day of the civil year. The retirement at mid-day would not therefore be on account of the heat, but for food and rest; for 'the Lord desireth mercy and not sacrifice,' Mat.9.13. The morning or sunrise was a little before six o'clock.—*C.*

i Ps.81.13;85.8. Lu. 19.48. Ac.10.14. Is.55.3.

6 Heb. *tower of wood*.

7 Rather a 'platform,' for it contained fourteen persons. —*C.*

k Ga.2.9. Phi.1.1.

CHAPTER VIII. [Ver. 1. 'The book of the law of Moses' is a proper name, and was employed and understood by the Jews as definitely as we employ the name Pentateuch. It is interesting to observe, 1. That the people all knew of the existence of such a book, and that they were acquainted with its general contents. 2. That they were aware that the book was in the possession of Ezra. It is in the highest degree probable that the book referred to was the original autograph committed by Moses to the custody of the priests, and laid up beside the ark. *P.*]

REFLECTIONS.—Not strong walls, but knowledge of and obedience to God, are the great safety of cities and nations. Nothing is more necessary for the establishment or preservation of true religion than a diligent study and thorough acquaintance with the word of God. Men, women, and children ought to vie with each other in their study and knowledge of it. And it is a great pleasure to faithful preachers to have hearers who hunger and thirst after it. Not only ought God's word to be read, but also explained and enforced on the conscience. And solemn prayers and praises should be joined with every public religious instruction. Sermons bid fair for success when the hearers are solemnly attentive. Nor will those who relish the word of God ever think the time long which is spent in hearing. Short sermons and soon-wearied hearers are sad tokens of cold and careless hearts. O what a happy presage it is when God's law cuts men's consciences to the quick, and makes them weep from the heart! Penitent mourning makes way for spiritual mirth. They who sow in tears shall reap in joy. And it is the pleasantest part of a minister's work to com-

hand, Pedaiah, and Mishael, and Malchiah, and Hashum, and Hashbadana, Zechariah, *and* Meshullam.

5 And Ezra [l]opened the book in the sight[8] of all the people; (for he was above all the people;) and when he opened it, all the people stood[m] up:

6 And Ezra [n]blessed the LORD, the great God: and all the people answered, Amen, Amen, with [o]lifting up their hands; and they [p]bowed their heads, and worshipped the LORD with *their* faces to the ground.

7 Also Jeshua, and Bani, and Sherebiah, Jamin, Akkub, Shabbethai, Hodijah, Maaseiah, Kelita, Azariah, Jozabad, Hanan, Pelaiah, and the Levites, caused the people to understand the law; and the people *stood* in their place.

8 So they read in the book in the law of God [q]distinctly, and gave the sense, and caused *them* to understand the reading.[9]

9 ¶ And Nehemiah, which *is* [r]the Tirshatha, and Ezra the priest the scribe, and the Levites that taught the people, said unto all the people, This day *is* [s]holy unto the LORD your God; mourn[t] not nor weep: for all the people [u]wept when they heard the words of the law.

10 Then he said unto them, Go your way, eat the fat,[1] and drink the sweet, and [x]send portions unto them for whom nothing is prepared; for *this* day *is* holy unto our LORD: neither be ye sorry; for [y]the joy of the LORD is your strength.[2]

11 So the Levites stilled all the people,[3] saying, [z]Hold your peace; for the day *is* holy; neither [a]be ye grieved.

12 And all the people went their way to eat, and to drink, and to send portions, and to make great mirth, because they had understood the words that were declared unto them.

13 ¶ And on the second day were gathered together the chief of the fathers of all the people, the priests, and the Levites, unto Ezra the scribe, even [b]to understand the words of the law.

14 And they found written in the law which the LORD had commanded by[4] Moses, that the children of Israel should dwell in booths in the feast of the seventh month:[5]

15 And that they should [d]publish and proclaim in all their cities, and in Jerusalem, saying, Go forth unto the mount,[3] and fetch olive-branches,[6] and pine-branches, and myrtle-branches, and palm-branches, and branches of thick trees, to make booths, as *it is* written.

16 ¶ So the people went forth, and brought *them*, and made themselves booths, every one [f]upon the roof of his house,[7] and in their courts, and in [g]the courts of the house of God, and in the [h]street of the water-gate, and in the street of the [i]gate of Ephraim.

17 And all the congregation of them that were come again out of the captivity made booths, and sat [k]under the booths: for since the days of Jeshua the son of Nun unto that day had not the children of Israel done [l]so:[8] and there was very great gladness.

18 Also day by day, from the first day unto the last day, he [m]read in the book of the law of God: and they kept the feast seven days; and on the eighth day *was* a solemn assembly, according unto the manner.

CHAPTER IX.

1 *A solemn general fast and humiliation.* 4 *The Levites make a religious confession of God's goodness, and of the national sins.*

NOW in the twenty and fourth day of [a]this month the children of Israel were assembled with [b]fasting, and with sackclothes, and [c]earth upon them.

2 And the seed of Israel [d]separated themselves from all strangers,[1] and stood and [e]confessed their sins, and the iniquities of their fathers.

3 And they stood up in their place, and [f]read in the book of the law of the LORD their God *one* fourth part of the day; and *another* fourth part they confessed, and [2]worshipped the LORD their God.[3]

4 ¶ Then stood up upon the [g]stairs,[4] of the Levites, Jeshua, and Bani, Kadmiel, Shebaniah, Bunni, Sherebiah, Bani, *and* Chenani, and [h]cried with a loud voice unto the LORD their God.

5 Then the Levites, Jeshua, and Kadmiel, Bani, Hashabniah, Sherebiah, Hodijah, Shebaniah, *and* Pethahiah, said, Stand up[5] *and* bless the LORD your God for ever and ever; and blessed be thy glorious name, which is exalted above all blessing and praise.

6 Thou, *even* thou, [i]*art* LORD alone: thou hast made heaven, the heaven of heavens, with all their host, the earth, and all *things* that *are* therein, the seas, and all that *is* therein, and thou [k]preservest them all;[6] and the host of heaven worshippeth thee.

7 Thou *art* the LORD the God, who didst choose Abram, and broughtest him forth out of Ur of the Chaldees, and gavest him the name of Abraham;

8 And foundest his heart faithful before thee, and madest a covenant with him, to give

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l Lu.4.17.
[8] Heb. *eyes.*
m Ju 3.20.1 Ki.8.14.
n 1 Ch.29.20; 16. 30. Ps.41 13.72 19.
o Ge.14.22. Ex.9.33. Ge.24.22. Ps.28.2 63.4; 134.2. 1 Ti. 2.8.
p Ge.24.26. Ex.4.31 2 Ch.7.3 20.18 29.30. Ne.8.6.
q ver. 7. Hab. 2. 2. Mal.2.7. Mat.24.15. 2 20. Is.30.8. Ac.28.23.
[9] The Hebrew in which Moses wrote was at this time to the Jews nearly an unknown tongue; the Chaldee, a cognate dialect, having come into use during the captivity in Babylon. The auditory, therefore, and especially the younger part, could not understand the law without translation, and all would require that exposition which would lead them from the ceremonies to Christ, 'the end of the law for righteousness,' Ro. 10.4. C.
r Or, *the governor*, ch.10.1 7.65,70. 1.21 2. 63.
s Le.23.24. De.16.10, 11,14,15. Is.12.1-6.
t Ec.3.4, with Is. 22. 12,13.
u 2 Ki.22.11,19. Is.66. 2. Ac.2.37. Hab.3.16.
1 The law forbade the eating of fat, Le. 3. 16,17; 7.23,25. Does Ezra then authorize it? No, *Fat*, in Hebrew, is referred to vegetable as well as to animal food, as in Ps. 147. 14, 'He filleth them with the finest (literally, the *fat*) of wheat.' And in Ps. 81. 16, 'He should have fed them with the *fat* of wheat.' See also Ge.27.28.—*C.*
x Es.9.22. De.16.11, 14. Ja.2.15,16. 1 Jn.3.17.
y Pr.17.22. Ps.119.32; 138.3. Lu.1.74,75.
2 The joy inspired by the discovery of God's mercy in pardoning sin, and restoring our souls to his favour, and endowing us, not merely with an earthly but a heavenly inheritance, is the great source of strength, whether to will or to do, or to suffer.—*C.*
3 A goodly example, teaching that, in all remarkable revivals of religion, while spiritual emotion is encouraged, mere animal excitement should be suppressed.—*C.*
z Is.22.4. Ex.14.14.
a De.16.10,11,14,15. Ro.5.11.
b Or, *that they might instruct in the words of the law*, Mat.13.52. 1 Pe.4.11.
4 Heb. *in the hand of.*
c Le.23.34,40,42. De. 16.13.
5 It can scarcely be imagined that the feast of tabernacles was neglected during the reigns of David, Solomon, Asa, Jehoshaphat, Joash, or Hezekiah, and it is certainly recorded that it was celebrated immediately after the return from the captivity about 91 years before this under the government of Zerubbabel, Ezr. 3. 4. The meaning therefore must be that since the days of Joshua this feast had not been kept with such deep sorrow for sin, nor such overflowing thankfulness for mercy.—*C.*
d Le.23.4. Nu.10.10. Ps.81.3. De.16.16.
6 The Mount of Olives, which lies east of Jerusalem, opposite Moriah, and only separated from it by the narrow ravine of the Kidron.—*P.*
e Le.23.40. Is. 41.19; 55.13. Ke.21.5.

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f De.22.8. 2 Sa.11.2.
7 The roofs were flat, and for safety were required to have a battlement of stone, or a sufficient railing. De. 22.8.—*C.*
g 2 Ch.20.5; 33.5.
h ch.3.26. 12.37.
i 2 Ki.14. 13. ch. 12. 39, *ie.* in all the streets of the city.
k Jn.1.14. He.11.13.
l With such solemnity, cheerfulness, and devotion, ver.18.
8 See note, ver.14.
m De.31.10-13.

CHAP. IX.

a ch 8.2.
b 2 Sa.12.16. 1 Ki.21. 27. Is.22.12. Jonah 3.5, 6. Joe.1.13,14.
c Jos.7.6. 1 Sa. 4. 12. Job 2.12.
d Ezr. 10. 1-12. ch. 13. 3, 23-30. 2 Co.6.14-17.
1 Heb. *strange children.*
e Pr.28. 13. Je. 3. 13. ch.1.6. Ezr.9.6-15. Da. 9.3-16. 2 Ch.30.22. Le. 26.40. 1 Jn.1.9.
f ch.8.7,8. De.31.11, 12.
2 By prayer and praise.
3 This is decidedly the most extraordinary religious service upon record. On the first day of the month the people were assembled, as one man, at the feast of trumpets, ch. 8. 1. On the second was an assembly for studying the law (ch. 8. 13), and from that time till the last day of the meeting (ch. 8. 18) the reading and exposition of the word continued for six hours every day, with other six hours for confession of sin to God and solemn religious worship, that is, of sacrifice, singing, and prayer, ch. 9. 3. On the tenth was the day of atonement; on the fourteenth began the feast of tabernacles, which lasted seven days; on the twenty-fourth, the people and rulers separated themselves from all idolatrous strangers, and concluded the service with a solemn covenant to observe the law of the Lord.—*C.*
g Or, *scaffold*, ch. 8.4.
4 Hebrew, 'upon the ascent' probably the ascent from the court of the people to the court of the priests in the temple. This would give a commanding position to the speakers, and afford an opportunity to a very large number of hearing the addresses.—*P.*
h Ps.77.1; 130. 1. Jn. 11.43. Ac.7.60.
5 Europeans cannot easily form an idea of the readiness with which an Asiatic assembly can sit down in an open field, court, or street. And though the European Jews do not now practise the Asiatic mode of sitting, yet there can be little doubt it must have been adopted here, as the request to 'stand up' distinctly implies.—*C.*
i Is.42.8; 43.10; 44.6. Ps.83.18.
k He. 1. 3. Jn. 5. 17. Col. 1.17.
6 The heathens partitioned the various departments of earth, air, and water, &c., to different gods, exercising separate, independent, and often opposing rule; the Spirit of God ascribes all to Jehovah alone.—*C.*

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fort with the gospel of Christ those that mourn. For the gospel explained and believed, and the consolations of Christ experienced, effectually rejoice the heart, and qualify for the performance of duty or resistance of enemies. And a sense of God's redeeming kindness powerfully instigates to charitable benevolence. But how often the institutions of God's word are unknown to the most of professors! What a multitude of things will diligent searchers of the Scriptures find there, which they had forgotten or had never duly considered! It will convince them of many negligences and ignorances. Well spent are those hours which are occupied in earnest conversing with God by his word. And happy is the effect when such as have access to it speedily and cheerfully practise whatever they find therein commanded.

CHAPTER IX. [Ver. 5. *Stand up.* The com-

the land of the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Amorites, and the Perizzites, and the Jebusites, and the Girgashites, to give *it, I say,* to his seed, and [h]hast performed thy words; for thou *art* righteous:[7]

9 And[m] didst see the affliction of our fathers in Egypt, and heardest their cry by the Red sea:

10 And showedst signs[8] and wonders upon Pharaoh, and on all his servants, and on all the people of his land; for thou knewest that they dealt [n]proudly against them: so didst thou get thee a name,[9] as *it is* this day.

11 And thou didst divide the sea before them, so that they went through the midst of the sea on the dry land; and their persecutors thou threwest into the deeps, as a stone into the mighty waters.

12 Moreover, thou [o]leddest them in the day by a cloudy pillar, and in the night by a pillar of fire, to give them light in the way wherein they should go.

13 Thou[p] camest down also upon mount Sinai, and spakest with them from heaven, and gavest them right judgments, and [q]true laws, good statutes and commandments:

14 And madest known unto them thy [r]holy sabbath,[1] and commandedst them precepts, statutes, and laws, by the hand of Moses thy servant:

15 And [s]gavest them bread from heaven for their hunger, and [t]broughtest forth water for them out of the rock for their thirst, and promisedst them that they should [u]go in to possess the land which thou hadst sworn to give [2]them.[3]

16 But they and our fathers [v]dealt proudly, and hardened their necks, and hearkened not to thy commandments,

17 And refused to obey, neither were mindful of thy wonders that thou didst among them;[4] but hardened their necks, and in their rebellion appointed a captain to return to their bondage:[5] but thou *art* [w]a God ready to pardon, gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and [x]forsookest them not.

18 Yea, when they had made them a molten calf, and said, This *is* thy God that brought thee up out of Egypt, and had wrought great provocations;

19 Yet[a] thou, in thy manifold mercies, forsookest them not in the wilderness: the pillar of the cloud departed not from them by day, to lead them in the [y]way, neither the pillar of fire by night, to show them light, and the way wherein they should go.

20 Thou gavest also thy [b]good Spirit[6] to instruct them, and withheldest not thy manna from their mouth, and gavest them water for their thirst.

21 Yea, forty years didst thou sustain them in the wilderness, *so that* they [c]lacked nothing: their clothes waxed not old, and their feet swelled not.[7]

22 Moreover, thou [d]gavest them kingdoms and nations, and didst divide them into [e]corners: so they possessed the land of Sihon, and the land of the king of Heshbon, and the land of Og king of Bashan.

23 Their children also [e]multipliedst thou as the stars of heaven, and [f]broughtest them into the land concerning which thou hadst [g]promised to their fathers, that they should go in to possess *it.*

24 So the children went in and possessed the land, and thou [h]subduedst before them the inhabitants of the land, the Canaanites, and gavest them into their hands, with their kings, and the people of the land, that they might do with them as they would.

25 And they took [i]strong cities, and a fat land, and possessed houses full of all goods, wells[9] digged,[1] vineyards, and olive-yards, and fruit trees in abundance: so they did eat, and were filled, and became fat, and delighted themselves in thy great goodness.

26 Nevertheless they [k]were disobedient, and rebelled against thee, and [l]cast thy law behind their backs, and [m]slew thy prophets, which testified against them to turn them to thee, and they wrought great provocations.

27 Therefore thou [n]deliveredst them into the hand of their enemies, who vexed[2] them: and in the time of their trouble, when they cried unto thee, thou heardest *them* from heaven; and, according to thy manifold mercies, thou gavest them [o]saviours, who saved them out of the hand of their enemies.

28 But after they had [p]rest, they [q]did evil again before thee;[3] therefore leftest thou them in the hand of their enemies, so that they had the dominion over them: yet when they returned, and cried unto thee, thou heardest *them* from heaven; and [r]many times didst thou deliver them according to thy mercies;

29 And [s]testifiedst against them, that thou [t]mightest bring them again unto thy law: yet they dealt proudly, and hearkened not unto thy

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l Nu. xxxii. Jos. vi.–xxi.23.14.

7 Observing what is *right;* that is, what is ruled by the law of thine own veracity.—*C.*

m Ex.3.7,9.25; 14.10–31. Is.63.7–9. Ac.7.19, 34.

8 *Signs,* visible evidences of the divine wisdom, mercy, and power.—*C.*

n Ex.18.11,11.11; 5.2, 7,8. Job 40.12.

9 Not a mere title of honour, but a name descriptive of nature, as drawn from the evidences of providence.—*C.*

o Ex.13.21,22; 46.36, 37. Nu.9.15–23. Ps. 78. 14; 105.39. Is.48.21; 63. 12,13.

p Ex. xix. xx.–xxxi. Le.i.–xxvii. De.iv.–ix. Eze.20. 11. Ps. 147. 19, 20. Ac.7.38.

q Heb. *laws of truth,* Ps. 19. 8–10; cxix. Ro.7.12,14.

r Ex.16.23; 20. 8–11; 31.14–17. Le.xxiii. Nu. xxviii. xxix.

1 Not then for the first time promulgated, for it was instituted in paradise; but then revived from that neglect into which it had fallen through the sinful forgetfulness of men.—*C.*

s Ex.16.14,15. De.8. 3. Ps.78.24, 25; 105. 40, 41.

t Ex.17.6. Nu. 20. 9, &c.1 Co.10.3,4.

u Ex.23,23,31;34.11, 24. De.1.8. He.6.17.

2 Heb. *which thou hadst lift up thine hand to give them.*

3 In this beautiful public prayer there is a summary, brief but comprehensive, of the whole history contained in the Pentateuch. It begins with creation; it notices the call of Abram, and the leading events in the eventful history of his descendants down to the time of their settlement in Palestine. The prayer contains therefore a remarkable testimony to the authenticity and divine authority of the five books of Moses.—*P.*

x Ps.106.6,7, 13. Ex. 32.9.2 Ki.17.14.

4 Israel's forgetfulness of the wisdom and deliverances of God would scarcely be credible, if we did not know our own hearts. But let him that thinks it impossible Israel could have been so forgetful and ungrateful, only examine himself, and there he will find proof of the Scripture history, and see that 'as face answereth to face so the heart of man.' Pr.27.19.—*C.*

5 Though the narrative (Num. 14. 4) merely expresses the wish for a captain to lead them back to slavery; when it is compared with this confession, the actual appointment is evident. But is it credible that any people could resolve to return to slavery? Most credible—an epicurean people would prefer any bondage to the want of luxuries, Ex. 16. 3. Phi.3.19.—*C.*

y Heb. *a God of pardons,* Nu.14.18,19. Ex.34.6,7. Mi.7.18.

z 1 Ki.6.13; 8.57. Ps. 94.14. He.13.5.

a Eze. 20. 9, 14, 22. Ps.106.8.ver.17.

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b Nu.11.25–27. Is.63. 11. Ps.143.10.

6 The Spirit is the only sufficient instructor. Neither to teachers nor study, nor to genius, should we trust. The Spirit alone can teach us the things of Christ, Jn.14.26. 1 Co. 12, 3.—*C.*

c De.2.7; 8.4; 29.5. Ps. 34.10. Lu.22.35.

7 Either from want of shoes, from fatigue, or from disease, De. 29.5.—*C.*

d Ps. 44.2,3; 66.12; 78. 54–55; 135.10–12. Nu. 21.21–35. De.2.26–36; 3.1–17. Ac. 7.45.

8 Places of retirement, privacy, and safety, in which the corners and measurings were accurately and minutely marked, as indicative of my care to prevent disputes, and insure quiet possession.—*C.*

e Nu.xxvi. Ge. 15.5; 22 17.

f Ps.44.2, 3. Jos. iii.–xxi.

g Ge.12.7; 13. 15, 17; 15.18; 17.8; 26, 3; 28.13–15; 35.12.

h ver.22. Nu. 21.21–35. Jos.vi.–xii.

i Nu.13.28. De. 3. 5; 8.7–10; 6.10, 11; 9. 1; 11.9–12; 32.13. Ex. 3.8.

9 Or, *cisterns.*

1 The importance of wells in countries within or even approaching the tropics is generally very great. In more northern or southern latitudes, abundance of water renders its value less perceptible.—*Note,* Just so, in settled and supplied churches, the possession of a gospel ministry and ordinances is slightly estimated, but in less favourable circumstances the want is severely felt.—*C.*

k Ps. 78. 56–58; 106. 34–43. Eze. xvi. xxiii. Ju.1.–vi. x. &c. 2 Ki. 17.7–17.

l Eze. 23, 35. Ps. 50. 17. 1 Ki.14.9.

m 1 Sa. 22. 21. 1 Ki. 18.10; 19.2. 2 Ch.24.22; 36.15, 16. Je. 26. 20–23. Mat.21.35; 23. 34, 37. 1 Th.2.15.

n Ju. 2.14, 15; iii. iv. vi.x.–xii. xvi. Ps. 106.40–46. Le. 26. 14–39. De. 28.15–68; 32.21–26.

2 The whole of the book of Judges is an illustration of these statements. In the introduction to that book, ch. 2. 14, &c., we have a summary of the history which it contains, and an exposition of the principles according to which God regulated his dealings with the nation, in almost the same terms as are here employed.—*I.*

o 2 Ki. 13. 5; 14. 27 Ob.21. Ju.2.18; 3-9, 15; 4.6; 6.14; 11.35; 13. 5. 1 Sa.7.10.

p Jos.14.15. Ju.3.11, 30; 5.31; 8.28.

q De.32.15–26. Ju.2. 18,19; iii.–xi.

3 How strange that *rest* should lead to rebellion against God; but such has been human nature in all generations—calling upon God in the storm, forgetting him in the calm.—*C.*

r ver.17,27. Ju.2.18; 10.16. La.3.22. Ps. 106. 43.

s 2 Ki.17.13. 2 Ch.36. 15. Ho.6.5. Je.25.3–7; 17. 25; 26.5; 32.33.

t Am.3.12. Je.18.7, 8. 2 Ch.24.19.

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mon attitude of both Jews and Samaritans at prayer is a half-kneeling half-sitting posture,—the knees upon the ground, but the body thrown back so as to rest upon the heels, the hands being crossed in front, and the eyes fixed in humility on the ground. At certain parts of their devotional exercises they suddenly rise from this posture and stand upon their feet, raising their voices at the same time in praise to God. *P.*]

Ver. 6. ['Heaven,' the visible firmament, sun, moon, and stars; 'the heaven of heavens,' the immediate dwelling-place of God and all the holy angels. There is a beautiful summary of the universe given in this verse. God is adored as supreme creator, preserver, and governor. *P.*]

REFLECTIONS.—It is a great mercy when God's word burdens men's consciences with a sense of their sins; and when reformation from sin and fasting for it go hand in hand. Those fasts are made profitable in which men's souls are afflicted for their sins, the bands of wickedness are loosed, intimate fellowship with God enjoyed, and in which God's goodness leads to repentance. O what multitudes of mercies to us and to our fathers may a diligent observer of providence discover! What gracious calls and covenants! What deliver-

commandments, but sinned against thy judgments, (which [u]if a man do, he shall live in them;) and withdrew the shoulder, and hardened their neck, and would not hear:

30 Yet many years didst thou [z]forbear them, and [y]testifiedst against them by thy Spirit[4] in thy prophets; yet would they not give ear: therefore gavest thou them into the hand of the people of the lands.

31 Nevertheless, for thy [z]great mercies' sake thou didst not utterly consume them, nor forsake them; for thou *art* [a]a gracious and merciful God.

32 Now therefore, [b]our God, the great, the mighty, and the terrible God,[5] who keepest covenant and mercy, let not [c]all the trouble[6] seem little before thee that hath come upon us,[7] on our kings, on our princes, and on our priests, and on our prophets, and on our fathers, and on all thy people, since the [d]time of the kings of Assyria unto this day.

33 Howbeit thou *art* [e]just in all that is brought upon us; for thou hast done right, but we have done wickedly.

34 Neither have [f]our kings, our princes, our priests, nor our fathers, kept thy law, nor hearkened unto thy commandments and thy testimonies, wherewith thou didst testify against them.

35 For they [g]have not served thee in their kingdom,[8] and in thy great goodness that thou gavest them, and in the large and fat land which thou gavest before them; neither turned they from their wicked works.

36 Behold, we *are* [h]servants this day; and *for* the land that thou gavest unto our fathers, to eat the fruit thereof, and the good thereof, behold, we *are* servants in it:

37 And it yieldeth much increase unto [i]the kings whom thou hast set over us because of our sins: also they [k]have dominion over our bodies, and over our cattle, at their pleasure,[9] and we *are* in great distress.

38 And [l]because of all this we make a sure *covenant,* and write *it;* and our princes, Levites, *and* priests, seal[1] *unto it.*[2]

CHAPTER X.

1 *The names of those that sealed the covenant.* 29 *The points of the covenant.*

NOW those that sealed[1] *were,*[2] [a]Nehemiah the [b]Tirshatha, the son of Hachaliah, and Zidkijah,

2 Seraiah,[c] Azariah, Jeremiah,

3 Pashur, Amariah, Malchijah,

4 Hattush, Shebaniah, Malluch,

5 Harim, Meremoth, Obadiah,

6 Daniel, Ginnethon, Baruch,

7 Meshullam, Abijah, Mijamin,

8 Maaziah, Bilgai, Shemaiah: these *were* the priests.[3]

9 And the [d]Levites: both Jeshua the son of Azaniah, Binnui of the sons of Henadad, Kadmiel;

10 And their brethren, Shebaniah, Hodijah, Kelita, Pelaiah, Hanan,

11 Micha, Rehob, [e]Hashabiah,

12 Zaccur, Sherebiah, Shebaniah,

13 Hodijah, Bani, Beninu.

14 The chief of the people; [f]Parosh, Pahath-moab, Elam, Zatthu, Bani,

15 Bunni, Azgad, Bebai,

16 Adonijah, Bigvai, Adin,

17 Ater, Hizkijah, Azzur,

18 Hodijah, [g]Hashum, Bezai,

19 Hariph, Anathoth, Nebai,

20 Magpiash, Meshullam, Hezir,

21 Meshezabeel, Zadok, Jaddua,

22 Pelatiah, Hanan, Anaiah,

23 Hoshea, Hananiah, Hashub,

24 Hallohesh, Pileha, Shobek,

25 Rehum, Hashabnah, Maaseiah,

26 And Ahijah, Hanan, Anan,

27 Malluch, Harim, Baanah.

28 ¶ And [h]the rest of the people, the priests, the Levites, the porters, the singers, the Nethinims, and all they that had separated themselves from the people of the lands unto the law of God, their wives, their sons, and their daughters, every one [i]having knowledge, and having understanding;[4]

29 They [k]clave[5] to their brethren, their nobles, and entered into a curse, and into an oath, to walk in God's law, which was given by[6] Moses the servant of God, and to [l]observe and do all the commandments of the LORD our Lord, and his judgments and his statutes;

30 And that we would not give [m]our daughters unto the people of the land, nor take their daughters for our sons:

31 And[n] *if* the people of the land bring ware or any victuals on the sabbath-day to sell, *that* we would not buy it of them on the sabbath, or on the holy-day; and *that* we would leave the [o]seventh year, and the [p]exaction of every[7] debt.[8]

32 Also we made [q]ordinances for us, to charge ourselves yearly with the third part of a shekel for the service of the house of our God;[9]

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[u] Le.18.5. Eze. 20. 11. Lu.10.28. Ga.3.12. Ro.10.5.

[z] Ro.2.4. 2 Pe. 3. 9. Ps.86.15.

[y] 2 Ki.17.13. 2 Ch.36. 15. 1 Pe.1.11. 2 Pe.1.21. Is.lxiii. Ac.7.51.

4 How beautifully does the Old Testament coincide with the New in the doctrine of the Holy Spirit, as the fountain of all witness for God, Jn.15.26. 1 Jn.5.6. —*C.*

[z] Ps.106.8. Eze. 20. 11,14,22. 2 Ki.13.23. 2 Ch.30. 9. Ps.86.15. Ex. 34.6,7. ver.17,19.

[a] ch.1.5. Da.9.4. Ps. 105.8.

5 *Terrible* to sinners, to enemies, and even to believers, because of their acknowledged imperfections.—*C.*

[b] 2 Ch. xxviii.; 32.1–23. xxxiii. xxxv. xxxvi. 2 Ki. xxiv. xxv. Ezr. iv. v. ch. iii.–vi.

6 Heb. *weariness.*

7 Heb. *that hath found us.*

[c] 2 Ki. 15. 19, 29; 17. 3. Is.7.17,18; 8.7,8.

[d] De.32.4. Job 34.23. La.1.18; 3.39. Da.9.14.

[e] Da.9.8, 10, 11. Ps. 106.6,7. 2 Ch.xxi. xxiv. xxv. xxviii. xxxiii. xxxvi.

[f] De. 32. 12–18; 28. 47. Ro.2.4,5.

8 Every kingdom is bound, as such, to serve Christ, and will stand accountable to God for any neglect or resistance of this great end of their creation.—*C.*

[g] De.28.48. 2 Ch.12. 8. Ezr. 9. 9, *i.e.* tributary to the Persians.

[i] Ezr. 6.8; 7.24. De. 28.33.

[k] De.28.31,43,51. ch. 5.3–5.

9 There were no written laws, no constitutional charter, the sole law was the will of the king.—*C.*

[l] ver.34–37. 2 Ch.15. 12,13; 29. 10; 34. 30, 31. De.29.12–15. Ezr.10.3. Is.44.4,5. ch.10.29.

1 Heb. are *at the sealing.*

2 This was a great and solemn act of national covenanting. First, there was the national adoration of God as supreme in creation and providence; then there was a public confession of national sin and repeated acts of rebellion; then there was clear acknowledgment of the justice of God as displayed in national punishment; and finally there was the solemn covenant, written and sealed, to acknowledge and serve God faithfully in all time to come. —*P.*

CHAP. X.

1 Heb. *at the sealings.*

2 Three orders, princes, Levites, and priests, are appointed to seal the covenant (ch. 9. 38), as representatives and chiefs of the nation. When they come to seal, however, this order is reversed, and after the governor, who seals first, for example, the sealing is in the order of priests, Levites, and princes. A change, not without meaning, as a memorial that the vanity of precedence should find no place in the service of God, Ja.1. 1 4.—*C.*

[a] ch.1.2.

[b] Or, *the governor,* ch.7.56,70. Ezr.2.63; 1. 8.

[c] ch.11.11; 12.1–7.

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3 Chief fathers among them.—[This does not imply that Nehemiah was a priest. He signed at the head of the whole nation, as Tirshatha or governor; after him followed the priests as named.—*P.*]

[d] Chief ones, ch.12. 8,9.

[e] ch.11.15,22.

[f] ch.7.8–24. Ezr.2.3–19. Only the chief of the priests, Levites, and people subscribed it.

[g] ch.7.22.

[h] Ezr.2.42–61; x.ch. 7.45–63; 13.3,30. 2 Co.6. 14–17.

[i] Je.4.2. Ec.5.1,2.

4 This covenant was acknowledged by all whose education and attainments enabled them to form a judgment of its requirements and obligations. None, however, sealed but the nobles; the rest gave in their adhesion by a solemn acknowledgment that 'cursed is every one that continueth not in all things written in the book of the law to do them,' and a solemn vow that, through the grace which they sought by sacrifice and prayer, they would observe it to the end, Ps. 119. 33, 34.—*C.*

[k] De.29.12,14,19. ch. 5.12,13. Ps. 119. 106. 2 Ch.15.12–34; 31.32.

5 Or, *adhered.* They gave their consent to what their representatives had done, adding an oath by which they bound themselves to observe the law, and an imprecation if they should fail in the fulfilment of their oath.—*I.*

6 Heb. *by the hand of.*

[l] De.4.2; 5.32; 12.32. Ps.119.5,6,32. Jn.15.14. Lu.1.6. 1 Co.15.58. Tit. 2.11–14. Ac.24.16. 2 Co. 1.12.

[m] Ex.34.16. De.7.3. Ge.6.2. Ezr.9.1–3; 10. 10–12.

[n] Ex. 20. 10; 23. 16. Le.23.3, 21, 35; 16. 29. De. 5. 12. ch.13.15–22. Je.17.21.

[o] Ex. 23. 10, 11. Le. 25.4.

[p] ch.5.7. De.15.1,2. Is.58.6.

7 Heb. *every hand.*

8 That is, such debts as the impoverished people owed to the rich—a relaxation of right, which mercy still requires of believers, because they ask of God to forgive them the debts they cannot pay to him, Mat.6.12.—*C.*

[q] Ge.28.22. Pr.3.9,10. 2 Sa.24.24.

9 The law (Ex. 30. 12) has been adduced to authorize an annual poll-tax of half a shekel for the tabernacle or temple service; but there appears in the law itself no authority for an annual tax upon any, but merely one payment from males on arriving at the age of twenty. This annual payment of half a shekel was, therefore, not the Mosaic ordinance modified, but an ordinance of the nobles, Levites, and priests, and most probably sanctioned by some of the contemporary prophets. —*C.*

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ance, direction, provision, and establishment! What giving of the law and of the promises! What warnings against and pardons of our sins! What amazing patience and long-suffering! What well-timed and well-adjusted corrections! And it is necessary to confess our fathers' iniquities as well as our own, or we make ourselves heirs to them, and shall share in the punishment of them. We must likewise search out the aggravations of our sins, and seek not to exculpate ourselves, but to justify God. O what a root of wickedness and woe is the pride of men's heart! Often by it we revolt from the free and honourable service of God into the basest slavery. But God's infinite mercy, and his constant adherence to his new relation with Christ, and in him with us, ought to encourage us to return to him under the deepest sense of our provocations. And solemn evangelical promises to God is peculiarly proper when we have notoriously departed from him, are sharply corrected by him, and earnestly desire to return to him.

CHAPTER X. [Ver. 28. All, except infants incapable of understanding the meaning of the act, gave their formal and public assent to the covenant. Four

33 For the [r]show-bread, and for the continual meat-offering, and for the continual burnt-offering, of the sabbaths, of the new-moons, for the set feasts, and for the holy *things*, and for the sin-offerings, to make an atonement for Israel, and *for* all the work of the house of our God.

34 And we [s]cast the lots among the priests, the Levites, and the people, for the [t]wood-offering,[1] to bring *it* into the house of our God, after the houses of our fathers, [u]at times appointed, year by year, to burn upon the altar of the LORD our God, as *it is* written in the law:

35 And [x]to bring the first-fruits of our ground, and the first-fruits of all fruit of all trees, year by year, unto the house of the LORD:

36 Also the [y]first-born of our sons, and of our cattle, (as *it is* written in the law,) and the firstlings of our herds and of our flocks, to bring to the house of our God, [z]unto the priests that minister in the house of our God:

37 And [a]*that* we should bring the first-fruits of our dough, and our offerings, and the fruit of all manner of trees, of wine, and of oil, unto the priests, [b]to the chambers of the house of our God; and the [c]tithes of our ground unto the Levites, that the same Levites might have the tithes in all the cities of our tillage.

38 And the priest the son of Aaron shall be with the Levites, [d]when the Levites take tithes: and the Levites shall bring up the tithe of the tithes[2] unto the house of our God, to the chambers, into the treasure-house.

39 For the children of Israel and the children of Levi [e]shall bring the offering of the corn, of the new wine, and the oil, unto the chambers, where *are* the vessels of the sanctuary, and the priests that minister, and the porters, and the singers: and we [f]will not forsake the house of our God.

CHAPTER XI.

1 The rulers, voluntary men, and the tenth man chosen by lot, dwell at Jerusalem. 3 A catalogue of their names. 20 The residue dwell in other cities.

AND the [a]rulers of the people dwelt at Jerusalem: the rest of the people also [b]cast lots, to bring one of ten to dwell in Jerusalem the [c]holy city,[1] and nine parts *to dwell* in *other* cities.

2 And the people [d]blessed all the men that [e]willingly offered themselves to dwell at Jerusalem.[2]

3 ¶ Now these *are* the chief of the province that dwelt in Jerusalem: but in the cities of Judah dwelt every one in his possession in their cities, *to wit*, [f]Israel, the priests, and the Levites, and the Nethinims, and the children of Solomon's servants.[3]

4 And at Jerusalem dwelt *certain* of the children of Judah, and of the children of Benjamin. Of the children of Judah; Athaiah the son of Uzziah, the son of Zechariah, the son of Amariah, the son of Shephatiah, the son of Mahalaleel, of the children of [g]Perez;

5 And Maaseiah the son of Baruch, the son of Col-hozeh, the son of Hasaiah, the son of Adaiah, the son of Joiarib, the son of Zechariah, the son of [h]Shiloni.

6 All the sons of Perez that dwelt at Jerusalem *were* [i]four hundred threescore and eight valiant men.[4]

7 And these [k]*are* the sons of Benjamin; Sallu the son of Meshullam, the son of Joed, the son of Pedaiah, the son of Kolaiah, the son of Maaseiah, the son of Ithiel, the son of Jesaiah.

8 And after him Gabbai, Sallai, nine[5] hundred twenty and eight.

9 And Joel the son of Zichri *was* their [l]overseer; and Judah the son of Senuah *was* second over the city.

10 Of[m] the priests:[6] Jedaiah the son of Joiarib, Jachin.

11 Seraiah the son of Hilkiah, the son of Meshullam, the son of Zadok, the son of Meraioth, the son of Ahitub, *was* the [n]ruler of the house of God.[7]

12 And their brethren that did the work of the house *were* eight hundred twenty and two: and Adaiah the son of Jeroham, the son of Pelaliah, the son of Amzi, the son of Zechariah, the son of Pashur, the son of Malchiah,

13 And his brethren, chief of the fathers, two hundred forty and two: and Amashai the son of Azareel, the son of Ahasai, the son of Meshillemoth, the son of Immer,

14 And their brethren, mighty men of valour, [o]an hundred twenty and eight: and their overseer *was* Zabdiel, the son of[8] *one of* the great men.[9]

15 Also [p]of the Levites: Shemaiah the son

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[r] Le. 24. 5-10; 4. 13-21; xvi. 2 Ch.2.4; 24. 5-14. Nu.xv.xxviii.xxix.

[s] Pr. 18. 18; 16. 33. 1 Ch.xxiv.-xxvi.

[t] ch.13.30. Le.6.12. 1 Sa.2.15. Is.40.16, with Jos.9.27.1 Ch.9.2.

1 The furnishing of wood for the temple was the duty of the Nethinims (Ezr.8.20), but as few of them returned from Babylon(Ezr.2.58.Ne.7.60), this draft from the Levites and people became necessary to supply their places. In the time of Josephus (*Bell.* lii. c. 17, sec. 6) the day of the wood-offering had become a feast-day. —*C.*

[u] Le. xxiii. Nu. xxviii.xxix. Ex.23.14-17;34.22.

[x] Ex. 23. 19; 34. 26. Le.19.23.De.xxvi.

[y] Ex.13.2,12,13. Le. 27.27.Nu.18.15,16. De. 12.6.

[z] Nu. 18. 8-19. 1 Co. 9.6-14.Ga.6.6.

[a] Le. 23. 17. Nu. 15. 19-21; 18. 12, &c. De. 18.4;26.2.

[b] 1 Ch.9.26.2 Ch. 31. 11, &c.

[c] Le. 27. 20, 32. De. 14. 22. 2 Ch. 31. 5, 6, 12. ch.13.12. Nu.18.24-30.

[d] Nu.18.24-29.

2 This was enjoined, Nu. 18. 26, the whole covenant being an abridgment or popular memorandum of certain Mosaic ordinances, with such additions (ver. 32, 34) as the present circumstances rendered necessary. *C.* ——The tithes of all the produce of the fields were brought to the Levites; out of these a tenth part was given to the priests. This is what is called the *tithe of tithes*. When the people brought their tithes to the Levites, one of the priests was appointed to be present to inspect them, and to see that without fraud they tithed the tithes; that is, set out the tenth part of what they had received for the priests.—*I.*

[e] De.12.6, 11, 17; 14. 23. Mal.3.8.

[f] He.10.25. Ps.137.5, 6;122.9;27.4;84.10. De. 12.19.ch.13.10.

CHAP. XI.

[a] ch.7.4,5. Ps.122.5.

[b] Pr.18.18. ch.10.34. Ju. 20.9,10. 1 Ch. 6. 61; xxiv.-xxvi. Ac. 1. 24, 25.

[c] ver. 18. Is.48.2; 52. 1. Mat.4.5;27.53.

1 Called *holy*, not as possessing any infused holiness, which was impossible in wood and stone, and only possible with beings made after the image of the holy God; but *holy* in the sense of special separation and dedication to the service of God.—*C.*

[d] Commended, thanked, and prayed for them, De.24. 13. 1 Ki.1.47.1 Ch.16.43.

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[e] Ju.5.9. Ps.110.3.

2 Because it was a service of great danger, yet of the greatest importance, Jerusalem being the chief seat of religion, government, commerce, retreat, and defence.—*C.*

[f] ch.7.60, 73. Ezr. 2. 43, 55, 58, 70. 1 Ch.9.2-13.

3 This verse is somewhat obscure. The meaning appears to be:—"These are the chief men of the province of Judea who volunteered to reside in Jerusalem. Their names are recorded below; but in the other cities of Judah and Benjamin the general body of the people took up their abode, namely, the Israelites, or those of the ten tribes who had returned from captivity; the priests, the Levites," &c. The word *Israel* is used to show that a portion of the ten tribes had returned to their country.—*P.*

[g] Pharez, Ge.38.29. 1 Ch.9.4. Ru.4.18. Nu. 26.20,21.

[h] Ge.38.5.1 Ch.9.5.

[i] 1 Ch.9.6.

4 Men of activity.

[k] 1 Ch.9.7-9.

5 There were almost as many more of Benjamin than of Judah (who were but four hundred and sixty-eight), for though Mount Zion was in the tribe of Judah, yet the city of Jerusalem was in the tribe of Benjamin: which made them have a great desire to see it inhabited, and inflamed the minds of the most valiant, who were best able to defend it, to come and live there.—*Patrick.*

[l] Ge.19.9. 2 Ch.2.18; 34.12. Ac.20.28.

[m] 1 Ch.9.10-13.

6 The order of David (1 Ch. xxiv.) required the regular attendance of the priests in courses; but each course was accustomed to retire to their respective cities, when their time of service was expired: these had relinquished them homes to partake with their brethren in all their toils and dangers, and to encourage them by their example of devotedness to their country, and piety to God.—*C.*

[n] Or, *duke*, 1 Ch.9. 11. 2 Ch. 19. 11; 31. 23. Nu.3.32.

7 Most probably the same called 'captain of the temple,' Ac. 8. 24. An officer whose duty was to preserve order, suppress disturbances, and protect the worshippers. *C.*——He had the supreme command in all the secular affairs of the temple, as the high-priest had in all the spiritual affairs.—*P.*

[o] In all 1192, 1 Ch. 9. 13.

8 Or, *the son of Haggedolim.*

9 The margin renders it as a proper name, which appears preferable to that in the text.—*C.*

[p] 1 Ch.7.14 19.

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classes signed and sealed as representatives of the whole nation, namely, (1) Nehemiah, as governor; (2) the priests; (3) the Levites; and (4) the chiefs of the people. After these had signed, the people themselves, by a public act, bound themselves to the engagement of their leaders. *P.*]

Ver. 31. [They engaged to observe the strict letter of the Mosaic law contained in Ex. 23. 10, 11 and Le. 25. 4; namely, to leave the land fallow on the seventh or sabbatical year. *P.*]

Ver. 33. [This was a national tax imposed upon the whole body of the people for the support of the established religion. It was independent of all free-will or voluntary contributions and offerings. It was independent of the regular contributions of wood for the fires of the temple, and of the first-fruits, the redemption-money of the first-born, and in fact of all the ordinary tithes and offerings enjoined in the law. *P.*]

REFLECTIONS.—It is honourable to be solemnly and publicly bound in the service of God; and especially is it becoming when they who have the lead in civil or sacred offices, or in solemn fasting, are correspondently forward in regular covenanting with God. But in all our covenants of duty a respect must be had to all God's commandments; and a peculiar guard be placed over those temptations which we have seen to be the occasion of other men's falls and to prove most dangerous to ourselves. They ought to be framed in direct opposition to that of which we have been guilty, or to which we are most likely to be tempted. And plainness and caution are indispensably necessary in the whole frame of them, that all who swear them, or are bound by them, may readily know what obligations they come under. ——

CHAPTER XI. REFLECTIONS.—The church of God, even on earth, ought to be a *holy city*. And since Jesus her great ruler and his apostles and prophets dwell in her, men ought cheerfully to fix their residence there. But, alas! regard to carnal advantages or sinful liberties, or fear of persecution or expense, often keep many from the church or cause of God! It

THE CORINTHIAN CANAL—CONNECTING THE COUNTRIES OF ATHENS AND SPARTA, THE CITIES WHICH SENT AN EMBASSY TO SUSA, CAPITAL OF PERSIA, ABOUT THE TIME THE EVENTS RECORDED IN THE ELEVENTH CHAPTER OF NEHEMIAH TOOK PLACE. [NEHEMIAH, xi: 1.]—"And the rulers of the people dwelt at Jerusalem." The things recorded in the eleventh chapter of Nehemiah are connected, by the calculation of Archbishop Usher, with B. C. 445. This was the year when the thirty years peace between Athens and Sparta was completed, and about the time, strange to say, that after the death of Cimon, negotiations for peace were opened between Athens and Persia, and an Athenian embassy under Callias was sent to Susa, capital of Persia. Thus we have the strange historical relationship of Greece and Palestine to Persia. About this time the Persian empire extended from India to Egypt, including the wide regions between the Black Sea, the Caucasus, the Caspian Sea, the Persian Gulf, the Indian Ocean, and the Arabian desert, and parts of Europe and Africa. We give a picture here of the Corinthian canal. The Ismuth of Corinth separated the ancient nations of Athens and Sparta.

of Hashub, the son of Azrikam, the son of Hashabiah, the son of Bunni;

16 And Shabbethai and Jozabad, of the chief of the Levites, *had* the oversight[9] of the [q]outward business[1] of the house of God.

17 And Mattaniah the son of Micha, the son of [r]Zabdi, the son of Asaph, *was* the principal to begin the thanksgiving in prayer;[2] and Bakbukiah the second among his brethren, and Abda the son of Shammua, the son of Galal, the son of Jeduthun.

18 All the Levites in the [s]holy city *were* two hundred fourscore and four.

19 Moreover, the porters, Akkub, Talmon, and their brethren that kept the gates,[3] *were* an hundred seventy and two.

20 ¶ And[t] the residue of Israel, of the priests *and* the Levites, *were* in all the cities of Judah, every one in his inheritance.

21 But[u] the Nethinims dwelt in [4]Ophel:[5] and Ziha and Gispa *were* over the Nethinims.

22 The overseer also of the Levites at Jerusalem *was* Uzzi the son of Bani, the son of Hashabiah, the son of Mattaniah, the son of Micha: of the sons of Asaph, the singers *were* over [x]the business of the house of God.[6]

23 For *it was* [y]the king's commandment concerning them, that a certain portion[7] should be for the singers, due for every day.[8]

24 And Pethahiah the son of Meshezabeel, of the children of [z]Zerah the son of Judah, *was* at[a] the king's hand[9] in all matters concerning the people.[1]

25 And for the villages, with their fields, *some* of the children of Judah dwelt at [b]Kirjath-arba, and *in* the villages thereof, and at Dibon,[c] and *in* the villages thereof, and at Jekabzeel,[d] and *in* the villages thereof,

26 And at Jeshua, and at [e]Moladah, and at Beth-phelet,[f]

27 And at [g]Hazar-shual, and at [h]Beersheba, and *in* the villages thereof,

28 And at [i]Ziklag, and at Mekonah, and *in* the villages thereof,

29 And at [k]En-rimmon, and at [l]Zareah, and at [m]Jarmuth,

30 Zanoah,[n] Adullam, and *in* their villages, at [o]Lachish, and the fields thereof, at [p]Azekah, and *in* the villages thereof. And they dwelt from [q]Beer-sheba unto the valley of Hinnom.

31 The children also of Benjamin [r]from [2]Geba[3] *dwelt* at[4] Michmash,[5] and Aija, and Beth-el, and *in* their villages,

32 *And* at [s]Anathoth, Nob, Ananiah,

33 Hazor, Ramah, [t]Gittaim,

34 Hadid, [u]Zeboim, Neballat,

35 Lod,[x] and Ono, the [y]valley of craftsmen.

36 And[z] of the Levites *were* divisions *in* Judah, *and* in Benjamin.[6]

CHAPTER XII.

1 *The priests and the Levites which came up with Zerubbabel.* 10 *The succession of high-priests.* 22 *Certain chief Levites in the days of Nehemiah and Ezra.* 27 *The solemnity of the dedication of the wall.* 44 *The offices of the priests and Levites appointed in the temple.*

NOW these *are* the [a]priests and the Levites that went up with Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, and Jeshua: [b]Seraiah, Jeremiah, Ezra,

2 Amariah, [c]Malluch, Hattush,

3 Shechaniah,[d] Rehum,[e] Meremoth,[f]

4 Iddo, [g]Ginnetho, Abijah,

5 Miamin,[h] Maadiah,[i] Bilgah,

6 Shemaiah, and Joiarib, Jedaiah,

7 Sallu,[k] Amok, Hilkiah, Jedaiah. These *were* the chief of the priests, and of their brethren, in the days of Jeshua.

8 Moreover, the Levites: [l]Jeshua, Binnui, Kadmiel, Sherebiah, Judah, *and* Mattaniah, *which was* over [m]the thanksgiving, he and his brethren.

9 Also Bakbukiah and Unni, their brethren, *were* over against them in the watches.

10 ¶ And [n]Jeshua begat Joiakim, Joiakim also begat [o]Eliashib, and Eliashib begat Joiada,

11 And Joiada begat Jonathan, and Jonathan begat Jaddua.[1]

12 And in the days of Joiakim were priests, the chief of the fathers: [p]of Seraiah, Meraiah; of Jeremiah, Hananiah;

13 Of Ezra, Meshullam; of Amariah, Jehohanan;

14 Of Melicu, Jonathan; of Shebaniah, Joseph;

15 Of Harim, [q]Adnah; of Meraioth, Helkai;

16 Of Iddo, Zechariah; of Ginnethon, Meshullam;

17 Of Abijah, Zichri; of Miniamin, of Moadiah, Piltai;

18 Of Bilgah, Shammua; of Shemaiah, Jehonathan;

19 And of Joiarib, [r]Mattenai; of Jedaiah, Uzzi;

20 Of Sallai, Kallai; of Amok, Eber;

21 Of Hilkiah, Hashabiah; of Jedaiah, Nethaneel.

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9 Heb. were *over.*

q 1 Ch.26. 29. ch. 10. 39.

1 Providing all that it was necessary to purchase from merchants or husbandmen for the service of the temple; and, probably, for keeping the exterior of the walls, roof, and approaches in order.—*C.*

r Zichri, 1 Ch. 9. 15. ch. 7.44.

2 Precentor, to give the key-note and air in singing the praises of God.—*C.*

s 1 Ki.11. 13. Ezr. 9. 8. Is.48.2;52. 1. Da.9.24. Re.11.2.ver.1.

3 Heb. *at the gates.*

t 1 Ch.9.17,18.

u ver. 3. 1 Ch. 9. 2. 2 Ch.27.3;33.14. ch.3.26, 27,31.

4 Or, *the tower.*

5 A suburb on the ridge immediately south of the temple. Two gates led from it by subterraneous ascending passages up to the temple court.—*P.*

x ch.12.8,9.

6 It is a curious fact, that skilful musicians were the persons selected, in the days of Josiah, to oversee the carpenters and masons in the repairs of the temple. See note on 2 Ch. 34. 12. Some similar appointment they seem to have had in the days of Nehemiah also.—*C.*

y Ezr.6.8,9;7.20-24.

7 Or, *a sure ordinance.*

8 The king of Persia knowing, most probably, from the habits of the Jews (Ps. 137. 1-3), that singing constituted an essential portion of the temple-service, had assigned a fixed salary to the choir.*C.*——The king here referred to can only be Ahasuerus, the Persian monarch. It is worthy of special note that he paid a fixed salary to the members of the choir who conducted the musical part of the temple worship. Darius had done so for the priests; his object, as stated by himself, having been, 'that they might offer sacrifices of sweet savour unto the God of heaven, and pray for the life of the king and his sons,' Ezr.6.10.—*P.*

z Ge. 38. 30. Nu. 26. 20.

a 1 Ch.18. 17;23. 28. A deputy in civil causes, or assistant to the governor.

9 Rather 'by the king's authority,' that is, not by appointment of Nehemiah, but by direct commission from the king.—*C.*

1 He was the royal commissioner, the agent to represent the king in the assemblies of the people, and to represent the people before the king.—*P.*

b Ge.23.2. Jos. 10. 3; 14.15;15.44.

c Dimonah, Jos. 15. 22.

d Kabzeel, Jos. 15. 21.

e Jos.15. 26;19.2.

f Jos.15. 27.

g Jos.15.28;19.2,3.

h Ju.20.1.1 Ki.4.25.

i Jos. 15. 31; 19. 5. 1 Sa.27.6;30.1.

k Jos. 15. 32. Ju. 20. 45.

l Jos.15. 33;19.41.

m Jos.10.3;15.35.

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2 Or, *of Geba.*

3 *Geba*, a Levitical city, about 6 miles north of Jerusalem. *Michmash* was situated 7 miles north of Jerusalem. It was famous as the scene of the rout of the Philistines by Jonathan, 1 Sa. 13. 5; and the encampment of Sennacherib, Is. 10. 28.—*C.*

4 Or, *to Michmash.*

5 Michmash is still a small village, bearing its old name in the Arabic form *Mukhmas*, and situated on the northern brow of a deep ravine which separates it from Geba. Geba must not be confounded with Gibeah of Saul, which lay to the south-west.—*Pearcer* Jerusalem.—*P.*

n Jos.15.21.

o Jos.15.39;10.3,5.

p Jos.10.10;15.35.

q Ju.15.1.Ju.20.1.

r Jos.18.24.

6 Or, *of Geba.*

s Jer.1.1.

t 2 Sa.4.3.

u 1 Sa.13.18.

x 1 Ch.8.12.ch.7.37.

y 1 Ch.4.14.

z Ge.49.7. Jos.xxi.

6 As it had been originally so it was now, the Levites had towns and villages assigned to them in various parts of the country. The arrangement was a wise one. The Levites were the public teachers of the law, and of the various details of the Mosaic ritual. It was important, therefore, that they should be disseminated among the people.—*P.*

CHAP. XII.

a Ezr.2.1.

b Ne. 7.7;8.4,7;9.4, 5.ver.10-21.

c Or, *Melicu*, ver.14.

d Or, *Shebaniah*, ver.14.

e Or, *Harim*, ver.15.

f Or, *Meraioth*, ver. 15.

g Or, *Ginnethon*, ver.16.

h Or, *Miniamin*, ver.17.

i Or, *Moadiah*, ver. 17.

1 The dates of the accession of the several high-priests, after the time of Nehemiah, cannot be precisely ascertained. But as Jaddua did not accede till the time of Alexander of Macedon, many years after Nehemiah's commission, this verse has been ascribed to a later writer than Nehemiah. There is, however, no necessity for this conjecture. Nehemiah might well have been cup-bearer to Artaxerxes at 25, and at the age of 125 or upwards have written, or caused to be written, this, as well as the foregoing genealogy. This is that Jaddua who is said by Josephus (*Antig.* l. xi. c. 8) to have come out to meet Alexander on his march from the siege of Tyre to the destruction of the Persian empire, when Alexander declared he had seen in a dream, to whom he did obeisance as a priest of God; whom he accompanied into the temple of Jehovah to offer sacrifices; who showed him the prophecies of Daniel, by which he was encouraged to proceed upon his warlike enterprise; and who obtained from the triumphant conqueror many favours for the Jews which he denied to the Samaritans.—*C.*

k Or, *Sallai*, ver.20. *l* ch.10.9-13;8.7,9.4. *m* That is, *psalms of thanksgiving*, ch.11.22.

n Ezr.2.2;3.2;10.18. *o* ch.13.4,7,28;3.1,20,21;ver.22. *p* ver.1-7. *q* Ezr.10.30. *r* Ezr.10.37.

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reflects great honour on magistrates and ministers when they take special care of the chief stations in nations and churches, and readily show themselves patterns of self-denial and holy resolution. If God distinguish them with honour, they should distinguish themselves by zeal for his cause. And they who for God's glory forego their own advantage shall never lose their reward; while those who only commend duty but do not practise it shall be ashamed. How commodiously God disposes of men into their various habitations! In all situations, therefore, they ought to accommodate their circumstances to his honour; and always live as strangers and pilgrims on this earth, who have here no continuing city, but look for one to come, the builder and maker of which is God.

CHAPTER XII. REFLECTIONS.—Happy are those ministers, those saints, who are recorded in the Lamb's book of life! Notwithstanding the ravages of death, God seeks to keep up in his church a succession of servants and people, and show them distinguished honours. It is highly proper, even in a most solemn manner, to devolve the protection of our cities and all that we have upon our God, as reconciled through the sacrifice of Christ. And it is comely when all, even wives and children, share in the joys of the gospel, and are taught to sing God's high praise. How necessary, through the selfishness or unconcern of most professors, are fixed methods of collecting a proper maintenance for the ministers of the Lord! But it is highly becoming for them faithfully to attend to their work, and leave the supply of their needs to the care of their God.

22 ¶ The Levites, in the days of [s]Eliashib, Joiada, and Johanan, and Jaddua, *were* recorded chief of the fathers; also the priests, to the reign of [t]Darius the Persian.[2]

23 The sons of Levi, the chief of the fathers, *were* written in the book of the [u]Chronicles,[3] even until the days of Johanan the son of Eliashib.

24 And the chief of the Levites: [x]Hashabiah, Sherebiah, and Jeshua the son of Kadmiel, with their brethren over against them, to praise *and* to give thanks, [y]according to the commandment of David [z]the man of God, [a]ward over against ward.

25 Mattaniah,[b] and Bakbukiah, Obadiah, Meshullam, Talmon, Akkub, *were* porters, keeping the ward at the thresholds[4] of the gates.

26 These *were* in the days of Joiakim the son of Jeshua, the son of Jozadak, and in the days of Nehemiah the governor, and of Ezra the priest, the scribe.

27 ¶ And at the [c]dedication of the wall[5] of Jerusalem they sought the Levites out of all their places, to bring them to Jerusalem, to keep the dedication with gladness, both [d]with thanksgivings, and with singing, *with* cymbals, psalteries, and with harps.

28 And the sons of the singers gathered themselves together, both out of the [e]plain country round about Jerusalem, and from the villages of [f]Netophathi;[6]

29 Also from the [g]house of Gilgal,[7] and out of the fields of [h]Geba and Azmaveth: for the singers had builded them [i]villages round about Jerusalem.

30 And the priests and the Levites [k]purified themselves, and purified the people, and the gates, and the wall.[8]

31 Then I brought up [l]the princes of Judah upon the wall, and appointed [m]two great *companies of them that gave* thanks, *whereof one* went on the right hand upon the wall toward the [n]dung-gate:[9]

32 And after them went Hoshaiah, and half of the princes of Judah,

33 And Azariah, Ezra, and Meshullam,

34 Judah, and Benjamin, and Shemaiah, and Jeremiah;

35 And *certain* of the priests' sons [o]with trumpets; *namely*, Zechariah the son of Jonathan, the son of Shemaiah, the son of Mattaniah, the son of Michaiah, the son of Zaccur, the son of Asaph;

36 And his brethren, Shemaiah, and Azarael, Milalai, Gilalai, Maai, Nethaneel, and Judah, Hanani, with the [p]musical instruments of David the man of God, and [q]Ezra the scribe before them.

37 And at the [r]fountain-gate, which was over against them, they went up by the [s]stairs[1] of the city of David, at the going up of the wall, above the house of David, even unto the [t]water-gate eastward.

38 And the other *company of them that gave* thanks went over against *them*, and I after them, and the half of the people upon the wall, from beyond the [u]tower of the furnaces, even unto the [x]broad wall;[2]

39 And from above the [y]gate of Ephraim, and above the [z]old gate, and above the [a]fish-gate, and the [b]tower of Hananeel, and the tower of Meah, even unto the sheep-gate; and they stood still in the [c]prison-gate.

40 So stood the [d]two *companies of them that gave* thanks in the house of God, and I, and the half of the rulers with me:

41 And the priests; Eliakim, Maaseiah, Miniamin, Michaiah, Elioenai, Zechariah, *and* Hananiah, with trumpets;

42 And Maaseiah, and Shemaiah, and Eleazar, and Uzzi, and Jehohanan, and Malchijah, and Elam, and Ezer: and the singers sang [3]loud, with Jezrahiah *their* overseer.

43 Also that day they [e]offered great sacrifices, and rejoiced; for God had made them rejoice with great joy: the wives also and the children rejoiced; so that the joy of Jerusalem was heard even afar off.

44 ¶ And at that time were some appointed over the [f]chambers for the treasures, for the offerings, for the first-fruits, and for the tithes, to gather into them, out of the fields of the cities, the portions [g]of the law for the priests and Levites: for Judah rejoiced[4] for the priests and for the Levites that waited.[5]

45 And both the singers and the porters kept the ward of their God,[6] and the ward of the purification, [h]according to the commandment of David, *and* of Solomon his son.

46 For in the days of David [i]and Asaph of old *there were* chief of the singers, and songs of praise and thanksgiving unto God.

47 And all Israel, in the days of Zerubbabel, and in the days of Nehemiah, [k]gave the portions of the singers and the porters, every day his portion: and they sanctified[7] *holy things* unto the Levites; [l]and the Levites sanctified *them* unto the children of Aaron.[8]

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s ver.10,11.

t The last of that monarchy, Da. 8. 21, 22.

2 Darius Codomannus was the monarch overthrown by Alexander; but as the regular course of the book seems to terminate with Darius Nothus, he, in the opinion of Hales, is *Darius the Persian.*—*C.*

u 1 Ch.9.14,&c.

3 Some think this refers to 1 Ch. 9. 14, &c. But Clarke remarks that this is not the book of Chronicles which we have now, no such list being found in it.—*J.*

x ver.8; ch. 9. 4; 8.7; 10.9–13.

y 1 Ch.xxiv.–xxvi.

z Ju.13.6.2 Ch.8.14.

a Ezr.3.10, 11. 1 Ch. 25.8.

b ver.8,9. 1 Ch.9.14, 17.

4 Or *treasuries*, or *assemblies*.

c De. 20. 5. Ps. 30. title.

5 All acts of religion may become either so formal or so superstitious, or so sensualized that they cease to be relished by the spiritually-minded. The abuse of anything is, however, no valid reason against its use, and accordingly the completed wall was considered by Nehemiah a proper subject of solemn dedication to God.—*C.*

d 1 Ch.25.1,6; 15. 28; 16.42.

e ch.6.2.

f 1 Ch.2.54.

6 *Netophath* was a town or village, and probably also a small district, situated near Bethlehem. The latter part of this verse might be rendered thus:—'From the circuit round Jerusalem (see next verse), and from the villages of Netophah.'—*J.*

g De.11.30. Jos.4.19.

7 'And from *Beth-Gilgal*;' it is no doubt a proper name. The town was in the Jordan valley near Jericho, where the Israelites encamped after crossing the Jordan.—*P.*

h Jos.21.17.

i Ezr.2.24.

k Ex 19.10,15. Ge.35. 2.2 Ch.29. 5, 34. Ezr. 6. 20,21. Nu.19.7,9.

8 *Purified themselves* by washing their clothes and abstinence, and 'the people,' by inculcating their own example. They purified the gate and wall by removal of rubbish, and probably by sprinkling the water of purification, Nu. 8. 6,7,21; 19.9.—*C.*

l 1 Ch.13.1; 28.1. 1 Ch. 5.2.

m ver.31–38,40–42.

n ch.2.13; 3.13,14.

9 The religious ceremony at the dedication of the wall appears to have been arranged as follows:—The priests, Levites, and chiefs of the people were divided into two companies, each of which was ranged so as to form a procession. One company went in one direction along the wall, the other in the opposite direction, and they thus proceeded until they met, each having gone round half the wall. They set out from the gate beside the palace on the west of the city, and they met at the temple on the east.—*P.*

o Nu.10.2,8. 2 Ch. 5. 12; 13.12. Jos.6.4.

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p ver.24.1 Ch.16.42; 23.5.2 Ch.8.14.

q Ezr.7.1,11.ch.8.1–6.

r ch.2.14; 3.15.

s ch.3.15.2 Sa.5.7.

1 Jerusalem was built upon hills, some parts of which were very precipitous, and consequently to some places the ascent was only by stairs. Some striking examples of this construction occur in the great commercial city of Bristol and the beautiful retreat of Torquay.—*C.*

t ch.3.26; 8.1,3,16.

u ch.3.11.

x ch.3.8.

2 Such walls are generally constructed with a strong front of masonry, surmounted by a parapet for purposes of defence; then within is generally a lower wall, and the space between these two being filled up, a road is made with stones and earth, so as to form both a place for soldiers and a passage for footmen, and often for carriages. *C.*—What part this was is not known. It has been conjectured that it may have been a place designed for assembling the troops or guard of the temple.—*J.*

y 2 Ki.14.13.ch.8.16.

z ch.3.6.

a ch.3.3.

b ch.3.1. Je.32.38. Jn. 5.2.

c ch.3.31. Je.32.2.

d ver.31,32.

3 Heb. *made their voice to be heard.* [They seem not to have begun their song of praise till they came to the house of God.—*J.*]

e 1 Ch.29.21.2 Ch.20. 27; 7.7. Ex. 15. 1–22. Ezr.3.13. Mat.21.9,15. Col.3.16. Ep.5.19. Ja.5. 13.

f ch.10.37; 13.5, 12.2 Ch.31. 11, 12. 1 Ch.26. 21,22,26.

g That is, *appointed by the law*, ch. 10. 32–39.

4 Heb. *for the joy of Judah.* [They rejoiced in this great concourse of Jehovah's appointed servants, and, in token of their gratitude, they took the necessary means for securing the provision for the priests and Levites, appointing officers to collect their revenue, &c.—*J.*]

5 Heb. *that stood.*

6 *Ward* signifies a limited district. The *ward of God* seems to signify those who, being ceremonially clean, were to be admitted to ordinances. The *ward of purification* seems to describe those who, being ceremonially unclean, were to be rigorously excluded. The two departments being emblematic of a faithful and godly discipline in the church of Christ.—*C.*

h 1 Ch.xxv.xxvi.

i 1 Ch.25.1,&c.2 Ch. 29.30.

k ch.10. 35. 2 Ch. 31. 5,6. Ga.6.6. 1 Co.9.14.

7 That is, *set apart.*

l Nu. 18. 20–28. ch. 10.38,39.

8 The Levites received the *tenths*, and of these they gave a *tenth* to the priests, according to the ordinance of God (Nu. 18. 26), and so both portions are said to be sanctified, that is, separated from the rest, and dedicated to the service of God.—*C.*

CHAPTER XIII. REFLECTIONS.—It is strange to observe how unacquainted with God's law many are who have daily access to study it! and while the common people are ready to comply with his mandates, often the principal leaders in the church are the most base and treacherous adherents to wickedness. But no dignity must plead exemption from rebuke. They who sin before all should be put to shame before all. The higher a man's station and the holier his office the more scandalous are his sins. Reformers have need therefore of great zeal, prudence, and fearlessness of man. But what vile robbery of God and wicked injury to the church is the withholding of ministers' dues from them! A scandalous maintenance makes a scandalous ministry. Few ministers are willing to serve Christ in hunger and nakedness, and amidst reproach, peril, and sword. Most are even ready to betake themselves to farming or merchandise, or like worldly cares, when they have scarcely a temptation to it: but when they first show themselves unworthy of their maintenance, no wonder the people grudge it. Sacred is God's claim to his holy Sabbath; and heinous their guilt who dare presumptuously to rob him of his property. Nobles, as well as others, ought to be

CHAPTER XIII.

1 Upon the reading of the law separation is made from the mixed multitude. 4 Nehemiah at his return causeth the chambers to be cleansed. 10 He reformeth the offices in the house of God, 15 the violation of the sabbath, 23 and the marriages with strange wives.

ON that [1]day [a]they read in the book of Moses[2] in the audience[3] of the people; and therein was found written, [b]that the Ammonite and the Moabite should not come into the congregation of God for ever;[4]

2 Because they [c]met not the children of Israel with bread and with water, but [d]hired Balaam against them, that he should curse them: howbeit our God [e]turned the curse into a blessing.

3 Now it came to pass, when they [f]had heard the law, that they separated from Israel all the [g]mixed multitude.

4 ¶ And before this, [h]Eliashib the priest, having the oversight[5] of the chamber of the house of our God, *was* allied unto [i]Tobiah;[6]

5 And he had prepared for him [k]a great chamber, where aforetime they laid the meat-offerings, the frankincense, and the vessels, and the tithes of the corn, the new wine, and the oil, (which was commanded *to be given* to the Levites, and the singers, and the porters,) and the offerings of the priests.

6 But in all this *time* [m]was not I at Jerusalem: for [n]in the two and thirtieth year of Artaxerxes king of Babylon[7] came I unto the king, and after certain days[8] obtained[9] I leave of the king.

7 And I came to Jerusalem,[1] and [o]understood of the evil that Eliashib did for Tobiah, in preparing him a chamber in the [p]courts of the house of God.

8 And it grieved me sore; therefore [q]I cast forth all the household-stuff of Tobiah out of the chamber.

9 Then I commanded, and they [r]cleansed the chambers; and thither brought I again the vessels of the house of God, with the meat-offering and the frankincense.

10 ¶ And I perceived that [s]the portions of the Levites had not been given *them:* for the Levites and the singers, that did the work, were fled every one [t]to his field.[2]

11 Then [u]contended I with the rulers, and said, [v]Why is the house of God forsaken? And I gathered them[3] together, and set them in their place.[4]

12 Then [y]brought all Judah the tithe of the corn, and the new wine, and the oil, unto the treasuries.[5]

13 And I made treasurers over the treasuries, Shelemiah the priest, and Zadok the scribe; and

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CHAP. XIII.

1 'On that day' Nehemiah had governed twelve years: he then went to Babylon, and having reported there to the king, obtained a new commission to return. And, most probably, on the day of his return, this reading and separation took place. Comp. ver. 6; ch. 2. 1, 6; 7. 2. *C.*

a Heb. *there was read*, ch. 8. 1–5; 9. 3. De. 31. 11–13.

2 'The Book of Moses' is one of the names given of old by the Jews to the Pentateuch. It is elsewhere called 'The Book of the Law of Moses,' 'The Book of the Law of the Lord,' &c.—*P.*

3 Heb. *ears.*

b De. 23. 3, 4. ch. 2. 10.

4 See note on De. 23. 3, 4.—*C.*

c Mat. 5. 42, 43.

d Nu. 22. 5. Jos. 24. 9. De. 23. 4. Mi. 6. 5. 2 Pe. 2. 15. Jude 11. Re. 2. 14.

e Nu. xxiii. xxiv. Ge. 32. 5; 33. 15–20. Phi. 1. 12, Ps. 109. 28.

f Ps. 19. 7–11; 119. 9, 11. Pr. 6. 23.

g ch. 9. 2. Ezr. x.

h ch. 3. 1, 20; 12. 10; ver. 7, 28.

5 Heb. *being set over.*

i ch. 2. 19; 6. 18; ver. 7. 28.

6 Tobiah was an Ammonite slave, who by the friendship of Sanballat had risen to great power and influence. Eliashib had married his grandson to the daughter of Sanballat, and he was therefore ready to show attention to Tobiah. He assigned him a splendid residence within the temple court.—An arbitrary and unlawful act.—*P.*

k ch. 10. 38, 39; 12. 41.

l Heb. *the commandment of the Levites*, Nu. 18. 8–28.

m Ex. 32. 1. 2 Ch. 24. 17. Mat. 13. 25.

n ch. 5. 5, 11.

7 Though king of Persia, it was as king of Babylon that he granted the new commission to Nehemiah.—*C.*

8 Heb. *at the end of days.*

9 Or, *I earnestly requested.*

1 The precise period of Nehemiah's absence is not given; but is calculated by some so low as *one* year, by others so high as *five*. The corruptions that had been introduced, and which Nehemiah begins so energetically to reform, seem to require the longer period.—*C.*

2 Or, *fields.* 1 Ki. 11. ver. 1, 5.

o 1 Ki. 3. 6. Ps. 84. 10. ver. 4, 5, 8, 9.

p Ps. 69. 9. Jn. 2. 13–17. Mat. 21. 12, 13.

q 2 Ch. 29. 16. ch. 12. 30, 41; ver. 5.

r 2 Ch. 29. 16. ch. 12. 30, 41; ver. 5.

s Mal. 3. 8, with ch. 10. 37. 1 Ti. 5. 17, 18.

t Nu. 35. 2. Jos. xxi.

2 Being, by the covetous rulers (ver. 11) deprived of their legal provision, they were compelled to betake themselves to agriculture for support.—*C.*

u ver. 17, 25; ch. 5. 7. Ga. 2. 14.

v ch. 10. 39. Mal. 3. 8–11.

3 The Levites and singers.—*C.*

4 Heb. *standing.*

y ch. 12. 44, 47. Le. 27. 30. De. 14. 22. Nu. 18. 24–30.

5 Or, *storehouses.*

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6 Heb. *at their hand.*

z ch. 7. 2. 1 Co. 4. 2.

7 Heb. it was *upon them.*

a ch. 5. 19; ver. 22, 31. He. 6. 10. 1 Co. 15. 58. Re. 3. 5.

8 If thou wert strict to mark what is done amiss, even my *good deeds* must be *wiped* out; but, Lord, remember me in thy mercy, and let my upright conduct be acceptable to thee!—*Clarke.*

9 Heb. *kindnesses.*

1 Or, *observations.*

2 Some have rashly concluded from this prayer that Nehemiah pleads the merit of his *good deeds*, whereas he merely pleads their *acceptability* through mercy. See Ro. 12. 1, 2. Ep. 1. 6. Besides, it is not to be forgotten, that when a believer addresses God, he never approaches him but as a God of mercy; mercy to our unrighteousness being ever in the very forefront of those *names* or *attributes* 'whereby he maketh himself known'—a circumstance which renders an assertion of human merit, and an appeal to the God of the Bible utterly incompatible. See Ex. 34. 6; Ps. 103. 8; He. 8. 12; also Nehemiah's own appeal to mercy, ver. 22.—*C.*

b Ex. 20. 8–10; 31. 21. Je. 17. 21, 22, 24. Is. 58. 13.

c Heathens, 1 Ki. 5. 1. Eze. 27. 3.

d ver. 11, 25; ch. 5. 7. 1 Ti. 5. 20, 22. Ga. 2. 14. Jude 3.

e Je. 17. 23, 27. Eze. 22. 8, 26. 2 Ch. 36. 21. Zec. 14. 4, 5.

3 Heb. *add fierce wrath.*

f Le. 23. 32. Ex. 20. 10. Je. 17. 20–27.

4 Nehemiah could place more dependence in this case on his own attendants than on the porters appointed by the nobles and rulers of Judah, who probably countenanced this profanation, in order to indulge their luxury or avarice.—*I.*

5 By proclaiming the law of the sabbath, which is God's testimony of his right over our time and employments.—*C.*

6 Heb. *before the wall*

g Ro. 13. 1–4. Is. 49. 23.

h ch. 12. 30. 1 Ch. 15. 12. 2 Ch. 29. 5, 34.

i ch. 5. 19; ver. 14, 31. Is. 38. 3. Ps. 132. 1–5; 130. 3–8.

7 Or, *multitude.*

k Heb. *had made to dwell* with them, ch. 10. 30. Mal. 2. 11, 12. 2 Co. 6. 14. Ezr. 9. 2, 14; 10. 14, 19.

8 Heb. *they discerned not to speak.*

9 Heb. *of people and people.*

l ch. 5. 13; 10. 29, 30.

1 Not that he uttered an angry and profane oath, but pronounced that *judicial curse*, which the law attached to its violation. De. 11. 26–28. *C.*——Denounced God's judgments against them. Aben Ezra thinks the meaning to be, that he excommunicated them.—*I.*

m De. 25. 2. Is. 50. 6.

2 Ordered them to be scourged, De. 25. 2.—*C.*

of the Levites, Pedaiah; and next to them[6] *was* Hanan the son of Zaccur, the son of Mattaniah; for they were counted [z]faithful; and their office *was*[7] to distribute unto their brethren.

14 Remember[a] me, O my God, concerning this, and wipe[8] not out my good deeds[9] that I have done for the house of my God, and for the offices[1] thereof.[2]

15 ¶ In those days saw I in Judah [b]*some* treading wine-presses on the sabbath, and bringing in sheaves, and lading asses; as also wine, grapes, and figs, and all *manner of* burdens, which they brought into Jerusalem on the sabbath-day: and I testified *against them* in the day wherein they sold victuals.

16 There dwelt [c]men of Tyre also therein, which brought fish, and all manner of ware, and sold on the sabbath unto the children of Judah, and in Jerusalem.

17 Then I [d]contended with the nobles of Judah, and said unto them, What evil thing *is* this that ye do, and profane the sabbath-day?

18 Did[e] not your fathers thus, and did not our God bring all this evil upon us, and upon this city? yet ye bring more wrath[3] upon Israel by profaning the sabbath.

19 And it came to pass, that, when the gates of Jerusalem began to be dark before the sabbath, [f]I commanded that the gates should be shut, and charged that they should not be opened till after the sabbath: and *some* of my [4]servants set I at the gates, *that* there should no burden be brought in on the sabbath-day.

20 So the merchants, and sellers of all kind of ware, lodged without Jerusalem once or twice.

21 Then I testified against them,[5] and said unto them, Why lodge ye about the wall?[6] if ye do *so* again, I will lay hands on you. From that time forth came they no *more* on the sabbath.

22 And I [g]commanded the Levites, [h]that they should cleanse themselves, and *that* they should come *and* keep the gates, to sanctify the sabbath-day. [i]Remember me, O my God, *concerning* this also, and spare me according to the greatness[7] of thy mercy.

23 ¶ In those days also saw I Jews *that* [k]had married wives of Ashdod, of Ammon, *and* of Moab.

24 And their children spake half in the speech of Ashdod, and could not speak[8] in the Jews' language, but according to the language of each people.[9]

25 And I contended with them, and [l]cursed[1] them, and [m]smote[2] certain of them, and plucked

6 Heb. *at their hand.*

z ch. 7. 2. 1 Co. 4. 2.

7 Heb. it was *upon them.*

a ch. 5. 19; ver. 22, 31. He. 6. 10. 1 Co. 15. 58. Re. 3. 5.

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b Ex. 20. 8–10; 31. 21. Je. 17. 21, 22, 24. Is. 58. 13.

c Heathens, 1 Ki. 5. 1. Eze. 27. 3.

d ver. 11, 25; ch. 5. 7. 1 Ti. 5. 20, 22. Ga. 2. 14. Jude 3.

e Je. 17. 23, 27. Eze. 22. 8, 26. 2 Ch. 36. 21. Zec. 14. 4, 5.

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5 By proclaiming the law of the sabbath, which is God's testimony of his right over our time and employments.—*C.*

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g Ro. 13. 1–4. Is. 49. 23.

h ch. 12. 30. 1 Ch. 15. 12. 2 Ch. 29. 5, 34.

i ch. 5. 19; ver. 14, 31. Is. 38. 3. Ps. 132. 1–5; 130. 3–8.

7 Or, *multitude.*

k Heb. *had made to dwell* with them, ch. 10. 30. Mal. 2. 11, 12. 2 Co. 6. 14. Ezr. 9. 2, 14; 10. 14, 19.

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m De. 25. 2. Is. 50. 6.

2 Ordered them to be scourged, De. 25. 2.—*C.*

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faithfully rebuked for their profanation of the Sabbath. And yet, alas! they are often either ringleaders in this sin, or connivers at such as are guilty. But magistrates ought to exert themselves in preventing open profanation of the Lord's-day. Though their laws, or the sanctions attending them, cannot convert souls, they may oblige vice to hide itself as ashamed. And did magistrates and ministers but faithfully concur in this matter according to God's law, much good might be done. Nations and churches quickly relapse into their former corruptions; and into none more readily than unhallowed connections in marriage. And none are

off their hair,[3] and made them [a]swear by God, *saying*, Ye shall not give your daughters unto their sons, nor take their daughters unto your sons, or for yourselves.

26 Did not Solomon[4] king of Israel sin by these things? yet [c]among many nations was there no king like him, who was beloved of his God, and God made him king over all Israel: nevertheless[p] even him did outlandish women cause to sin.

27 Shall we then hearken unto you to do all[q] this great evil, to transgress against our God in marrying strange wives?

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3 A punishment common in Persia.—*C.*

n De.6.13;7.3.ch.10. 29, 30. Ex.34.16. Ge.6. 2.

4 If even Solomon, who excelled all men in wisdom, was nevertheless undone by such marriages, how shall ye preserve yourselves; and if even he was punished, though beloved of his God, how shall he spare you? —*I.*

o 1 Ki.3.13. 2 Sa. 12. 24,25.

p 1 Ki. 11.1–8. Ec. 7. 26.

q Ge.6.2;27. 46. Ex. 34.16. De.7.3. Ezr.ix. x.

A.M. 3571. B.C. 433.

r ch.12.10, 11; 2. 19; ver.4,5.

5 Josephus calls him *Manasseh;* but whether the tradition be correct or not, we cannot tell. Nehemiah consigns him to oblivion, Ps.69.28. —*C.*

s ver.25. Ro.13.1–4.

t ch.6.14.2 Ti.4.14.

6 Not a denunciation of *anger*, but a prayer of *faith*, in which he intercedes with God that the progress of evil-doers may be arrested.—*C.*

u Mal.2.4,8,12. 1 Sa. 2.30. Le.8.35;21.1–7.

x 1 Ch. xxiv.–xxvi. ch.12.2–26.

y ch.10.34.

z ch.5.19; ver.14,22. Ps.106.4;132.1;119.132.

28 And *one* of the sons of [r]Joiada,[5] the son of Eliashib the high priest, *was* son-in-law to Sanballat the Horonite: therefore I [s]chased him from me.

29 Remember[t] them,[6] O my God, because they have [u]defiled the priesthood, and the covenant of the priesthood, and of the Levites.

30 Thus cleansed I them from all strangers, and appointed the [x]wards of the priests and the Levites, every one in his business;

31 And for the [y]wood-offering at times appointed, and for the first-fruits. [z]Remember me, O my God, for good.

more daring in wickedness than unsanctified clergymen. But nothing more effectually entails misery on our offspring than profane marriages: and yet no commands of God, no warnings of Providence, are sufficient to restrain men. The sharpest rebukes, corrections, and brands of infamy, are necessary to check abominations which have once become fashionable. And it is a great mercy if, in critical conjunctures, a magistrate or minister is helped so to behave in his station, as that he may look up to God for a gracious reward.

THE BOOK OF ESTHER.

In the two preceding books we have seen God's marvellous preservation of those Jews who returned to their own country. In this we have an account of his marvellous preservation of those who continued in the eastern parts of the Persian empire. Particularly, (1) How God brought Esther to be queen, and Mordecai to be great at the Persian court, to prepare them to be instruments of the intended deliverance, ch. i. ii. vi. (2) Upon what provocation, and by what arts, Haman obtained an irrevocable order from the Persian king for the destruction of all the Jews, iii. (3) The great distress into which the publishing of this order cast the Jews, particularly Esther and Mordecai, iv. (4) The defeating of Haman's particular plot against Mordecai's life, v. vi. vii. (5) The defeating of his general plot against the Jewish nation, viii. ix. (6) The joyful commemoration and happy issue of the deliverance, ix. x. [The authorship of this book is not stated. That it was written by an eye-witness of the events which it records is evident. There is a vividness of description, a minuteness of detail, and an acquaintance with the internal arrangements of the royal palace, which prove that the writer must have lived in the court of the Persian monarch. The only man mentioned in the book itself who could have written it is Mordecai; and it is highly probable he was the author. Independent of its sacred character as a part of the canon of Scripture, Esther is highly valuable as affording a vivid picture of the plots and intrigues, the public policy and domestic economy, of the Persian court. It is singular that in the Septuagint version, and others made from it, this book appears in a different form. It has various interpolations, prefixed, interspersed, and appended; but all so woven in as to form a complete and consistent narrative. The additions to the canonical book must have been made at a comparatively early period. *P.*]

CHAPTER I.

1 *Ahasuerus maketh royal feasts.* 10 *Vashti refuseth to come, when sent for by the king.* 13 *Ahasuerus, by the counsel of Memucan, maketh the decree of men's sovereignty over their wives.*

NOW it came to pass in the days of [a]Ahasuerus, (this *is* Ahasuerus which reigned from India even unto Ethiopia, [b]*over* an hundred and seven and twenty[1] provinces,)

2 *That* in those days, when the king Ahasuerus [c]sat on the throne of his kingdom, which *was* in [d]Shushan the palace,

3 In the third year of his reign, he made a feast[e] unto all his princes and his servants; the power of Persia and Media, the nobles and princes of the provinces, *being* before him;

4 When he [f]showed the riches of his glorious kingdom, and the honour of his excellent majesty, many days, *even* an hundred and fourscore days.[2]

5 And when these days were expired, the king made a feast unto all the people that were present[3] in Shushan the palace, both unto great and small, seven days, in the court of the garden of the king's palace;

6 *Where were* white, green, and blue[4] *hangings*, fastened[5] with cords of fine linen and purple to silver rings and pillars of marble: the [g]beds[6] *were of* gold and silver, upon a pavement [h]of red, and blue, and white, and black marble.

7 And they gave *them* drink in vessels of

A.M. 3485 or 3541. B.C. 519 or 463.

CHAP. I.

a Not that Ezra 4. 6. Da. 9.1, but Darius Hystaspes or Xerxes or Artaxerxes Longhand, Ezr.vi.vii.

b Ps.17.14;137.35. Da. 6.1.ch.8.9;9.30.

1 Since the time of Cyrus seven new provinces had been added.—*I.*

c 2 Sa.7.1. Pr.16.16.

d Ne.1.1. Da.8.2.

e Ec. 10. 19. 2 Sa. 3. 20. 1 Ki. 3. 15. Da.5.1. Mar.6.21. Lu.14.13.

f Is. 39.2. Da.4.30. 1 Sa.25.30.

2 *i.e.* half a year. —[We have records elsewhere of feasts not less protracted, and the custom seems still to obtain in Persia.—*I.*]

A.M. 3485 or 3541. B.C. 519 or 463.

3 Heb. *found.*

4 Or, *violet.*

5 Palaces consisting merely of pillars, and covered with splendid awnings, are still found in Persia and India. Some idea of their magnificence may be formed from the famous Bargah of the emperor Akber, which required for its erection the work of 1000 men during a week, and was capable of entertaining 10,000 guests. —*C.*

g Wherein they sat, ch.7.8. Eze.23.41. Am.2.8;6.4. Jn.13.23.

6 The couches or sofas upon which the Persians reclined while feasting.—*C.*

h Or, *porphyre, and marble, and alabaster, and stone of blue colour.* 1 Ki.7.9.

CHAPTER I. [Ver. 1. Three monarchs of this name are mentioned in the Bible:—1. The father of Darius the Mede, who is well known in history as *Cyaxeres*, the conqueror of Nineveh; and who began to reign in B.C. 634. 2. Ahasuerus, king of Persia, mentioned in Ezr. 4. 6; and who was the same as Cambyses. He began to reign in B.C. 529. 3. The Ahasuerus here spoken of, who has been identified with the *Xerxes* of classic historians. The traits of character described in this book accord well with those mentioned by Greek writers. He was a rash, unscrupulous, and sensual tyrant; easily influenced by passion, and thus open to the devices of crafty counsellors. It was in the third year of his reign he gave the grand feast to his nobles mentioned in ver. 3; and it was in the same year, probably at the very same time, he assembled his chief officers to deliberate on the invasion of Greece. *P.*]

Ver. 5. [*Shushan*, called by the Greeks Susa, was the ancient capital of Elam. It was captured by the Assyrians about B.C. 650. It was subsequently occupied by Cyrus, and was by him restored to Babylon. Daniel resided in it for a time, Da. viii. Under the Persian monarchy Shushan was a royal city, the king residing there for a portion of each year. Nehemiah was in Shushan when he heard of the desolation of Jerusalem, Ne. i. The site of the ancient capital is now marked by a number of large and desolate mounds, lying between the rivers Ulai, Da. 8. 2, and Dizful. The ruins cover an area nearly four miles in circuit.

SCYTHIA
Mæotis
TAURICA
Mount Caucasus
EUXINE SEA
PONTUS EUXINUS
Bosphorus
Sinope
CASPIAN SEA
BITHYNIA
PAPHLAGONIA
R. Phasis
Halys
PONTUS
Hellespont
MYSIA
MEDIA
ARMENIA
SOGDIANA
KM. OF LYDIA
PHRYGIA
LYDIA
CAPPADOCIA
R. Araxes
GRECIA
CARIA
CILICIA
R. Tigris
EMPIRE
Mash-had
BACTRIANA
ARIANA
PARTHIA
BABYLONIAN EMPIRE
Ecbatana
MEDIA
SYRIA
Euphrates
SUSIANA
Ulai
Susa
Shushan
SAMARIA
JUDEA
Jerusalem
BABYLONIA
PERSIA
Persepolis
CARMANIA
INDIA
Indus
ARABIA
ERYTHRÆAN SEA
PERSIAN GULF
GEDROSIA
EGYPT
Seveneh
ARABIAN GULF
ETHIOPIA
PERSIAN EMPIRE.
Franklin Co., Engrs., Chi.

PEDESTAL OF AGRIPPA, ATHENS—SHOWING ALSO THE TEMPLE OF THESEUS, STANDING WHEN AHASUERUS FOUGHT THE GREEKS IN THE BATTLE OF SALAMIS. [ESTHER, i: 1.]—"Now it came to pass in the days of Ahasuerus (this is Ahasuerus which reigned from India even unto Ethiopia, over a hundred and seven and twenty provinces)." Ahasuerus is the name of the Persian king the Greeks knew as Xerxes, the latter being the Greek form of the word. The characters of the two kings as described by sacred and profane history correspond. Ahasuerus in the beginning of his reign organized an expedition for the purpose of subjugating Greece. The battle of Salamis, in which the Persians under Ahasuerus fought the Greeks, was in sight of the scene represented by the above picture. The Temple of Theseus which we see between the Pedestal of Agrippa on the left, and the stone wall on the right, was in all probability standing when this battle was fought. This temple was built in the fifth century, B. C., and is to-day the most perfect of the ancient buildings in Athens.

gold, (the vessels being diverse one from another,) and royal[7] wine in [i]abundance, according to the state of the king.[8]

8 And the drinking *was* according to the law; none did [k]compel:[9] for so the king had appointed[l] to all the officers of his house, that they should do according to every man's pleasure.

9 Also Vashti the queen made a feast for the women[1] *in* the royal house which *belonged* to king Ahasuerus.

10 ¶ On the seventh day, when the heart of the king was [m]merry with wine, he commanded Mehuman, Biztha, [n]Harbona, Bigtha, and Abagtha, Zethar, and Carcas, the seven [2]chamberlains[3] that served in the presence of Ahasuerus the king,

11 To bring Vashti the queen before the king with the crown-royal, to show the people and the princes her beauty; for she *was* fair to look on.[4]

12 But the queen Vashti refused[5] to come at the king's commandment by *his* chamberlains:[6] therefore was the king very wroth, and his anger burned in him.

13 ¶ Then the king said to the wise men, which knew the times, (for so *was* the king's manner toward all that knew law and judgment:

14 And the next unto him *was* Carshena, Shethar, Admatha, Tarshish, Meres, Marsena, *and* Memucan, the [o]seven princes of Persia and Media, which saw the king's face,[7] *and* which sat the first in the kingdom,)

15 What[p] shall we do unto the queen Vashti according to law, because she hath not performed the commandment of the king Ahasuerus by the chamberlains?

16 And Memucan[8] answered before the king and the princes, Vashti the queen hath not done wrong[q] to the king only, but also to all the princes, and to all the people that *are* in all the provinces of the king Ahasuerus.

17 For *this* deed of the queen shall come abroad unto all women, so that they shall despise[r] their husbands in their eyes, when it shall be reported, The king Ahasuerus commanded Vashti the queen to be brought in before him, but she came not.

18 *Likewise* shall the ladies of Persia and Media say this day unto all the king's princes, which have heard of the deed of the queen. Thus *shall there arise* too much contempt[9] and wrath.[1]

A.M. 3485 or 3541.
B.C. 519 or 463.

7 which the king used to drink.

i Jn.2.6-10.

8 Heb. *according to the hand of the king.*

k Or, *trouble*, Da. 4-9.

9 The contrary was the custom even of the polished Athenians, whose barbarous law of the table was 'drink or begone.' This is the first historical note of any public law in favour of temperance.—*C.*

l Jn.2.8.

1 Oriental etiquette still prohibits the promiscuous meeting of males and females at table. Ahasuerus and his nobles accordingly feast in the *garden* (ver.5), Vashti and her ladies in the royal house.—*C.*

m 2 Sa.13.28. Ec.10. 19.7.23. Jude 12.

n ch.7.9.

2 Or, *eunuchs.*

3 See note on Ezr. 7.14.—*C.*

4 Heb. *good of countenance.*

5 It is generally stated that *Vashti* refused to obey the command of the king because her appearance unveiled would have been accounted a degradation; but though such an opinion may have become prevalent in some parts of the East, Herodotus assures us that it was customary for the ancient Persians to exhibit the beauty of their women at feasts; but there is no need of his testimony to establish the fact of the custom, for in ver. 15 the trial of Vashti's refusal is 'according to law.'—*C.*

6 Heb. *which* was *by the hand of his eunuchs.*

o Ezr.7.14. Pr.11.14. 2 Ki.25.19.

7 This is not a mere figure for intimacy, but a literal fact; for during some periods of the Persian history none but a few were ever permitted to speak to the king.—*C.*

p Heb. *What to do,* Mal.2.14.Col.3.19.

8 The youngest answers first according to a custom that prevails even in European law-courts. It affords the more experienced time to think on what is proposed, and it removes the delicacy of a young judge contravening the opinion of his senior.—*C.*

q 1 Co.6.7,8.

r 2 Sa.6.16, with Ep. 5.33.

9 Wives will contemn their husbands, and husbands will deal outrageously with their wives.

1 Wherever there is an unnatural law or custom, it sooner or later punishes the enactor or observer. Such was the custom amongst the Persians of exposing their wives to the gaze of Bacchanalian revellers, and such the law of polygamy, which invariably establishes domestic tyranny, introduces jealousies and feuds, and slowly yet finally extirpates those classes whose riches enable them most extensively to follow their caprices, and indulge their passions. *C.*—The sense seems to be:—'And henceforth the ladies of Persia and Media, who have heard of the act of the queen, will speak to (their husbands) the king's princes, with too much contempt and petulance.'—*P.*

2 Heb. *If it be good with the king.*

3 Heb. *from before him.*

4 Heb. *that it pass not away.*

s Pr.18.13;27.4.

5 Heb. *unto her companion.*

t Ep.5.22,23,33.1 Pe. 3.1-7.Col.3.18.

6 Heb. *was good in the eyes of the king.*

u Heb. *that one should publish* it, *according to the language of his people,* ch.3.12;8.9. Lu.16.8.

7 The latter part of this verse ought to be translated as follows:—'That every man should be ruler in his own house, and should speak in the tongue of his people.' The Targum gives this interpretation:—'Every man shall rule in his own house and compel his wife to speak in the language of her husband and in the language of his people.' It appears that the Persians when they married foreign wives permitted them to rule the harem as they thought proper, and to use in it their own language. The decree of Ahasuerus was intended to put a stop to this practice.—*P.*

CHAP. II.

B.C. 515 or 459.

a Da.6.18.ch.6.1.

1 Not that he had *forgotten* her, for if he had, his wrath had no object; but he now remembers her with returning tenderness, and the judges who had pronounced sentence against her are anxious to prevent her restoration, lest it might lead to their dismissal or punishment.—*C.*

b ch.1.16;6.5.

2 This proposal was perhaps intended to divert the king's thoughts. It was, however, the usual way in which the harem or seraglio was furnished; the finest women in the land, whether of high or low degree, were sought out and brought to the harem. They all became the king's concubines; but one was raised as chief wife or sultana to the throne, and her issue was specially entitled to inherit.—*J.*

3 Heb. *unto the hand.*

c Or, *Hegai*, ver.8.

4 There is still an officer in the Persian court called *Daroga*, and his authority over the *harem* is next to that of the king.—*C.*

d Or, *ornaments*, ver.12-14.Is.3.18-23.

5 Baths, unguents, and in modern language all the necessaries of an eastern *toilette.*—*C.*

h 1 Sa. 2. 8. Ps.75.6; 113.7,8.Eze.17.24.

i ver.15; ch.3, 3; 8. 2; 10.3.

k 2 Ki 24.6,15. 2 Ch. 36.10. Je.24.1.

6 That is, not Mordecai, but Kish, who had been carried away. This must be the meaning, as this event occurred about 140 years after the time of Jeconiah's captivity.—*C.*

7 Heb. *nourished.*

19 If it please the king,[2] let there go a royal commandment from him,[3] and let it be written among the laws of the Persians and the Medes, that it be not altered,[4] That Vashti [s]come no more before king Ahasuerus; and let the king give her royal estate unto [5]another that is better than she.

20 And when the king's decree which he shall make shall be published throughout all his empire, (for it is great,) all the wives shall [t]give to their husbands honour, both to great and small.

21 And the saying pleased the king[6] and the princes; and the king did according to the word of Memucan:

22 For he sent letters into all the king's provinces, into every province according to the writing thereof, and to every people after their language, that every man should bear rule in his own house; and [u]that *it* should be published according to the language of every people.[7]

CHAPTER II.

1 *Out of the choice of virgins a queen is to be chosen.* 5 *Mordecai the nursing father of Esther.* 8 *Esther is preferred by Hegai before the rest.* 12 *The manner of purification, and going in to the king.* 15 *Esther best pleasing him, is made queen.* 21 *Mordecai discovering a treason, is recorded in the chronicles.*

AFTER these things, when the wrath of king Ahasuerus was appeased, he [a]remembered Vashti,[1] and what she had done, and what was decreed against her.

2 Then said the king's [b]servants that ministered unto him, Let there be fair young virgins sought for the king:

3 And let the king appoint officers in all the provinces of his kingdom, that they may gather[2] together all the fair young virgins unto Shushan the palace, to the house of the women, unto the custody[3] of [c]Hege the king's chamberlain, keeper of the women;[4] and let their [d]things for purification[5] be given *them:*

4 And let the maiden which pleaseth the king [h]be queen instead of Vashti. And the thing pleased the king; and he did so.

5 ¶ *Now* in Shushan the palace there was a certain [i]Jew, whose name *was* Mordecai, the son of Jair, the son of Shimei, the son of Kish, a Benjamite;

6 Who[k] had been carried away from Jerusalem[6] with the captivity which had been carried away with Jeconiah king of Judah, whom Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon had carried away.

7 And he brought up[7] Hadassah, (that *is,*

One of the largest of the mounds has been explored by Loftus, and he laid bare the foundations of the *royal palace.* One vast hall in it measures 343 feet by 244, and was ornamented by ranges of columns. Probably in this hall Ahasuerus held his great feast. *P.*]

Ver. 6. [The open courts of all eastern houses of the better class have tesselated pavement of marble. Some of those in Damascus are exceedingly rich and beautiful. The divans too are covered with cloth of gold or silver, with heavy fringe of gold. *P.*]

Ver. 13. [This expression appears to include both statute and common law; or, in other words, the law as written, and the ordinary practice followed in court. It is worthy of note that Ahasuerus, though a fickle and passionate tyrant, here thinks it right to consult his ministers. He threw upon them the responsibility. *P.*]

REFLECTIONS.—Insatiable is the nature of covetousness and ambition, which gathers to itself all people and countries, yet is nothing nearer contentment. Yea, kingdoms, when once they are overgrown, are near the brink of decay and ruin. What vast expenses do many sacrifice to the idol of pride—expenses which might have relieved many helpless families. In what awful manner shall those heathens, who would urge none to

THEATRE OF BACCHUS DIONYSUS — WHERE ÆSCHYLUS BROUGHT OUT HIS PLAY REPRESENTING THE DEFEAT OF THE PERSIANS LED BY AHASUERUS, EIGHT YEARS AFTER THE BATTLE OF SALAMIS. [ESTHER, ii: 1.]—"After these things, when the wrath of king Ahasuerus was appeased, he remembered Vashti, and what she had done and what had been decreed against her." The theatre of Bacchus Dionysus is called the cradle of the dramatic art of Greece. Here is where the masterpieces of Æschylus, Sophocles, Euripides and Aristophanes were first brought before the Greeks. This theatre was frequently altered during its history, but when we see the above view we may know that we are looking at the very spot where the theatre always stood. Æschylus whose plays were acted here, fought against the Persian army led by Ahasuerus in the battle of Salamis. Eight years after this battle, his play, the "Persians," was performed in the theatre of Dionysus at Athens. The foundations of two sanctuaries of Dionysus have been excavated here, one of them dating from the time of the Persian wars. To the north and rising directly above this theatre is the Acropolis, and if one could have been standing on the top of the Acropolis when the battle of Salamis was fought he would have had a view of this decisive conflict between the Greeks and the Persians.

Esther,[1]) his uncle's daughter; for she had neither father nor mother, and the maid *was* fair and beautiful:[8] whom Mordecai (when her father and mother were dead) took for his own daughter.

8 ¶ So it came to pass, when the king's commandment and his decree was heard, and when many maidens were gathered together unto Shushan the palace, to the custody of Hegai,[m] that Esther was brought also unto the king's house,[9] to the custody of Hegai, keeper of the women.

9 And the maiden pleased him, and she obtained[n] kindness of him; and he speedily gave her her things for purification, with such things as belonged to her,[1] and seven maidens, *which were* meet to be given her, out of the king's house: and he preferred[2] her and her maids unto the best *place* of the house of the women.

10 Esther had not showed her people, nor her kindred:[3] for Mordecai had charged her that she [o]should not show *it*.

11 And Mordecai [p]walked every day before the court of the women's house, to know[4] how Esther did, and what should become of her.[5]

12 ¶ Now, when every maid's turn was come to go in to king Ahasuerus, after that she had been twelve months, according to the manner of the women, (for so were the days of their purifications accomplished, *to wit*, six months with oil of myrrh, and six months with sweet odours, and with *other* things for the purifying of the women;)

13 Then thus came *every* maiden unto the king; whatsoever she desired was given her, to go with her out of the house of the women unto the king's house.

14 In the evening she went, and on the morrow she returned into the second house[6] of the women, to the custody of Shaashgaz the king's chamberlain, which kept the concubines: she came in unto the king no more, except the king delighted in her, and that she were called by name.

A.M. 3489 or 3545.
B.C. 515 or 459.

15 ¶ Now when the [q]turn of Esther, the daughter of Abihail, [r]the uncle of Mordecai, (who had taken her for his daughter,) was come to go in unto the king, she [s]required nothing but what Hegai the king's chamberlain, the keeper of the women, appointed: and Esther [t]obtained favour in the sight of all them that looked upon her.

16 So Esther was taken unto king Ahasuerus, into his house-royal, in the [u]tenth month, (which *is* the month Tebeth,) in the seventh year of his reign.[6]

17 And the king loved Esther above all the women, and she obtained grace and [7]favour [w]in his sight more than all the virgins; so that he [v]set the royal crown upon her head, and made her queen instead of Vashti.

18 Then the king [z]made a great feast unto all his princes and his servants, *even* Esther's feast; and he made a [8]release[9] to the provinces, and [a]gave gifts, according to the state of the king.

19 And when the virgins were gathered together the second time,[1] then Mordecai sat in the king's[2] gate.[3]

20 Esther had [b]not *yet* showed her kindred nor her people, as Mordecai had charged her: for Esther did the commandment of Mordecai, like as when she was brought up with him.

21 ¶ In those days, (while Mordecai sat in the king's gate,) two of the king's chamberlains, [c]Bigthan and Teresh, of those which kept the door,[4] were [d]wroth, and sought to lay hand on the king Ahasuerus.

22 And the thing was [e]known to Mordecai, who told *it* unto Esther the queen; and Esther certified the king *thereof* in [f]Mordecai's name.

23 And when inquisition was made of the matter, it was found out; therefore they were

A.M. 3490 or 3546.
B.C. 514 or 458.

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l Da.1.7; v.; 8.15–17, ch.iv.–viii.

8 Heb. *fair of form, and good of countenance.*

m ver.3.

9 Some have accused Mordecai of permitting Esther to be taken; the Jews, in extenuation, say he hid her, but she was discovered. But, whatever may have been Mordecai's wishes, he had no power to resist an absolute monarch.—*Note*, How grateful should we feel for a government where the *law is above the king*, as well as the subjects, and God and Scripture above every human law!—*C.*

n Ge.39.21.1 Ki.8.50. Ne.2.8. Ps.106.46. Pr.16.7. Da.1.9.ver.15, 17.

1 Heb. *her portions.*

2 Heb. *he changed her.* [In the Persian harem the chief eunuch or keeper is a person of great importance. Next to that of the king himself, it is the interest of the women to endeavour to secure his favour, as their comfort is very much in his power.—*I.*]

3 It was prudent in the meantime to conceal her kindred, the discovery of which might have operated to her prejudice.—*I.*

o Because the Jews were so much contemned, ch. 3. 8; ver. 20. Mat.10.16. Ps. 112. 5. Ep.5.15&16.1.

p Jn.10.23.

4 Heb. *to know the peace of.*

5 There can be no difficulty in understanding how Esther might communicate with Mordecai, when the kindness of Hegai is recollected, ver. 9.—*C.*

6 The house of the concubines. The Persian monarch seems to have had but one wife, at least but one in chief favour and esteem with him, though he must have had many secondary wives or concubines. This was the name of every one that was taken from among the virgins (who had a separate house for themselves), and conducted to the king's bed; where, having passed a night, she returned no more to the virgins' apartments, but was the next morning received into the house of the concubines, and there treated in the state and port of one of the king's wives: for such they were accounted. No man was permitted to marry them as long as the king lived; and upon his demise they generally fell to his successor. Of these Darius Nothus is reckoned to have had no less than 360.—*Poole.*

q ver.12. Ps.105.20.

r ver 7.

s Ps.132.1. He.13.5. 1 Pe.3.3.

t Ca.6.9. Pr.16.7. Lu. 14.11.ver.9,17.

u With ch.1.7;8.9.

6 The divorce of Vashti took place in the third year of Ahasuerus, and Esther's accession four years after. *C.*—It was in the seventh year of his reign Xerxes returned from his unsuccessful and disastrous expedition against Greece. Humiliated as a soldier, it was quite characteristic of an eastern despot to drown his cares in revelry and licentiousness. In the third year of his reign he dethroned and divorced Vashti; from that time till the seventh year he had been immersed in war, and had no time to think of domestic matters.—*P.*

7 Or, *kindness.*

x Heb. *before his eyes*, Pr.5.17,20;21.1.

y Lu.1.48. Ps.75.5,6; 113.7,8. 1 Sa.2.8. Eze. 17.24.

z ch.1.3,5. Ge.29.22. Ju.14.10,17.

8 Heb. *rest.*

9 A remission of taxes, or release of prisoners.—*C.*

a Ne.8.12.ch.9.22.

1 They had *first* been collected when Vashti was made queen; now, the *second time*, at the selection of Esther.—*C.*

2 Had some office there.

3 Hence some think he was one of the porters; but this does not follow from his sitting in the gate; it rather conveys the idea of some *judicial* dignity, or official appointment about the court and person of the king, probably obtained through the influence of Esther with Hegai, though whose kindness, as is evident from ver. 22, Mordecai kept up a correspondence, or obtained an interview with his lovely and obedient relative.—*C.*

b ver.10.

c Or, *Bigthana*, ch. 6.2.

4 Heb. *the threshold.*

d 1 Sa.24.6;26.9. Ps. 144.10.

e Ec.10.20. Pr. 8. 12. Ro.11.33.ch.vi.–x.

f Ro.13.7. Phi.2.4.

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drink, rise up in judgment against those professed Christians who send round their healths, their toasts, and send round sin and death along with them! Yea, ordinarily hard drinking, however unforced, issues in the misery or shame of those who occasioned it. If persons be once intoxicated with liquor, how imprudent their conduct! they are ready to dishonour themselves or their nearest relations, and to require what cannot be decently granted. And when pride meets with pride the issue is contention and ruin. It is easier to govern a kingdom than to rule our own proud spirit. But especially unhappy are those contentions between married persons which happen before company. The bad consequences of them may never be cured. It is indeed dangerous for kingdoms to indulge disobedience in the wives of rulers; but death or divorce ought to be the last means used to prevent it. Nor ought even the general welfare of kingdoms to be founded in injustice to particulars. But O the wisdom and power of God! he makes all the follies and wickedness, as well as the counsels of mankind, to work for his own glory and the good of his church and people.

CHAPTER II. REFLECTIONS.—What is done in haste and passion issues in bitter repentance and grief. And what odd shifts crafty courtiers will take to avoid coming under the power of a female whom they have injured. Yea, men will practise the greatest extravagance and wickedness to gratify their fleshly lusts. Surely we may here observe the need there was of the gospel, in order to reduce men to the observance even of the plainest laws of nature: and at the same time we discern the wisdom of God in carrying on his wise and holy designs by means of the most simple methods. What care he takes of orphans and fatherless! And great is the care which men ought to take of them. Yea, it is comely when near relations have a tender and fixed regard for one another. Great prudence is sometimes necessary to enable us to discern what truths may be told, and what concealed, without bordering on falsehood. And the guardians of virgins ought to take the greatest care of them, especially if they are brought into slippery and dangerous situations. How strangely God brings treasonable plots to light! And it is an advantage for courts to have faithful attendants; and very honourable to risk our own life for the sake of our sovereign, even when we have no prospect of reward.

CHAPTER III. REFLECTIONS.—The very worst of men are often exalted to the highest honours: and exalted too to render their shame and ruin in the end the more conspicuous and dreadful. Often the cringing complaisance of others lays a snare for the truly godly. And there is need therefore of strong faith and ardent zeal to make us take a singular course at the hazard of all that is dear to us in this world. But no consideration must influence us to that which is evil. Of what intolerable pride, insatiable cruelty, and deep-rooted antipathy to the people of God are some men possessed! And often courtiers mark out the worthiest of the subjects as the objects of their resentments. The people of God are ordinarily loaded with the vilest calumnies in order to encompass their ruin. And pride, malice, and revenge, met together, stick at nothing to obtain their own ends. Some men are very lavish of their money in the service of the devil, who would be absolute churls in the service of God. And crafty courtiers often make princes believe what is for their unspeakable hurt to be for their inexpressible advantage. But miserable is the state of nations when flattering sycophants can sway the sovereign to everything horrid at their pleasure. And it is absurd for princes or others to riot in mirth and pleasure when the church is in danger and the public perplexed. But there is no counsel nor device effectual against the Lord. Even Haman's appeal to the lot, for marking out a lucky day for the destruction of the

PRISON OF SOCRATES, ATHENS — WHERE SOCRATES, BORN FIVE YEARS AFTER THE BATTLE OF SALAMIS, WAS POISONED BY HIS COUNTRYMEN. [ESTHER, iii : 1.]—Socrates was born about five years after the battle of Salamis. He is regarded as the greatest spirit of the pagan world. He was born at the time when Grecian civilization had reached its highest point of splendor. The high civilization to which the Greeks attained at the time Socrates was born is thought to have been due to the triumph which the Greeks, as representing western civilization, won over the Persians, representing the civilization of the east. The armies of the east that aroused and regenerated the Greeks were led by Ahasuerus, the king mentioned in the first verse of the third chapter of Esther. We give above a picture of the prison of Socrates, in sight of the Acropolis and the Pnyx, and of the neighborhood of the battle where the Greeks fought the Persians under Ahasuerus. The poet, Shelly, called Socrates the Jesus Christ of Greece.

both [g]hanged on a tree:[5] and it was [h]written in the book of the Chronicles before the king.

CHAPTER III.

1 Haman, advanced by the king, and despised by Mordecai, seeketh revenge upon all the Jews. 7 He casteth lots. 8 He obtaineth by calumniation a decree of the king to put the Jews to death.

AFTER these things did king Ahasuerus promote[a] Haman the son of Hammedatha the Agagite, and advanced him, and set his seat above all the princes that *were* with him.

2 And all the king's servants, that *were* in the king's gate, bowed, and reverenced Haman; for the king had so commanded concerning him: but Mordecai bowed not, nor did *him* reverence.[1]

3 Then the king's servants, which *were* in the king's gate, said unto Mordecai, Why transgressest thou the king's commandment?

4 Now it came to pass, when they spake daily unto him, and he hearkened not unto them, that they told Haman, to see whether Mordecai's matters would stand: for he had told them that he *was* a Jew.[2]

5 And when Haman saw that Mordecai bowed not, nor did him reverence, then was Haman full of wrath.

6 And he thought scorn to lay hands on Mordecai alone; for they had showed him the people of Mordecai: wherefore Haman sought to destroy all the Jews[3] that *were* throughout the whole kingdom of Ahasuerus, *even* the people of Mordecai.

7 ¶ In the first month, (that *is*, the month Nisan,) in the twelfth year of king Ahasuerus, they cast [b]Pur, that *is*, the lot,[4] before Haman from day to day, and from month to month, *to* the twelfth *month*, that *is*, the month Adar.

8 ¶ And Haman said unto king Ahasuerus, There is a certain people scattered abroad and dispersed among the people in all the provinces of thy kingdom; and their laws *are* diverse from all people; neither keep they the king's laws: therefore it *is* not[5] for the king's profit to suffer them.

9 If it please the king, let it be written that they may be destroyed;[6] and I will pay[7] ten thousand talents of silver to the hands of those that have the charge of the business, to bring *it* into the king's treasuries.[8]

10 And the king took his ring from his hand, and gave it unto Haman the son of Hammedatha the Agagite, the Jews' [c]enemy.

11 And the king said unto Haman, The silver *is* given to thee, the people also, to do with them as[d] it seemeth good to thee.

12 Then were the king's [e]scribes called on

A.M. 3493 or 3549.
B.C. 511 or 455.

g Ge. 40. 19. De. 21. 22. Jos. 8. 29.
[5] Josephus says they were crucified; and Grotius observes that hanging was a punishment frequent among the Persians. —*C.*
h ch. 6. 1, 2. Mal. 3. 16.

CHAP. III.

a Ps. 12. 8. Mal. 3. 15. Pr. 29. 2.
1 The most probable explanation of this is, that Haman was an Amalekite, and Mordecai scorned to do homage or show respect in any way to one of that hated nation. Possibly also Mordecai saw the wily and traitorous heart of the powerful but unscrupulous adviser. The sequel shows that Haman's boasted loyalty and devotion to the king was assumed for purposes of personal aggrandizement.—*P.*
2 Agag was the common name of the kings of Amalek, with whom Israel was commanded to have no peace. Nothing can account for the refusal of Mordecai to do an act of ordinary courtesy to his superior, but the idea that he judged himself thereby contravening a commandment of God. He recollected how Saul his kinsman had suffered for sparing the wicked Agag—he dreaded he might suffer for bowing to his equally wicked descendant.—*C.*
3 Every single evil passion passes immediately into another when temptation offers. Haman appears to have been merely proud, instantly he becomes immeasurably cruel—he was offended by the neglect of one man, whom his pride disdains to punish; but in revenge of the imaginary insult his crucity enacts the destruction of a whole nation.—*C.*
b ch. 9. 24. Eze. 21. 21. He tried to fix upon a lucky day for his project.
4 The casting of lots to find out fortunate months and days, and even hours, is still all-prevalent in Persia. The king maintains an astrologer for this superstitious purpose. European almanacs were formerly filled with such vain but too successful impositions upon credulity, and even yet there are those who prefer one month or one day of the week to another for special undertakings. All this is a departure from God that, rightly considered, amounts to idolatry. The word and Spirit of God, and a conscience void of offence, are the only oracles a true believer dares or requires to consult.—*C.*
5 Heb. *meet* or *equal.*
6 Heb. *to destroy them.*
7 Heb. *weigh.* Perhaps coining of money was not then begun. It is 428 cart loads.
c Or, *oppressor*, ch. 7. 6.
d Jn. 19. 10. Ps. 73. 7. Je. 18. 23, 7. 44. 17.
e Or, *secretaries*, ch. 8. 9, 11. 22.
8 It is not necessary to conclude that this was all the argument Haman employed to deceive the king, but merely the substance of it. It amounts to a charge of rebellion against the Jews, and

A.M. 3495 or 3551.
B.C. 509 or 453.

a lure to the king's covetousness by their extirpation. The offer amounts to above two millions of our money, but was not to come out of Haman's private property, as appears from ver. 11, but from the product of the plunder and confiscation arising from the execution of the decree. —*C.*
f ch. 8. 9. 1 Ki. 21. 8. Da. 6. 8, 12, 15.
9 Several signet-rings, of very high antiquity, may be seen in the British Museum. The engraved part revolves upon a pivot, and was used as the signmanual in modern times. Many private and public documents still continue to be so authenticated, and the keeper of the great seal is in Britain an officer of the very highest rank. *C.*——The Persians have stones in their rings, which answer the purpose of seals. On these their names are frequently engraved, and the impression serves for their signature. It was probably for the purpose of sealing this writing that the king had previously given Haman his ring, by the use of which the sanction of the royal authority would be given to his bloody mandate.—*I.*
g 2 Ch. 30. 6. ch. 8. 10, 14. Ro. 3. 15. Pr. 1. 16; 4. 16. Is. 59. 7.
h 1 Sa. 22. 18. Ps. 83. 4, 5. Mat. 2. 16. Ex. 1. 16, 22.
i Job 39. 30. Ps. 36. 4. Ja. 2. 13.
k ch. 8. 11, 12; 9. 1, 16, 17.
l Ro. 3. 15. Pr. 4. 16; 1. 16. Is. 59. 7.
m Ge. 37. 25. Mat. 14. 6. Jn. 16. 20. Re. 11. 10.
1 There are few things upon record more awful than this simple statement. An easy-minded monarch is deceived by a crafty and cruel minister—the letters of murderous extermination are despatched, and this accomplished, the king and Haman 'sat down to drink!' —*C.*
n ch. 4. 16; 8. 15.
2 Because, 'no doubt, the Jews being numerous in the capital, much resistance and retaliation were apprehended.'—*C.*

CHAP. IV.

1 Different countries have different modes of expressing the same thing, or attempting the same object. Any obnoxious proclamation in a free country would instantly be met by public assemblies and petitions, but under an eastern despotism the effort must be personal. *Loud cries* are so common in the streets of Asiatic towns that the efforts of Mordecai would not be considered more than the ordinary mode of attracting public attention.—*C.*
2 Heb. *eunuchs.*
3 This is a lovely trait in Esther's character. She does not despise her unhappy relative, whom probably she believes demented, but is 'exceedingly grieved,' and sends everything in her power to relieve and comfort him.—*C.*
a Ge. 37. 35. Je. 31. 15. Ro. 2. 7.
4 Heb. *whom he had set before her.*
b Job 29. 16. Ro. 12. 15. He. 13. 3.
c 1 Ki 2. 1 v. Mat. 24. 45. 2 Ti. 1. 16, 17.

the thirteenth day of the first month, and there was written, according to all that Haman had commanded, unto the king's lieutenants, and to the governors that *were* over every province, and to the rulers of every people of every province according to the writing thereof, and *to* every people after their language; [f]in the name of king Ahasuerus was it written, and sealed with the king's ring.[9]

13 And the letters were sent by [g]posts into all the king's provinces, to destroy, [h]to kill, and to cause to perish, all Jews, both young and old, little children and women, in [i]one day, *even* upon the [k]thirteenth *day* of the twelfth month, (which *is* the month Adar,) and *to take* the spoil of them for a prey.

14 The copy of the writing, for a commandment to be given in every province, was published unto all people, that they should be ready against that day.

15 The posts went out, [l]being hastened by the king's commandment; and the decree was given in Shushan the palace. And the king and Haman [m]sat down to drink;[1] but the [n]city Shushan was perplexed.[2]

CHAPTER IV.

1 The great mourning of Mordecai and the Jews. 4 Esther, understanding it, sendeth to Mordecai, who showeth the cause, and adviseth her to intercede with the king for the nation. 10 She excusing herself, is threatened by Mordecai. 15 She appointing a fast, undertaketh the suit.

WHEN Mordecai perceived all that was done, Mordecai rent his clothes, and put on sackcloth with ashes, and went out into the midst of the city, and cried with a loud and a bitter cry;[1]

2 And came even before the king's gate: for none *might* enter into the king's gate clothed with sackcloth.

3 And in every province, whithersoever the king's commandment and his decree came, *there was* great mourning among the Jews, and fasting, and weeping, and wailing; and many lay in sackcloth and ashes.

4 ¶ So Esther's maids and her [2]chamberlains came and told *it* her. Then was the queen exceedingly grieved;[3] and she sent raiment to clothe Mordecai, and to take away his sackcloth from him: but [c]he received *it* not.

5 Then called Esther for Hatach, *one* of the king's chamberlains, whom he had appointed to attend upon her,[4] and gave him a commandment to Mordecai, [b]to know what it *was*, and why it *was*.

6 So Hatach went [c]forth to Mordecai unto the street of the city, which *was* before the king's gate.

Jews, places it at so great a distance as to render their deliverance more glorious, and his own and their enemies' ruin the more ignominious.

CHAPTER IV. REFLECTIONS.—A good man severely feels and laments the heavy strokes of Providence, whilst with humble resignation he submits to the rod: and it is peculiarly grievous to him that others should suffer for his sake. How brave is it to espouse the cause of God when it seems desperate and sinking! But unhappy are those courts where all are so abandoned to gaiety, pleasure and mirth, that nothing serious or mournful dare enter. Yea, the pride or base fear of princes has introduced the most unaccountable laws, hurtful to themselves, families, and

7 And Mordecai told him [d]of all that had happened unto him, and of the sum of the money that Haman had promised to pay to the king's treasuries for the Jews,[5] to destroy them.

8 Also he gave him the copy of the writing[6] of the decree that was given at [e]Shushan to destroy them, to show *it* unto Esther, and to declare *it* unto her, and to [f]charge her that she should go in unto the king, to make [g]supplication unto him, and to make request before him for her people.

9 And Hatach came and [h]told Esther the words of Mordecai.

10 ¶ Again[i] Esther spake unto Hatach, and gave him commandment unto Mordecai;

11 All the king's servants, and the people of the king's provinces, do know, that whosoever, whether man or woman, shall come unto the king into [k]the inner court, who is not called, *there is* [l]one law of his to put *him* to death,[7] except such to [m]whom the king shall hold out the golden sceptre,[8] that he may live: but I have [n]not been called to come in unto the king these thirty days.

12 And they told to Mordecai Esther's words.

13 Then Mordecai commanded to answer Esther, Think [o]not with thyself that thou shalt escape in the king's house, more than all the Jews.

14 For if thou altogether holdest thy peace at this time, *then* [p]shall there enlargement[9] and deliverance arise to the Jews from another place; but thou and thy father's house shall be destroyed: and who knoweth whether [q]thou art come to the kingdom for *such* a time as this?[1]

15 ¶ Then Esther bade *them* return Mordecai *this answer*,

16 Go, gather together all the Jews *that are* present[2] in Shushan, and fast ye for me, and neither eat nor drink three days, night or day: I also and my maidens[3] will fast likewise; and so will I go in unto the king, which *is* not according to the law; and if I perish, I perish.[4]

17 So Mordecai went[5] his way, and did according to all that Esther had commanded him.

CHAPTER V.

1 *Esther, adventuring on the king's favour, obtaineth the grace of the golden sceptre, and inviteth the king and Haman to a banquet.* 6 *She, being encouraged by the king to name her suit, inviteth them to another banquet the next day.* 9 *Haman, proud of his advancement, repineth at the contempt of Mordecai.* 14 *By the advice of his wife and friends he prepareth for him a gallows.*

NOW it came to pass on [a]the third day, that Esther [b]put on *her* royal *apparel*, and stood in the [c]inner court[1] of the king's house, over against the king's house: and the king sat upon his royal throne in the royal house, over against the gate of the house.

2 And it was [d]so, when the king saw Esther the queen standing in the court, *that* she obtained favour in his sight: and the king [e]held out to Esther the golden sceptre that *was* in his hand. So Esther drew near, and touched the top of the sceptre.

3 Then said the king unto her, [f]What wilt thou, queen Esther? and what *is* thy request? it shall be even given thee to the half of the kingdom.[2]

4 And Esther [g]answered, If *it seem* good unto the king, let the king and Haman come this day unto the [h]banquet that I have prepared for him.

5 Then the king said, Cause Haman to make haste, that he may do as Esther hath said. So the king and Haman came to the banquet that Esther had prepared.

6 ¶ And the king said unto Esther at the banquet of wine, [i]What *is* thy petition? and it shall be granted thee: and what *is* thy request? even to the half of the kingdom it shall be performed.

7 Then [k]answered Esther, and said, My petition and my request *is;*

8 If I have found favour in the sight of the king, and if it please the king to grant my petition, and to perform[3] my request, let the king and Haman come to the banquet that I shall prepare for them, and I will do [l]to-morrow as the king hath said.[4]

9 ¶ Then went Haman forth that day [m]joyful and with a glad heart: but when Haman saw Mordecai in the king's gate, that he [n]stood not up, nor moved for him, he was [o]full of indignation against Mordecai.

10 Nevertheless Haman [p]refrained himself: and when he came home, he sent and [5]called for his friends, and [q]Zeresh his wife.

11 And [r]Haman told them of the glory of his riches, and the multitude of his children, and all *the things* wherein the king had promoted him, and how he had advanced him above the princes and servants of the king.

12 Haman said moreover, Yea, Esther the queen did let no man come in with the king unto the banquet that she had prepared but myself; and [s]to-morrow am I invited unto her also with the king.

13 Yet [t]all this availeth me nothing, so long as I see Mordecai the Jew sitting at the king's gate.[6]

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d ch.3.2-13.
5 Though ch. 3. 11 gives Haman the *silver* as well as the *people*, it seems probable from this statement that some return to the royal treasury was expected from the plunder and confiscation of an industrious and mercantile people.—*C.*
6 In the Septuagint version a copy of this letter or decree is inserted, but its genuineness is very doubtful. The writer of this book did not think the decree worth inserting. It forms no part of the canon of Scripture.—*P.*
e Is.1.24.Na.3.1.
f 1 Th.5.27. 2 Ti.4.3. 2 Ti.16.17.
g Ec.10.4. Pr. 15. 1; 18.23;16.14,15.
h Je.23.28.Ac.20.27. 1 Co.4.2.
i He.12.3. Pr.24.10. Is.40.29-31.
k ch.5.1.
l Da.2.9;6.7.
7 Such laws still exist in several eastern courts. They originated, no doubt, in the necessity of preventing unreasonable intrusions upon domestic privacy; they were advocated by courtiers on the plea of protecting the royal dignity; but they were enforced for the real purpose of transferring from indolent and luxurious monarchs the whole administration into the hands of their attendants.—*C.*
m ch.5.2;8.4.
8 That such a golden sceptre was used by the Persian kings is stated in Xenophon (*Cyropæd.* l. 8); but while such authorities are introduced, it is not for establishing the Scripture truth, which is totally independent of such aid, but for illustration of the homage and faithful history pays to divine revelation.—*C.*
n 1 Co.7.4,5. 1 Pe.3.7.
o Ph.2.4. Mat.16.24, 25. Pr.29.25;3.5,10-12.
p Je.22.21. Lu.1.26, 42. De.32.36. Je.4.27; 30.11;46.28.
9 Heb. *respiration.*
q Is.49.23. Ob. 21. 2 Ki.13.5;24.27.
1 Agents and occasions are alike in the hand of God. Poor short-sighted humanity can absolutely judge of neither; but when agents and occasions seem suited for each other, it becomes us carefully to watch the leadings of Providence, convinced that God will order all things well.—*C.*
2 Heb. *found.*
3 Who, no doubt, were Jewesses, chosen at her request, and as deeply interested herself in the decision.—*C.*
4 Noble-minded woman! devoted to thy God in fasting, and prayer its inseparable companion, and ready to die for thy religion and thy kindred, and asking no epitaph beyond the record of perishing so glorious a cause! —*Note*, One only has surpassed this self-devotedness. Esther could have died for her friends! But oh! who died for his enemies? Ro.5.10.—*C.*
5 Heb. *passed.*

CHAP. V.

a ch.4.16.
b Mat.10.16. Ps.112. 5. 1 Pe.3.3,5. Ep.5.15.
c ch.4.11;6.4.
1 The more private residence of the king. The circumstance that Esther was seen by the king, she being in the court, while he was seated in the hall, is explained by the fact that, in the Persian palaces, the principal apartment is open in front, so that the king, from the upper end of the hall, commands a view of the whole court.—*I.*
d Ps.116.1. Ac.10.4. Pr. 21. 1. ch. 4. 11; 8.4. Ge. 22. 14. De.32. 36. 1 Co.10.13.
e Col.3.18. 1 Pe. 3.1-7.
f ver.6;ch.7.2;9.12. 1 Ki.2.20. Mar. 6. 23, so Zec.1.13. Jn.16.24.
2 It was customary with the Persian kings to give particular cities and provinces to their queens and favourites, not in absolute possession, but to furnish various necessaries. Historians tell us of one city which was assigned to a Persian queen for sandals, a second for a girdle, a third for her headdress; of one to furnish a favourite with *flesh*, another with *bread*, and a third with *wine*.—*C.*
g Pr.29.11. Ep. 5.15. Mat.10.16. Ps.112.5.
h Mat.9.10; 10. 16. 1 Th.5.21. Ja.3.13.
i ver.3;ch.7.2;9.12.
k Ja.3.13. Pr. 29. 11. Mat. 10. 16. Ep. 5. 15. Ps.112.5.
3 Heb. *to do.*
l Pr.16.9.ch.vi.
4 No one can certainly discover the motive of Esther in this postponement. It may have been *fear* shrinking from a present difficulty in hope of a better opportunity; or *wisdom* seeking more ingratiation, in hope of greater influence; or *piety* waiting upon a providential opening, and concluding, by the Spirit of God, that her time was not come. The event leads us to adopt this last view of Esther's decision.—*C.*
m Lu. 6. 25. Am. 6. 13. Job 20.5.
n ch.3.2. Mat.10.28. Ps.15.4.
o ch.3.5. Job 5.2. Ec. 4.4. Pr.27.3,4.
p 2 Sa.13.22.
5 Heb. *caused to come.*
q ch.6.13.
r Da.4.30.ch.9.7-10; 3.1. Ps.49.6,16,18;73.4-8, 12; 37.35; 17. 14. Job 21.7,8,11,12.
s Pr. 27. 1. 1 Th. 5.3. Is.13.8. Lu.21.34,35.
t Job 5.2. 1 Ki. 21. 4. Ps.52.1,2. Ec.10.1.
6 What a picture does this give of poor degraded human nature! Here was a man, according to his own account, enjoying everything his heart could wish for —wealth, honour, domestic prosperity; and yet the bitter hatred he entertained to another troubled and distracted his mind. Haman was essentially a bad man. He was vain, ambitious, cruel, and unscrupulous. To gratify his private feelings he would stop at no crime. Mordecai had from the first formed a true estimate of him. —*I.*

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subjects. But how friendly is it when all the members of Christ, however great, sympathize with one another in their distress! God sometimes permits the most discouraging circumstance to exercise the faith and brighten the crown of the redeemed. And it is necessary to consider well the ends of Providence in putting us into our stations, and to labour to let slip no opportunity of answering them. If we have faith to trust in God he will never fail us. But if through unbelief we decline the path of duty, we may expect the danger which we sinfully decline. In times of great distress, solemn fasting and supplication to God are leading means of deliverance. And such as are confined ought to join in the work as well as the attenders in public. In all our distresses there is a throne of grace open and a God who heareth prayer. When we are truly humbled under our sins, we may hope that God will deliver us from our afflictions. And while we desire the prayers of others, let us never forget to be importunate for ourselves. And having by the prayers of faith committed our way to the Lord, we may, with the greatest courage and resolution, venture on the most dangerous work to which in providence we have a call.

14 ¶ Then said [u]Zeresh his wife and all his friends unto him, Let a gallows be made of fifty cubits high, and to-morrow speak thou unto the king that Mordecai may be hanged thereon: then [x]go thou in merrily with the king unto the banquet. And the thing pleased Haman; and [y]he caused the gallows to be made.

CHAPTER VI.

1 Ahasuerus, hearing read in the chronicles the good service done by Mordecai, taketh care for his reward. 4 Haman, coming to sue that Mordecai might be hanged, unawares giveth counsel that he might do him honour. 12 Complaining of his misfortune, his friends foretell him of his fall.

ON that night could not the king sleep;[1] and he commanded to bring the book of records of the chronicles;[2] and they were read before the king.[3]

2 And it was found written, That Mordecai had told of Bigthana and Teresh, two of the king's chamberlains, the keepers of the door, who sought to lay hand on the king Ahasuerus.

3 And the king said, What honour and dignity hath been done to Mordecai for this? Then said the king's servants that ministered unto him, There is nothing done for him.

4 ¶ And the king said, Who *is* in the court? (Now Haman was come into the outward court of the king's house, to speak unto the king to hang Mordecai on the gallows that he had prepared for him.)[4]

5 And the king's servants said unto him, Behold, Haman standeth in the court. And the king said, Let him come in.

6 So Haman came in. And the king said unto him, What shall be done unto the man whom the king delighteth to honour? (Now Haman [a]thought in his heart, To whom would the king delight to do honour more than to myself?)

7 And Haman [b]answered the king, For the man whom the king delighteth to honour,[5]

8 Let the royal apparel be brought[6] which the king *useth*[7] to wear,[8] and the [c]horse that the king rideth upon, and the crown-royal which is set upon his head;[9]

9 And let this apparel and horse be delivered to the hand of one of the king's most noble princes, that they may array the man *withal* whom the king delighteth to honour, and bring him on horseback[1] through the street of the city, and [d]proclaim before him, Thus shall it be done to the man whom the king delighteth to honour.

10 Then the king said to Haman, [e]Make haste, *and* take the apparel and the horse, as thou hast said, and do even so to Mordecai the Jew, that sitteth at the king's gate: let nothing fail[2] of all that thou hast spoken.

11 Then [f]took Haman the apparel and the horse, and arrayed Mordecai, and brought him on horseback through the street of the city, and proclaimed before him, Thus shall it be done unto the man whom the king delighteth to honour.[3]

12 ¶ And Mordecai [g]came again to the king's gate: but Haman hasted to his house mourning, and [h]having his head covered.

13 And Haman told Zeresh his [i]wife and all his friends every *thing* that had befallen him. Then said his [k]wise men and Zeresh his wife unto him, [l]If Mordecai *be* of the seed of the Jews, before whom thou hast begun to fall, thou shalt not prevail against him, but shalt surely fall before him.[4]

14 And while they *were* yet talking with him, came the king's chamberlains, and [m]hasted to bring Haman unto the banquet that Esther had prepared.

A.M. 3495 or 3551. B.C. 509 or 453.

u Mar.6.24. 2 Sa.13. 2,31 Ki.21.25.2 Ch.22. 3,4.

x ch.3.15. Re. 11.10. Ps.52.1,7.

y Pr.4.16,17.16. Is.59. 7.Ro.3.15,ch.7.10.

CHAP. VI.

1 Heb. *the king's sleep fled away.*

2 These chronicles were written in verse, and would therefore form an embellished narrative, well suited to amuse the sleepless king. The famous Persian poem of *Ferdoosy* is nothing but such a chronicle of events from the creation till the tenth century. Similar poetic records may be found in all countries emerging from barbarism; and, in Persia, they continue down till the present day.—*C.*

3 We have here a key to Esther's postponement of her request. She was guided from first to last by divine wisdom. She may not herself have been fully conscious of it; yet still she was an instrument in God's hands. Matters were not yet ripe for action. The gallows had not been erected. Mordecai's loyalty and devotion had not been fully developed.—*P.*

4 What a blessing is a government where liberty, and life, and death stand not in the will of any man, but solely in the law, openly administered, and deciding upon public evidence, not upon private insinuation! Haman, without any proof of crime, had obtained sentence of death against a nation, and now by a single writ expects the immediate execution of Mordecai! Yet, in lands of law and liberty, let it never be forgotten, that every nation was at one period of its history despotically governed, and that to the light of Christianity is due all the real liberties that any nation has established and enjoyed.—*C.*

a Ps.10.13. Is. 10. 7–14. Ob.3. Pr. 18. 12; 16. 18.

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b Job 5.11–13.

5 Heb. *in whose honour the king delighteth.*

6 Heb. *Let them bring the royal apparel.*

7 Heb. *wherewith the king clotheth* himself.

8 Xenophon relates that the robe of Cyrus was half purple, half white, and that for any one to wear such a robe was a capital offence. This proposal of Haman was therefore high presumption, and indicates a mind abandoned to vanity, and ruined by success.—*C.*

c 1 Ki.1.33.

9 This 'crown-royal' was most probably some regal ornament for the head of the horse, not of the man. To put the crown upon his own head, even Haman, in all his pride, would scarcely have dared to propose. This custom of crowning a horse led in state still prevails in Ethiopia.—*C.*

1 Heb. *cause him to ride.*

d Ge.41.43.

e Job 5. 11–13. Mi.7. 8.Lu.14.11.

2 Heb. *suffer not a whit* to fail.

f Ezr.6.13. Lu.1. 51, 52. Ps.30.5;31.20;33.18, 19;37.39;92.11.

3 Pitts relates a nearly similar procession in Algiers, in honour of a proselyte to Mohammedanism. See *Harmer*, vol. ii. c. 6.—*C.*

g Ps.131.1,2.

h 2 Sa.15.30.Je.14.4. Job 20.5. Pr.11.8; 1.31; 21.18.Ps.9.15,16.

i ch.5.10–14.

k ch.1. 13. Ge. 41. 8. Da.2.12.Mat.2.1.

l Da.6. 4–24. 1 Sa. 5. 3.Am.8.14.Zec.12.2–9.

4 Fully aware of Haman's evil purposes against the Jewish nation, they conclude that Mordecai will show little mercy to the fallen Agagite. In this they judged Mordecai by themselves, or inwardly dreaded that righteous retribution which their own consciences told them they deserved.—*C.*

m Je.22.7.De.32.35, 36.

CHAPTER V. REFLECTIONS. — Prudence and courage must be joined to our prayers if we would succeed in any work for God. And a plentiful harvest of joy shall they reap who sow in the tears and mourning of faith. They who venture all for God shall find him able to do for them unspeakably better than their most sanguine hopes. While himself is easily accessible, casting out none that come to him, he can dispose the spirits of the haughtiest princes to whatever he pleases. But in our dealing with great men, it is best first to conciliate their affection before we ask important favours: and to watch the favourable moment is the best way to insure success. They who are careful to please God need neither fear nor care who are displeased with them for so doing. But pitiful and miserable is the condition of the proud. Easily they are puffed up with that which is intended to ruin them, and unmeasurably fretted at that which could never hurt them. Their pride and discontentment create them numberless miseries, and rob them of the enjoyment of their mercies: and the curse of God is often visible upon them in the midst of all their great possessions. But it is unhappy for proud spirits to have rash and imprudent advisers, who spur them on to the most debasing resentment. And base are those minds which promote revenge, even the lowest, with alertness and pleasure.

CHAPTER VI. REFLECTIONS.—How unsearchable are God's judgments, and his ways past finding out! By the most insignificant trifles can he promote his most important purposes. Happy are those who have the sleep of his beloved granted to them: or if their eyes be debarred from rest, can employ their minds in sweet surveys of the annals of redeeming love! The natural law of gratitude, even towards the meanest inferior, is binding upon the conscience. But how little notice earthly princes take of their mean servants and friends, when they often know not whether their important services have been rewarded or not! Nay, often the greatest merits and best services are least rewarded at courts. That modesty and self-denial which are of so great price before God, hinder men's preferment in this world; whilst forward flatterers thrust themselves into honours. The longer we have neglected to recompense favours done us we should the more abundantly reward them at last. But pride and ambition are never satisfied with the most accumulated honours. And it is dangerous for courtiers to have too high an opinion of their own merits, and of their interest with princes, or to presume on more than they really have. Kings ought always to delight in honouring the deserving, and encouraging those that do well. But how confounding is it to proud spirits to be obliged to confer that honour on the distinguished objects of their hatred and contempt, which they had carved out for themselves! Miserable comforters in a day of distress are those who flatter us in the time of our prosperity; and it is in vain to fight against those whom God protects. But none hurry faster downwards than falling favourites at courts. And sad presages of approaching ruin often seize upon sinners before destruction comes upon them to the uttermost.

CHAPTER VII. REFLECTIONS.—God often strangely animates his enemies in power to encourage his people's requests for favour. And a tender regard for natural life at stake makes us very earnest in supplicating deliverance: and surely then we ought to be much more earnest for the life of our own and others' souls. The most ruinous and wicked projects are often laid to gratify men's sinful lusts. And though persecution of the people of God is not only impious, but even exceedingly detrimental to the state, where nothing can repair the loss of pious and industrious subjects, how often is it practised! Men are ready often to startle at the mention of that very wickedness to which they had given their consent! And sin generally becomes vexatious and burdensome at the last. That is often done thoughtlessly with which, on a moment's cool reflection, we cannot but be shocked. Many seem amazed at the wickedness of others, who overlook the same, or a greater, in themselves. And accomplices in guilt quickly become the bitterest enemies one to another. How dejected in adversity are those who were most proud in prosperity! The most insolent enemies of God's people may quickly be glad to bow at their feet. And every motion creates suspicion against a man whose character is once proved infamous and abandoned. All hands will eagerly help down with falling courtiers; and the ruin of the wicked comes upon them in an instant! Yea, the enemies of God's church are astonishingly taken in their own craftiness, and have their pride brought down, their persecution punished, and their mischief returned on their head.

CHAPTER VII.

1 Esther, entertaining the king and Haman, maketh suit for her own life and her people's. 5 She accuseth Haman. 7 The king in his anger, being told of the gallows which Haman had made for Mordecai, causeth him to be hanged thereon.

SO the king and Haman came to banquet[1] with Esther the queen.

2 And the king said again unto Esther on the second day, at the banquet of wine, [a]What *is* thy petition, queen Esther? and it shall be granted thee: and what *is* thy request? and it shall be performed, *even* to the half of the kingdom.

3 Then Esther the queen answered and said, If I have found favour in thy sight, O king, and if it please the king, [b]let my life be given me at my petition, and my people at my request.

4 For we are [c]sold, I and my people, to be destroyed, to be slain, and to perish:[2] but if we had been sold for [d]bond-men and bond-women, I had held my tongue, although the enemy could not countervail the king's [e]damage.[3]

5 ¶ Then the king Ahasuerus answered and said unto Esther the queen, Who is he, and where is he, that durst presume in his heart[4] to do so?

6 And Esther [f]said, The adversary[5] and enemy *is* this wicked Haman. Then Haman was [g]afraid before the king and the queen.

7 ¶ And the king, arising from the banquet of wine in his [h]wrath, *went* into the palace-garden: and Haman [i]stood up to make request for his life to Esther the queen; [k]for he saw that there was evil determined against him by the king.[6]

8 Then the king returned out of the palace-garden into the place of the banquet of wine; and Haman was [l]fallen upon the bed whereon Esther *was*.[7] Then said the king, Will he force the queen also before me in the house? As the word went out of the king's mouth, they covered[m] Haman's face.[8]

9 And [n]Harbonah, one of the chamberlains, said before the king, Behold also, the gallows[9] fifty cubits high, which Haman had made for Mordecai, who [o]had spoken good for the king, standeth in the house of Haman. Then the king said, Hang him thereon.

10 So they [p]hanged Haman on the gallows that he had prepared for Mordecai. Then was the king's wrath [q]pacified.

CHAPTER VIII.

1 Mordecai is advanced. 3 Esther maketh suit to reverse Haman's letters against the Jews. 7 Ahasuerus granteth to the Jews to defend themselves. 15 Mordecai's honour, and the Jews' joy.

ON that day [a]did the king Ahasuerus give the house of Haman, the Jews' enemy, unto Esther the queen: and Mordecai [b]came before the king; for Esther had told what he *was* unto her.

2 And the king took off [c]his ring, which he had taken from Haman, and gave it unto Mordecai. And Esther [d]set Mordecai over the house of Haman.

3 ¶ And Esther spake yet again before the king, and [e]fell down at his feet, and besought him with tears[1] to put away the [f]mischief of Haman the Agagite, and his device that he had devised against the Jews.[2]

4 Then the king [g]held out the golden sceptre toward Esther. So Esther arose, and stood before the king,

5 And said, If it please the king, and if I have found favour in his sight, and the thing *seem* right before the king, and I *be* [h]pleasing in his eyes, let it be written to reverse [i]the letters devised by Haman the son of Hammedatha the Agagite, which he wrote[3] to destroy the Jews which *are* in all the king's provinces:

6 For how can I [k]endure to see the evil that shall come unto my people? or how can I endure to see the destruction of my kindred?

7 ¶ Then the king Ahasuerus said unto Esther the queen, and to Mordecai the Jew, Behold, [l]I have given Esther the house of Haman, and him they have hanged upon the gallows, because he laid his hand upon the Jews.

8 Write ye also for the Jews, as it liketh you, [m]in the king's name, and seal *it* with the king's ring: for the writing which is written in the king's name, and sealed with the king's ring, [n]may no man reverse.[4]

9 Then were the king's scribes called at that time in the [o]third month, (that *is*, the month Sivan,) on the three and twentieth *day* thereof, and it was written (according to all that Mordecai commanded) [p]unto the Jews, and to the lieutenants, and the deputies and rulers of the provinces which *are* from India unto Ethiopia, an hundred twenty and seven provinces, unto every province according to the writing thereof, and unto every people after their language, and to the Jews according to their writing, and according to their language.

10 And he wrote [q]in the king Ahasuerus' name, and sealed *it* with the king's ring; and sent letters by post on [r]horseback, *and* riders on mules, camels, *and* young dromedaries:

11 Wherein the king granted the Jews which *were* in every city to gather themselves together, and [s]to stand for their life, to destroy, to slay, and to cause to perish, all the power of the

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CHAP. VII.

1 Heb. *to drink.*

a ch.5.6;1.12.

b Job 2.4.2 Sa.20.19.

c ch.3.9–13.4.7,8.

2 Heb. *that they should destroy, and kill, and cause to perish.*

d Jos.9.23.Ne.5.5.

e ch. 3. 9. Ezr. 6. 16. Tit.3.8,14. Is.6.13. Pr. 12.26.

3 The damage arising from the loss of subjects, and of the revenue arising from their manufactures and commerce. The revocation of the edict of Nantes, by which so many thousands of French Protestants were destroyed or banished, affords a striking example of the commercial damage a nation may sustain by the loss of so many peaceable and industrious inhabitants.—*C.*

4 Heb. *whose heart hath filled him.*

f Ec. 5. 8. Ps.139.21, 22.

5 Heb. *the man adversary.*

g Job 29.22;15.21,22; 18.5–12. Ps.62.9.

h ch. 1.12. Pr. 19.12; 16.14.

i Pr.14.19;28.17.

k Pr.19.12;16.14.

6 He had so thoroughly studied his sovereign's temper and manner that he read in his countenance the fixed purpose of his heart. He had wickedly fostered the violence of his passions, and now, as he deserved, becomes their victim. It is said to be still the custom in Persia, that if the king rises abruptly and retires from a trial, it is immediately taken as a signal of death to the accused.—*C.*

l ch.1.6;8.3. Is.40.14; 49.23.

7 Some think he had fallen down on the couch where Esther sat, to beg for his life: it seems much more probable he had fallen in a fainting fit, through fear; for the cruel, who sport with the lives of others, are often the greatest cowards when their own are endangered.—*C.*

m Job 9.24. Is.22.17.

8 Quintus Curtius relates of Alexander, that when he pronounced sentence on Philotas, his face was immediately covered with a veil. And in several eastern countries criminals are still carried to judgment or execution with their faces covered. *C.*—A criminal was thought unworthy to behold the face of the king. This action was equivalent to placing him before the king as a malefactor to receive his doom. Many illustrative cases might be quoted from ancient historians; and the custom still prevails.—*J.*

n ch.1.10;6.14.

9 Heb. *tree.*

o ch.2.21–23;6.2.

p ch.9.25. Ps.7.15,16; 9.15,16; 35.8; 73.19. Pr. 11.6,8;21.18. Da.6.7,24.

q Eze.16.63. Zec.6. 8.

CHAP. VIII.

a Ps. 37. 35, 36. Job 27.16,17. Pr.13.22; 20. 21.

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b ch. 1. 14, with 2. 7, 15.

c ch.3.10.

d Job 27.16,17. Pr.3. 22;20.21.

e 1 Sa.25.24. 2 Ki.4. 37. He.5.7. Ne.1.4. Is. 38.3.

1 Heb. *and she wept and besought him.*—[On another occasion she again ventured uninvited into the royal presence, and was graciously received, the king, as before, holding out the golden sceptre to her. Her object was, if possible, to obtain a reversal of the bloody decree; for though she and Mordecai were now safe, the edict against her nation was still unrepealed and in force.—*J.*]

f ch.3.8–15; 7.4. Job 5.11–15.

2 In peaceful and settled times such a cruel device as that of Haman against the Jews seems scarcely credible, or at least an attempt without parallel. The plot against the Huguenots, and the massacre of St. Bartholomew's, in France, can, however, furnish an example of similar devising and cruelty, where the victims were taken totally unawares, and where the king, so far from repenting, like Ahasuerus, of his rash decree, himself took part in the murder of his subjects.—*C.*

g ch.4.11;5.2.

h Pr.5.19.ch.2.17.

i Heb. *the advice,* ch.3.12,13.

3 Or, *who wrote.*

k Heb. *be able that I may see,* Ne. 2. 3. Am. 6. 6. Je. 9.1; 4.19. La.1.19,41,42; 2.35. Mi. 1.8,9.

l ver.1;ch.7.10.

m ch.3.12.

n ch.1.19. Da.6.8,12, 15.

4 It seems that according to the principles of Median and Persian jurisprudence, a decree, once signed, could not be reversed: full power, however, is given to Esther and Mordecai to devise any means by which Haman's decree may be counteracted. *C.*—Whatever had passed the royal signet could never be revoked; and this was the reason why the king was obliged not to reverse, but to give a contradictory decree—that if the Jews, pursuant to the first decree, were assaulted, they might legitimately, by virtue of the second, defend themselves, slay their enemies, and even take the spoil. The maxim in our government that no act can be so framed but that the same authority which enacted it may repeal it, is better suited to the state of human nature; for no human wisdom can foresee all the effects of any regulation till experience has evinced them. Nothing, indeed, could more strikingly show the absurdity of this law of the Persians than that the king should now be forced to allow a civil war.—*J.*

o ch. 3.12. Ps. 30. 5, 10. Je. 3.17.

p ch. 1.1, 22; 3. 12. 2 Co.7.6.

q ch. 3. 12. Ec. 8. 4. Da.5.19.

r 1 Sa. 21. 8. Is. 60.6; 66.20. Je.2.23.

s 1 Ki. 20. 22. Ps. 94. 16. Ec.9.5.

CHAPTER VIII. REFLECTIONS.—This world is but a changing scene. The favour even of kings is precarious; and riches make to themselves wings and fly away. Men often lay up wealth, little thinking to whom it shall at last pertain, whether to a friend or a foe. The ten thousand talents which were lately offered as the price of the Jews' blood now become the property of them whose lives were marked out for a prey. How just is the judgment of God; and with what care should we make sure those riches which will not be left behind, but will go with us into another world! Surely then the lives and interests of God's people ought to lie the nearest to our hearts! And no advancement must make us to forget our poor relations. It is proper to present our petitions to God or men with earnestness, and attended with the utmost modesty. Though we have justice on our side it becomes us, as inferiors, to use entreaty. Men's mischief often sur-

people and province that would assault them,[5] *both* little ones and women, and *to* [t]*take* the spoil of them for a prey,

12 Upon [u]one day, in all the provinces of king Ahasuerus, *namely*, upon the thirteenth *day* of the twelfth month, which *is* the month Adar.

13 The copy of the writing, for a commandment to be given in every province, *was* published[6] unto all people, and that the Jews should be ready against that day to [x]avenge themselves on their enemies.

14 *So* the posts[7] that rode upon mules *and* camels went out, being [y]hastened and pressed on by the king's commandment. And the decree was given at Shushan the palace.

15 ¶ And Mordecai went out from the presence of the king in [z]royal apparel of blue[8] and white, and with a great crown of gold, and with a garment of fine linen and purple; and the city of Shushan [a]rejoiced and was glad.

16 The Jews had light, and gladness, and joy, and honour.

17 And in every province, and in every city, whithersoever the king's commandment and his decree came, the Jews had joy and gladness, a feast and a good day. And many of the people of the land became Jews; for the fear of the Jews fell upon them.[9]

CHAPTER IX.

1 *The Jews (the rulers, for fear of Mordecai, helping them) slay their enemies, with the ten sons of Haman.* 12 *Ahasuerus, at the request of Esther, granteth another day of slaughter, and causeth Haman's sons to be hanged.* 20 *The two days of Purim are made festival.*

NOW, in the [a]twelfth month, (that *is*, the month Adar,) on the thirteenth day of the same, when the king's commandment and his decree drew near to be put in execution, in the day that the enemies of the Jews hoped to have power over them, (though it [b]was turned to the contrary, that the Jews had rule over them that hated them),

2 The Jews [c]gathered themselves together in their cities, throughout all the provinces of the king Ahasuerus, to lay hand on such as sought their hurt:[1] and no man could withstand them; for [d]the fear of them fell upon all people.

3 And all the rulers of the provinces, and the lieutenants, and the deputies, and officers of the king,[e] helped[f] the Jews; because the fear of Mordecai fell upon them.

4 For Mordecai *was* great in the king's house, and his fame went out throughout all the provinces: for this man Mordecai [g]waxed greater and greater.

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5 Could not the Jews have stood upon the defensive without this royal decree? No doubt they could. But then they would have become rebels, and so would have been prosecuted for a new crime. This decree of Ahasuerus rendered their self-defence lawful, while it must greatly have abated the courage of their enemies. A more unnatural mode of government cannot well be conceived, nor can we wonder that the empire was soon afterwards dismembered by a handful of Macedonians. —*C.*

t ch. 9.10, 15, 16. De. 2.35. Jos. 11.14.

u Ch. 3.13, 9.1. Ex. 15.9, 10. Ju. 1.6, 7. Mat. 7.2.

6 Heb. *revealed.*

x Ps. 37.14, 15, 92-7, 9, 11, 68.23. Pr. 11.8, 21, 18.

7 To Cyrus is attributed the origination of posts and couriers. He is said by the Greek writers to have established post-houses with relays of horses at proper distances; and that by causing them to travel both night and day, he astonished the ancient world by the rapidity of communication with all parts of his vast empire. Early European travellers were astonished to find similar posting establishments in the Mongol empire, having 10,000 post-houses, and 200,000 horses, and expediting despatches at the rate of 200 or 250 miles in a day. The origin of posting in Europe is generally ascribed to the university of Paris. (See Marco Polo, 2. 90).—*C.*

y ch. 3.15. 1 Sa. 21.8. Ec. 9.10.

z Mat. 11.8. Ge. 41.42. 1 Sa. 2.30.

8 Or, *violet.*

a ch. 3.15. Ps. 30.5, 11. Pr. 29.6.

9 This is not surprising, for the Jews, though few, were a brave people, and being concentred into Jewish quarters, as is still the custom in the cities of the East, they could consequently have acted with terrible and combined effect upon their enemies.—*C.*

CHAP. IX.

a ch. 3.7, 13. Job 11.20.

b Ps. 7.16, 9.15, 16, 30.11; 126.5. De. 32.35, 36. Ge. 22.14. Ec. 9.1.

c ch. 8.11; ver. 15, 16. Jos. 11.20. Pr. 11.8; 21.18. Da. 6.7, 24.

d ch. 8.17. Ge. 35.5; 28.12. Ex. 23.27. De. 11.2. Jos. 2.9.

e Heb. *those which did the business that* belonged *to the king.*

f Pr. 16.7.

g 2 Sa. 3.1. Ps. 1, 3, 4; 37.37, 38; 92.7–12. Pr. 4.18.

1 To the honour of the Jews it is recorded that they injured none but their assailants, in strict accordance with the terms of the decree, ch. 8. 11. *C.*—As the Jews were not charged with exceeding the limits assigned them in the king's edict, it may be concluded that they assaulted none except such as appeared in arms against them. The 16th verse, indeed, seems plainly to indicate that they stood on the defensive. It is not unnatural to suppose that Haman had a great party throughout the empire who, enraged at his fall, would be unable to suppress their hatred against those who had been the occasion of it.—*J.*

2 2 Th. 1.6. De. 32.35, 36. Ps. 18.37–48.

3 Heb. *according to their will.*

h Ex. 17.14. De. 25.17, 19. 1 Sa. 15.3. Job 27.14. Ps. 21.10.

i ver. 15, 16. Col. 4.5. 1 Co. 10.32. Ro. 12.17. Phi. 4.8. Ge. 14.23, with ch. 8.11.

4 In this they forbore to act up to the terms of the decree, which commissioned them not only to repel their assailants, but to take their spoil, ch. 8.11.—*C.*

5 Heb. *came.*

6 'Shushan the palace,' i.e. Shushan the royal city, in which the palace was. The total number slain there was 800. These are generally supposed to have been Amalekites, of Haman's faction, who, enraged at his disgrace and death, and headed by his sons, had taken advantage of the decree to avenge him.—*J.*

k ch. 5.6, 7.2.

l ch. 5.4, 8, 7; 3, 8.5.

m Heb. *let men hang*, 2 Sa. 21.6. ch. 5.11, 13; ver. 10. Ps. 46.8; 66.5; 109.8. Ex. 20.5. Is. 14.20–22.

7 How could this be, seeing they were already slain? ver. 10. Their dead bodies were hanged up, according to a custom of the Jews (Jos. 10. 26), and a practice still found in Persia and other countries. *C.*—They had been slain on the previous day, and the request was that their dead bodies should be hung up for the greater infamy, and for the purpose of deterring others.—*J.*

n He. 11.33. Ps. 118. 7–13.

o ver. 10, 16. He. 13.5. 1 Co. 6.12. 1 Th. 5.22.

8 They gathered themselves, not into an army, but into local bands. And as none of them all laid their hands on the prey, there can be little question that Mordecai had given them warning to manifest, by this universal abstinence, that they sought protection and not plunder. The previous exercises of fasting and prayer in which they had been engaged would render their minds peculiarly accessible to such admonition.—*C.*

p ch. 8.11. Le. 26.7, 8. Ps. 18.34–48.

9 Heb. *in it.*

q Ne. 8.10. Ec. 10.19. Ge. 21.6. Ps. 118.11–29. Ex. 15.1–22. De. 16.11, 14.

1 History is found in books, the evidence of history generally in institutions. Independently, therefore, of the higher evidence of Scripture, it is always accompanied by such institutional evidence as no other history can furnish. This yearly festival, which the Jews still celebrate, gives witness to the history of this book as distinct and undeniable as that of Esther, Mordecai, and Ahasuerus were to rise from the dead to confirm it.—*C.*

5 Thus the [2]Jews smote all their enemies with the stroke of the sword, and slaughter, and destruction, and did what they would[3] unto those that hated them.

6 And in Shushan the palace the Jews slew and destroyed five hundred men.

7 And Parshandatha, and Dalphon, and Aspatha,

8 And Poratha, and Adalia, and Aridatha,

9 And Parmashta, and Arisai, and Aridai, and Vajezatha,

10 The[h] ten sons of Haman the son of Hammedatha, the enemy of the Jews, slew they;[i] but [4]on the spoil laid they not their [4]hand.

11 On that day the number of those that were slain in Shushan the palace was [5]brought before the king.

12 ¶ And the king said unto Esther the queen, The Jews have slain and destroyed five hundred men in Shushan[6] the palace, and the ten sons of Haman; what have they done in the rest of the king's provinces? now, [k]what *is* thy petition? and it shall be granted thee; or what *is* thy request further? and it shall be done.

13 Then said Esther, [l]If it please the king, let it be granted to the Jews which *are* in Shushan to do to-morrow also according unto this day's decree, and [m]let Haman's ten sons be hanged upon the gallows.

14 And the king commanded it so to be done: and the decree was given at Shushan; and they hanged Haman's ten sons.[7]

15 For the [n]Jews that *were* in Shushan gathered themselves together on the fourteenth day also of the month Adar, and slew three hundred men at Shushan: but [o]on the prey they laid not their hand.

16 But the other Jews that *were* in the king's provinces gathered themselves [8]together, and [p]stood for their lives, and had rest from their enemies, and slew of their foes seventy and five thousand (but they laid not their hands on the prey)

17 On the thirteenth day of the month Adar: and on the fourteenth day of the [9]same rested they, and made it a day [q]of feasting and gladness.

18 But the Jews that *were* at Shushan assembled together on the thirteenth *day* thereof, and on the fourteenth thereof; and on the fifteenth *day* of the same they rested, and made it a day of feasting and gladness.[1]

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vives them. They murder, even after their death, by the laws which they have made, the projects which they have set on foot, and the writings and sentiments which they have propagated. But absurd and entangling are those laws which have pride for their source and basis. And there is great need to hasten the relief when men's lives are in danger: for when we have done wrong we cannot too quickly prevent the mischievous consequences of it. God quickly turns his people's mourning into joy. And his alarming providences in their favour effectually determine others to join them.

CHAPTER IX. REFLECTIONS. — How strangely sinners are infatuated to their own destruction; and obstinate revenge is deaf to all admonition. Fight they will, though both the hand of God and men be lifted up against them! But great numbers are friends or enemies to the people of God, just as the smiles of great men wind about: and pitiful is the work which the wicked have in hand when the terrors of God and the terrors of great men concur to dismay them. We may make the boldest attempts when not only great men favour us but the great God fights for us. And it is glorious when, in the most desperate war, the laws of self-denial, humanity, and pity are strictly regarded. Never should the people

19 Therefore the Jews of the villages, that dwelt in the unwalled towns, made the fourteenth day of the month Adar *a day* [r]*of* gladness and feasting, and a good day, and of sending portions one to another.

20 ¶ And Mordecai [s]wrote these things,[2] and sent letters unto all the Jews that *were* in all the provinces of the king Ahasuerus, *both* nigh and far,

21 To stablish *this* among them, that they should[t] keep the fourteenth day of the month Adar, and the fifteenth day of the same, yearly,[3]

22 As[u] the days wherein the Jews rested from their enemies, and the month which was turned unto them from sorrow to joy, and from mourning into a good day; that they should make[x] them days of feasting and joy, and of sending portions[4] one to another, and gifts to the poor.

23 And the Jews undertook to do as they had begun, and as Mordecai had written unto them;

24 Because [y]Haman the son of Hammedatha, the Agagite, the enemy of all the Jews, had devised against the Jews to destroy them, and had cast [z]Pur, (that *is*, the lot,) to consume[5] them, and to destroy them:

25 But [a]when *Esther* came before the king, he commanded by letters, that his wicked device, which he devised against the Jews, should return upon his own head, and that he and his sons should be hanged on the gallows.

26 Wherefore they called these days [b]Purim,[6] after the name of Pur:[7] therefore for all the words of this letter, and *of that* which they had seen concerning this matter, and which had come unto them,

27 The Jews ordained, and [c]took upon them, and upon their seed, and upon all such as joined themselves unto them, so as it should not fail,[8] that they would keep these two days according to their writing, and according to their *appointed* time every year;

28 And [d]*that* these days *should be* remembered, and kept throughout every generation, every family, every province, and every city; and *that* these days of Purim should not [9]fail from among the Jews, nor the memorial of them perish[1] from their seed.[2]

29 Then Esther the queen, the daughter of Abihail, and Mordecai the Jew, wrote with all authority,[3] to confirm this second letter of Purim.

30 And he sent the letters unto all the Jews, to [e]the hundred twenty and seven provinces of the kingdom of Ahasuerus, *with* [f]words of peace and truth,

31 To confirm these days of Purim[4] in their times *appointed*, according as Mordecai the Jew and Esther the queen had enjoined them, and as they had decreed for themselves,[5] and for their seed, the matters of the [g]fastings and their cry.

32 And the decree of Esther confirmed these matters of Purim; and it was written in the book.

CHAPTER X.

1 *Ahasuerus' greatness.* 3 *Mordecai's advancement.*

AND the king Ahasuerus [a]laid a tribute upon the land, and *upon* the [b]isles of the sea.

2 And [c]all the acts of his power, and of his might, and the declaration of the greatness of Mordecai, whereunto the king [d]advanced him, *are* they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Media and Persia?[1]

3 For Mordecai the Jew *was* [e]next unto king Ahasuerus, and great among the Jews, and [f]accepted of the multitude of his brethren, [g]seeking the wealth of his people, and speaking peace to all his seed.

A.M. 3495 or 3551. B.C. 509 or 453.

[r] Ne.8.10,12.ver.22; ch.8.17.

[s] The history of this memorable deliverance, 1 Ch. 16.12. Ps. 145. 4–12; 124. 1, 2; 126. 1–5. 2 Co. 1. 10, 11. Col.1.10.

2 Mordecai wrote 'these things,' that is, this book or history, and not merely the letters that accompanied it.—*C.*

[t] Ro.12.15.Ex.13.3.

3 See note on ver.18.

[u] ch. 3. 12, 13, with ver.2–16.Ps.9.1,2;34.1, 4;103.2;116.13–18.

[x] Ne. 3. 10–12. ver. 17–19;ch.6.17.

4 The Orientals not only invite their friends to feasts, but usually send a portion of the banquet to those that cannot conveniently come, especially their relatives and those in a state of mourning.—*L.*

[y] ch.3.5–13.

[z] ch.3.7;ver.26,28.

5 Heb. *crush.*

[a] Heb. *when she came*, ch. 7.5–10; 8. 1–14;9.1–14.

[b] Nu.16.40. Eze. 39. 11.

6 The way in which the feast of Purim is now kept by the Jews is as follows;—The 13th of Adar is kept as a fast, and is called *the fast of Esther*. It is a time of humiliation and prayer. At sunset the festival commences by a public service in the synagogue, after which the whole book of Esther is read from a special roll containing it alone. The passage containing the names of Haman and his sons (9.7–9) is read very rapidly, to indicate that they were hanged at once. In the MS. roll the names are placed underneath each other, each one occupying an entire line, and the whole being on a page by themselves. On the morning of the 14th there is another public service in the synagogue, after which the roll of Esther is again read through as before. The rest of the festival is spent in feasting and rejoicing—too often in revelry and drunkenness.—*P.*

7 Supposed to be a word of Persian origin, and signifying *lot*.—*C.*

[c] De. 5. 3; 29. 14, 15. Jos.9.15, with 2 Sa. 21. 1, 2.

8 Heb. *pass.*

A.M. 3495 or 3551. B.C. 509 or 453.

[d] Ex. 12. 17. Le. 23. 43. Ju. 5. 11. Job 19.23, 24. Ps. 103.2.

9 Heb. *pass.*

1 Heb. *be ended.*

2 Accordingly this book is twice read by the Jews in the synagogue during the feast of Purim; once on the evening of the first day of the feast, and again the next morning. At every mention of the name of Haman the congregation make a noise, by stamping on the floor and beating on the seats, and exclaiming, 'Cursed be Haman! let his memory rot,' &c. In some countries the feast is a species of carnival, on which the bounds of temperance are entirely overpast; and even where these boundaries are more respected, an extraordinary degree of indulgence is still conceded. So little, alas! can human nature call up the joy of the feast, without laying up in store some sorrow for the future. See Allen's *Modern Judaism*, p. 419.—*C.*

3 Heb. *all strength.*

[e] ch.1.1;8.9.

[f] Is.39. 8. Zec. 8. 19. Ro.15.5. Ep. 4. 3, 15. 1 Th.5.10. He.12.14. Ja. 3.17.

4 That the Jews scattered through so many provinces should have so universally concurred in adopting the feast, furnishes an additional evidence to the history. The rabbins, however, say that thirty-five elders protested against the institution (*Lightfoot* on Jn.20.22), as an unauthorized addition to the law of Moses.—*C.*

5 Heb. *for their souls.*

[g] ch.4.16. Jonah 2.9, with 3.8.

CHAP. X.

[a] Lu.2.1.ch.1.1; 8.9. Ro.12.7,8.

[b] Lesser Asia and its isles, Da.11.18.Ge. 10.5.

[c] 1 Ki.11.41;14.19,29; 15.7,23.

[d] Heb. *made him great*, Ps. 18. 35. Job 29.8,9.

1 The Persian empire extended from the Hellespont to the Indus, 2500 miles; and from Pontus to the Arabian Sea, about 2000 miles; including several isles of the Mediterranean and Ægean Seas.—*C.*

[e] Ge.41. 40–44. 2 Ch. 28.7.1 Sa.23.17.

[f] ch.3.1.Lu.2.52.

[g] Ne.2.10. Ps.137.5. 6.Ro.9.2,3;10.1.

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of God appear selfish, worldly, or covetous. And if we receive signal mercies from God, our thankful returns ought to be quick and speedy: while they are yet fresh in our minds, and the impressions of them most sensible. Nor ought astonishing deliverances and their circumstances ever to be forgotten. Remembrance of such ought to encourage us in every subsequent distress. Yet there is great need to beware, lest what is well intended at first should by degrees become an occasion of wickedness. Nothing more purifies the heart and adorns religion than holy joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ. And nothing more pollutes the heart, and reproaches religion, than carnal mirth and sensual pleasure.

CHAPTER X. REFLECTIONS.—It is a great mercy in an arbitrary government, when the weakness or wickedness of the monarch is balanced by the good qualities of the minister of state. They only are truly great whose power and dignity are employed for the public good. But, alas! how unsubstantial the whole pomp, grandeur, and wealth of this world, which so soon pass away!

GENERAL REMARKS ON THE HISTORICAL BOOKS.

[It has been well observed by a recent writer that 'the Old Testament may be regarded from two points of view—the religious and the literary. It is needless here to enlarge on the disproportion between the value of the two, or to re-assert the truism of the uselessness for the highest ends of the most accurate knowledge of the literary history of the Holy Scriptures, and the most minute acquaintance with their criticism, unless we also employ the Scriptures for the purpose for which they were given by divine inspiration, and make them 'profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness.' But while we endeavour to keep both in their places, and especially not to exalt the lower at the expense of the higher, we must recognize the existence of the two characters borne by the Old Testament. We must not be afraid to acknowledge the undoubted fact that it is not merely a revelation of God—his being, his attributes, his will, his works, his ways; but also a national literature, and a collection of books of different characters—historical, prophetical, poetic, and didactic; of widely different dates, some perhaps misdated, by very diverse authors, and some perhaps wrongly assigned.' The notes and reflections attached to the text in this Bible have been written almost exclusively from the religious point of view. The divine origin and sacred character of the book has never been lost sight of. It has been treated, in fact, as a revelation from God rather than a work of human authorship. I now think it well to append a very few observations, from a purely literary stand-point, upon the origin, history, and character of the historical books, which, as arranged in our English version, conclude with Esther.

It is important, at the outset, to know exactly what is the meaning of the word *canonical* as applied to books of Scripture. The meaning of the term *canon* was primarily a 'cane;' then, technically, a 'measuring cane;' then, metaphorically, 'anything which serves to regulate other things.' Hence *canonical books* are those which form the divine rule of faith and practice—by which men determine what they are to believe, and what they are to do. In the primitive church, however, the word was not always employed in the same definite sense. By some it was used to designate those books which were publicly read in the churches; and as in some churches apocryphal books were permitted to be read, the term canonical was given to them. Thus originated the admission by the Church of Rome, and the Greek church, of certain uninspired writings into the canon of Scripture. But while the term *canonical* was thus somewhat vaguely used in the early church, and by the early fathers, it is most important to bear in mind that, during the first four centuries of our era, there existed no doubt or uncertainty as to the books which were inspired and of divine authority, as contra-distinguished from those which were uninspired. The books of Maccabees, and a few others, are classed by some churches among the historical books of the Old Testament; but their inspiration was never admitted by the Jews, or by any Christian writer or church during the first three centuries. The Jewish canon of the Old Testament, which received the sanction of our Lord and his apostles, was identical with that of our present authorized version.

It is well to observe, however, that the arrangement of the books in the Jewish canon was different from ours. The Jews divided the Old Testament into three parts—*the Law, the Prophets,* and *the Psalms.*

1. *The Law* included the five books of Moses—our Pentateuch in fact—and was usually written continuously upon one parchment roll, and called either 'The Law,' or 'The Book of the Law.'

2. *The Prophets.* Under this general name were comprehended two distinct classes of writings, which were again distinguished from each other by specific titles—(1) *The Earlier Prophets,* including only the historical books of Joshua, Judges, 1 and 2 Samuel, and 1 and 2 Kings; (2) *The Later Prophets,* including all those books of the Old Testament, with one exception, which are strictly prophetical, and which were classed under two heads, namely, (*a*) *The Greater Prophets,* Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel; (*b*) *The Twelve Minor Prophets,* from Hosea to Malachi. The general name *Prophets* was given to them because they contained a large portion of prophetic matter, and were written by men gifted with prophetic power.

3. *The Psalms,* or *Writings,* comprehended the remaining books, which were arranged under three heads—(1) The purely poetical, always written in Jewish MSS. with the poetical accentuation, including Job, Psalms, and Proverbs; (2) *The Megilloth* ('Rolls'), including Canticles, Lamentations, Ruth, Ecclesiastes, and Esther. In later times these five were appointed to be read on certain festival days. (3) The third division included Daniel, Ezra, Nehemiah, and 1 and 2 Chronicles.

This threefold division of the Old Testament canon into Law, Prophets, and Psalms, appears to have been generally adopted immediately after the close of the canon, about the year B.C. 425. It is first mentioned in the prologue to the Greek translation of 'The Wisdom of Sirach,' which may be dated about B.C. 130. It is mentioned by Philo and Josephus, the latter giving a full list. It was universally known among the Jews in the time of our Lord; hence the vast importance of his words as recorded in Luke 24. 44: 'All things must be fulfilled, which were written in the Law of Moses, and in the Prophets, and in the Psalms, concerning me.' In these words our Lord bears clear testimony to the prophetic character, and consequently to the plenary inspiration, of the whole of the Old Testament.

The enumeration of the books was not the same in the Jewish canon as in ours. The *Talmud,* for example, makes the total number of books in the Old Testament *twenty-four;* Josephus makes it *twenty-two;* we make *thirty-nine.* The *Talmud* arranges them as follows: *Law,* 5; *Prophets,* 8; *Psalms,* 11. This is done by counting 1 and 2 Samuel one, 1 and 2 Kings one, the twelve minor prophets one, 1 and 2 Chronicles one, Ezra and Nehemiah one. Josephus has the same plan, only he unites Ruth with Judges, and Lamentations with Jeremiah.

The arrangement of the books in our Bibles is widely different from that followed by the Jews, and is more in accordance with their character and subject-matter. Our arrangement is not modern. We find it in the Septuagint version, which was made in Egypt in the third century B.C. It was followed by Jerome in his translation, which is now well known as the Latin Vulgate. It was adopted by Luther and the Reformers. The general plan is a threefold division into historical, poetical, and prophetical. The *first* division embraces *seventeen* books, terminating with Esther; the *second* division *five,* terminating with Canticles; and the *third* division *seventeen.* Each of the two first divisions is arranged chronologically, and this is very important to the student who wishes to read them systematically. In the third division, however, the chronology is not adhered to; and the reader is apt to become confused when passing suddenly from Daniel, one of the latest, to Hosea, one of the earliest of the prophets; and again from Zephaniah, who prophesied during the reign of Josiah, to Haggai, who lived after the exile. It will be well to remember that in our Bibles the prophets are divided into two groups, *the greater* and *the minor.* The former group includes Daniel, and is arranged chronologically; the latter includes the *twelve,* and is also arranged with a near approach to chronological order.

After these general observations on the whole of the Old Testament canon, I shall now direct special attention to the first great division of our English Bible, which comprehends the Historical Books.

1. THE PENTATEUCH contains an outline of the history of the world from the creation till the death of Moses. History forms its groundwork. Wherever doctrines or moral precepts are introduced, they are connected with historic facts. As a history we may inquire, Who was its author? When was it written? and What were its sources; or, in other words, whence did its author derive his information?

The Pentateuch professes to have been written by Moses during the last forty years of his life. Such at least is the impression which a thoughtful perusal would leave on any unprejudiced mind. In Ex. 17. 14, it is recorded that the Lord commanded Moses to write an account of the war with Amalek '*in the Book.*' The Hebrew words indicate *a book* well known to Moses—a book intended to be handed down to posterity, at once for the future guidance of rulers, and to show that God would execute his prophetic judgments. Of this book Moses was the author; and we find him from time to time receiving divine instructions to record in it the great events of Jewish history, Ex. 24. 1–7; 34. 27; Nu. 33. 1, 2. The account of its completion and solemn delivery into the custody of the priests is most important: 'And Moses wrote this law, and delivered it unto the priests, the sons of Levi, . . . and unto all the elders of Israel. . . . And Moses commanded them, saying, At the end of every seven years, in the solemnity of the year of release, in the feast of tabernacles, when all Israel is come to appear before the Lord thy God in the place which he shall choose, thou shalt read this law before all Israel in their hearing,' De. 31. 9–11.

We have thus an indication of the way in which the Pentateuch originated. It was not written at once. Genesis was first compiled by Moses, apparently from authentic and inspired documents, written by the patriarchs, and handed down through successive generations. Genesis formed the groundwork of the Bible. When it was compiled it was called *The Book.* The rest of the Pentateuch consists mainly of narratives or journals of passing events, also written by Moses, and added to *The Book* from time to time. *The Book,* thus gradually formed, was at length, before the death of its great author, committed to the care of the priests, and placed beside the ark of the covenant: 'And it came to pass when Moses had made an end of writing the words of this law in *The Book* [so the Hebrew reads] until they were finished, that Moses commanded the Levites which bare the ark . . . saying, Take this book of the law and put it in the side of the ark . . . that it may be there for a witness against you,' De. 31. 24.

These direct indications of authorship are corroborated by evidence of another kind, but no less convincing. The book abounds with minute incidental allusions to the manners and customs, private life and public polity, of the Egyptians; with descriptions of and references to the topography, physical features, and products of the wilderness of Sinai; with genealogical and ethnological accounts of

ancient peoples and tribes. The writer must therefore have been personally acquainted with Egypt and the whole desert of Arabia; and he must have possessed besides most extensive learning. All these things point to one man, and one only. Moses, who was brought up at the court of Pharaoh, who was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, who spent forty years in Egypt, and forty in the peninsula of Sinai—Moses is the only man on whom the scholar could fix his attention as the author of the Pentateuch.

What is indicated in the Pentateuch itself is fully stated by subsequent writers. In a literary point of view, the testimony of antiquity to the authorship and credibility of the Pentateuch is most interesting. The first evidence is that of a contemporary—a man who had fuller opportunity of knowing the whole truth than any other. When Joshua entered on his office as Moses' successor, he thus records the charges given to him by Jehovah: 'Be thou strong and very courageous, that thou mayest observe to do according to all the law which Moses my servant commanded thee. . . . This *book of the law* shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate thereon day and night,' &c., Jos. 1. 6, 8. Again, at the close of his life he himself gave this last solemn admonition to the Israelites: 'Be ye therefore very courageous to keep and to do all that is written in the *book of the law of Moses*,' Jos. 23. 6. This book of the law is quoted or referred to by a line of illustrious authors extending from the time of Joshua down to the commencement of our era. A close inspection proves that every book of the Old Testament, with the exception of Job, indicates in one way or another the previous existence of the Pentateuch. In many of them it is mentioned by name, Ju. 3. 4; 1 Sa. 2. 13; 1 Ki. 2. 3, sq.; 2 Ki. 23. 25; 2 Ch. 23. 18; Ps. 19. 7–11; Dan. 9. 11, 13; Ezra 3. 2; in others it is quoted; in others simply referred to. The testimony of Nehemiah, the last of the historical writers in the Old Testament, is especially worthy of note. He speaks of Moses as its author, Ne. 8. 14; he calls it the 'book of the law of God,' Ne. 8. 18; he says it was read throughout at the feast of tabernacles; and he gives a summary of its contents, Ne. 9. 1, sq. And the last of the prophetical books is equally clear in its testimony. Malachi says, 'Remember ye the law of Moses my servant, which I commanded unto him in Horeb for all Israel,' Mal. 4. 4.

I have now brought down the testimony for the authorship and authenticity of the Pentateuch to the close of the Old Testament period. I have shown it to be clear and uniform from Joshua to Malachi. The Pentateuch was known to the whole Jewish nation. It contained the code of national law, the directory for national worship, the confession of the national faith. Many of its enactments were felt to be burdensome; but no attempt was ever made to dispute their divine authority. The unanimous and continuous testimony of the Jews regarding the Pentateuch was that Moses wrote it by divine inspiration. That testimony is embodied in the authentic records of national history, in the odes and hymns of poets, and in the writings of prophets. In fact it pervades the whole national literature. We may therefore conclude that 'at no time from the days of Joshua would it have been possible for any man, or any body of men, to introduce among the Jewish sacred records a modern work, or a modern compilation of ancient fragments and traditions, and to gain for it the confidence and respect of the nation. The imposition would have been at once detected and exposed.'

The chain of evidence does not end here. It extends unbroken down to the time of the New Testament, and from that period to our own day. In the apocryphal books of Ecclesiasticus (ch. 24. 23), Esdras (1 Esd. 1. 6), Baruch (ch. 1. 20), and Maccabees (2 Mac. 7. 30), the law of Moses is distinctly mentioned and quoted as authoritative. Philo, the distinguished Jewish philosopher of Alexandria, wrote a life of Moses, and gives a detailed account of his great work, the Pentateuch. Josephus, the representative of the Jewish literati in Palestine, as Philo was in Egypt, is equally full and clear in his testimony.

I have hitherto cited Jewish testimony alone. Some may perhaps affirm that the Jews were not impartial witnesses. I do not admit this. I affirm, on the contrary, that they were the best and safest witnesses. But to take away all ground of objection, I shall quote a few heathen testimonies. Hecatæus of Abdera, a contemporary of Alexander the Great, and a man famed for learning and wisdom, wrote a history of the Jews, in which he has described the exodus, and attributed the Pentateuch to the great lawgiver. Eupolemus, a Greek historian, who lived a century and a half later, states that Moses was the author of the book of the Law. Manetho, a learned Egyptian of the age of Hecatæus, ascribes to Moses the formation of the Jewish code. To these might be added Tacitus, Juvenal, Longinus, and many other classic writers, all of whom ascribe to Moses the institution of that code of laws which we find in the Pentateuch. 'These authors cover a period extending from the time of Alexander, when the Greeks first became curious on the subject of Jewish history, to that of the emperor Aurelian, when the literature of the Jews had been thoroughly sifted by the acute and learned Alexandrians. They constitute not the full voice of heathenism, but only an indication of what that voice was. Here then we have a mass of sound historical evidence for the genuineness and authenticity of the Pentateuch such as no other ancient writing can boast of.'

I have stated that the Pentateuch is a history. It is not, however, an ordinary history. It has marked characteristics, which the student must keep in mind if he would fully comprehend it. 'It is in no sense a civil history, or record of general revolutions in human affairs, or of even intellectual and social progress. It opens with an account of the origin of the earth and its various inhabitants, showing the preparations made for man—the last link in the great chain of creation—and the special object of the history in his moral and spiritual relations. The object of this record, however, was not to teach science or natural history, but to point out distinctly the relation subsisting between the Creator and his creatures, which constitutes the fundamental idea of all true religion and worship.' Nor are the delineations of the progress of human affairs, given in the immediately succeeding portions, composed in the spirit, or with the design, of mere secular history. There are indeed notices of the origin of the arts, of the founding of cities, of the wars of some ancient tribes, but all these are referred to in a way which plainly shows their entire subordination to the sacred object of the narrative. The whole history of the Cainites, for instance, is disposed of in ten verses (Ge. 4. 16–26), while the particulars referred to are adduced as indications of the character of this rejected family, and of the sources whence they looked for happiness. The wars of the eastern kings, too, are only noticed on account of the part Abraham took in rescuing Lot; and to introduce the interview of the patriarch with Melchizedec. The object, then, of the Pentateuch was not to give a full or systematic history either of the physical or political world, but simply to notice such facts in connection with both as tended to show in what relation the universe and man stand to God; what duties God requires of man; and what provision God has made for man's temporal and eternal welfare. Whatever is calculated to throw light on these subjects is narrated—all else is excluded. This I take to be the key to the narratives in the Pentateuch. This shows why incidents in the personal and family histories of the patriarchs are minutely related, why conversations, dreams, and visions are recorded with great fulness of detail; while the rise of dynasties and kingdoms is barely mentioned. This shows, too, why the account of the creation of man occupies such a large space, while the most stupendous creations and arrangements of the material universe—the countless orbs of heaven, the strata of the earth's crust, the air, the ocean, the trees, the grass, the flowers, the multitudinous forms of animal life—are either passed over or despatched in a word or two. In fact the Pentateuch looks at, and speaks of, the whole of this world, and the whole material universe, merely in its relation to a creating and governing God, and to man as a moral and immortal being. The opening words of the Pentateuch may be regarded as intended to show the relation of God to the physical universe. The next part his relation to the whole human race—that in him they live, and move, and have their being; that to him they are responsible; that by him they will finally be judged. All that follows—the great body of the Pentateuch, and indeed of the Bible—was designed to show the special and peculiar relation of God to his church and covenant people. They are his by a double ownership. He watches over them with a double interest and care.

The grand design, therefore, of the Pentateuch is to show God as the Creator and Ruler of the universe; to show when, and for what purpose, the present terrestrial economy was instituted; to show that mankind is one fraternal tribe, protected, guided, and provided for by the care of a Father, the only and omnipotent Creator; to show the object for which man was created, and the destiny in store for him; to show the provision made for man's spiritual as well as his temporal wants, in the promise of a MESSIAH; and to show the way in which God selects, governs, and redeems his church. All the historic facts, all the incidental allusions, all the scientific notices, are subservient to one or other of these objects. The Pentateuch is a system of divine truth grafted on a series of physical and historical events. It is this characteristic which makes it so infinitely superior to all the so-called sacred books in the world. The Pentateuch is not a collection of poems more or less beautiful; it is not a philosophical speculation on the origin of the universe; it is not an unintelligible jumble which expositors can twist at pleasure from a cosmological essay into a treatise on ethics. It is a sacred history; but a history designed to show God's relation to the universe as Creator and Sustainer; and especially God's dealings with man, and man's duty to God. It is only when viewed in this light we can understand why the history of the fall is given with such minuteness; and why the biographies of three patriarchs occupy whole chapters, while the histories of the mightiest nations and potentates are dismissed in a single sentence. It was to the patriarchs God revealed himself; to them the promise of the Messiah was given; and hence to those wandering chiefs attaches a grandeur and an interest greater far than that of the Babels and the Nimrods of the world.

In the remaining historical books the history of the people of Israel, which was begun in the Pentateuch, is carried on continuously from the death of Moses to the re-establishment of the Jews in Palestine after the captivity, under the leadership of Ezra and Nehemiah. They thus cover a period of a little more than a thousand years. They may be divided into two groups. The *first group* begins with Joshua and ends with 2 Kings. The history is continuous. The book of Joshua closes with his death, after narrating the partition of Palestine among the tribes, and the overthrow of the most formidable of the Canaanitish kings. Judges embraces the history of Israel from the death of Joshua to the death of Samson. The books of Samuel continue it down to the close of David's reign; and the two books of Kings narrate the history of the Jews to the Babylonish captivity. The *second group* begins with Chronicles and ends with Nehemiah. The history here is also continuous, but to a large extent it overlaps the former group. The books of Chronicles begin with genealogical tables which extend back to Adam, and reach onward to David, where the narrative is taken up, and a history of the kingdom of Judah given down to the captivity. The narrative differs from that in Kings in this respect, that nothing is said of the kingdom of the ten tribes. Ezra and Nehemiah join on to the end of Chronicles, and record the return of the several bands of Jews from Babylon, the rebuilding of the temple, and the re-establishment of the Jewish polity in Jerusalem.

The books of Ruth and Esther may be regarded as in some respects standing apart from both these groups. They are monographs of two of the most remarkable women in Old Testament history. The former narrates the almost unparalleled filial devotion of a stranger, whose fortunes as one of the ancestors of King David and of the MESSIAH, had a peculiar interest for the Israelites. The latter contains the romantic story of Queen Esther, and her noble act of patriotism.

With one or two exceptions, the authorship of these books cannot now be definitely

ascertained. Joshua doubtless wrote the greater part of the book which bears his name; and Samuel may have been the author of Judges and a part of the books of Samuel. Ezra and Nehemiah probably composed those books which have been called after them; but more than this we cannot say. Another and much more interesting question presents itself to the thoughtful reader. Whence did the authors obtain their information? It could not have been in all cases from personal knowledge, for the book of Judges embraces the history of about five hundred years; Samuel of more than a hundred years; Kings of four hundred and fifty years; and Chronicles of a still longer period. Direct revelation from God was, of course, possible. Some of the facts and truths recorded were confessedly obtained from that source; but we have no evidence that ever ordinary history was revealed. The analogy of Scripture is altogether opposed to such a theory. Whatever came within the sphere of ordinary observation was recorded in the ordinary way. There was no new revelation of it to the mind of the historian; and there was no supernatural power exerted farther than was necessary to enable fallible man to write observed facts with infallible accuracy.

In the book of Genesis we have some incidental evidence of the source from which Moses obtained his information. Close observation shows to even the ordinary reader traces of distinct narratives, or documents; sometimes overlapping each other, and recording events from different points of view, and with different details. These documents generally begin with some set phrase, such as, 'These are the generations of the heavens and the earth,' Ge. 2. 4; 'This is the book [or writing] of the generations of Adam,' ch. 5. 1; 'These are the generations of Shem,' ch. 11. 10; 'Now these are the generations of Esau,' ch. 36. 1. The details of facts, of genealogies and lists of names, and of long conversations, are given with a minuteness and circumstantiality which indicate an actor or eye-witness. The words and phrases used, and the general style, show distinctive individuality. My belief is that the leading personages in primeval history—Adam, Seth, Enoch, Abraham, Jacob, Joseph—each recorded the events which transpired in his own times; and that the records thus prepared were handed down from generation to generation, until at length they were embodied by Moses, under the infallible guidance of the Holy Spirit, in one continuous history.

In addition to the documents which Moses appears to have used in the preparation of the book of Genesis, he mentions and quotes from a separate work, 'The Book of the Wars of the Lord,' Nu. 21. 14, 15. The title and the quotation show that this must have been a collection of odes, composed at different periods, to celebrate the wars waged by Israel, under the guidance of Jehovah. They may have been so connected by brief annals as to form a continuous history, comp. Nu. 21. 17, 18; 27. 3. The authors of the succeeding historical books of the Old Testament seem to have made full use of national records and contemporary annals. Joshua (ch. 10. 13) and the author of 2 Samuel (ch. 1. 18) quote from the *Book of Jasher*, which appears to have contained a collection of odes on some of the most remarkable events of Israelitish history. At the close of the reign of Solomon, the sacred writer refers for a fuller history of the events of that important period to the *Book of the Acts of Solomon*, 1 Ki. 11. 41; and the character of the reference implies that the writer was himself largely indebted to that book. In regard to the history of King David the author of 1 Chronicles says:—'Now the acts of David the king, first and last, behold, they are written in the book of Samuel the seer, and in the book of Nathan the prophet, and in the book of Gad the seer; with all his reign and his might, and the times that went over him, and over Israel, and over all the kingdoms of the countries,' ch. 29. 29, 30. In one or other of the historical books, reference is made to the following works: 'The Prophecy of Ahijah the Shilonite,' 2 Ch. 9. 29; 'The Visions of Iddo the Seer against Jeroboam the Son of Nebat,' 2 Ch. 9. 29; 'The Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Judah,' 1 Ki. 14. 19; 'The Book of the Kings of Israel and Judah,' 2 Ch. 27. 7. The two last are probably identical, and are referred to very often both by the writers of Kings and Chronicles. The work must have been large, and was perhaps an official or national record of the leading events which occurred both in the northern and southern kingdom. Mention is likewise made of histories or annals written by Jehu the son of Hanani, 2 Ch. 20. 34; by Isaiah the prophet, 2 Ch. 26. 22; by Hosai (rendered in the English version 'the Sayings of the Seers,' 2 Ch. 33. 19); and of 'The Chronicles of King David,' 1 Ch. 27. 24. All these were probably contemporary works, from which the sacred writers extracted, under divine guidance, the facts which they wove into Bible history.

It has been objected to the view given above with regard to the original sources of the book of Genesis, that the art of writing was unknown in those primeval times. If this can be proved, the theory of written documents is untenable. But recent discoveries have dissolved this argument, and have established the fact that the art of writing with ink upon papyrus was known in Egypt long before the days of Moses. A number of Egyptian *papyri*, written in the hieratic character, are now in the British Museum, all of which are of the age of Moses or anterior to it. There is one in the Bibliothèque Impériale at Paris, which appears to have been written two centuries before Abraham migrated to Palestine. Recent discovery has achieved still greater triumphs on behalf of divine revelation. Away in the midst of a parched desert, near the banks of the Euphrates, are great mounds covered with dust and sand. They mark the site of Abraham's native city, Ur of the Chaldees. Some of them have been excavated, and bricks, cylinders, and other monuments have been dug up, bearing inscriptions dating back from the time of Abraham to the period of the confusion of tongues. Thus it is that some of the very earliest monuments in the world bear inscriptions which are still legible; and this fact, taken in connection with incidental allusions in the book of Genesis, seems to indicate that He who first taught the human tongue to articulate intelligible sounds, taught at the same time the human hand to trace intelligible characters.

The foregoing considerations give an additional antiquarian interest to the historical books of the Old Testament. We recognize in them not merely the earliest specimens of literature, but venerable records handed down from periods when most of us have been accustomed to think the means for forming a literature did not exist. It seems to me highly probable that to Adam the revelation of God's creative work was first made, and by him it was recorded; and that to him we are indebted for the striking narrative of his converse with God in Eden, and for the whole account of the fall. Noah was the natural historian of the deluge. Abraham was his own biographer, and we find in his life just such simple and graphic details of facts, incidents, and conversations as an eye-witness would record. Jacob alone could have written so fully the story of the dream at Bethel, the romantic incidents of Padan-aram, and the meeting with Jehovah at Mahanaim. Joseph was probably the last whose personal memorials Moses embodied in his history.

To some this view may appear strange; it may perhaps run counter to their early impressions, or to what may be called traditional theory. But does it detract one iota from the authenticity of the sacred history? Does it contradict one single passage in God's Word? Does it tend in the least to contravene the truth of the Mosaic authorship or plenary inspiration of the Pentateuch? It seems to me that it tends to encircle this venerable book with a yet brighter halo of glory, and to give it if possible a yet higher claim upon the attention of the Christian scholar and antiquary. We can see in it not merely a connected history drawn up by Moses; but we can recognize, embodied in that history, the sublime story of creation written by Adam in Eden; we can recognize there Noah's own account of the deluge, perhaps composed in the ark; we can recognize fragments of the autobiographies of Abraham, Jacob, and Joseph. We can see besides the infinite wisdom of God pervading each fragment as well as the combined history—giving life-like reality to its characters, giving perfect accuracy to its details, giving infallible certainty to scientific developments, and investing with absolute historic truth its wondrous and cheering prophecies and promises. *P.*]

THE BOOK OF JOB.

By whom the book of Job was written is uncertain, and conjecture is useless. It is, for the substance of it, a true history of real facts. Job is represented as really existent as Noah or Daniel, Eze. 14. 14, 20; and as a patient sufferer who obtained a joyful deliverance, Ja. 5. 11. It is an ancient history. The length of Job's life; the rare use of the divine name of JEHOVAH, and frequent use of SHADDAI, or Almighty and All-sufficient; the remarkable remains of religion in the land of Uz and the places about; the mentioning of no other idolatry but that of worshipping the sun and moon; the never making any plain allusion to the dividing of the Red Sea, or to the appearance of God to the Israelites in the wilderness, which lay at no great distance from the land of Uz; strongly tempt one to think that Job's distress might be about the time when Moses lived in the land of Midian, or perhaps a hundred years before. We have here, (1) The history of Job's sufferings and his remarkable patience under them, issuing in a sad mixture of human weakness in his cursing the day of his birth, ch. i. ii. iii. (2) A hot dispute between him and Eliphaz, Bildad, and Zophar, his friends, *Whether remarkable judgments be certain tokens of the wickedness of those upon whom they are inflicted?* The aim of Job is to bewail his own affliction, complain of its weight, justify himself from gross wickedness or hypocrisy, and prove that wicked men often prosper in this world while the godly are exposed to manifold calamities. The scope of his friends is to prove that no good man is subjected to extraordinary calamities, but that the most wicked men ordinarily are; and hence to condemn Job as a hypocrite, because of his uncommon troubles, iv.–xxxi. (3) A decision of the dispute; by Elihu, then by JEHOVAH. The aim of Elihu is to leave Job's state undetermined, or even to admit it to be good; and only to charge him with his misbehaviour under his trouble, as too arrogant and self-justifying, especially when he had to do with a God of infinite sovereignty, greatness, power, wisdom, and justice. The scope of Jehovah's speech is to convince Job of his meanness, and of his own infinite power, greatness, and extensive influence; and thereby lead him into a sense of his iniquity in insisting so much upon his own justification, and complaining so unguardedly of the providence of God:—and at last he justifies him, in opposition to his three friends, in his character and sentiments, xxxii.–xlii. (4) The whole issues in Job's great honour and redoubled prosperity, xlii. In this book we have at once a most noted encouragement to patience, and a system of the most ancient believers' apprehensions and faith concerning the wisdom, power, holiness, justice, goodness, and sovereignty of God; and concerning his works of creation and providence; concerning the original and actual corruption of mankind; concerning redemption by Christ and the usefulness of good works; and, in fine, concerning the resurrection of the dead and eternal life.

[The age of the book of Job is a subject of deep interest to the biblical scholar. We have no direct evidence bearing upon it. Jewish tradition assigns to it a very high antiquity. The critic, however, must depend for his arguments mainly on the character of the book itself—on its language and style; on the manners and customs it portrays; and on its reference to, or silence regarding, the great facts and personages of sacred history. All are agreed that the language of the book is of the oldest type found in the Bible. It has certain peculiarities. It has a closer affinity to the Arabic than any other of the inspired writings, arising from the close connection of Job with the nomads of the Arabian desert. There are besides many Aramaic words and phrases in it; but these are of an archaic form, entirely different from those found in the later Hebrew writings. The style of the book—its terse, rugged, and highly poetic language—resembles portions of the book of Genesis, the song of Deborah, and the Proverbs of Solomon, and is characteristic of a primitive and imaginative people. 'The language,' says a recent writer, 'belongs altogether to a period when thought was slow, but profound and intensely concentrated; when the weighty and oracular sayings of the wise were wont to be engraved upon rocks with a pen of iron and in characters of molten lead. It is truly a lapidary style, such as was natural only in an age when writing, though known, was rarely used, before language had acquired clearness, fluency, and flexibility, but lost much of its freshness and native force.' The manners and customs so clearly developed are those of a simple and primitive people. The vast flocks and herds, the semi-nomad, semi-agricultural mode of life, the profuse hospitality, the sudden and sweeping reverses of fortune, are all characteristic of the earliest patriarchal age. The nearest approaches to them are in the histories of Abraham at Beersheba and Laban in Mesopotamia. This book affords a very graphic and full picture of the manners and customs, domestic, social, and political, of the period. Yet there is no straining in it—no aiming at effect; all is easy, natural, simple, affording clear proof that the writer was personally familiar with the scenes he depicted. The free, vigorous, and wild simplicity of the life portrayed in the book of Job bears the stamp of a hoar antiquity; and the style of the narrative shows that the author must have been contemporary with the events. Another consideration leads to the same conclusion. The book is silent regarding the Mosaic law. Its peculiar enactments and institutions, which gave a tone and distinctive character to all the subsequent literature of the Jewish nation, were manifestly unknown to the author of this book, as well as to all the actors introduced into it. The book is silent too regarding the Egyptian bondage, the exodus, the wilderness journey, and the entrance into Canaan. This silence can only be accounted for by the supposition that the date of the book was anterior to those events. 'The sanctions and penalties of the law, if known, could scarcely have been passed over by the opponents of Job, while the deliverance of Israel and the overthrow of the Egyptians supplied exactly the examples which they required to silence the complaints and answer the arguments of Job.' The forms of law, the system of worship, the illustrations and allusions of the book are those of the patriarchal age. Everything therefore in this book tends to show that it 'stands apart from all other productions of the Hebrews, belongs to a different epoch, and, in accordance with the surest canons of criticism, to an earlier age.' *P.*]

CHAPTER I.

1 *The holiness, riches, and religious care of Job for his children.* 6 *Satan, appearing before God, by calumniation obtaineth leave to tempt Job.* 13 *Understanding of the loss of his goods and children, in his mourning he blesseth God.*

THERE was a man in the land of [a]Uz whose name *was* [b]Job; and that man was [c]perfect[1] and upright, and one that feared God, and eschewed evil.[2]

2 And there were [d]born unto him seven sons and three daughters.

A.M. cir. 2484.
B.C. cir. 1520.

CHAP. I.

a Ge.10.23;22.21. La. 4.21.1 Ch.1.17,42.

b Ge.10.29;36.33,34. Eze.14.14,20. Ja.5.11.

c Ge.6.9. Lu.1.6 ch. 2.3. Ps.119.6,7 1 Th.2. 10. Pr.16.6. See ver.8. 2 Co.1.12. Tit.2.11,12.

1 Not a legal perfection, see ch. 9. 20; 7. 20. The word signifies *complete*, that is, Job was a believer in Christ, whose day he saw by faith and rejoiced, ch. 19. 25. For the manner in which a believer is perfect and complete, see Jn. 17. 23. Col.2.10.—*C.*

2 Avoided evil as one avoids something dangerous and venomous.—*C.*

d Ps.127.3, 4; 128. 3–5.

e Mat.6.33.1 Ti.4.8.

3 Or, *cattle.*

f Ge.13.5–7;36.6,7 Nu.31.32–34. Ju. 6.5. 2 Ki.3.4.2 Ch.17.11.

4 Or, *husbandry.*

g Ge.25.6. Nu. 23.7 Ju.6.3.

h Ps.133.1. He.13.1. Pr.18.24. Ge.26.30;31. 54.

5 Most probably his birth-day, Ge.40. 20.—*C.*

A.M. cir. 2484.
B.C. cir. 1520.

3 His [e]substance[3] also [f]was seven thousand sheep, and three thousand camels, and five hundred yoke of oxen, and five hundred she-asses, and a very great household;[4] so that this man was the greatest of all the men of the [g]east.

4 And his [h]sons went and feasted *in their* houses, every one his day;[5] and sent and called for their three sisters to eat and to drink with them.

CHAPTER I. [Ver. 1. *Uz.* There are three persons called Uz in Scripture. The son of Aram, Ge. 10. 23; the son of Nahor, Ge. 22. 21; and the son of Dishan, Ge. 36. 28. Hence the difficulty of deciding upon what country is called by this name. The most probable opinion, because the best supported by Scripture reference, is that which places Uz in Edom, or Idumæa, as in La. 4. 21, where Uz and Edom are identified. The same may be seen by referring to Je. 49. 7; Eze. 25. 13; Am. 1. 11; and in Ob. 9 the men of Teman are described as inhabitants of Idumæa, and in Job 2. 11 Eliphaz is described as a Temanite. *C.*]

Ver. 3. [Job was 'the greatest of all the men of the east;' literally, 'the *Bene-Kedem*,' a people who dwelt in Arabia, and chiefly in that section of it which lay east and south-east of Palestine. Hence it may be concluded that the land of Uz was in Arabia Petraea. Jeremiah groups it with Egypt, Philistia, Edom, and Moab, Je. 25. 20; in one passage he seems to identify it with part of Edom:—'Rejoice and be glad, O daughter of Edom, *that dwellest in the land of Uz*,' La.

COURT-YARD OF SHIEK ISLAM, DAMASCUS—NEAR WHICH, ACCORDING TO THE HISTORIAN IBN ER RABI, JOB WAS BURIED. [JOB, i: 1.]—"There was a man in the land of Uz whose name was Job; and that man was perfect and upright, and one that feared God and eschewed evil." Ibn er Rabi, as quoted by Lawrence Oliphant in his land of Gilead, says: "To the prophets buried in the region of Damascus belong Job, and his tomb is near Nawa in the district of Hauran." Muhammed el Makdeshi, on page 81 of his Geography, as also quoted by Oliphant, says: "And in Hauran and Batanæa lie the villages of Job and his home. The chief place is Nawa, rich in wheat and other cereals." The Hauran is the store-house of Damascus. It is a highly productive and thickly populated region. The artist who took these pictures and the writer were in Damascus on Friday, May 18, 1894, when the first train went out from Damascus seventy miles into the Hauran. We give as illustrating this the court-yard of Shiek Islam in Damascus.

5 And it was so, when the days of *their* feasting were gone about, that Job sent and sanctified[i] them, and [k]rose up early in the morning, and offered burnt-offerings *according* to the number of them all: for Job said, [l]It may be that my sons have sinned, and [m]cursed God in their hearts. Thus did Job [n]continually.

6 ¶ Now there was a [o]day when the [p]sons of God came to [q]present themselves before the LORD, and Satan[7] came also among them.[8]

7 And the LORD said unto Satan, Whence comest thou? Then Satan answered the LORD, and said, From [r]going to and fro in the earth, and from walking up and down in it.

8 And the LORD said unto Satan, [9]Hast thou considered [s]my servant Job, that *there is* [t]none like him in the earth, a [u]perfect and an [x]upright man, one [y]that feareth God, and [z]escheweth evil?

9 Then Satan answered the LORD, and said, Doth Job fear God for nought?

10 Hast thou not [a]made an hedge about him, and about his house, and about all that he hath on every side? thou hast [b]blessed the work of his hands, and his substance[1] is increased in the land:

11 But [c]put forth thine hand now, and [d]touch all that he hath, and he will [e]curse thee to thy face.[2]

12 And the LORD said unto Satan, Behold, all[f] that he hath *is* in thy power;[3] only [g]upon himself put not forth thine hand. So Satan went[h] forth from the presence of the LORD.[4]

A.M. cir. 2484.
B.C. cir. 1520.

i Ex. 19. 10, 14, 15. 1 Sa. 16. 5. Jn. 11. 55. Ne. 12. 30.
k Ps. 5. 3; 63. 1. Ec. 9. 10. Ro. 12. 11. Ge. 22. 3, ch. 42. 8. Le. i.
l 2 Co. 11. 2.
m 1 Ki. 21. 10, 13. Mat. 15. 19. Le. 24. 15, 16.
n Heb. *all the days*, Ga. 6. 9. Mat. 24. 13.
o ch. 2. 1, &c.
p ch. 38. 7. Da. 7. 10, or Ge. 6. 2. 2 Co. 6. 18.
q 1 Ki. 22. 19–21
[7] Heb. *the adversary*, 1 Ch. 21. 1. Zec. 3. 1. Re. 12. 9, 10.
[8] Heb. *in the midst of them.*
r 1 Pe. 5. 8. Ge. 3. 15, with Zec. 1. 10, 11; 6. 7. 2 Ki. 5. 25. ch. 2. 2. Mat. 12. 43.
[9] Heb. *Hast thou set thy heart on?*
s Nu. 12. 6, 7. De. 34. 5. Ps. 89. 20. Is. 42. 1; 49. 3. Ro. 1. 1. Re. 1. 1.
t Nu. 12. 3. 1 Co. 15. 10. Ca. 5. 9–16. He. 7. 26.
u Ps. 18. 23; 32. 2. Jn. 1. 47.
x Ps. 15. 2. Is. 26. 7. Mat. 7. 12.
y 1 Ki. 18. 12. Ne. 5. 15; 7. 2. Ac. 10. 2.
z Ps. 34. 14; 37. 27. Is. 1. 16. 1 Pe. 3. 11. 1 Th. 5. 22.
a Ps. 80. 12, 13; 5. 12; 34. 7. Is. 5. 2, 5.
b Ps. 90. 17; 107. 38; 128. 5. Pr. 10. 22.
[1] Or, *cattle.*
c ch. 2. 5. Is. 5. 25. Eze. 25. 7, 13, 16.
d ch. 19. 21. Ge. 26. 11. Ru. 2. 9. Ps. 105. 15. Zec. 2. 8.
e Is. 8. 21.
[2] Heb. *if he curse thee not to thy face.*
f Mat. 8. 31. Jn. 19. 11.
[3] Heb. *hand*, Ge. 16. 6.
g 1 Co. 10. 13. Is. 27. 8.
h Ro. 3. 15. Pr. 4. 16; 16. Is. 59. 7. 1 Pe. 5. 8. ch. 2. 7.
[4] Is this to be considered as a real dialogue, or an allegory; a narrative of facts, or a representation by parable? When it is recollected that JEHOVAH literally conversed with Abraham (Ge. 15. 1, 2, 7, 8, 18; 17. 1, 18, 19), and afterwards with Jacob (Ge. 32. 24, 30), and that he spoke with Moses 'face to face' (Ex. 33. 11); and then when it is farther recollected that Jesus, 'the Word that was God—the Word become flesh' (Jn. 1. 1, 14), 'God manifest in the flesh' (1 Ti. 3. 16), permitted Satan to tempt him verbally (Mat. 4. 3, 11), there will be less difficulty in apprehending how this narrative may reveal and record a reality of the invisible, and not present a mere figurative emblem. But, if any be otherwise minded, still let it be remembered, that a figure is a figure of some reality, and that consequently the narrative, however interpreted, represents the reality of an invisible government over the good and the evil of this visible world.—*C.*
i ver. 4. Pr. 27. 1. Lu. 21. 34. Ec. 9. 12.
j Ge. 10. 7, 28; 25. 3, *i.e.* wild Arabs.
[5] Probably the descendants of Sheba, the grandson of Abraham (Ge. 25. 3), whom he sent into 'the east country' (ver. 6), where Job 'was the greatest of all the men of the East.' *C.* —— More probably either a tribe of the Cushite Sabaeans (Ge. 10. 7), or of the people of the same name descended from Joktan (10. 28). I believe the age of Job to be too early to admit of the possibility of the descendants of Sheba being here referred to.—*P.*
k ver. 16, 17, 19. 1 Pe. 5. 8. Pr. 12. 10.
l ver. 14, 15, 17, 18.
m Or, *A great fire, lightning*, Ge. 19. 24. 1 Ki. 18. 38. Nu. 11. 1. Re. 13. 13, with Ep. 2. 2.
n Is. 23. 13. Ge. 11. 28.
[6] Heb. *rushed.*
o ver. 13–17; ch. 14. 1. Ja. 1. 2. Ps. 34. 19.
p Da. 7. 2. Je. 4. 11, 12. Mat. 7. 27, with Ep. 2. 2.
[7] Heb. *from aside*, &c.
q Mat. 7. 27; 24. 42, 44. Ec. 9. 12. Jn. 9. 3. Lu. 13. 1–5. Ac. 28. 3. De. 32. 29.
r 2 Sa. 18. 33. Ge. 37. 29, 34. Jos. 7. 6. Ezr. 9. 3. Is. 15. 2.
[8] Or, *robe.*
s 1 Pe. 5. 6. Mat. 26. 39. De. 9. 18.

13 ¶ And there was a day [t]when his sons and his daughters *were* eating and drinking wine in their eldest brother's house:

14 And there came a messenger unto Job, and said, The oxen were ploughing, and the asses feeding beside them;

15 And the [j]Sabeans[5] fell *upon them*, and took them away; yea, they have slain the servants with the edge of the sword; and I [k]only am escaped alone to tell thee.

16 While[l] he *was* yet speaking, there came also another, and said, The [m]fire of God is fallen from heaven, and hath burnt up the sheep, and the servants, and consumed them; and I only am escaped alone to tell thee.

17 While he *was* yet speaking, there came also another, and said, The [n]Chaldeans made out three bands, and fell[6] upon the camels, and have carried them away, yea, and slain the servants with the edge of the sword; and I only am escaped alone to tell thee.

18 While[o] he *was* yet speaking, there came also another, and said, Thy sons and thy daughters *were* eating and drinking wine in their eldest brother's house:

19 And, behold, there came [p]a great wind from[7] the wilderness, and smote the four corners of the house, and it [q]fell upon the young men, and they are dead; and I only am escaped alone to tell thee.

20 Then Job [r]arose, and rent his [s]mantle, and shaved his head, and [s]fell down upon the ground, and worshipped,

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4. 21. The name was derived from Aram's eldest son, who was founder of one of the primeval tribes, which took his name, and settled in the land of Uz, Ge. 10. 23, 31. When travelling in the countries east of Palestine, I often heard from intelligent natives the tradition that Jebel-Hauran was the country of Job; and I found several places in that wild region bearing the name of the patriarch. *P.*]

Ver. 5. [*Cursed God in their hearts.* Nor blessed God in their hearts.—*Note*, In all efforts for promoting religion, let the heart—the conversion, the purifying, the watching of the heart, be the chief object. *C.*]

Ver. 6. [Of the invisible kingdom of God we know literally nothing beyond what God is pleased to reveal; therefore, when it pleases God to reveal it to us, it must needs be by corresponding emblems from visible governments. Still it must be remembered that these emblems have originals of which they are the copies; and that whilst through these emblems 'we see but in part, and know but in part,' yet we see there is a heavenly worship and an invisible government in which spirits of evil may accuse the children of God in heaven, even as their coadjutors, evil-spirited men, have ever done on earth; and in which they may obtain a limited power of inflicting injury, even as on earth wicked men obtain a similar power; while JEHOVAH restrains both, and finally compels all things to 'work together for good to them that love God.' *C.*]

Ver. 7. [It must not be inferred from this narrative that Satan has admission to the assembly of the saints in heaven. The Lord is here represented as holding a solemn court. Before *it* Satan appears. He appears as a subject of the Ruler of the Universe, though a wicked and rebellious one. And it is seen in this remarkable incident that, while pursuing his own wicked purposes, he is still made, by the all-wise, overruling providence of God, instrumental in promoting the glory of God and the *ultimate* good of God's true children. The dealings of Satan with Job are in harmony with what we read of him in the New Testament. Paul's thorn in the flesh was 'a messenger of Satan,' 2 Co. 12. 7; the tares in the field were sown by Satan, Mat. 13. 29; the poor woman mentioned in Lu. 13. 16 is said to have been bound by Satan. He is thus represented as the author of physical as well as moral evil. He is permitted in God's mysterious providence to torture the body as well as to tempt and oppress the soul. His character and work are well indicated in his name, *Satan*, 'the adversary.' *P.*]

Ver. 11. [We have a key here to the moral of the book and of Job's history. It was intended to be a life lesson to all God's people. Job was a good man. He was prosperous, happy, and useful. Under the divine protection and blessing he enjoyed as large an amount of felicity as weak humanity is capable of. 'One question could be raised by envy: May not the goodness which secures such direct and tangible rewards be a refined form of selfishness? In the world of spirits, where all the mysteries of existence are brought to light, Satan suggests the doubt, 'Doth Job fear God for nought?' and asserts boldly that if these external blessings were withdrawn Job would cast off his allegiance. One problem is thus distinctly propounded which this book is intended to discuss and solve—Can goodness exist irrespective of reward?' *P.*]

Ver. 17. [*The Chaldeans.* The word literally signifies *robbers*. They gave name to an indefinite extent of country bordering on the Euphrates. *C.*——The Chaldees were one of the primeval races who settled early on the great alluvial plain near the junction of the Euphrates and Tigris. Ur was a city of the Chaldees, and must always be remembered as the native place of Abraham. The Chaldees possessed the characteristics of true Bedawîn—restless, fierce, and predatory. They were of Cushite origin. The raid here mentioned will remind the reader of that in which Sodom fell and Lot was carried away captive. *P.*]

Ver. 19. [Infidels have scoffed at a wind smiting the four corners of a house at once, but in their scoffing they but display their ignorance; a whirlwind would exactly smite the house as the messenger described. *C.* ——Satan's power, as here represented, is very extensive. It reaches to individuals, nations, and the elements of nature. In all this the incidental statements in Job are in entire harmony with the notices in the New Testament. He is the great tempter of man, insinuating doubts, suggesting evil, visiting with bodily infirmity. He is spoken of as 'prince of this world,' and even 'god of this world,' Jn. 12. 31; 2 Co. 4. 4:—that is, of the physical world, able to employ the elements as his instruments against the people of God. *P.*]

REFLECTIONS.—God can easily raise up instances of remarkable piety, even among wild Arabs and amidst wealth: and he delights to propagate the fame of such as are remarkably pious. It is a mercy for children to have parents deeply and constantly concerned for the glory of God and the good of their souls. However lawful feasting and mirth may be on some occasions, there is always need after it to examine our hearts and conduct, and to supplicate the pardon of our mistakes in it. How closely Satan attends saints, ministers, and angels, particularly when they present themselves before God! We have great need to be always sober and vigilant, when our adversary the devil goeth about as a roaring lion seeking whom he may devour. And many, not less odious to God in their tempers and designs than Satan, thrust themselves into the assemblies of God's people in their house of prayer. The noted favourites and servants of God are peculiarly the objects of Satan's malice. But precise are the limits by which he is restricted by God, who knoweth all his designs. And they who approve themselves faithful servants to God, will find him faithful to them in preserving them from the snares of the devil. It is very common for Satan and his instruments to reproach the people of God as selfish and hypocritical in their religion: and almost as common to ascertain their declarations with curses and impre-

21 And said, [t]Naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I [u]return thither: [c] the LORD [x]gave, and the LORD hath taken[y] away; blessed [z]be the name of the LORD.

22 In[a] all this Job sinned not, nor charged God foolishly.[1]

CHAPTER II.

1 Satan appearing again before God, obtaineth further leave to tempt Job. 7 He smiteth him with sore boils from head to foot. 9 Job reproveth his wife, moving him to curse God. 11 His three friends condole with him in silence.

AGAIN there[a] was a day when the sons[1] of God came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan came also among them, to present himself before the LORD.

2 And the LORD said unto Satan, From whence comest thou?[2] And [b]Satan answered the LORD, and said, From going to and fro in the earth, and from walking up and down in it.[3]

3 And the LORD said unto Satan, Hast thou considered [c]my servant Job, that *there is* none like him in the earth, a perfect[4] and an upright man, one that feareth God, and escheweth evil? and [d]still he holdeth fast his integrity, although thou movedst me against him, to destroy[5] him without[e] cause.

4 And Satan answered the LORD, and said, Skin[f] for skin,[6] yea, all that a man hath will he give for his life.

5 But [g]put forth thine hand now, and touch his bone and his flesh, and he will [h]curse thee to thy face.

6 And the LORD said unto Satan, [i]Behold, he *is* in thine hand; but[7] save his life.

7 ¶ So [k]went Satan forth from the presence of the LORD, and smote Job [l]with sore boils from the sole of his foot unto his crown.

8 And he [m]took him a potsherd to scrape himself withal; and he [n]sat down among the ashes.

9 ¶ Then said [o]his wife unto him, Dost thou still retain thine integrity? [p]curse God, and die.[8]

10 But he said unto her, Thou speakest as one of the [q]foolish women[9] speaketh. What! shall we [r]receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil? [s]In all this did not Job sin with his lips.

11 ¶ Now when Job's three friends heard of all this evil that was come upon him, they came every one from his own place; [t]Eliphaz the Temanite, and [u]Bildad the Shuhite, and [z]Zophar the Naamathite: for they had made an appointment together [y]to come to mourn with him, and to comfort him.

12 And when they lifted up their eyes afar off, [z]and knew him not, they [a]lifted up their voice, and wept; and [b]they rent every one his mantle, and sprinkled dust upon their heads toward heaven.

13 So they [c]sat down with him upon the ground [d]seven days and seven nights, and none [e]spake a word unto him: for they saw that *his* grief was very great.

CHAPTER III.

1 Job curses the day and services of his birth. 13 The ease of death. 20 He complaineth of life, because of his anguish.

AFTER this [a]opened Job his mouth, and cursed[b] his day.

A.M. cir. 2484. B.C. cir. 1520.

t Ec.5.15. Ps. 49. 17. 1 Ti.6.7.
u Ge.3.19. ch. 30.23. Ec.12.7. He.9.27.
9 The body shall return to its mother earth, from whence it was taken.—*C.*
x Ge.33.5,11. Jos.24. 3,4. Ro.11.36. 1 Ch. 29. 14,16. La.3.38.
y Is.42.24. Ge. 45. 5. Am. 3. 6. 2 Sa. 16. 10. Mat.20.15. 1 Ki.12.15.
z Is.24. 15. Ps. 34. 1; 89,38,52. 1 Th.5.18.
a ch.2.10. Ja. 1.4,12. 1 Pe.1.7.
1 Or, *attributed folly to God.*

CHAP. II.

a ch.1 6. Is.6.1. Mat. 18.10. 1 Ki.22.19–22.
1 Angels, ministers, or saints.
2 Not a question proceeding from ignorance, but demanding an account. —*C.*
b ch. 1. 7. 1 Pe. 5. 8. Mat.12. 43. Lu. 10. 18. Jn.14.30.
3 This will recall the words of St. Peter: —'Be sober, be vigilant, because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour,' 1 Pe.5.8.—*P.*
c See ch.1.1,8.
4 See note on ch. 1. 1.—*C.*
d He.11.35. Ja.1.12. ch.13.15; 27. 5, 6. Mat. 24. 13. Ga.6.9. Ps.26.1; 41.12.
5 Heb. *to swallow up.*
e ch.9.17. Jn.9.2. Ge. 22.1. Mat.20.15.
f Es.7.3, 4, with ch. 1. 3. Ge. 25. 32; 32. 20. Mat.6.25.
6 That is, Job has readily given the skins (bodies), both of beasts and children, to save himself. —*C.*
g ch.1.11. Ps.6.2.
h ch.1.5,11; ver.9. Is. 8.21. Re.16.11,21.
i ch.1.12. 2 Co. 12. 7. Lu.22. 31. 1 Co. 10. 13. Is.27.8.
7 Or, *only.*
k ch.1.12. 1 Ki.22.22. Ro.3.15. 1 Pe.5.8.

A.M. cir. 2484. B.C. cir. 1520.

l Ex.9.9. De. 28. 27. Is.1.6. ch.19.20.
m ch. 19. 14, 17. Ps. 142.4.
n ch. 42. 6. Is. 61. 3. Jonah 3.6. Mat.11.21.
o Ge.3.6. 1 Ki. 21.25, with ch.1.15–17,19.
p ch.1.11; 2.1,5. Mal. 3.14. see ver.5.
8 Job had listely (ch. 1. 21) 'blessed the name of Jehovah, nor had he in his affliction 'charged God foolishly.' His wife now questions him. 'Dost thou still retain thine integrity (thy confidence in Jehovah's power, protection, and mercy), blessing God and dying?'—*C.*
q 2Sa.13.13. Mat.16. 23; 18.15.
9 Not, as some inconsiderately imagine, a charge against women generally, but against those 'foolish women,' the idolatrous worshippers of Ashtaroth or other false deities, who, when they did not obtain their wishes, maltreated or cast away the images of their deities. A practice found in all countries where idolatry prevails—even in those countries where image worship still, alas! disfigures and degrades Christianity.—*C.*
r ch.1.2,3,10. Jn. 18. 11. He. 12. 6, 9, 10, 11. Re.3.19. Ja.5.10,11.
s ch.1.22. Ja.3.2. Ps. 39.1.
t ch.4.1;15.1;22.1;42. 7,9. Ge.36.11,34,42. Je. 49.7.
u ch.8.1; 18. 1; 25. 1; 42.9. Ge.25.2.
x ch.11.1;20.1;42.9.
y Pr.17.17; 18.24;27. 10. Ps.35.13,14. Na.3.7. Is.51.19. Ro.12.15. He. 13.3. ch.16.2.
z La.4.7,8.
a Ge.50.10, 11. 2 Sa. 18.33.
b ch.1.20. Ge. 37, 29, 34. Jos.7.6. Ne.9.1. La. 2.10. Eze.27.30. 1 Sa. 4. 12. 2 Sa.1.2.
c Is. 47. 1. La. 2. 16. Ne.1.4. Ezr.9.3–5.
d Ge.50.10.
e Ps.77.4.

CHAP. III.

a ch.1.22;2.10.
b Je.20.14. Ps.106.33.

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cations. And when God, for holy ends, lengthens Satan's chain against his own people, how inexpressibly forward is he in carrying on mischief to the utmost extent of his permission! There is need then in our happiest estate to rejoice with trembling. How heavy are sore troubles when they come from every quarter and on everything, one upon the neck of another; and the last the most dreadful. Happy is it when we are graciously weaned from created comforts, of which we may be so quickly and in so awful a manner deprived. But no affliction should indispose us for God's worship. The more trouble we feel the more need we have of his grace to support us. And the views of our death should wean us from perishing things. All that we have is God's gift, lent or given to us: and whatever we lose, enough is left to deserve our thankfulness. Nay, a spirit of meekness bestowed is a greater blessing than all that God can take from us. But, nevertheless, how powerful are the influences of God's grace, that can render his people composed and heartily resigned to his will under the sharpest trials! In all my troubles let me view God's hand and acquiesce in his will: and let them all drive me into the arms, the bosom of my God.

CHAPTER II. [Ver. 3. The object of God was holy and wise, though that of Satan was wicked and foolish. Satan insinuated that piety could not exist independent of the selfish expectation of reward. In opposition to this the Lord desired to demonstrate to Satan by a living example the existence of true and disinterested piety. And this was no mere useless demonstration of truth. Satan was man's great tempter. Had he not been signally defeated in his plans and arguments, his power must have been largely augmented. *P.*]

Ver. 6. [*But save his life.* Whatever be the power and commission of evil spirits or wicked men, God sets bounds to their malice they are unable to pass, Ps. 76. 10. *C.*]

Ver. 8. [Sitting in ashes is a sign of deepest humiliation and sorrow. It is still practised in the East. I have witnessed it on more than one occasion. Any sudden and heavy calamity often drives the afflicted one not only to sit down on the heap of dust and ashes, but to sprinkle them over the whole person. *P.*]

REFLECTIONS.—How restless, impudent, steady, and active is the devil in prosecuting his malice against the saints! Disappointment but sharpens his rage, and makes him return more furious to the attack: and though proved a liar he persists in his accusations. It is honourable and necessary to resist him steadfast in the faith. But above all, great is the mercy that we have Jesus as our advocate to repel his bold accusations. To what astonishing extent doth God, for his own wise ends, permit Satan to afflict his dearest saints; nay, his Son! But glorious conquerors are they whose mind, in humble abasement, corresponds with their lowest or most loathsome circumstances of body. Heavy indeed is the trial when those who ought to be our sympathizing directors in trouble become our tempters to the most horrid sins;—to rage and disquiet; to blasphemy;—to trespass more and more against the Lord; and when those who come to comfort us have their mouths shut! But happy is he who endureth temptation; when he is tried he shall receive a crown of life! Happy is he who abhors to parley with vile suggestions, and who receives troubles as the love-messengers of his God! God can make our friends useless to us, even when they are so kind as to come to comfort us, and so wise as to prefer the house of mourning to the house of mirth. What frightful changes disease can make on us! Why then should we be proud of vile bodies? But worthless are those friends who hasten from the chamber of disease, and are glad to flee from the melancholy door: an awful proof that they are unmindful of and unprepared for death. Let then no health but what Christ is, no friend but God in him, be the trust, the boast of my soul! In the time of need all others take to themselves the wings of the morning and fly away. Miserable comforters, nay ensnaring tormenters, are they all.

CHAPTER III. Ver. 1, 2. After these seven days were finished, Job gave vent to that grief which had so long stupified him, in the most bitter lamentations, and in imprecating mischiefs upon the day of his conception and birth. 3. Let, said he, the day of my birth, and the night of my conception, be utterly forgotten as if they had never been. 4. Let that unhappy day be covered with horrible darkness, and turned into night. And never let one ray of daylight appear thereon. 5. Let the most frightful darkness, and the most extensive and thick clouds, wholly possess it. Let black burning vapours, and the most fearful disasters, render it terrible to men. 6. Let gross darkness, or absolute extinction, seize upon the night of my conception. 7. Let that wretched night be as barren of everything comfortable as a flinty rock: and let men never meet together on it for feasting or mirth: nor let a single whisper of joy be heard on it. 8. Let the most skilful mourners, who imprecate woe upon the days of uncommon disasters, effectually curse it by name as the direful mother of monsters, redoubled terrors, and mischiefs. 9. Let nothing but the most frightful darkness seize upon it, without a single glimmering of a star, or the smallest dawn of a long-looked-for morning; 10. Because it did not bury me in my mother's womb, and thus secure me from those miseries which I now feel. 11. What a wretched misfortune was it that I did not die in the womb in the birth, or immediately after! 12. What a misfortune that they who received me from the womb did not let me fall on the ground, and dash out my brains; or that the nurse

2 And Job [c]spake, and said,

3 Let[d] the day perish wherein I was born, and the night *in which* it was said, There is a man-child conceived.

4 Let that day be [e]darkness; let not [f]God regard it from above, neither let the light shine upon it.

5 Let darkness and the [g]shadow of death stain it;[1] let a cloud dwell upon it; [h]let the blackness of the day terrify it.[2]

6 *As for* that night, let darkness seize upon it; let it not be joined unto the days[3] of the year; let it not come into the number of the months.

7 Lo, let that night be [i]solitary; let no joyful voice come therein.

8 Let them curse it [k]that curse the day, who are ready to raise up [l]their mourning.[4]

9 Let the stars of the twilight thereof be dark; let it [m]look for light, but *have* none; neither let it see [n]the dawning of the day:

10 Because it [o]shut not up the doors of my *mother's* womb, nor hid [p]sorrow from mine eyes.

11 Why [q]died I not from the womb? *why* did I *not* give up the ghost when I came out of the belly?

12 Why [r]did the knees prevent me?[5] or why the breasts that I should suck?

A.M. cir. 2484.
B.C. cir. 1520.

c Heb. *answered*, ch.4.1;6.1;8.1;11.1;15.1;16.1.

d ch.10.18,19. Je.20.14;15.10.

e Ex.10.22,23. Am.5.8. Ac.27.20.

f De.11.12. Ps.74.16.

g ch.10.21,22;24.17;38.17. Ps.23.4;44.19. Is.9.2.

1 Or, *challenge it.*

h Or, *let them terrify it, as those* who have a *bitter day*, Am.8.10.

2 'Let thunder-clouds render it terrible.'—*Boothroyd* and *Hewlett.*

3 Or, *let it not rejoice among the days.*

i Is.13.21;24.8. Re.18.22,23. Je.7.34.

k 2 Ch.35.25. Je.9.17-20. Am.5.16.

l Or, *a leviathan*, ch. 41.1. Ps.74.14;104.26.

4 The margin and best authorities render it *leviathan.* To stir him up is represented as inevitable destruction, ch. 41.8, 10. The meaning therefore is, 'Let them curse it who are in such anguish and despair that, to escape their torments, they court any danger in order to obtain a speedy death.'—*C.*

m ch.30.26. Je.8.15;13.16. Mi.7.12.

n Heb. *the eyelids of the morning*, ch. 38.12.

o Ge.20.17,18;29.31, 32;30.22.

p ver.24;ch.6.2,3;10.1;23.2.

q ch.10.8. Je.15.10;20.17,18. Ec.6.3-5.

r Ge.30.3. Eze.16.5. Is.66.12.

5 'Why did the lap anticipate me?'—*M. Good.* Why did a mother ever long to nurse me?—*C.*

A.M. cir. 2484.
B.C. cir. 1520.

s Is.57.2. 1 Ki.2.10.

t Ps. 49.6-10, 14; 89.48. ch.30.23.

u Tombs, ch.15.28. Eze.26.20.

x ch.22.25;27.16. Nu. 22.18. Pr.8.21;10.22.

y Ps.58.8. Re. 6.13. Ec.6.3-5.

z Is.57.20. Pr.4.16.

a Heb. *wearied in strength*, ch. 14.1, with He.4.9. Re.14.13. Is.57.2.

b Ex.5.6. Ju.4.3. Es. 7.6.

c Je.5.4,5. Ps. 49.2, 10;89.48. ch.30.23.

d Ps.56.13. ch.7.15, 16;14.13;16.9.

6 Twice is testimony borne to Job (ch.1.22;2.10), that he sinned not (sinned not with his lips), nor charged God foolishly.' But after he begins this unparalleled wailing, and proceeds with his argument against his friends, this favourable testimony is never repeated. On the contrary (ch. 42.6), he accuses himself heavily, and proclaims his deep abasement and repentance. It will be evident when Elihu appears (ch. xxxii.) that both Job and his friends are in some degree in error, and their several statements are therefore to be received under the correction of those principles by which Elihu expounds and defends the principles of the divine government.—*C.*

e Re.9.6. ch.6.8,9;7.15,16. Nu. 11.15. 1 Ki. 19.4. Jonah 4.3,8.

f Is.40.27.

g ch.19.8;12.14. La. 3.7,9. Ho.2.6.

h ch.7.19. Ps.102.9.

7 Heb. *before my meat.*

i Ps. 22.1, 2, 14; 119. 136. He.5.7.

8 Heb. *I feared a fear, and it came upon me.*

13 For now should [s]I have lain still and been quiet, I should have slept: then had I been at rest,

14 With[t] kings and counsellors of the earth, which built [u]desolate places for themselves;

15 Or with princes that had gold, who [x]filled their houses with silver:

16 Or [y]as an hidden untimely birth I had not been; as infants *which* never saw light.

17 There the [z]wicked cease *from* troubling; and there the [a]weary be at rest.

18 *There* the prisoners rest together; they hear not the voice of the [b]oppressor.

19 The [c]small and great are there; and the servant *is* free from his master.

20 Wherefore is [d]light given to him that is in misery, and life unto the bitter *in* soul;[6]

21 Which[e] long for death, but it *cometh* not; and dig for it more than for hid treasures;

22 Which rejoice exceedingly, *and* are glad when they can find the grave?

23 *Why is light given* to a man [f]whose way is hid, and whom God hath [g]hedged in?

24 For [h]my sighing cometh before I [7]eat, and [8]my roarings are poured out like the waters.

25 For the thing which I greatly feared is come upon me,[8] and that which I was afraid of is come unto me.

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did not refuse to give me suck! 13. For thus should I have lain still as a ship at anchor; I should have felt none of those miseries which I now endure: but had lain quiet and undisturbed in the grave; 14. Equal to kings and great men, who lie alone in the tombs which they built for themselves; 15. And to princes, who in their life had heaped up riches and wealth; 16. Or like a concealed abortive infant, which was never numbered among men. 17. There, in the grave, the most wicked can hurt no one; and they who had been restlessly tossed and wearied with violence, enjoy the profoundest safety and rest. 18. There the condemned prisoners and enslaved captives enjoy the most perfect ease, and do not so much as hear the voice of an oppressor or exacter of labour. 19. There every person is on an equal level of power and greatness; and the servant is as free as his master. 20. Is it not strange that a man should be forced to live when his miserable condition makes him heartily abhor it; 21. Who in vain wishes for death, and seeks it more eagerly than the greatest riches; 22. And who would more gladly leap into his grave than the covetous miser can meet with a rich vein of silver; 23. Being so oppressed and shut up with God's indignation that he knows no other way to turn himself? 24. For my meat doth but sustain a miserable life, which is filled up with heart-sinking sobs and loud roarings, on account of my troubles. 25. For whatever dreadful things I fear they immediately come upon me, notwithstanding all my care to prevent them. 26. In my prosperity I never securely trusted in my riches, nor indulged myself in carnal ease; yet that has not preserved me from being miserable. And in this distress I have had no rest; and yet further billows of tossing troubles are still coming upon me.

Ver. 1. [The close connection between the end of the second and beginning of the third chapter ought not to be overlooked. '*After this* opened Job his mouth,'—after the seven days of silent pantomime that ushered them in. Could anything have been more trying to the temper, more crushing to the spirit, more harrowing to the feelings of the poor bereaved, plague-stricken sufferer than the conduct of these three men? They came professedly to mourn with and comfort him; but justly has their heartless conduct been made the basis of the ironical proverb, 'Job's comforters.' The loud lamentations, the rending of their garments, the throwing of dust on their heads, and the seven days and nights of blank silence, were all, by the wasted and heart-broken sufferer, interpreted, and, as the sequel shows, rightly interpreted, in the light of insults rather than sympathy. The visit of the three friends was probably a part of Satan's work; and if so, it was surely his masterpiece. To assail the isolated, exhausted, agonized man with hypocritical professions of sympathy, with illogical arguments, and finally with coarse and cruel invective, was enough to drive him to despair. We can scarcely wonder that, under such circumstances, even the patience of Job was exhausted, and that he broke forth into those passionate utterances, of which an example is given in this third chapter. *P.*]

Ver. 14. [*Desolate places.* No country is more remarkable for its splendid and desolate tomb-palaces than the land of Edom, where Job resided. See Laborde or any other descriptions of Idumæa, especially of the city of Petra. *C.*]

Ver. 26. [This sublime and pathetic, and yet humiliating speech, must be regarded as the commencement of Job's 'sin with his lips.' Hitherto his outward conduct and language had been pure and perfect; now under unparalleled trial and temptation he bursts forth into passionate exclamations. What a sad comment is this on his noble declaration: 'The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord!' *P.*]

REFLECTIONS.—How dreadful are the days, the ages, in hell, on which heaven frowns, and which earth forgets, joy forsakes, and curses attend. The best, when left to themselves, may fall into the greatest folly and guilt; become mad in their wishes, liberal of their curses, cruel to their friends, and unthankful to their God! but how much better is the never-cursed day of our spiritual and eternal birth than that of our natural! How helpless are men when they come into this world! But kind is the care of Providence about them. How levelling are the strokes of death! None of our earthly honours dare enter the grave. Happy only those in it who die in the Lord! What relief from trouble, what rest, what liberty they enjoy! But sad is the case when inflicted troubles, and want of prospect of deliverance, make even saints to long for death and bid it welcome. To quarrel with the life which God bestows, is to sin against our own mercies. Fretfulness and impatience at our lot can only aggravate our sufferings. And to reflect on God's providence is to accuse himself. It is our happiness that our time is in God's hand. The more irksome this life is we should be the more solicitous to prepare for a better. And they only are fit to die who are content to live, and, satisfied under every burden, wait cheerfully the Lord's pleasure.

CHAPTER IV. Then Eliphaz, a descendant of Esau, replied, ver. 2. Thou wilt doubtless be incensed by the slightest attempts to offer a reply: but who can restrain himself from speaking the truth upon such a pressing occasion? 3. Behold, in former times thou hast, with great pains and success, instructed many under trouble and corrected their mistakes; and by thy kind and pertinent advices hast mightily encouraged the dispirited. 4. By thy discourse thou hast encouraged and supported those whose hearts were ready to sink; and hast settled them who trembled under the burdens of their adversity. 5. But now, when fallen into their condition, thou canst not practise thy own lessons, but faintest and art struck with consternation. 6. Is not this the time to exercise thy piety, thy confidence in God, thy hope of blessings, and thy integrity of conversation? Or shall all thy religious appearances turn out a mere nothing? 7. Too good reason thou hast to suspect thyself a hypocrite: for think if thou canst remember one instance of an innocent and godly man who was ever punished with such remarkable strokes of divine vengeance as thou art. 8. For my part, aged as I am, I have always observed that it is the wicked devisers and practisers of horrible crimes who reap the fruit of their works in such a manner. 9. By the blasting and burning influence of God's fearful judgments they are more suddenly, or more gradually, reduced to misery and ruin. 10. And though, like thee and thy sons, they be oppressors, fierce and strong as lions, their power and influence are broken and themselves afflicted. 11. The mightiest tyrants and their posterity are in due time stripped of their ill-gotten wealth, and violently reduced to misery and servitude. 12-16. Moreover in a vision which exceedingly terrified me, I heard a spirit, whose form I could not com-

26 I[k] was not in safety, neither had I rest, neither was I quiet, yet trouble came.

CHAPTER IV.

1 *Eliphaz reproveth Job for want of religious trust.* 7 *He teacheth God's judgments to be not for the righteous, but for the wicked.* 12 *His fearful vision, to humble the excellency of creatures before God.*

THEN[a] Eliphaz[1] the Temanite [b]answered and said,

2 *If* we assay to commune[2] with thee, wilt thou [c]be grieved? but who can withhold himself from speaking?[3]

3 Behold, [d]thou hast instructed many, and thou hast strengthened the weak hands.

4 Thy words have upholden him that was falling, and thou hast strengthened the feeble knees.[4]

5 But now [e]it is come upon thee, and thou faintest;[5] it toucheth thee, and thou art troubled.

6 *Is* not *this* [f]thy fear, thy confidence, thy hope,[6] and the uprightness of thy ways?

7 Remember,[g] I pray thee, who *ever* perished being innocent? or where were the righteous cut off?

A.M. cir. 2484. B.C. cir. 1520.

[k] Ge.3. 19. ch. 14. 1. Ac.14.22. He. 12.6–11. Re.3.19.2 Ti.3.12.

CHAP. IV.

[a] See ch.2.11.

[1] The name 'Eliphaz,' and his residence 'Teman,' compared with Ge. 36. 11, cannot leave a doubt that Job lived long posterior to the days of Abraham, and that consequently he was well acquainted with the Abrahamic covenant of promise.—*C.*

[b] ch.3.1, 2; 6. 1; 8. 1, &c.

[2] Heb. *a word.*

[c] 2 Ti.4.3.

[3] Heb. *who can refrain from words?*

[d] Ge.18.19. Is.35.3,4. He.12.12.1 Th.5.14.

[e] ch.3.25,26; 1.11–19; 2.5,7.

[5] The same trial in which you instructed and comforted others is come upon yourself: and lo! you 'faint' when rebuked of the Lord.—*C.*

[f] ch.1.1; 17.15. Pr.3. 26. Ki.20.3.

[6] Is not this *fainting* sufficient proof of the weakness of thy principles, the insincerity of thy professions?—*C.*

[g] 2 Sa.16.8. Ac.28.4. Ps.7.14. Je. 2. 17,19; 4. 18. Ga.6.7,8. Is.3.10,11. Ro.2.7–10.

A.M. cir. 2484. B.C. cir. 1520.

[h] Ga.6.7,8.

[i] That is, *by his anger*, Is. 30. 33; 11.4. Ex.15.8. ch.1.19; 15.30. Ps.18.8; 68.1,2; 37.20. 2 Th.2.8.

[j] Ps.58.6; 3.7. ch. 29. 17.

[k] Ps.34.10; 37.4.2 Ti. 4. 17. Eze. xix. 1.*e.* powerful oppressors.

[l] Ps.62. 11. 1 Co. 13. 12.

[7] Heb. *by stealth.*

[8] 'Mine ear received a whisper along with it,' as the 'still small voice' that spake to Elijah,1 Ki. 19.12.—*C.*

[m] ch.33.15,16. Da.2. 19,29; 4.5. Nu.22.19,20; 12.6. Ge.xl.xli.

[n] Ge.2.21. Jonah 1.5. 1 Sa.26.12.

[o] ch.7.14. Is.6.5. Da. 10.8. Hab.3.16. Re. 1. 17.

[9] Heb. *met me.*

[1] Heb. *the multitude of my bones.*

[p] Ps.104.4. He.1.14.

[q] Or, *I heard a still voice*, 1 Ki.19.12.

[2] This seems to have been a real vision, and not a dream, and the communication was worthy of God, however erroneous the use to which Eliphaz applies it.—*C.*

[r] ch.14.13; 9.2. Ps.130. 3; 143.2. Ec.7.20. Ja.3.2.

[3] Or, *before.*

8 Even as I have seen, [h]they that plough iniquity, and sow wickedness, reap the same.

9 By the blast of God they perish, and [i]by the breath of his nostrils are they consumed.

10 The roaring of the lion, and the voice of the fierce lion, and the [j]teeth of the young lions, are broken.

11 The [k]old lion perisheth for lack of prey, and the stout lion's whelps are scattered abroad.

12 Now[1] a thing was secretly[7] brought to me, and mine ear received a little thereof.[8]

13 In [m]thoughts from the visions of the night, when [n]deep sleep falleth on men,

14 Fear[o] came upon me,[9] and trembling, which made all my bones[1] to shake.

15 Then a [p]spirit passed before my face; the hair of my flesh stood up:

16 It stood still, but I could not discern the form thereof: an image *was* before mine eyes; *there* [q]*was* silence, and I heard a [2]voice, *saying,*

17 Shall [r]mortal man be more just [3]than

prehend, amidst profound silence all around, say, 17. Shall a wretched man be more righteous than God, or justified before him? or even the most excellent man be pure before his Maker? 18. Behold! he put no firmness in his heavenly ministers, and can put no trust in them; and in his angels he has placed no ground of boasting, and can perceive defect of service and readiness to slide. 19. How then can he perceive perfection in mortal and sinful men, whom he can crush as easily as, or before the face of, a moth? 20. They are pricked and bruised in a mortar of trouble through their whole life and quickly perish for ever, without any oppressing them or regarding their fall. 21. Is not all their power and excellency a *plucked-up nothing*, is it not destroyed together? They pine and melt away for want of, and without ever attaining, wisdom, or any solid and well-connected good. And though their dignity be ever so great, and their posterity ever so numerous, they die like so many beasts which have no understanding of their latter end.

Ver. 1. [*Teman* is closely connected with Edom, and must have been a province of it, or have bordered upon it, Je. 49. 7, 20. In one passage it is included in the same curse with the capital of Edom, Am. 1. 12. Habakkuk joins it with Mount Paran, and this may indicate that it embraced that section of Edom which lay opposite to Kadesh, Hab. 3. 3. Probably as the northern section of Edom was called Gebal, the southern may have been called Teman. *P.*]

Ver. 6. [Delitzsch's translation brings out what appears to be the true meaning:—'Is not thy piety thy confidence, thy hope? and the uprightness of thy ways?' That is, Dost thou not rely on thy presumed innocence before God? *P.*]

Ver. 9. [The argument is this: What a man sows, that shall he reap—if he sow wickedness, by the blast of God he will perish; but you, Job, are suffering by that blast, therefore it is evident you have been secretly wicked. So dark is the understanding, so uncharitable the judgment of man! But to the believer 'it is a small thing to be judged of man's judgment—he that judgeth is the Lord,' 1 Co. 4. 3, 4. *C.*]

Ver. 17. [How blessed the truth, that notwithstanding all man's weakness, imperfection, and sin, God has provided a way in which man shall be 'justified,' and God shall be, not merely merciful, but 'just, and the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus,' Ro. 3. 26. *C.*]

REFLECTIONS.—Such as are in sore trouble ought to be spoken to and dealt with in great tenderness. But affection must not hinder, but promote faithfulness in our reproofs and admonitions. We must not, for fear of offending, suffer sins upon our brother. And it is very edifying when such as are noted in their profession, lay out themselves for the instruction and encouragement of others in the Lord's war; warning the unruly, supporting the weak, and comforting the feeble-minded. Yet through the sorruption of our nature, it is far easier to give good counsel than to take it. Extremely trying is the situation when Satan employs the saints' godly friends to make them raise their hopes and acknowledge themselves hypocrites. The charge of hypocrisy is most frequently laid against the people of God, and is one of the hardest to be borne. But exceeding sinful is the indulgence of a censorious spirit. We must never judge of a man's state from a particular failing or from his outward lot. Though tyrannical oppressors and other sinners be recompensed in this life, yet no man knows either love or hatred by all that is before him. What singular intimacy with God might saints enjoy if duly weaned and withdrawn from the things of this life! Were our tempers duly holy, even our dreams might be means of our noted fellowship with God. O how men's spirits shrink under visits from the other world! What then must be the terrible majesty, infinite holiness, and equity of God himself! Insignificant and impure are all creatures in comparison of him. Mean are men while they live; and wretched in death if driven away in their sins. But for senseless, sinful, dying worms to impeach the wisdom, goodness, or equity of JEHOVAH'S dispensations of providence, or to plead their own wealth and excellency in his presence, is the boldest presumption. How strange is it that amidst so many and remarkable warnings of an entrance into eternity, most men should live entirely unconcerned about it! And scarcely less strange that even good men should so often wrest God's oracles to serve their own humours. This oracle which Eliphaz heard gave ground to rebuke Job for his murmuring, but none to condemn him as a hypocrite.

CHAPTER V. Call now if there be indeed any that will answer this oracle in thy favour! And to which of the saints canst thou turn as an advocate for thy cause, or as an example of thy condition? 2. For the just judgment and holy jealousy of God shall destroy foolish and wicked men: and their own rage at Providence and envy of other men's happiness shall render them miserable. 3. Even when I have seen wicked men flourishing in apparently fixed prosperity, I have judged them unhappy, and predicted their fall, and quickly seen them and their families rendered miserable. 4. Their posterity are exposed to great dangers and calamities: they are oppressed and ruined in their lawsuits, or are openly punished, while there is none to deliver them. 5. The hungry vagabonds eat up their crop; and notwithstanding all the means used to secure it, or the danger to the taker, the sweeping scourge, and savage robber, *such as the Chaldeans or Sabeans*, carry off their whole substance and wealth. 6, 7. Affliction never comes to men without the just influence of God and the deserving influence of men's sin, even though it be altogether common and natural for men to meet with trouble. And men, outrageous in iniquity, and abandoned to gross impiety, shall not long flourish on the earth; but if, as born in it, a man be obstinate in gross wickedness, the flaming thunderbolts of God's judgment shall fly aloft to destroy him. 8. Truly, therefore, were I in thy place, I would humbly address myself unto God and refer myself to his disposal. 9. I would refer myself to God, who works so many things, the nature, causes, and immediate ends of which we do not understand, and so is able to help or punish as he pleases: 10. To God, who waters the earth with rain, and who causes the fountains to spring, and rivulets to run along the streets and fields; 11. That by plentiful crops he may enrich and dignify men of low condition, and exalt those that mourn in sordid baseness and misery to an extended happiness and safety: 12. To God, who defeats the craftiest designs of subtle men to raise or enrich themselves, that it is not in their power to execute the schemes which they have most cunningly contrived: 13. Who makes their own devices to produce what they studied to avoid, and to hurry them, contrary to their expectation, into dreadful ruin. 14. So that when everything seems plain and prosperous, they suddenly stumble into mistakes and misery; and in the very midst of their wisdom and felicity unexpected danger seizes upon them. 15. By which means God delivers those who fear his name from the open fury and from the treacherous flatteries and calumnies of these powerful oppressors. 16. That by observation and experience of this the poor and oppressed may be encouraged to hope in God for help and deliverance, and wicked men may be confounded and silenced.—17. And, moreover, God makes all the afflictions of his people to work remarkably for their good; therefore never complain of his corrections, but esteem them as a distinguished favour. 18. For he not only makes us grieved and pained with trouble for our good, but quickly removes his rod and bestows his comforts. 19. When manifold troubles are inflicted on others thou shalt escape if thou refer thyself to God's disposal. Nay, be thy own troubles as many as they will, they shall do thee no real hurt. 20. God shall supply thee with food in times of famine, and protect thee in the day of battle. 21. No malicious reproachers or false witnesses shall be able to hurt thee; and thou shalt be secure amidst the depopulations of countries. 22. No pestilence, nor famine, nor ravenous beast shall be allowed to hurt thee, nor even mar thy cheerfulness. 23. The stones of the field, as if in league with thee, shall neither hurt thy person nor crop; and even the wild beasts shall submit to thee as thy conquered servants. 24. Thou shalt by experience find thy dwelling, family, and substance, wherever it is, in safety and quietness: and thou shalt be enabled to manage thy household affairs without any allowed iniquity; and shalt take an account of them without disappointment. 25. And however bare thou now appearest, as the earth in winter, thou shalt find thy

God?[4] shall a man be more pure than his Maker?

18 Behold, [s]he put no trust in his servants;[5] and his angels[6] he charged with folly:[7]

19 How much less *in* them that dwell in houses[t] of clay, whose foundation *is* in the dust, *which* are crushed before the moth?[8]

20 They are [u]destroyed[9] from morning to evening: they [x]perish for ever without any regarding *it*.

21 Doth not [y]their excellency *which is* in them go away? they die, even [z]without wisdom.

CHAPTER V.

1 *The harm of inconsideration.* 3 *The end of the wicked is misery.* 6 *God is to be regarded in affliction.* 17 *The happy end of God's correction.*

CALL now, if there be any that will answer thee; and to which of the saints wilt thou turn?[1]

2 For [a]wrath killeth the [b]foolish man, and envy[2] slayeth the silly one.

3 I [c]have seen the foolish taking root: but suddenly I cursed[3] his habitation.

4 His children are [d]far from safety, and they are crushed in the gate,[4] neither *is there* any to deliver *them*.

5 Whose harvest the hungry eateth up, and taketh it even out of the thorns, and the [e]robber swalloweth up their substance.

6 Although affliction[5] cometh [f]not forth of the dust, neither doth trouble spring out of the ground,

7 Yet[g] man is born unto trouble,[6] as the [h]sparks[7] fly upward.

8 I[i] would seek unto God, and unto God would I commit my cause:

9 Which [j]doeth great things and unsearchable; marvellous things without number:

10 Who[k] giveth rain upon the earth, and sendeth waters upon the fields:[l]

11 To[m] set up on high those that be low; that those which mourn may be exalted to safety.

A.M. cir. 2484. B.C. cir. 1520.

4 'Shall mortal man be just before God?'—*M. Good.*

s ch.15.25; 25.5. Ps. 109.21; 104.4. 2 Pe.2.4.

5 'He did not put stability in his servants.' *Patoblus.*—'Nor ascribeth glory to his angels.' *Boothroyd.* In other words, all created beings are liable to defection, and the angels that excel in power have no glory in themselves, but must ascribe it all to God, Is.6.3.—*C.*

6 Or, *nor in his angels, in* whom *he put light.*

7 Readiness to slip.

t 2 Co. 5.1. ch. 10.9; 13.12; 33.6. Ec.12.7. Ge. 3.19.

8 No one sees the moth while it frets and destroys the garment, so man falls before hidden and unsuspected diseases and injuries.—*C.*

u Heb. *beaten in pieces*, Ps.90.5,6. Is.38. 12.

9 'Beaten down,' as insects, by idle and unthinking boys. 'They are ever perishing' in succession, yet no one takes warning.—*C.*

x ch.14.14; 16.22. Ps. 39.13.

y Ge. 49.3. Ps.39.11; 49.14; 146.3,4.

z Ps.49.20. ch.36.12. Is.2.22. Lu.12.20.

CHAP. V.

1 Or, *look.*

a Ro.2.8. De. 29.20; 32.22.

b Ps.107,17. Pr.1,32; 8.5,9. 13; 14.30.

2 Or, *indignation.*

c Ps.37. 35, 36; 73. 3, 18–20. Je.12.1–3. Zec.5. 3,4. 13.3.

3 Not the curse of unholy wrath, but the doom of prophetic foresight.—*C.*

d Ps.119. 155; 109. 7, 12, 13; 50.21,22. Ex. 20. 5.

4 Sooner or later, punished in the gate, the seat of judgment.—*C.*

e ch.18.9,1. 12,13.

5 Or, *iniquity.*

f Am. 3. 6. La. 3.39. Is. 45. 7, with Mat. 15. 19.

g ch.14.1. 1 Co.10.13.

6 Or, *labour.*

h Heb. *the sons of the burning coal lift up to fly*, Is.24. 15; 43. 2. 1 Pe.4.12.

i Ps.50.15; 91.10; 34. 4, 6; 37.5; 91.15.

j ch. 9.10. Ps. 72. 18; 86.10; 145. 3; 40. 5; 104. 24. Ro.11.33.

k ch.38. 26. Je.5. 24; 10. 13; 14. 22. Am. 5. 8. Ac.14.17. Ps.65.8–11.

l Heb. *out places.*

m 1 Sa.2 7. Ps.113.7. Eze.17.24. 1 Co. 1. 26–29.

7 *Sparks*, and neither *birds* nor *arrows*, seems the true rendering. Sparks ascend by no power of their own, but merely by atmospheric pressure; so

A.M. cir. 2484. B.C. cir. 1520.

man is *born unto trouble*, being immersed, as it were, in an atmosphere of sin, of which the consequence is inevitable misery. And as the sparks are never exhausted so long as the fire burns, so trouble and sorrow continue to be the only sure inheritance to which man is born, so long as he is guilty of sin.—*C.*

n Ne.4.15. Ps.33.10; 76. 5. Es.9.24, 25. Is. 8. 10; 14.24, 25. Ex.18.11.

8 Or, *cannot perform anything.*

o 1 Co.3.19. Ps.7.15, 16; 9.15, 16; 35.7, 8; 141. 10; 17.13.

9 Or, *run into.*

p Is.19.3,13,14; 59.9, 10. Am.8.9, ch. 12. 25. De.28.29. Ac. 17. 27. 2 Co.4.4.

q Ps.72.4,13,14; 34.6; 107.41; 109.31.

r Ps.9.18; 10.14; 107. 41,42. Is.14.32. Mi.7.9, 10.

s Pr.3.11,12. He. 12. 5,6,10. Ja. 1. 12; 5. 11. Re.3.19. Ps.119. 67, 71; 94.12. Je.31.18–20.

1 Eliphaz utters here a most blessed truth, yet not the whole truth; for though there be many afflictions corrective of sins past, yet others are merely preventive of sins that might arise; while others are sent for the production of brighter graces (Ja. 1. 3, 4), or higher glory (2 Co.4.15–27).—*C.*

t De.3.39. 1 Sa.2.6. Ps.147.3. Is.30.26. Lze. 34.16. Ho.6.1.

u Ps. 34. 19; 91. 3, 7. Pr. 24.16. 2 Pe.2.7,9. Re.3. 10. 2 Co.10.13. 2 Co. 1. 10.

2 From six troubles in worldly affairs, so many being the days of labour—from *seven*, adding the day of rest, that is, from all the religious troubles of a broken and contrite spirit.—*C.*

x Ps.33.19; 34.10; 37. 19. Pr.10.3. Hab. 3. 17, 18.

y Ps.31.20; 73.9; 91.1–10. Je. 28. 18. Pr. 14. 3. De.33.27–29.

3 Either by making thine enemies be at peace with thee, or hiding thee under the shield of a good conscience, Pr.16.7. 1 Co.4.3.—*C.*

z Ja. 1. 2. Ps.34.8–10. Ro.5. 3. Phi.4.19. Hab. 3.17, 18.

a Ps.91.12. Is.11.6–9; 65. 25. Eze. 34. 25. Ho. 2.18. Mar.16.18. Ac.28. 3,4. Pr.16.7.

b Or, *that peace* is *thy tabernacle*, Pr. 3. 17, 33. Ps.119.165. Is.66. 12.

4 Or, *be disappointed.*

c Ps. 128.3,6. Ge. 12. 2; 15.5; 22. 16, 17. Pr.9. 11.

5 *much.*

d Ec.12.5. ch. 17.13; 30.23.

12 He[n] disappointeth the devices of the crafty, so that their hands cannot perform *their* enterprise.[8]

13 He[o] taketh the wise in their own craftiness; and the counsel of the froward is carried headlong.

14 They [p]meet [p]with darkness in the daytime, and grope in the noon-day as in the night.

15 But [q]he saveth the poor from the sword, from their mouth, and from the hand of the mighty.

16 So[r] the poor hath hope, and iniquity stoppeth her mouth.

17 Behold, [s]happy *is* the man whom God correcteth;[1] therefore despise not thou the chastening of the Almighty:

18 For[t] he maketh sore, and bindeth up: he woundeth, and his hands make whole.

19 He [u]shall deliver thee in six troubles; yea, in seven[2] there shall no evil touch thee.

20 In[x] famine he shall redeem thee from death; and in war from the power of the sword.

21 Thou[y] shalt be hid from the scourge of the tongue;[3] neither shalt thou be afraid of destruction when it cometh.

22 At destruction and famine thou shalt [z]laugh; neither shalt thou be afraid of the beasts of the earth.

23 For[a] thou shalt be in league with the stones of the field; and the beasts of the field shall be at peace with thee.

24 And thou shalt know [b]that thy tabernacle *shall be* in peace; and thou shalt visit thy habitation, and shalt not sin.[4]

25 Thou shalt know also [c]that thy seed *shall be* great,[5] and thine offspring as the grass of the earth.

26 Thou shalt [d]come to *thy* grave [e]in a full age, like as a shock of [f]corn cometh in his season.

27 Lo this, we have [g]searched it, so it *is;* hear it, and know thou *it* for thy good.

e Pr.10.27. Ge.15.15; 25.8. De.34.8. Ps.102.24; 91.16. Ep.6.2,3. *f* Jn.12.24. Mat.13.30.
g Ps.111.2; 81.11,13. Is.55.3. Pr.2.3–5; 9.12.

posterity very numerous, prosperous, and beautifully connected. 26. And when thou hast arrived at an uncommon age, thou shalt enter into thy grave with an easy smile and shouts of joy, as one fully ripened for the glories of heaven. 27. Doubt not of this; for we have thoroughly examined the point, and find it as I have said. Hear, consider, and practise it, for thy present and everlasting advantage.

Ver. 1. [These are the words of Eliphaz. 'Call now'—which of these can give assistance? 'Saints' (holy angels), to whom amongst these wilt thou turn for help in thy murmuring against Providence, seeing they are unable to help themselves? See ch. 4. 18. *C.*

——*To which of the saints wilt thou turn?* This clause is connected in sense with ch. 4. 18. God charged his angels with folly, consequently it would be vain to put any trust in them. They are sustained by divine power, and can render no assistance to others. As the term 'saints' is liable to be misunderstood, the translation 'holy ones' would be preferable. *P.*]

Ver. 2. [*Envy slayeth the silly one.* For *envy* the margin gives *indignation*, and this is the true reading. Wrath and indignation do not signify the suicidal influence of a man's own passions, but the righteous 'severity of God,' Ro. 11. 22, as will appear by the ascription of all chastisements to his will and power, ver. 11–14. *C.*]

Ver. 7. ['Misfortune does not grow like weeds out of the ground; it is rather established in the divine order of the world, as it is established in the order of nature that sparks of fire should ascend.' It is a beautiful sentiment, and characteristic of an age of piety and thoughtfulness. *P.*]

Ver. 23. [*Stones of the field.* Literally, *sons of the field*, the verse intimating a mutual peace; the whole animal creation in league with man, and he faithful to his engagement, and at peace with them. And true it is, that in proportion as religion gains a place in the heart, cruelty to animals is expelled. *C.*]

Ver. 27. [With all its beauty of expression, poetic fire, and depth of thought, there is a false principle running through the whole of this speech, or rather ode. Eliphaz regards Job as a sinner and a hypocrite, and therefore punished by God. He endeavours to establish the dogma that all affliction is penal; consequently the address must have seemed cold and heartless to the poor sufferer. Not a word of compassion is uttered, not a sentiment calculated to purify or spiritualize the soul. He never rises to the sublime conception of suffering set forth by Christ or Paul:—'We know that all things work together for good to them that love God.' 'Every branch that beareth fruit he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit.' *P.*]

REFLECTIONS.—The best of men quickly grow confident in their own mistakes. And it is the greatest discouragement to one in sore trouble to find no saint in his case or sentiment. But how foolish and silly are the greatest of sinners! Their own wickedness fearfully corrects them, and their backslidings ruin themselves, their families, or property. It is stupid and heathenish to think that anything happens to us by chance. And the more we are acquainted with the sinfulness of our nature, we shall see the less reason to murmur at our afflictions. Under sore troubles it is necessary to search out and remove the sinful cause, and to turn all our fretful murmurs into humble supplications. How encouraging is it to have an almighty, condescending, and gracious God to apply to! No craft, no strength, no plots of devils or men need discourage us when we have him on our side. If our mind be brought down to our circumstances let us never quit our hope: it is in a faithful promiser. Our malignant opposers may for a while open their mouths wide against us, and their oppressing hand may lie heavy on us; but quickly their arms shall be broken and their lips sealed up in

CHAPTER VI.

1 *Job showeth that his complaints are not causeless.* 8 *He wisheth for death, wherein he is assured of comfort.* 14 *He reproveth his friends of unkindness.*

BUT Job [a]answered and said,

2 Oh that my grief were [b]thoroughly weighed, and my calamity laid[1] in the balances together!

3 For now it would be [c]heavier than the sand of the sea:[2] therefore [d]my words are swallowed up.

4 For[e] the arrows of the Almighty *are* within me, the poison whereof drinketh up[3] my spirit: the terrors of God do set themselves in array against me.

5 Doth the wild ass[4] bray when he hath [f]grass?[5] or loweth the ox over his fodder?

6 Can that which is unsavoury be eaten without salt? or is there *any* taste in the white of an egg?

7 The things *that* my soul refused to touch *are* as my [g]sorrowful meat.

8 Oh that I might have my request; and that God would grant *me* the thing that I long for![6]

9 Even[h] that it would please God to destroy me; that he would let loose his hand, and cut me off!

10 Then should [i]I yet have comfort; yea, I would harden[7] myself in sorrow:[8] let him not spare; for I [k]have not concealed the words of the[l] Holy One.[9]

11 What[m] *is* my strength, that I should hope? and what *is* mine end, that I should prolong my life?

12 *Is*[n] my strength the strength of [1]stones? or *is* my flesh of brass?[1]

13 *Is* not my help [o]in me?[2] and is wisdom driven quite from me?

A.M. cir. 2484.
B.C. cir. 1520.

CHAP. VI.

a ch.3.1;4.2.
b ch.23.2,3.
1 Heb. *lifted up.*
c Pr.27.3.Ps.42.5.
2 Which though composed of such minute particles that each seems nothing in the balance, is yet by successive additions from its inexhaustible stores in the sea often found to overwhelm both the shore and threaten kingdoms.—*C.*
d Or, *I want words to express my grief.* Ex.6.9.Ps.77.4.
e Ps. 38. 2; 88.3-5,15, 16; 7.12, 13. De. 32. 23. ch.7.14,15.
3 The poisoning of arrows has been often practised; and the effect of a wound from such a missile would be instantaneous fever and intolerable thirst.—*C.*
4 The *onager*, a beautiful animal of the desert.—*C.*
f Ps.104.14. Je. 14.6. Joel 1.18,20.
5 Heb. *at grass.*
g La.4.4,5; 5. 6. Ho. 9.4.Dan.10.3.Ps.102.9. Pr.13.12.
6 Heb. *my expectation.*
h 1 Ki 19.4.Jonah 4. 3,8,9. Re. 9.6. ch.7.15, 16.Lu.6.30.1.
i ch.19.25-27. Is. 57. 2. Re.14.13. Ps. 16. 10, 11.
7 Or, *though I should be burnt with pain.*
8 'Harden myself in sorrow,' by expecting death as a deliverance.—*C.*
k Ps. 40.9,10; 119.13. Ac.20.20,27. Ro.1.3.
l 1 Sa. 2. 2. Ho. 11.9. Hab.1.12; 3. 3. Ex. 15. 11. Is.6.3;57.15.
9 'I would not resist the commands or decree of the Holy One.'—*Health. Good.*
m ch. 7. 17, 18. 1 Ki. 19.4.Nu.11.14,15.
n Ps.103.14,15;39.5.
1 Heb. *brazen.*
o ch.19.28. Col.1.27. 2 Co.1.12.Gal.6.4.
2 These words have been translated—'Alas! there is no help in me!' but the construction requires the interrogative form, and also that the first member of the sentence be independent of any word borrowed from the second. The meaning therefore appears to be—'Is not my help in me?' that is, have I not a right, as my only help, to ask of God to let loose his hand and cut me off? See ver.8,9.—*C.*

A.M. cir. 2484.
B.C. cir. 1520.

p 2 Co.11.29. He.13. 3.Ro.12.15.Ja.1.26.
q Ps.36.1. Ge. 20.10, 11.1 Jn.3.17.
3 Shame to the man who hath despised his friend. He indeed hath departed from the fear of the Almighty.—*M. Good.*
r Je.15.18. Ps.38.11; 88.18.Lu.10.30–32.
4 Or mourn.
5 Heb. *they are cut off.*
6 Heb. *in the heat thereof.*
7 Heb. *extinguished.*
s Ge.25.15. Is.21.13, 14.Je.25.23.
t Je.14.3;3.23–25.
8 Or, *For now ye are* like *to them.*
u ver.25.Ps.62.9.
9 Heb. *not.*
1 Even as the deceitful brook to the Temanite (ver. 18,19), ye furnish me no water of comfort, 'ye are nothing.'—*C.*
x ch.2.12, 13. Ps. 38. 11;88.18.
2 Smitten with fear, either of the infection of his disease, or with horror at his calamities, instead of being moved with sympathy for his afflictions.—*C.*
y 1 Sa.12.3.Ac.20.33.
z Ge.14. 14, 16. Jos. 10.6.1 Sa.30.18,19.
a Ja. 1. 19; 5. 19, 20. Ps.39.1;19.12.
b Ec.12.10,11. Is.41. 21. Pr.8.6,8,9.
c ch.13.4,5.1 Ti.1.7.
3 Is it right merely to watch for my words? have you no facts to lay to my charge?—*C.*
d Ho.12.1. Ep.4.14.
4 Do you treat my desperate lamentations as mere idle wind?—*C.*
5 Heb. *ye cause to fall upon.*
e Ps. 82.3. Ex. 22. 22. Pr.23.10.
6 The *bereaved*, bereaved both of children and property.—*C.*
f Je.18.18,20. Ps.5.6; 7.15;64.4,5;142.5.
7 Heb. *before your face.*
g Is.63.8.Col.3.9.
h ch.17.10;27.4–6.
8 That is, *in this matter.*
9 Look upon me (ver. 28) again and again, and in my countenance you will perceive the consciousness of my innocence of the charges you have laid against me.—*C.*
i Ja.3.13. He.5.12. 1 Co.2.15.
1 Heb. *my palate.*

14 To[p] him that is afflicted pity *should be showed* from his friend; but he [q]forsaketh the fear of the Almighty.[3]

15 My brethren have [r]dealt deceitfully as a brook, *and* as the stream of brooks that pass away;

16 Which are blackish[4] by reason of the ice, *and* wherein the snow is hid:

17 What time they wax warm, they [5]vanish: when it is hot,[6] they are consumed[7] out of their place.

18 The paths of their way are turned aside; they go to nothing, and perish.

19 The[s] troops of Tema looked, the companies of Sheba waited for them.

20 They[t] were confounded because they had hoped: they came thither, and were ashamed.

21 For[8] now ye [u]are [9]nothing;[1] ye [x]see *my* casting down, and are afraid.[2]

22 Did[y] I say, Bring unto me? or, Give a reward for me of your substance?

23 Or, [z]Deliver me from the enemy's hand? or, Redeem me from the hand of the mighty?

24 Teach me, and I [a]will hold my tongue; and cause me to understand wherein I have erred.

25 How forcible are [b]right words! but [c]what doth your arguing reprove?

26 Do ye imagine to reprove words,[3] and the speeches of one that is desperate, *which are* as [d]wind?[4]

27 Yea, ye overwhelm[5] the [e]fatherless,[6] and ye [f]dig *a pit* for your friend.

28 Now therefore be content, look upon me; for *it is* evident unto you[7] if [g]I lie.

29 Return,[h] I pray you, let it not be iniquity; yea, return again, my righteousness *is* in[8] it.[9]

30 Is[i] there iniquity in my tongue? cannot my taste[1] discern perverse things?

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death. But great and holy caution is necessary under trouble, that we may neither be averse to it, nor think ill of it, nor overlook and disregard it. For when blessed of God they are remarkably advantageous. They but open God's way for bestowing his distinguished favours. And those who dwell under the shadow of the Almighty shall enjoy the surest protection, inward quietness, peace with God and his creatures, comfort in their families and seed, and joy and honour in their death. Let us then attend to and profit by every truth we hear.

CHAPTER VI. But Job replied to Eliphaz: 2. O that my oppressive trouble, allotted me in God's indignation, and my extensive, unavoidable, and sinking calamity and sorrow, were but impartially and thoroughly weighed! 3. It would be found so heavy as to hinder and far surpass complaints: therefore are my words full of burning rage and tossing disquiet. 4. For grievous pains in my body, and impressions of God's wrath on my conscience, by their violence, quite dispirit my soul and waste my life. His terrible judgments shut me up on every side and set themselves as in battle array against me. 5. You do no more than brute beasts when you are easy and unconcerned amidst your prosperity. But if these animals complain in their distress, why should I be hindered? 6. Can ever such empty and unsavoury discourse as yours, without any seasoning of grace, prudence, and moderation, be either acceptable or edifying to one in such distress! 7. Those grievous afflictions, which I was once afraid to touch, I must now in anguish endure; and yet I have nothing afforded me for comfort but your loathsome and empty discourses. 8. O that God would quickly fulfil my request for death, and grant me that which I earnestly hope and long for! 9. Even that, without leaving me to languish in this miserable condition, he would, with one effectual stroke, put an end to my present life. 10. The near views of this would comfort my spirit and strengthen me to endure the severest pains; to obtain this I would gladly endure what he pleases; as I am conscious that I have not hypocritically denied, disregarded, or concealed his truths. 11. My strength is so spent that I can neither hold out nor expect recovery. I neither have nor hope for comfort in this life that I should desire it; nor do I apprehend any hurt in death that I should fear it. 12. My strength is quite incapable of bearing such troubles; nor can I but feel their terrible pressure. 13. And though I cannot deliver myself, am I therefore destitute of solid reason and true virtue? Have not I the testimony of a good conscience? Do not I know my own integrity, and the nature and degree of my sufferings, better than you? 14. Surely he who is in distress should meet with pity and compassion! and he who, instead of pitying a friend under great affliction, censures and reproaches him, shows that he has not the true fear of God, and is in a fair way to apostatize from his service. 15–20. My dearest friends promised me help and comfort; but failed me in a time of need; as torrents, which in winter make a great noise, and run with a violent stream when the melted ice and snow fall thick into them; but in the summer, when water is much needed in these hot and parched countries, are quite dried up; the water is so diverted into other channels, exhausted by the dry desert, or exhaled into the empty air, that one can scarcely tell where they ran: and the Arabian travellers who expected to refresh themselves with the water find themselves shamefully and miserably disappointed. 21. Just so are ye deceitfully disappointing me in my adversity, when I most need your help. Instead of comforting me, you, seeing my distress, shrink from me, as if you were afraid I should prove burdensome or disgraceful to you. 22, 23. But since I never asked aught of you for either my subsistence or deliverance, can you not afford me a few comfortable words! 24. If you can convince me of any mistake, I shall submit, cease my complaints, and hearken to your counsels: 25. For solid arguments have a marvellous power to convince and persuade; but your reproofs are to no purpose, as they proceed wholly on mistakes. 26. To what purpose rail ye at words, or critically censure the speeches of a man desperate with trouble? 27. Mean ye to oppress me, when so helpless and destitute, with your bitter calumnies and revilings; and designedly to add to my misery? 28–30. Consider therefore my case and words more deliberately and impartially: you can easily detect me if I speak false or maintain a bad cause. Fairly try my cause over again, and you will find me innocent of the hypocrisy and wickedness which you have laid to my charge. Have I uttered aught that is false or wilfully wicked? or am I so stupid that I cannot distinguish that which is vain, false, or impious, from that which is true, gracious, and edifying?

Ver. 5–7. [May not ver. 5–7 be paraphrased thus:

MILITARY ROAD, DAMASCUS—SETTLED BY UZ, THE SON OF ARAM, AND SAID BY THE ARABIAN HISTORIAN, MUGIR-ED-DIN-EL-HAMBELI, TO HAVE ONCE BEEN THE PROPERTY OF JOB. [JOB, vi: 1.]—Wetzstein, Oliphant thinks, clearly shows that the land of Uz, mentioned in Jeremiah, xxv: 20, "And all the mingled people, and all the kings of the land of Uz," cannot refer to Edom, but must have reference to a region near Damascus. While Josephus, in his Antiquities (i: 6-4), states that the Arameans, whom the Greeks called the Syrians, were descended from Aram. Uz, who was a son of Aram, settled Trachonitis and Damascus. The historian, Mugir-ed-din-el-Hambeli, in the chapter on the legends of the prophets, says: "Job came from El-Es Uz (?), and the Damascene province of Batanæa, which included Hauran, was his property." And Dr. Porter, one of the contributors to this Self-Interpreting Bible, says that he visited a town in the Hauran whose people claimed that Job was king of Batanæa. We give as illustrating this a view of the Military Road in Damascus.

CHAPTER VII.

1 *Job excuseth his desire of death.* 12 *He complaineth of his own restlessness,* 17 *and God's watchfulness.*

IS *there*[a] not [b]an appointed time to man[1] upon earth? *are not* his days also [c]like the days of an hireling?

2 As a servant earnestly [2]desireth [d]the shadow,[3] and as an hireling [e]looketh for *the reward of* his work;

3 So am I made to possess [f]months of vanity, and wearisome nights are appointed to me.

4 When I lie down, I say, [g]When shall I arise, and the night be gone?[4] and I am full of tossings to and fro unto the dawning of the day.

5 My[h] flesh is clothed with worms and clods of dust; my skin is broken, and become loathsome.

6 My[i] days are swifter than a weaver's shuttle, and are spent [j]without hope.

7 O remember that my life *is* [k]wind: [l]mine eye shall no more[5] see good.[6]

8 The eye of him that hath seen me shall see [m]me no *more:* [n]thine eyes *are* upon me,[7] and I *am* not.[8]

9 *As* the cloud is consumed and vanisheth away; [o]so he that goeth down to the grave shall come up no *more*.[9]

10 He [p]shall return no more to his house, neither shall his place know him any more.

A.M. cir. 2484. B.C. cir. 1520.

CHAP. VII.

a ch.14.5,14.Ps.39.4. Ec.3.1,2.

b Or, *a warfare*,Is. 40.2.

1 A set time, task, or place, a military station.—*M. Good.*

c ch.14.6.Is.16.14;21. 16.Ge.47.9.

2 Heb.,*is eveth after.*

d ch.14.6.Is.16,3; 25. 4,5;32.2.Ca.1.7.

3 Any shade in the heat of the day is an inconceivable luxury in a burning climate. See Is.4.6;32.2. Jonah 4. 5, 6. *C.*——'The shadow,' that is the long shadow of evening, which tells of the approach of sunset, and his release from toil. In the East during the heat of day, there is scarcely any perceptible shadow.—*P.*

e Le.19.13.De.24.15. Mat.20.1,2,8.

f Ps. 39.5.ch. 29.2;14. 1.Ec.1.14.Ge. 31.40.47. 9.

g De. 28. 67. Ps. 6.6; 77.2-4.

4 Heb. *the evening be measured.*

h ch.17.14;19.26.

i ch.9.25;16.22;17.11. Ps.90.6; 102.11; 103.15; 144.4.Is.38.12;40.6. Ja. 4.14;1.11.

j ch.6. 11, 12; 19. 10, with 5.16.24.

k Ps.78.39;89.47. Ja. 4.14;1.11.

l Ge.42.36.

5 Heb. *shall not return.*

6 To *see*, that is, *to enjoy.*

m ch.20.9. Ec.1.4,5. Ps.37.36.

n Ps. 80. 16; 39. 11. Eze.14.8.

7 Thou (Lord)seest me for a moment, and I am gone. That the reference is to God will be seen by reference to ver. 14, 17,20.—*C.*

8 I can live no longer.

o Ps. 103. 16; 39. 13. ch.14.10;16.22.2 Sa.12. 23;14.14. Is. 38.11.

p Ec 12. 5. ch. 8. 18; 20.9. Ps.37.36;49.12,14.

9 This does not proceed from ignorance of the great doctrine of a resurrection, which was well known to Abraham (He. 11. 19), but merely asserts that man shall return no more to the relations, employments, and places of this world. See ver. 10.—*C.*

A.M. cir. 2484. B.C. cir. 1520.

11 Therefore I [q]will not refrain my mouth; I will speak in the anguish of my spirit; I will complain in the bitterness of my soul.

12 *Am*[r] I a sea, or a whale, that thou settest a watch over me?

13 When I say, [s]My bed shall comfort me, my couch shall ease my complaint;

14 Then thou [t]scarest me with dreams, and terrifiest me through visions:

15 So that my soul [u]chooseth strangling, *and* death rather than my life.[1]

16 I loathe *it;* I would not live alway: [x]let me alone; for my days *are* vanity.

17 What[y] *is* man, that thou shouldest magnify him? and that thou shouldest set thine heart upon him?

18 And *that* thou shouldest [z]visit[2] him every morning, *and* [a]try him every moment?

19 How[b] long wilt thou not depart[3] from me, nor let me alone, till I swallow down[4] my spittle?[5]

20 I [c]have sinned; what shall I do unto thee, O thou [d]Preserver of men? [e]why hast thou set me as a mark[6] against thee, so that I am a burden to myself?

21 And [f]why dost thou not pardon my transgression, and take away [g]mine iniquity? for now shall I [h]sleep in the dust; and [i]thou shalt seek me in the morning, but I [j]*shall* not *be.*

q Ch.10.1; 6. 9. 1 Ki. 19. Jonah 4.3,8.Re.9. 6.Ge.27.46.

1 Heb. *bones.*

x ch.10.1,20;14.6.Ps. 39.10,13;89.47,48.

y Ps.8.4; 144. 3. He. 2.6.1Sa.24.14.Ru.2.10. 2Sa.7.18.

z Ps.106.4;80.14.Ex. 20.5.

2 Punish, or chasten, as the word is translated, Ex. 20. 5; 32.34;34.7.—*C.*

a Je. 9. 7. Zec. 13. 9. Da. 12. 10. 1 Pe. 1.7; 4. 12.

b Ps.39.10;13.1–3;80. 4.ch.9.28.

3 How long wilt thou not depart, but still continue to afflict?—*C.*

4 Cutaneous ulcerations frequently extend to the interior, and the throat is often specially affected, so that swallowing becomes very painful, and while earnestly desired, nearly impossible.—*C.*

5 This is an ordinary Arab proverb, somewhat like our expression, 'the twinkling of an eye.' It denotes the shortest space of time.—*P.*

c 2 Sa.24.10. Ps.32.5. Je.3.13,21.Is.64.6.

d Or, *Observer*, Ps. 36.6;7.9;11.4.

e Ps. 21. 12. ch. 6. 12. La.3.12.ver.12,14–16.

6 A mark for all thine arrows, ch. 6. 4. —*C.*

f Is.1.18.Ex.34.9.Nu.14.19.Ps.25.11;130.3,4. *g* Mi.7.18,19.1 Jn.1.9.
h Is.26.19,20.Da.12.2.Re.14.13. *i* See ver.10. *j* Ps.103.15.

—The onager and the ox never complain while they have the food of their choice. Give them other food unsuited to their taste, and their braying or lowing will soon give proof of hunger. Even so, before me is set a table covered with sorrowful meat which my soul refuses to touch. I have lost all taste and relish for the world, the world is become insipid and unsavoury to me; why should I not then complain if the lower animals are so privileged? If their Maker indulge their craving appetites, why may I not call upon the death that I long for? See ver. 8. *C.*]

Ver. 13. [The Hebrew may be rendered:—'Or am I then not utterly helpless, and continuance (or succour) is driven from me?' The meaning is that he was now without hope. *P.*]

Ver. 14. [Or, 'otherwise he might forsake the fear of the Almighty;' *i.e.* despair will drive him altogether from God. *P.*]

Ver. 17. [The imagery is thoroughly oriental. In western Asia there are very few perennial streams. Torrents flow while rain is falling, or at most during a few months in winter. On the return of summer the water disappears; the torrent-beds are dry and parched; the streams are literally 'consumed out of their place.' *P.*]

Ver. 19. [*Troops of Tema.* The companies of Tema, a city of Arabia, so called from Tema a son of Ishmael (Ge. 25. 15), searched for these brooks in their thirst, but they had vanished, leaving nothing but a dry channel, a circumstance frequent even with considerable rivers in warm climates like Edom. *C.*——In travelling once across the Arabian desert my Arab guides had determined to spend the night at a well-known watering-place—a desert streamlet. Our water was exhausted. We had had none from early morning; we suffered in silent hope of a refreshing draught in the evening. We reached the spot weary and almost fainting.—It was dry! I can never forget the look of dismay—of blank despair, that in a moment was pictured on every face. Then for the first time I realized the words of ver. 20:—'They were confounded because they had hoped.' *P.*]

Ver. 29. ['Try again; let there be no injustice; try again, my righteousness still stands.' The sense is: Turn back to the way of reason and charity, and do not deal with me rashly and unjustly. *P.*]

REFLECTIONS.—How insupportable is inward trouble, either felt or feared; and of all our evils none more intolerable than a sense of God's wrath! They, in general, are partial judges of other men's troubles who live in ease and plenty themselves. And it adds greatly to afflictions to meet with nothing under them but uncharitable censures and insipid comforts from our Christian friends. It is difficult to keep either heart or lips aright under such complicated troubles. Ungoverned passion grows more violent when it meets with rebukes and checks. But it is most unbecoming when it gets into our very prayers to God, and by our folly turns them into sin. There is great need of always living faithful for God, since we know not how soon troubles may render us weary of our life. And those who are by grace prepared for another world, can see little in this to make them fond of staying in it. But it is not self-hardening, but humility under trouble, that makes us ripe for deliverance. Alas! how often dejected spirits preach despair to themselves, and refuse to be comforted; forgetting how God can strengthen or recover for his own glory as he pleases! It is a mercy then to have wisdom and grace that will remain with us in the very worst of times. Unjust, yea, impious, is the want of compassion to those who are under heavy afflictions. And it is bitter to find the friends on whom we depended prove faithless. Yet created comforts commonly disappoint us, and become gall and wormwood when we come to have most need of their encouraging and supporting influence. Upright souls are averse to be a burden to their friends. And the importunity of want often provokes the abuse of the uncharitable. But how contrary to sense—to reason—to pity—to patience—to equity—to a desire after truth—do friends act when God makes them scourges to us! Truth is a mighty weapon when wielded by the weakest arm. And they who have truth on their side will never shun the light, but court inquiry; and nothing then can be more unreasonable than to refuse them a patient hearing.

CHAPTER VII. Is there not a warfare of trouble, and the set time thereof appointed, for wretched man upon earth? Are not his days fixed and determined, and full of toil and labour? 2. As a servant wearied with the toils of the day desires a place of refreshment, and as a hireling looks for the end and reward of his work, so I long for death, to deliver me from my miseries and bring me to my glorious reward. For I have *now* allotted me for my portion months of wretchedness and vanity without any solid comfort; and in the night, when others rest from their sorrows, I can but restlessly increase mine. 4. I am scarcely laid down on my bed when, through agony and pain, I wish to be up again; and I am continually tormented both in body and mind. 5. For my body is overspread with ulcers, filled with worms, and crusted over with scabs, which have made such clefts in my skin that I am become loathsome to myself. 6. My happy days have quickly run over in a moment, and there is no hope that I shall recover them. 7. Remember, O God, how short and unsubstantial my life is, though once it was pleasant; and when once dead, I shall never return to my possessions and worldly prosperity. 8. My friends shall never more see me in this mortal state. Thou dost but frown upon me and I vanish out of this world. 11. Since there is no hope that my condition will be better in this world, therefore I will give some vent to the extremity of my sorrow by complaining. 12. Am I so strong and unruly that nothing but such strong chains of affliction can tame, rule, or restrain me? 16. Either cease from afflicting me or from preserving me in life; for my days have no need to be made more miserable and fading than they are of themselves. 17. What is man that thou shouldest honour him so much as to contend with him, and set thyself against him in rendering him so miserable? 18. And that thou shouldest visit him with new afflictions every morning, and try him with new strokes every moment? 19. If thou art so patient and kind to the generality of mankind, why wilt thou not turn away thy displeasure from me, and at least give me time to breathe? 20. I cannot satisfy thy justice for my sins, O thou Observer of men: yet why hast thou set me up as a mark for thy vengeance to shoot at and run against, so that I am a burden to myself and to thee? 21. Why wilt thou not forgive me my sin, and at least release me so far from its punishment that I may die? for if thou come not speedily to help me it will be too late.

Ver. 5. [There can be no question that Job was

CHAPTER VIII.

1 Bildad showeth God's justice in dealing with men according to their works. 8 He appealeth to antiquity to prove the certain destruction of the hypocrite. 20 He applieth the argument of God's just dealing to the case of Job.

THEN answered Bildad[1] the Shuhite, and said,

2 How long wilt thou speak these *things?* and *how long shall* the words of thy mouth [a]*be like* a strong wind?

3 Doth[b] God pervert judgment? or doth the Almighty pervert justice?

4 If thy children have sinned [c]against him, and he have cast them away for [2]their transgression;[3]

5 If[d] thou wouldest seek unto God betimes, and make thy supplication to the Almighty;

6 If[e] thou *wert* pure and upright, surely now he would awake for thee, and make the habitation of thy righteousness prosperous.

7 Though[f] thy beginning was small,[4] yet thy latter end should greatly increase.

8 For inquire, [g]I pray thee, of the former age, and prepare thyself to the search of their fathers:

9 (For [h]we *are but of* yesterday,[5] and know nothing, because our days upon earth *are* a shadow:)

10 Shall not they [i]teach thee, *and* tell thee, and utter words out of their heart?

11 Can the rush grow up without mire? can the flag grow without water?

12 Whilst[k] it *is* yet in his greenness, *and* not cut down, it withereth before any *other* herb:

13 So *are* the [l]paths of all that forget God; and the [m]hypocrite's hope shall perish:[7]

14 Whose hope shall be cut off, and whose trust *shall be* a spider's [n]web.

15 He shall [o]lean upon his house,[8] but it shall not stand; he shall hold it fast, but it shall not endure.

16 He[p] *is* green before the sun, and his branch shooteth forth in his garden.

17 His roots are wrapped about the heap, *and* seeth the place of stones.[9]

18 If[q] he destroy him from his place, then *it* shall deny him, *saying,* I have not seen thee.[1]

19 Behold, [r]*this is* the joy of his way,[2] and [s]out of the earth shall others grow.

20 Behold, God [t]will not cast away a perfect *man,* neither will he [u]help the evil-doers;

A.M. cir. 2484. B.C. cir. 1520.

CHAP. VIII.

1 The observant student of the Bible will note that Bildad is much more abrupt and acrimonious in his charges than Eliphaz.—*C.*

a ch. 7. 19–21; 6. 11–13,26.

b ch.34.12,17.Ge.18. 25. Zep.3.5. De.32.4. 2 Ch.19.7. Da.9. 14. Ro. 3.5,6.Ps.89.14.

c Ge.13. 13. 2 Sa. 24. 10.Ps.55.23;140.11.Ho. 13.11.

2 Heb. *in the hand of their transgression.*

3 This unkind allusion, and unfounded assumption, must have added greatly to the affliction of the sufferer.—*C.*

d ch.22.21,23; 11. 13; 5.8. Ps.50.15;91.15; 34. 4,6.

e ch.1.1. Ja.4.8. Le. 26.3–14.De.28.1–14.Is. 1.19;3.10.Ps.7.8; 35.23; 44.23.1 Ti.4.8.

f Zec.4. 10. Mat. 13. 12. Is. 60. 22. ch.42.12, 12.

4 Though Job was found rich (ch.1.3), yet hence it seems probable he had risen by the blessing of Providence upon his own industry.—*C.*

g De.4.32. Is. 38. 19. ch.15.18. Ro. 15. 4. Ps. 44.1;78.3,4.

h Ge.47.9. ch. 7. 6. 1 Ch.29. 15. Ps.39.5; 144. 4. Ja. 4. 14. Pr. 30. 2, or ch.12.2;13.2.

5 When compared with the antediluvian fathers, some of whom lived nearly 1000 years.—*C.*

A.M. cir. 2484. B.C. cir. 1520.

i He. 11. 4. Is. 63. 7. Ps.78.1–8;66.16;145.3–7.Mat.12.35;13.52.

k Ps.129.6. Je. 17. 6. Ja.1.10,11.Mat.13.20.

l Ps.9.17;10.4; 50.22. De.8.11, 14. Tit. 1. 16. Je.2.32.

m ch.11.20;18.14;27. 8. Ps.112.10;52.7.Pr.10. 28. Je.2.25.

7 Rather, the hope of the profligate shall perish.—*C.*

n Heb. *house,* Is. 59.5,6.ch.15.34.

o Is.36. 6; 33. 14. ch. 27.18. Mat.7.26,27. Ro. 10.3.

8 Rather, he shall fortify his house, but it shall soon be beaten down.—*C.*

p Ps.37.35,36;73.3,4, 12. Je.12.1,ch.21.7–15.

9 Which windeth its roots around a spring (for moisture) and among the stones (for protection) doth it flourish (*Boothroyd*).—*C.*

q ch.7.9,10;20.9. Ec. 12.5. Ps.37.36;73.18,19; 55.23.

1 If he (God, ver. 13) destroy him as a plant is withered, ver. 12.—*C.*

r ch.20.5. Is.20.5,6.

2 Behold, this is its short-lived prosperity' (*Boothroyd*). Or, if our authorized version be preferred, the meaning is, this destruction is all the profligate (ver. 13) finds instead of his expected prosperity and joy.—*C.*

s Ps.113.7;75.7.1 Sa. 2. 8. Eze.17.24. ch. 27. 16,17. Mat.3.9.

t Is.1. 19;41. 9;3. 10. Ps.37.24,28;94.14.

u Heb. *take them ungodly by the hand,* Is.1.20;3.11.Ps.55.23.

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afflicted by some loathsome disease of the skin, of what specific kind we cannot tell, and mere conjecture is useless. Were conjecture permitted, it is most probable that the disease was *sui generis,* unprecedented, and hence the astonishment of his friends, and their conviction that it was a divine judgment. *C.*]

Ver. 12. [*Am I a sea or a whale?* Am I an *inundation,* such as that of the Nile, whose risings are eagerly watched by appointed officers; or a *dragon* (as the word is translated, ch. 30. 29; Mi. 1. 8; Mal. 1. 3), that is, as a *crocodile,* which is also watched lest it should destroy those who observe the inundation. *C.*]

Ver. 21. [Job does not absolutely deny his sin (see ver. 20), but merely questions its magnitude in the sight of the 'Observer of men,' and murmurs against what he judges the long delay of pardon. *C.*]

REFLECTIONS.—Our life hath its bounds and form unalterably fixed by God's decree. But how short-lived and hard is the condition of mankind on earth! Surely then we ought to be humble, whose bodies are so vile, and our days so empty and short? And sweet must the heavenly rest be to those who get thither through so much tribulation. It is proper therefore to die with affections quite weaned from this world and set on things above. But if the saints' afflictions can be so terrible, so constant on earth, what must hell be to the wicked for evermore! How terrible to be driven thither in our wickedness! to fall into the hands of an angry God! The views then of our near approaching death ought to animate our confessions of sin, our cries for pardon of it, and deliverance from it. It is a mercy that the blood of Jesus Christ cleanses from all sin, the most unadvised and desperate expostulations with God not excepted: and sprinkled with this, we may cheerfully bid adieu to this valley of tears and sorrows.

CHAPTER VIII. Not without a mixture of mistake, rage, and pride, Bildad replied, 2. How long wilt thou outrageously pour forth what is dishonourable to God and unprofitable to men; and brutishly violent, noisy, and presumptuous? 3. Can God, who has no reason to fear the displeasure or court the favour of any, wretchedly and wickedly deal unjustly with men? 4. Suppose he has fearfully punished thy children for their wickedness; 5. Yet thy humble, speedy, and penitent supplication to him for mercy would meet with due regard. 6. And wert thou thyself sincere in heart, and upright in conduct, he would, all of a sudden, bestir himself to help thee, and restore thee and thy family to its wonted peace and prosperity. 7. And however low and contemptible thy condition is at present, he would render thy happiness and glory more eminent than ever. 8–10. And as you look on us as mere ignorant upstarts, carefully inquire of the most aged and best informed, and they will assure you that God never punished but for sin, and never rejected a penitent person. 11, 12. And that as rushes and flags without abundant moisture quickly wither of their own accord; 13, 14. So without true piety, and a real enjoyment of the divine favour, the highest professions of religion, and the greatest prosperity and most extensive hopes of happiness, will quickly issue in apostasy, infamy, disappointment, and self-wrought wretchedness. 15. The wicked man may attempt to rely on his friends, family, or wealth, and may exert himself to the utmost to retain what he has, but to no purpose. 16. The external smiles of Providence may render his prosperity remarkable for a little time; and his family, wealth, and honour may greatly flourish and increase. 17. He may appear deep-rooted amidst outward enjoyments; and, in height of glory and apparent stability, may vie with the loftiest buildings of marble. 18. But quickly shall his native soil swallow him up into ruin: and he and all that he had shall quickly disappear and be forgotten. 19. Such is the mad and unsubstantial joy of the wicked, and the issue of their flourishing prosperity; while others are exalted from meanness and poverty to fill their place in the world. 20. For —mark it as a certain and important truth—the mighty God will never despise, or loathe, or refuse to help and comfort an upright saint; nor will he strengthen, support, or deliver evil-doers. 21, 22. Wert thou perfect, or thoroughly penitent, he would bless thee till his favours had overwhelmed thee with raptures of thankful praise; they who hate thee and rejoice at thy present troubles should be confounded at thy restoration, while they and theirs should irrecoverably perish.

Ver. 11. [*Can the rush.* Believed to be the Egyptian *papyrus.* The *rush* and the *flag* are green and flourishing above other plants while they have mire and water, but wither before any other herb when these are dried up—meet emblem of man's transient prosperity, which withers in a moment under the displeasure of God!—*Note,* There is but one kind of plant that can never wither—the believing branch in the true vine, Jn. 15. 7, 16; 17. 10–12. *C.*]

REFLECTIONS.—Men readily follow one another in running down those who are singularly distressed. And much sooner do they perceive other men's sins marked in their judgments than their own. But in every affliction it is always wise to have recourse to God for help. His blessing can soon make a remarkable change for the better in our lot. And if he knows our integrity, it matters little though men esteem us as hypocrites. God often gives his people indirect hints of the kindness which he intends for them, by words never intended for that purpose by the speakers. And the knowledge and experience of others ought carefully to be improved for our instruction and comfort. What a common sin among professors is hypocrisy and dissimulation! What a sad source of it is forgetfulness of God! But the hope of hypocrites will put the most fearful cheat upon themselves. Though it flourishes awhile, it perishes at last. And the things of nature around us suggest the most important admonitions, did we but consider them aright. The most precious truths are often abused through the misapplication of them, to make the heart of the righteous sad, and the souls of the wicked to triumph. Let me therefore never be a harsh judge of others, and never too mild with respect to myself. Let me never judge of people's character by their outward lot. It is not time, but the last judgment and eternity, that will reduce all things to apparent order.

CHAPTER IX. Immediately Job replied, 2. I know indeed that God is righteous, and that he ordinarily punishes the wicked and favours the godly. But what frail man can, in your sense, be just before God? 3. If God please to call him to a strict account he cannot answer for one of a thousand of his thoughts, words, or actions. 4. And while God is infinitely righteous, his knowledge, wisdom, and power are so unbounded, that it is impossible for any to harden himself in rebellion against him and peacefully prosper. 5–9. *Against him* who can in a moment remove and overturn the largest mountains—who can shake the earth out of its place, and shatter its rocky foundations—who can at pleasure forbid the rising of the sun or shining of the stars—who at pleasure spreads out or dispels the clouds, and triumphantly treads upon the swelling waves of the sea, all being subject to his will—who makes and governs all the starry constellations which appear in the north or south parts of our world. 10. And does works unsearchably marvellous and unnumbered. 11. In his providential dispensations he can pass before me and attack me; can quickly pass by and rush upon me, and continually set his works before me: and yet I cannot perceive him nor understand them. 12. Behold! he can suddenly or forcibly snatch away whatever a man has, and none can resist his infinite power, or make him to restore it, or even bring him to account for his conduct. 13. If he, the object of our adoration, continue the displays of his terrible majesty and almighty wrath in the infliction of just

21 Till he fill thy mouth with laughing, and thy lips with rejoicing.[3]

22 They that hate thee [z]shall be clothed with shame; and the dwelling-place of the wicked shall come to nought.[4]

CHAPTER IX.

1 Job, acknowledging God's justice, showeth there is no contending with him. 22 Man's innocency is not to be condemned by afflictions.

THEN Job answered and said,

2 I know *it is* so of a truth: but [a]how should man be just with God?[1]

3 If he will contend with him, he cannot answer him [b]one of a thousand.[2]

4 *He is* [c]wise in heart, and mighty in strength: [d]who hath hardened *himself* against him, and hath prospered?

5 Which [e]removeth the mountains, and they know not; which overturneth them in his anger;

6 Which [f]shaketh the earth out of her place, and the [g]pillars thereof tremble;

7 Which [h]commandeth the sun, and it riseth not, and [i]sealeth up the stars;

8 Which alone [k]spreadeth out the heavens, and[l] treadeth upon the waves[3] of the sea;

9 Which[m] maketh Arcturus, Orion, and Pleiades,[4] and the chambers of the south;[5]

10 Which[n] doeth great things past finding out; yea, and wonders without number.

11 Lo,[o] he goeth by me, and I see *him* not: he passeth on also, but I perceive him not.

12 Behold,[p] he taketh away, [q]who can hinder him? who will say unto him, What doest thou?

13 *If*[r] God will not withdraw his anger, the proud helpers do stoop under him.[6]

14 How[s] much less shall I answer him, *and* choose out my words *to reason* with him?

15 Whom, [t]though I were righteous, *yet* would I not answer, [u]*but* I would make supplication to my Judge.

16 If [x]I had called, and he had answered me; *yet* would [y]I not believe that he had hearkened unto my voice.[7]

17 For he [z]breaketh me with a tempest, and multiplieth my wounds [a]without cause.[8]

A.M. cir. 2484.
B.C. cir. 1520.

3 Heb. *shouting for joy,* Is. 65. 13. Ps. 65.13;126.2.

x Ps.132.18;35.26;69. 7;109.28,29.

4 Heb. *not be,* ver. 18.Pr.3.33.Zec.5.4. Ps. 69.25,27.

CHAP. IX.

a ch.4.17;25.4,6. Ps. 143.2;130. 3. Ro.3.19, 20.Ga.2.16.Is.64.6.

1 Or, *before God.*

b Ro.3.19,20. 1 Jn.3. 20.Ps.40.12.

2 Once in a thousand times.—*C.*

c ch.36.5;40.9–14;37. 23; ver. 19, 32, 33. Ps. 147.5. Jude 24,25.

d Is.27.4. 1 Co.10.22. ch.41.10. Mal.3.13.

e Ps.68.8;46.2; 114.4. Hab.3.6. Na. 3.6. Am. 9.5. Zec.14.4; 4.7. Re. 16.20.

f He.12.26.

g Ps.75.3.1 Sa.2.8.

h Ps.135.6. Da.4.35. Joel 2.2. Am.4.13; 5. 8; 8.9. Jos.10.12,13.

i ch.3.4,6. Eze. 32.7. Ac.27.20. Is.13.10.

k Ge.1.6. Ps.104.2,3. ch.37.18. Is.40.22–28.

l Hab.3.15. Ps.93.3, 4; 65. 7; 89. 9; 107. 29. Mat. 14. 25. Mar. 6.48. Je.5.22.

3 Heights.

m ch. 38. 31, 32, &c. Am.5.8. Ps.147.1.

4 Heb. *Ash, Cesil, and Chimah.*

5 The constellations of the southern, which are invisible in the northern hemisphere.—*C.*

n ch.5. 9. Ps. 71. 15; 40.5;145.5,6;72.18.

o ch.23.3,8,9;35.14.

p Is. 45. 9. Je. 18. 6. Ro.9.20. ch. 23. 13;33. 13;34.29. Da. 4. 35. Ps. 135.6;115.3.

q Heb. *who can turn him away?* ch. 11.10.

r Is.30.7;31.2.ch.40. 2,11,12.Eze.21.26. Da. 4.37. Lu.14.11.

6 Beneath him must the mightiest stoop. —*Boothroyd.*

s ch.40.5.1 Pe.3.15.

t ch.10.15. Ro. 3. 19. 1 Co.4.4. Ge. 18. 27,30. Ho.12.4. Mat.5.24,25.

u ch.34.31.

x ch.29.2–5. Ge.48.3. Ps.18.6; 116.1;6.8;9;34. 4,6.

y Ex.6.9. Ju.6.13.

7 But that what he had thus done he had done from his mere good-will and mercy, and not for any power or right I had over, or any merit I could plead before him.—*C.*

z Ps.83.15;42.7,9,10. Je.23.19. Eze.13.13. Is. 28.17.

a ch.2.3;34.6. Jn.9.3. Mat.26.15.

8 Not without *any* cause, for Job had acknowledged his sin (ch. 7. 20; ver. 20), but without any such special cause in concealed sin, hypocrisy, or profligacy, as his friends had alleged against him.—*C.*

A.M. cir. 2484.
B.C. cir. 1520.

b ch.7.19. Ps. 88. 15–17. Je.9.15.

c ch.3.20.1 Sa.15.32. 2 Sa.2.26. La. 3. 15, 19. He.12.6–11.

d 1 Co. 10. 22; 1. 25. ver.4.

e ver.32,33. Ps.143.2.

f ver. 2, 3. Ps. 130. 3; 143.2. Pr. 27. 2. Lu.16. 15. 1 Co.4.4. 1 Jn. 1. 8, 10.

g Phi.3.3–9. Is. 64.6. Lu.17.10. Ge.32.10. ch. 7.16.

9 If I said I were perfect, I would not know my own soul—the assertion would prove my ignorance of my own heart. And the more thoroughly I know myself, the more must I despise all vain pretensions to perfection in the sight of God.—*C.*

h Ec.9.1,2. Eze.21.3.

i ch.1.13–19;27.20,21; 34.20. Ps.80.5.

k Eze.21.13. Zec.13. 9.1 Pe.1.7;4.12. He.11. 36,37.

l Je.12.1,2. Ps. 73. 3, 7;17,14. Da.7.7,25.

m Ps. 69. 23; 81. 12. Es.7.9, or Is.29.10.

1 If God do not this, who does? It cannot be chance, it must be providence. —*C.*

n ch.7.6. Ps.39.5; 90. 6,9;103.15,16. Ja.4.14. 1 Co.7.31. Hab.1.8. La. 4.19.

2 See note Es.8.14. —*C.*

o ch.7.13.

p Or, *strengthen,* Am.5.9.

q Ps.119. 120; 88. 16; 77.3-9.

r Ex.20.7. Ps.130.3.

s 2 Pe.2. 20–22. Eze. 18.24. Ps.73.13.

3 I am sinful, why then attempt to prove mine innocence?—*C.*

t Je.2.22; 18. 14. Ps. 18.20;73. 13;26.6;15.1,2; 24.4.

4 At once cooling and cleansing.—*C.*

u Ps.130.3; 143.2;69. 1,2.

x Or, *make me to be abhorred,* Pr.21.27. Lu.13.14.

y Ec.6.10. Is.45.9. Je. 49.19. Ro.9.20. Nu.23. 19. ver. 3,14.15.

5 Heb. *one that should argue.*

6 Or, *arbitrator.*

z 1 Sa.2. 25. ver. 19, with Ps.51.5. Hos.6.6;9. 15;2.5. Ps.106.23.

a Ps.39.10.

b Ps.90.11. ch.31.23; 38.1;33.7;13.11,21.

7 Heb. *but I am not so with myself.*

8 His rod is not removed, therefore I dare not speak, Ps 39.10.—*C.*

CHAP. X.

1 Or, *cut off while I live.*

a ch.7.16;6.8,9.1 Ki. 19.4. Jonah 4.3,8.

2 'Weary,' heart-sick. 'I will leave my complaint upon myself;' 'I will indulge my grief, and seek no comfort.—*C.*

b ch.7.11;13.13;21.4.

c ch.6. 2–4; 16. 6, 26; ver. 15,16. Ps. 32. 3. 5.

18 He[b] will not suffer me to take my breath, but filleth me with [c]bitterness.

19 If *I speak* of strength, lo, [d]*he is* strong: and if of judgment, who [e]shall set me a time *to plead?*

20 If I [f]justify myself, mine own mouth shall condemn me: *If I say,* I *am* perfect, it shall also prove me perverse.

21 *Though* [g]I *were* perfect,[9] *yet* would I not know my soul; I would despise my life.

22 This *is* [h]one *thing,* therefore I said *it,* He destroyeth the perfect and the wicked.

23 If [i]the scourge slay suddenly, he will laugh at the [k]trial of the innocent.

24 The[l] earth is given into the hand of the wicked: he [m]covereth the faces of the judges thereof; if not, where, *and* who *is* he?[1]

25 Now my days are [n]swifter than a [2]post; they flee away, they see no good.

26 They are passed away as the swift ships; as the eagle *that* hasteth to the prey.

27 If[o] I say, I will forget my complaint, I will leave off my heaviness, and [p]comfort *myself;*

28 I [q]am afraid of all my sorrows, I know that thou [r]wilt not hold me innocent.

29 *If* I be wicked, why then labour I [s]in [3]vain?

30 If I [t]wash myself with snow-water,[4] and make my hands never so clean;

31 Yet shalt thou [u]plunge me in the ditch, and mine own clothes shall [z]abhor me.

32 For *he is* [y]not a man, as I *am, that* I should answer him, *and* we should come together in judgment.

33 Neither is there any [5]daysman[6] betwixt us, *that* might [z]lay his hand upon us both.

34 Let him take [a]his rod away from me, and let not his fear [b]terrify me:

35 *Then* would I speak, and not fear him; [7]but *it is* not so with me.[8]

CHAPTER X.

1 Job, taking liberty of complaint, expostulateth with God about his afflictions. 18 He complaineth of life, and craveth a little ease before death.

MY soul [1]is [a]weary[2] of my life: I [b]will leave my complaint upon myself: [c]I will speak in the bitterness of my soul.

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punishments, the most proud, powerful, and fierce helpers and avengers must yield to his influence, and confess their inability to relieve us. 14. How then can I, a poor, weak, unbefriended wretch, answer him in judgment; or choose, give sense to, and order my words in debating with him! 15. Though my case were ever so just, nothing would become me but to make humble supplications to my tremendous and omniscient Judge who contends with me. 16. And if he had graciously accepted my supplication, and even promised to grant the request of such a poor and wretched creature as I am, I could not believe it. 17. Since, without my being conscious of any uncommon wickedness, he breaks me to pieces by a fiery whirlwind of his judgments, and multiplies my painful afflictions. 18. He allows me no interval from trouble, no ease under it, but fills me with the most tormenting troubles and bitter griefs. 19. Should I be inclined to dispute with him by force, lo! he is infinitely more powerful than I. Should I be inclined to cite him at law, who, higher than he, could be our judge, and appoint us a time or place of hearing? 20. Though I am guilty of no allowed crime, yet his majesty and holiness would make me condemn myself: and though I be no hypocrite, my attempts to justify myself before him would prove me perverse. 21. Though I were ever so perfect I durst not, on my own consciousness, debate the matter with him, nor insist that my soul were really such in his view; but I would undervalue, disapprove, and loathe my practice before his infinite holiness; and would rather lose my life than dare to contend with one of boundless majesty. 22. All that I have affirmed and insist upon is this important truth, that God, in sovereignty, fearfully afflicts the righteous as well as the wicked. 23. When the most fearful calamities fall upon and suddenly kill men, he often, with seeming pleasure, for their trial grievously afflicts the most innocent. 24. Who but he prospers the wicked, and gives the earth to be possessed by wicked men, and ruled by blind judges, who, from ignorance, misinformation, bribery, or partiality, pass unrighteous decisions? 25, 26. I myself am an instance of his sovereign management. My days of prosperity have quickly passed away without substantial comfort; and my natural life, amidst inexpressible misery, posts on to an end, more swiftly than the boat of paper reeds is hurried down the rapid stream, or the hungry eagle alights upon his prey. 27, 28. If I attempt to forget my calamities, lay aside my mournful looks, pluck up my spirits, and cause my face to shine with a smile, my tormenting pains and sorrows terrify my mind: and I find by experience that thou, O God, wilt not remove my trouble as if I were innocent. 29. I see that I shall be held and punished as one that is wicked—why then do I thus fatigue myself in vindicating my innocency? 30. Though I could wash myself by the most effectual vindications, and thoroughly purge my practice with purity itself, 31. Thou, O infinitely holy God, wouldst plunge me into depths of noisome afflictions and of filthy ulcers; and my discovered wickedness and manifest troubles should hold me forth as quite abominable: 32. For God is so infinitely above me that I cannot, dare not, enter into a debate or plea with him. 33. Neither, indeed, is any umpire or arbiter to be found who could order us to silence, or oblige us both to stand to his award. 34, 35. If he would remove from off me this heavy trouble, and not terrify me with the dread of his power and majesty, then would I freely speak, without any slavish fear of

2 I will say unto God, Do not [a]condemn me; [c]show me wherefore thou contendest with me.

3 *Is it* good unto thee[3] that thou [f]shouldest oppress? that thou shouldest despise [g]the work[4] of thine hands? and [h]shine upon the counsel of the wicked?

4 Hast thou [i]eyes of flesh? or seest thou as man seeth?

5 *Are* thy [k]days as the days of man? *are* thy years as man's days,[5]

6 That thou [l]inquirest after mine iniquity, and searchest after my sin?[6]

7 Thou [m]knowest that I am not wicked;[7] and *there is* [n]none that can deliver out of thine hand.

8 Thine hands [o]have[8] made me, and fashioned me together round about; yet thou dost [p]destroy me.

n De.32.39.Jn.10.29.Ps.50.22.ch.9.13. *o* Ps.139.15,16;119.73.Is.43.7;44.2.Ge.2.7.
[8] Heb. *taken pains about.* *p* ch.19.10.Is.64.8,9 ver.16.Jonah 4.10.

A.M. cir. 2484. B.C. cir. 1520.

d Pr.17.15. Ro. 8.1, 34.Ps.143.2.
e ch.34.31,32. La. 3. 40,35,16,17.
[3] Is it befitting the Judge of the whole earth?—*C.*
f Nu. 11. 15. Ru. 1. 20. La.iii. Ps. lxxxviii. lxxvii.xxii.
g Ps.138.8.ver.8.Ep. 2.10;3.9.
[4] Heb. *labour.*
h Ps.73.3-12.Je.12.1 -3.ch.xxi.
i 1 Sa.16.7. Re.1.14.
k Ps.90.2,4.2 Pe.3.8.
[5] The original words for *man* are different, and may be rendered, 'Are thy days as the days of miserable man? Are thy years as the days of the mighty?'—*C.*
l ch.14.16,17. Je. 50. 20 Ps.10.15.
[6] Not like man in his misery, thou art inquiring after the perpetrator of injury; or like man in his might, thou art engaged to punish him.—*C.*
m Ps. 17. 3; 26. 1, 2; 139.1,2,23,24.Is.38.3.
[7] Not denying that he had sinned (see ch. 7. 20; 9. 20), but denying that he was the wicked profligate his friends described him to be.—*C.*

A.M. cir. 2484. B.C. cir. 1520.

q Is.45.9;64.8. Je.18. 6.ch.33.6.Ro.9.21.
r Ge.2.7;3.19. Ps.90. 3,Ec.12.7.
[9] Fashioned me as the clay of this potsherd (ch. 2. 8), and wilt thou reduce me to dust as these ashes in which I sit?—*C.*
s Ps.139.14-16.
t 2 Co. 5. 1,4. 2 Pe.1. 14.Ps 139.13.
[1] Heb. *hedged.*
u Ge.2.7. Mat. 6.26. Ac.17. 25,28. ch. 33. 4. Ps.....2,9,10.
x Ro.11.33. Ec. 8.7. Is.40.14.Pr.25.2.
[2] All these things thou rememberest. Ps.119.11. I know my record is with thee, ch.16.19.—*C.*
y ch.14.16,17; 13. 26. Ps.139.1;130.3.
z Ex.20.7;34.7. Am. 3.2.
a Is.3.11;6.5.Ro.2.8, 9.
b ch.9.20,21. Lu. 17. 10. Is.64.6. Phi. 3. 8, 9. Ge.32.10.1 Ti.1.15,16.
c Ex.3. 7. Ps. 25. 18; 119.153. La.1.20.
d Is.38. 13. ch. 19. 6. La. 3. 10. Ho. 5.14; 13. 7,8.
[3] As a fierce lion roused, thou springest upon me.—*C.*
e De.28.59.Nu.16.29, 30.ch.1.18.

9 Remember, I beseech thee, that thou hast made me [q]as the clay; and wilt thou bring me into [r]dust again?[9]

10 Hast[s] thou not poured me out as milk, and curdled me like cheese?

11 Thou hast [t]clothed me with skin and flesh, and hast fenced[1] me with bones and sinews.

12 Thou hast granted me [u]life and favour, and thy visitation hath preserved my spirit.

13 And these *things* hast thou [x]hid in thine heart:[2] I know that this *is* with thee.

14 If I sin, then thou [y]markest me; and thou wilt [z]not acquit me from mine iniquity.

15 If[a] I be wicked, woe unto me; and [b]*if* I be righteous, *yet* will I not lift up my head. I *am* full of confusion; therefore [c]see thou mine affliction;

16 For it increaseth. Thou [d]huntest me as a fierce lion;[3] and again thou [e]showest thyself marvellous upon me.

him, in my own vindication; for I am not such a hypocrite as you allege. But, alas! sorrows and fears oppress my spirit.

Ver. 1. [Job admits the truth of the principle enunciated at the close of Bildad's address; namely, that God's acts and judgments are always right and just. He goes on to show that it would be impossible for man to dispute this; for if God should even condescend to enter into controversy with man, he would not be able to give him information on one of a thousand subjects that might be brought into discussion. Fear would awe him; his finite and fallible mind would utterly fail before the infinite and infallible Jehovah. To discuss or question God's dealings would therefore be mere presumption. *P.*]

Ver. 9. [*Arcturus*—Aben Ezra says it is a northern constellation, composed of seven stars, constituting *Ursa Major*. *Orion*—Aben Ezra concludes it to be *Antares*, a star in the constellation *Scorpio*. *Pleiades*, a cluster of stars in the constellation *Taurus*. Of these some additional remarks will be required on ch. 38. 31 *C.*]

Ver. 14. [Job's conception of the nature and attributes of God is clear and full. He was totally free from false and imperfect views which we discover even in the most distinguished of heathen philosophers. Here God is represented as a Spirit of infinite wisdom, power, and justice. All things are admitted to be subject to his direct control. The universe which he created he governs. *P.*]

Ver. 22. [He afflicts and cuts off both good and evil men, therefore outward calamities are no certain indications, as you suppose, of the sufferer's profligacy and of God's displeasure. *C.*]

Ver. 23. [If the scourge (the wicked oppressor) slay suddenly, the innocent will also be allowed to perish through false witness and unjust judgment, and thus come to the same end as the wicked. *C.*]

Ver. 24. [*Covereth the faces of the judges.* Gives up not merely the innocent to trial and condemnation, but righteous judges to have their faces covered; that is, to be themselves tried and condemned for their righteous administration of the law. See Es. 7. 8. *C.*]

Ver 26. ['Job gathers images of swiftness from earth (the posts), from water (the light ships of reed or papyrus, such as float swiftly on the Nile), and from the air (the eagle), to describe the rapidity with which his days of happiness have passed away' (*Wordsworth*). *P.*]

Ver. 33. [The Hebrew word translated 'daysman' signifies 'one who makes clear,' 'one who arbitrates in a matter.' The general sense is plain enough, but the doctrinal point involved is whether Job can have had any reference to Christ, the great Mediator. There is a reading of great importance found in some early MSS. It would convert the clause into a prayer:—'O that there was a daysmen between us!' The latter part of the verse suggests the idea that Job must have formed some conception in his mind of one who having two natures, the divine and human, touches both God and man, and brings them together so as to make an atonement. *P.*]

REFLECTIONS.—O the infinite goodness of God! And what is man, so mean, so sinful, that he should be mindful of him! How incapable of advancing a justifying righteousness before him! Dreadful is the case of those devils and men who harden themselves against him. His excellencies are plainly marked in his works of creation and providence. Happy are they whose God is JEHOVAH! and inexpressibly miserable his most powerful and proud opposers! In incontestable goodness he often afflicts the righteous and prospers the wicked. And it is hard to complain much of our troubles without mingling somewhat reproachful to God. Let therefore the thoughts of my own meanness, sinfulness, and mortality keep my mind low and silent before him. It is his mercy, not my merits, that must be my only plea. Conceit of my sinless perfection, and of the worth of my righteousness, will but manifest my ignorance of the spirituality of his law and of my own corruption. Let me always stand in awe of him and the power of his wrath. Let me tenderly pity such as are wounded in spirit, and earnestly pray for them, as they can sometimes scarcely pray for themselves. Let me always entertain kind and honourable thoughts of God; as hard thoughts of him are inlets to much sin and sorrow. But above all, let me bless him that Jesus Christ is the Mediator between himself and me, and that my soul is not under extreme anguish and disquiet. And while I walk in the light of the Lord, let me rejoice therein, but rejoice with trembling. Who knows what change a night or a day may bring forth!

CHAPTER X. My soul bursts asunder with weariness of being detained in the cords of natural life. I will therefore permit my complaints to vent themselves freely, be the issue what it will. I will speak fervently in the bitter anguish of my soul. 2. I will say to God, Do not condemn and punish me as a wicked man, but cause me to know for what sin or reason I am so peculiarly afflicted. 3. Is it either pleasant, profitable, or honourable to thee, or is it just and equal, that thou shouldst spoil me of all I had, and thus load me with tormenting troubles; or that with an enraged mind thou shouldst contemn the work of thine hands as good for nothing but to be a spectacle of misery? or that, by thy providential dispensations, thou shouldst appear to confirm the thoughts or encourage the practices of the wicked? 4–6. Are thy views of my conduct and state short-sighted, biased, or malignant? Are thy days so short that thou must punish me in this sudden and severe manner all at once? Are thy researches after truth tedious that thou shouldst thus by tortures attempt to force a confession of guilt from me? 7. Thou canst not but know that I am no hypocrite, and that if thou punish, none can deliver me from thy judgments. 8. By thy creating power I have been curiously and elaborately bound together with sinews; bound together in my whole frame: and wilt thou, as a raging lion, utterly tear me asunder and swallow me up? 9. Remember that thou, as my Potter, hast formed me out of the clay; and wilt thou, in this sudden and fearful manner, so quickly reduce me to dust by death? 10. Didst thou not, in the womb, purify my substance as milk, and curdle and compact the liquid matter of which my body was framed? 11. Didst thou not cover my inward parts with skin and flesh, and curiously fence and weave me together with bones and sinews? 12. Didst thou not grant me the entrance and continuance of life? And hath not thy providential care and kindness preserved me from dangers and death? 13. And, notwithstanding, hadst thou a secret purpose thus to afflict me?—I find, by experience, that it was then determined with thee, 14. That if I should sin, thou wouldst watch over me to punish me, without the least patience, pardon, or pity. 15. That if I should be wicked, fearful judgments should fall upon me; and though I should live holy and innocent, I should nevertheless be oppressed with trouble. I am full of confusion and shame on account of my uncommon circumstances; therefore look with pity on my inexpressible misery. 16. Shall my trouble still increase and exalt itself over me? Wilt thou follow me close with plagues, as a fierce lion hunteth his prey? Wilt thou, by repeated strokes of judgment, set me up as a distinguished spectacle of thy marvellous power and wrath to all around me? 17. Wilt thou bring fresh plagues upon me as witnesses of thy continued displeasure? Wilt thou still afflict me more and more? Shall nothing but diverse forms and multitudes of trouble assault me? 18. Why then didst thou bring me out of the womb at all? Why did I not die in the womb, without ever being seen on this wretched earth? 19. Or die in the birth, that I might have been carried from the womb to the grave? 20. Shall not the momentary duration of my life quickly cease? Shall I not then be allowed a short reprieve from trouble, 21, 22. Before I go to the dark region of the grave, where there is no orderly succession of day and night, summer and winter, labour and rest, but one perpetual night of gross darkness?

Ver. 2. ['Do not condemn me' thus to suffer under thine own hand, and then under the unjust accusations of my friends, without showing why these complicated calamities are sent, and without any divine interference or human sympathy for their relief. *C.*]

Ver. 10. [The whole process of human nutrition is by milk poured out as a fluid, and then consolidated as cheese. This is not merely true of the child sustained by the maternal aliment, but equally true through all the after-stages of life. For whatever food is received into the stomach there undergoes the first process of digestion, and is afterwards farther changed into chyle; whence by the lacteals—an innumerable system of absorbent vessels—it is carried into the thoracic duct in the form of milk; next it is commingled with the blood, which it thus serves to renew; and being in that form carried throughout the whole

17 Thou renewest thy [f]witnesses[4] against me, and increasest thine indignation upon me; changes[g] and war[5] *are* against me.

18 Wherefore[h] then hast thou brought me forth out of the womb? Oh that I had given up the ghost, and no eye had seen me!

19 I should have been as though I had not been; I should have been carried from the womb to the grave.

20 *Are*[i] not my days few? cease *then, and* let me alone, that I may take comfort a little,

21 Before I go *whence* I [k]shall not return,[6] *even* to the [l]land of darkness, and the shadow of death;

22 A land of darkness, as darkness *itself; and* of the shadow of death, without any order, and *where* the light *is* as darkness.

CHAPTER XI.

1 *Zophar sharply reproveth Job for justifying himself.* 7 *God's counsels are unsearchable.* 13 *The assured blessing of repentance.*

THEN answered Zophar the Naamathite, and said,

2 Should not the [a]multitude of words be answered? and should a man full of talk[1] be justified?

3 Should thy lies[2] make men hold their peace? [3] and when thou [b]mockest, shall no man make thee ashamed?

4 For thou hast said, [c]My doctrine *is* pure, and I [d]am clean in thine eyes.

5 But [e]O that God would speak, and open his lips against thee;

6 And that he would show thee the [f]secrets of wisdom, that *they are* double to that which is! [3] Know therefore that God [g]exacteth of thee *less* than thine iniquity *deserveth*.

A.M. cir. 2484.
B.C. cir. 1520.

f That is, *thy plagues*, ch.16.8;6.4.

4 *Witnesses*—weapons, troops.—*C.*

g Ps.73.14;34.19. Ac. 14.22. Jn.16.33. 2 Ti. 3. 12. Re.3.19. He.12.6.

5 Every change is but a new attack of calamity.—*C.*

h ch.3.11. Je. 15. 10; 20. 17, 18. Nu. 14. 2, 3. Ec.4.3;6.3–5.

i ch.7.6,16; 8.9; 14.1. Ps.103.16;39.5,13.

k ch.7.8–10. 2 Sa.12. 23. Ec.8.8.

6 Whence I shall not return to the relations and pursuits of this life.—*C.*

l ch.3.5,14–19. Ps.88. 6,12,18; 23. 4, with Ex. 10.21–23.

CHAP. XI.

a Ac.17.18. Ja. 1.19. Pr.10.19. Ec.5.7.

1 Heb. *a man of lips.*

2 Or, *devices.*

3 Bildad had accused Job of hypocrisy or profligacy (chap. 8. 13). Zophar surpasses him in uncharitableness, and rudely accuses him of lying; the charge of which is ordinarily most insulting and provoking, as it is the meanest and most cowardly of all the vices—the sin by which Satan blighted paradise—the sin by which he peoples the hopeless regions of darkness, Re. 22. 15. —*C.*

b ch. 6. 14, 15, 25, 26; 13.9; 17.2.

c ch.6.10, 30; 42.7, 8.

d ch.10.7; 9. 22; 34.5, 6; 35.2.

e ch. 9. 35, with xxxviii.–xli.

f Da.2.28. Ps. 25. 14. Ep. 3. 10. Mat. 13. 11. Ro.11.33, 34.

3 That is, doubly more than what is imagined possible; including not only all that we know, but all we have forgotten, together with those errors and secret faults that eluded our own discovery and comprehension. Ps.19.12.—*C.*

g Ezr.9.13. La.3.22, 33. ch.33.27. Ps.103.10.

A.M. cir. 2484.
B.C. cir. 1520.

h Ec.3.11. Is. 40.28. Ro.11.33. ch.26.14; 36. 26. 1 Co.2.9. Ep.3.18,19.

4 Heb. *the heights of heaven.*

i Ps.92.5; 147.5. Ro. 11.33. Ep.3.18,19.

k ch.12. 14. Re. 3. 7. Ps.41.8;76.7. De.32.30, 39. Ex.18.11.

5 Or, *make a change.*

l Heb. *who can turn him away?* ch. 9.4.12.

m Je.17.10. He.4.13. Re.2.23. Ps.10.14. Jn.2. 24,25.

n Heb. *empty.* Ps.62. 9; 73. 22; 92. 6; 94. 8. ch. 39.5; Je.2. 23,24. Ec.3. 18. Ro.2.21.

6 Will he accept the hollow-hearted person? or will the wild ass's colt assume the man?—*M. Good.* 'Wild ass's colt,' an Arabic description of a wild, intractable, and contumacious man.—*C.*

o ch.5.8; 22.21. 2 Ch. 12.14; 19.3. Ps. 143.6. 1 Sa.7.3.

p Is. 1. 15. Ps. 26.10; 66.18.

q Ja.4.8. Ps.24.4; 26. 8. 1 Ti.2.8.

r Je.4. 14; 13.27. Ps. 101.3.

s ch.22.26; 10.15. 1 Jn. 3.21, with Ge. 4. 5,6. 2 Co.1.12.

t Ge. 41. 51. Is. 54.4; 65.16. Jn.16.21. Pr.31.6, 7.

u Ps.37.6; 112.4. Mi. 7.9. Phl. 2. 15. Is. 58. 8, 10. Pr.4.18. Ca.6.10.

7 Heb. *shall arise above the noon-day.*

x Ps.3.5;4. 8; 127. 2. Le.26.5. Pr.3.24. Eze. 34.25.

8 Either *dig* in thy field peaceably during the six days of labour, and enjoy in safety the *rest* of the Sabbath; or *dig wells* for thy family and flocks, and be at rest, as Isaac at the well he had digged at Rehoboth, Ge. 26. 22. —*C.*

y Pr.19.6. Ps. 45. 12. Ge.26.26.

9 Heb. *entreat thy face.*

1 Shall seek thy friendship and protection, Ge. 21. 22; 26. 28.—*C.*

z ch.31.16. Ps. 69. 3, 23. Je. 14. 6. La. 4.17. De.28.65.

a Heb. *flight shall perish from them,* Am.2.14;9.1.

b ch.8.13;18.14. Je.2. 25. Eze.37.11. Pr.11.7.

2 Or, *a puff of breath.*

7 Canst thou by searching [h]find out God? canst thou find out the Almighty unto perfection?

8 *It is*[4] as high [i]as heaven; what canst thou do? deeper than hell; what canst thou know?

9 The measure thereof *is* longer than the earth, and broader than the sea.

10 If [k] he cut off,[5] and shut up, or gather together, then [l]who can hinder him?

11 For he [m]knoweth vain men: he seeth wickedness also; will he not then consider *it?*

12 For [n]vain man would be wise, though man be born *like* a wild ass's colt.[6]

13 If thou [o]prepare thine heart, and stretch out thine hands toward him;

14 If iniquity *be* [p]in thine hand, [q]put it far away, and let not wickedness [r]dwell in thy tabernacles.

15 For then shalt thou [s]lift up thy face without spot; yea, thou shalt be steadfast, and shalt not fear:

16 Because thou shalt [t]forget *thy* misery, *and* remember *it* as waters *that* pass away:

17 And[u] *thine* age shall be clearer than the noon-day;[7] thou shalt shine forth, thou shalt be as the morning.

18 And [x]thou shalt be secure, because there is hope; yea, thou shalt dig[8] *about thee, and* thou shalt take thy rest in safety.

19 Also thou shalt lie down, and none shall make *thee* afraid; yea, [y]many shall make [9]suit unto thee.[1]

20 But the eyes of the wicked [z]shall fail, and [a]they shall not escape, and [b]their hope *shall be as* the giving up of the ghost.[2]

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body, it supplies the necessary repairs or increase to bone, muscle, and every other part of the frame. *C.*]

Ver. 11. [The whole process of the growth of the human body is here described by a few graphic touches, which show an extent of anatomical and physiological knowledge that may well surprise the thoughtful student. The last clause is particularly striking:—'Thou hast woven me, intertwined me about with bones and sinews.' *P.*]

REFLECTIONS.—To be weary of life before God sends us our discharge, is to be unfaithful to the post which he hath given us to maintain. In suffering times we should inquire into their cause that we may answer their end; and chiefly plead for the removal of our sin and of the condemnation on account of it. But those who are awed by the majesty of God often attempt easing their mind in sinful resentments. And under extraordinary troubles it is hard to forbear impeaching the goodness or equity of God by sinful murmurings. The most humble prayers are often mingled with the most peevish and proud expostulations. Neither the views of his omniscient discernment of all our sins, nor the almighty power of his correcting hand, can awe our souls into quiet submission. Nothing but the largest supplies of grace can bridle the tongue in such a case. But when God hides himself as a Saviour his work as a Maker and Preserver should lead us to admiration and thankfulness. When he changes his way towards us, we are to believe that he has reasons hid for it in his heart, which will be shortly manifested. Alas! how sin stares the best of men in the face when God lays them under heavy troubles! Happy are they whose iniquities are pardoned, and in whom the fruit of afflictions is to take away the sin that procured them. But if sins be great, troubles heavy, life and its comforts short, death and its darkness near, let us give ourselves unto prayer. Every trouble is a call from God; and every moment of reprieve from death is an opportunity to prepare for it.

CHAPTER XI. Then Zophar the Naamathite replied, 2. Dost thou think to stop our mouths with a multitude of words, or by thy talkativeness to persuade us thou art innocent? 3. Must no one confute thy false allegations concerning thine own innocence or God's dispensations of providence? And when thou hast so insolently scoffed at God and thy friends, must none expose thee to shame, by pointing forth thy wickedness? 4. Wilt thou dare pretend to God himself that thou art quite pure and unspotted in thy principles and practice? 5. Truly my earnest wish is that he would fully and freely debate the cause with thee, and confute thy mistakes; 6. And that he would show thee the hidden methods of his providence, and reasons of his wise counsels, which infinitely transcend thy conceptions, and make thee to know that thou hast deserved far more affliction than has been laid upon thee. 7. Darest thou pretend, by thy inquiries, fully to know the secrets of his providence, or the reasons of his procedure! 8, 9. Thou mayest sooner measure the height of heaven, or fathom the depth of hell, and describe the surfaces and boundaries of the earth and sea. 10. If he attack a person or family, and shut them up in chains or nets of affliction, or bring them to his public tribunal, who can resist or refute him; or cause him to restore them to liberty? 11. For he knoweth the lovers of, and dealers in, falsehood and vanity. He exactly observes and understands what emptiness and wickedness takes place, however unimportant it appears to us, and thus hath reasons for inflicting trouble that men overlook. 12. Let then the dull and self-conceited pretender to knowledge, who just now spoke, be endued with solid wisdom; and let him who appears as rude and blockish as an ass be formed into a man of understanding. 13. If thou art truly wise, forbear disputing; and in the exercise of faith and hearty repentance, apply thyself to humble supplication. 14. Reform thyself and family from whatever wickedness thou hast indulged. 15. Thus shalt thou be quickly delivered from thy loathsome disease and lamentable condition, and be firmly established in holiness and happiness. 16. The greatness of thy prosperity shall make thee forget all thy present trouble as if it had never been. 17. The remainder of thy life shall be filled up with the most glorious and ever-increasing felicity. Thy present labour, under confounding trouble, shall issue in a fresh, clear, and pleasant morning of prosperity. 18. Thy mind shall be quiet and free from terrors, in the well-grounded confidence of God's favour and protection. Thou shalt dig thy wells of water, or intrench thyself for security, and nothing shall disturb thee or thine. 19. And whilst thou art in perfect peace, without anything to disquiet thee, many, even of the great, shall humbly court thy favour and friendship. 20. But wicked men shall never enjoy the happiness they desire or expect; their refuge from, help under, or escape out of misery is utterly perished. Their firmest hope of happiness is as the giving up of the ghost, a noisy puff of breath, all on a sudden leaving them miserable and desperate.

Ver. 15. [*Without spot.* Without consciousness of sin, which is as the spot of leprosy, Le. 13. 2, 4, 19; Ep. 5. 27; He. 9. 14. *C.*]

REFLECTIONS.—It is highly indecent and sinful to be abusive and passionate in religious controversy;

CHAPTER XII.

1 *Job maintaineth himself against his friends that reprove him.*
13 *He acknowledgeth the general doctrine of God's omnipotency.*

AND Job answered and said,
2 No doubt but ye *are* [a]the people, and wisdom shall die with you.

3 But[b] I have understanding[1] as well as you; I *am* not inferior to you:[2] yea, who knoweth not such things as these?[3]

4 I [c]*am as* one mocked of his neighbour, who calleth upon God, and he [d]answereth him:[4] the just upright *man is* [e]laughed to scorn.

5 He that is [f]ready to slip with *his* feet *is as* a lamp despised [g]in the thought of him that is at ease.

6 The[h] tabernacles of robbers prosper, and they that provoke God are secure; into whose hand God bringeth *abundantly*.

7 But[i] ask now the beasts, and they shall teach thee; and the fowls of the air, and they shall tell thee:

8 Or speak to the earth, and it shall teach thee; and the fishes of the sea shall declare unto thee.

9 Who knoweth not in all these that [k]the hand of the LORD hath wrought this?[5]

10 In[l] whose hand *is* the soul[m] of every living thing, and the breath of all mankind.[n]

11 Doth[o] not the ear try words; and the mouth[p] taste his meat?

12 With[q] the ancient *is* wisdom; and in length of days understanding.

A.M. cir. 2484
B.C. cir. 1520.

CHAP. XII.

a ch.11.12. Pr.28.11. 1 Co.4.8,10.
b ch.13.2. 2 Co.11. 5, 16;12.11.
1 Heb. *an heart.*
2 Heb. *I fall not lower than you.*
3 Heb. *with whom* are *not such as these?*
c ch. 16. 10, 20; 17. 6; 21.3;30.1. He.11.36. Ps. 55.12,13.
d Je.33.3. Ps. 91. 15. Mi.7.7.
4 I am as one derided of his friend: (thus) 'He calleth upon God, let him answer him.' — *Boothroyd.* And, thus translated, it is remarkable that they are very nearly the words of cruel mockery addressed to our Lord on the cross, Mat.27.39-43.—*C.*
e Pr.14.2. Mar.5.40.
f De.32.35. Ps.38.16, 17;94.18. Je.13.16.
g Ps.123.4. Lu.12.19.
h ch.21.7. Ps. 17, 10; 37. 1, 35; 73. 3, 12; 92. 7. Je.5.28;12.1-3. Hab.1. 3,4. Zec.11.5. Mal.3.15.
i Pr.6.6. Is.1.3. Je.8. 7. Ps. 19.1, 2. Ro. 1.20. Hab.2.13,14.
k He.1.10,13. Ro.11. 36. Col.1 16,17. Pr.16.4.
l Nu.16.22. Da.5.23. Ac. 17. 25, 28. Mat. 10. 28.
m Or, *life.*
n Heb. *all flesh of man.*
o ch.34.3;6.30. 1 Co. 10.15. Ps.94.9.
p Heb. *palate.*
q ch.8.8;32.6,7,9.
5 All the creatures of God manifest design, and hence Job infers there must be a designer. No one is so foolish as to conclude that a complicated machine was ever made by chance; and when it is seen performing its work with more than the precision of rationality, the conclusion is inevitable, that it was designed for that end. But the body of a beast, a fowl, or a fish is a far more curious and more complicated machine, and answers hundreds of purposes that no work of man could accomplish; the conclusion is again inevitable, that the several parts of the creature were designed for their several functions.—*C.*

A.M. cir. 2484
B.C. cir. 1520.

o God, ch.9. 4;36. 5; 37. 24. Ps.147. 5. Da. 2. 20. Is. 40. 12-29; 28. 29. Pr.8.14. Ja.1. 5.
p ch. 9. 12; ver. 10. Mal.1.4. Je.18.7. Is.22. 22. Ge.20. 18. Re. 3. 7. Ps.88.6,8.
1 Heb. *upon.*
q Ge.8.21,7. 11. Zec. 10.11. 1 Ki.17.1. Na. 1. 4. 2 Pe.3.5,6.
r See ver.13.
s Eze.14.9. Is.19.14. 2 Th.2.11. 1 Ki. 22. 22. Mat.24.24. Re.20.2,8.
t 2 Sa. 15. 31; 17. 14, 23. Is.19.12,13. 1 Co. 1. 19,20;3.19,20. ch. 5. 13, 14.
u Ps.2.3. Da.2.21.
2 Looseth the bond of their authority, and adjudges them to be led captive in a girdle, cord, or chain, examples of which may be seen in some ancient but well-preserved Egyptian sculptures. See Ps. 149.8.—*C.*
x Ps. 66. 11; 107. 10. Lu.17.8.
y 2 Sa.viii.x. Jos.xii. 1s.45.1.
z ch.32.9. Is.3.2-4. 2 Sa. 15. 31. Mat. 25. 28, 29. Zec.11.17.
3 Heb. *the lip of the faithful.*
a Ps.107. 40. Ac. 12. 23. Da.2.21,22.
4 Or, *looseth the girdle of the strong.*
b 2 Ki.6.10-12. Da.2. 22. Mat.10. 26. 1 Co. 2. 10,11;4.5. Ec.7.24.
c ch.34.22.
5 Examples of which may be seen in the wondrous manner in which murders have often been detected after the lapse of many years.—*C.*
d De.28.4,11. Ps.107. 38, 39.
e Ro.1.21. Ps. 107.4, 40. Ge.20.13. Is. 63.17. Jos. 2. 9. 1 Co. 1.19,20. Nu.14.33. Da.4.16,33.
f Ge.19.17. Is. 59.10. 2 Ki.6.18. De.28.29.

13 With[c] him *is* wisdom and strength, he hath counsel and understanding.

14 Behold, he [p]breaketh down, and it cannot be built again; he shutteth up[1] a man, and there can be no opening.

15 Behold, [q]he withholdeth the waters, and they dry up; also he sendeth them out, and they overturn the earth.

16 With[r] him *is* strength and wisdom; the [s]deceived and the deceiver *are* his.

17 He[t] leadeth counsellors away spoiled, and maketh the judges fools.

18 He [u]looseth the bond of kings,[2] and [x]girdeth their loins with a girdle.

19 He [y]leadeth princes away spoiled, and overthroweth the mighty.

20 He[z] removeth away the speech of the trusty,[3] and taketh away the understanding of the aged.

21 He[a] poureth contempt upon princes, and weakeneth the strength of the mighty.[4]

22 He [b]discovereth deep things out of darkness, and bringeth out to light the [c]shadow of death.[5]

23 He [d]increaseth the nations, and destroyeth them: he enlargeth the nations, and straiteneth them *again*.

24 He [e]taketh away the heart of the chief of the people of the earth, and causeth them to wander in a wilderness *where there is* no way.

25 They [f]grope in the dark without light,

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and cruel to deal harshly with them whose spirits the Lord has wounded. Harsh censures readily exceed the bounds of truth. Such as are forward in giving the lie to others are ordinarily too guilty of falsehood themselves; and none are more forward in making their appeals to God than they whose cause is bad. How little we know of God's unbounded excellencies, or of the mysteries of his wisdom and will! men often talk well concerning them to serve a bad purpose. But surely it is very unreasonable to complain under troubles, when we have not only a God of deep counsels and unsearchable perfections to deal with; but, in providence, have a mixture of undeserved mercy in the most severe afflictions we meet with. Men often proudly imagine they know much when they are amazingly ignorant: and the more ignorant they are, so are they the more unsettled and ungovernable. But in trouble there is need of a thorough reformation of ourselves and families. Yea, to have our nature changed, our heart lifted up to God in holy desires and self-dedication, and our practice rectified. And the most holy confidence towards God; holy composure in our own mind; comfortable reflection on troubles; and joyful expectation of peace, joy, and honour, attend upon sincere and gospel repentance. If God establish us we shall not fail; nor need we fear what all the powers of hell and earth can do against us. Though we may for a little suffer an eclipse, we shall at last, without spot, shine forth in the kingdom of our Father. If the anchor of our hope be fixed on the faithfulness of God, no storms can hurt or endanger our security.—But unavoidable misery awaits the impenitent; and if not before, the hope of the wicked always expires in death.

CHAPTER XII. To this Job replied, 2. No doubt you think yourselves the only men upon earth who understand divine things, by whose death all solid knowledge will be rooted out from the world. 3. But believe it, I, and even the weakest of mankind, understood all that you have said of God's infinite wisdom, power, and justice. 4. I am indeed insolently mocked by you, my fellow-professors, even while you promise me great prosperity in answer to my prayers. But it has been the common lot of upright men to be made the butts of derision by their wicked neighbours. 5. The best of men, when reduced to the point of perishing, are generally contemned and hissed at by those who wallow in worldly ease and affluence. 6. But it is certain that the most wicked and mischievous persons often prosper remarkably in this world. 7, 8. The beasts and fowls which they live upon, or are served by, can teach you pretenders to wisdom this: the earth, that affords them her plentiful and delicious fruits; and the fishes of the sea, which gratify their appetites, plainly manifest this. 9, 10. And even the most stupid of mankind must know that this is ordered by the providence of God, who is the Creator, Preserver, and Governor of both animals and men. 11, 12. Cannot our mind distinguish truth from falsehood as exactly as the palate can do sweet from bitter? And the older we grow the more wise we ought to become. 13. Much more with the eternal God is there wisdom to know all, and strength to do everything. He never mistakes in his conceptions, nor miscarries in his purposes. 14. Behold, he destroys cities, families, persons, and things; and none can restore them. He shuts up men in prisons or troubles, and none can bring them out. 15. At one time he withholds rain, or restrains the springs, and the waters dry up. Anon he sends forth the rains and fountains with unbridled liberty, and the torrents of water overturn the strongest banks. 16. Nor is his wisdom inferior to his power. The sin of the deceiver, and the sufferings of the deceived, are both ordered by him to his glory. 17. He defeats the projects of the wisest statesmen, and infatuates the ablest senators. 18. He deprives kings of their royal majesty and authority, and reduces them to slavery and imprisonment. 19. The most devout priests, or the noblest ministers of state, he renders captives; and overthrows the most powerful armies of warriors. 20. Eloquence, fidelity, and prudence, gained by long experience, are rendered quite unavailable for the protection of princes or kingdoms. 21. He renders the greatest princes contemptible, and the strongest persons or armies weak. 22. He brings to light the most secret plots; makes plain the mysteries of doctrine or providence; and advances such as were poor, obscure, condemned, or imprisoned, to liberty and glory, to honour and wealth. 23. At his pleasure he increases nations in number, power, wealth, and honour; and anon diminishes them by famine, war, and pestilence. He enlarges their boundaries, and anon shuts them up into corners. 24. Princes, magistrates, and others, he deprives of courage and wisdom; and throws them into such confusion that they know not which way to turn themselves. 25. Without either sense or success, they seek for ways to help themselves and their people out of trouble; but by his providential influence they are quite uncertain in their counsels, and doubtful what course to take.

Ver. 2. [*Wisdom shall die with you.* Were this a mere irony, as many interpreters assume, then would not Job immediately claim equal wisdom for himself (ver. 3), but plead comparative ignorance, to make the irony effective. But irony is not a figure for deep and poignant affliction. The phrase is not therefore irony, but a simple acknowledgment that his learned friends were wise, and would be accompanied with wisdom to the grave. *C.*]

Ver. 5. [*Ready to slip*—to fall through the exhaustion of losses and weight of troubles. *A lamp despised*—a lamp that is dying out, whose former light is ungratefully forgotten. *C.*]

Ver. 6. [*The tabernacles of robbers prosper.* Of this fact Job could furnish the evidence of the Sabean and Chaldean marauders on a small scale, and that of the most distinguished conquerors, who have been but robbers on a great scale. Witness Nebuchadnezzar in after-times robbing the very temple of God, 2 Ki. 25. 13–17. *C.*]

REFLECTIONS.—Nothing is more disgusting and offensive than proud boasting; and a high conceit of our own importance is extremely foolish and sinful; contempt is all that is ordinarily gained by it. It is but just to allow others a share of reason and wisdom as well as ourselves. But often they who riot in prosperity contemn and reproach the afflicted, especially if they be religious. And peevish minds are sometimes apt to take well-meant reproofs for ill-natured

and he maketh them to stagger[6] like *a* drunken *man.*

CHAPTER XIII.

1 Job reproveth his friends of false reasoning and partiality. 14 He professeth his confidence in God: 20 and entreateth to know his own sins, and God's purpose in afflicting him.

LO, mine[a] eye hath seen all *this;*[1] mine ear hath heard and understood it.

2 What[b] ye know, *the same* do I know also: I *am* not inferior unto you.

3 Surely I [c]would speak to the Almighty, and I desire to reason with God.[2]

4 But ye *are* [d]forgers of lies,[3] ye *are* all physicians of no value.

5 O [e]that ye would altogether hold your peace; and it should be your wisdom.

6 Hear[f] now my reasoning, and hearken to the pleadings of my lips.

7 Will ye speak wickedly for God? and talk deceitfully[h] for him?

8 Will ye [i]accept his person?[5] will ye contend for God?

9 Is it good that he should [j]search you out? or as one man mocketh another, do ye *so* [k]mock him?[6]

10 He will surely [l]reprove you, if ye do secretly accept persons.

11 Shall not his [m]excellency make you afraid? and his dread fall upon you?

12 Your[n] remembrances *are* like unto ashes,[7] your bodies to bodies of clay.

A.M. cir. 2484.
B.C. cir. 1520.

6 Heb. *wander,* Ps.107.27. Is.19.14; 24.20.

CHAP. XIII.

a ch.32.8,10. Ps. 78.3,4;37,35,36.

1 *All this*—all this scene of creation, and varied workings of providence, of which he had been discoursing from ver. 6 of the former chapter.—*C.*

b 2 Co.11.5,16,22,23; 12.11.ch.12.3.

c ch.11.5,9,34,35; 23.3-7; 31, 35. Is.1.18; 41.21;43.26. Mi.6.2,&c.

2 There was no presumption in this; for God invites his rational creatures to reason with him, Is. 1.18.—*C.*

d ch.42.7,8; 16, 21, 21.34; 11.3. 1 Ti.1.7. Zec. 11.17.

3 *Lies,* fallacies, sophisms.—*C.*

e Pr.17.28. Am.5.13. Ec.5.3.

f ch.6.14;33.1,3;34.2; 36.2. Pr.8.6,7.

g ch.17.5;32.21;36.4; 8.6,20. Is.66.5.

h 2 Co.4.2.

i Pr.24.23. Ju.6.31.

5 *Accept his person*—give a wrong judgment in his favour.—*C.*

j Je.17.10. Ps.139.23.

k 1 Sa.15.9,11. Ga.6.7. Ho.11.12.

6 As one man deceiveth another, can ye deceive him?—*C.*

l ch.42.7,8. Ps.50.21, 22;82.1,2. Ja.2.9. De.1.17.

m Or, *height of greatness,* ch.9.34;31.23. Ps.4.4. Je.5.22;10.7, 10.

n Pr.10.7. ch.4.7;18.17. Is.40.17. Ge.18.27.

7 *Your remembrances*—your recollections of ancient wisdom are as ashes, the fire, the light, the heat, extinct and ready to be swept out and scattered by the winds. Your *bodies*—your *systems* (the word *body* is often so applied), are as heaps of mud, shapeless, defiling, and unstable,—*C.*

A.M. cir. 2484.
B.C. cir. 1520.

8 Heb. *Be silent from me.*

o ch.7.19;16.10;10.1.

p Ec.4.5. Is.9.20; 49.26.

q Ju.12.3. 1 Sa. 19.5; 28.21. Ps.119.109.

r Ps.23.4; 138.7. Pr. 14.32. Ro.8.38,39.

s ch.23.4;27.5,6; 31.1 -37.

t Ex.15.2. Is. 12.1,2. Ps. 118. 5-29; 27. 1. ch. 19.25-27. Ho.14.3.

u Ps. 1.5. Is. 33. 14. Mat.24.51.

x ver.6;ch.33.1.

y Ec.12.9,ch.23.4.

z Is.45.24, 25. Ro. 8. 33,34. 2 Co.1.12. Ac.24. 16.

1 Not before God, for he had confessed his sins (ch.7. 20), but against the unjust and uncharitable accusations of his friends.—*C.*

a Ro.8.33,34. 1 Jn.3. 21. Is.50.8.

b ch.7.11; 32. 20. Ps. 39.2, 3; 32.3,4. Je.20.9.

c ch.9.34,35;33.7.

d ver.3;ch.23.3-7.

e Ps.39.10.

f ch.23.4; 38. 3; 40.4, 5;42.3-6.

g Ps. 139. 23; 19. 12. ch.36.8,9;40.4; 42.6; 34. 31,32;10.2. Jn.16.8,9.

h De.32.20. Ps.10.11; 13.1;22.1;88.14;102.2. Is.8.17. ch.29.2,3; 23.8, 9.

i ch.16. 9; 19. 11; 33. 10. La.3.10;2.5.

j Is.42.3; 64. 6. Mat. 12.20. Is.24.14.

k Ru.1.20. Ps. 88. 1-18;25.7.ch.20.11. Je.31. 19.

2 'Entailest upon me the iniquities of my youth.'—*Note,* The sins and faults of youth are generally excused under the softer names of thoughtlessness, folly, inexperience, and the like; but names will not change the nature of actions, and the sin of a youthful hour may darken the evening of the longest life. Lord, grant special grace to the young, for their knowledge is little, and their dangers are many! Ec.12.1. 2 Ti.2. 22.—*C.*

l ch.33.11. Ps.88.8.

13 Hold[8] your peace, [o]let me alone, that I may speak, and let come on me what *will.*

14 Wherefore [p]do I take my flesh in my teeth, and [q]put my life in mine hand?

15 Though[r] he slay me, yet will I trust in him; but I [s]will maintain mine own ways before him.

16 He also *shall be* [t]my salvation: for [u]an hypocrite shall not come before him.

17 Hear[x] diligently my speech, and my declaration with your ears.

18 Behold now, I have [y]ordered *my* cause; [z]I know that I shall be justified.[1]

19 Who[a] *is* he *that* will plead with me? [b]for now, if I hold my tongue, I shall give up the ghost.

20 Only[c] do not two *things* unto me; then will I not [d]hide myself from thee.

21 Withdraw[e] thine hand far from me; and let not thy dread make me afraid:

22 Then [f]call thou, and I will answer; or let me speak, and answer thou me.

23 How[g] many *are* mine iniquities and sins? make me to know my transgression and my sin.

24 Wherefore [h]hidest thou thy face, and [i]holdest me for thine enemy?

25 Wilt [j]thou break a leaf driven to and fro? and wilt thou pursue the dry stubble?

26 For [k]thou writest bitter things against me, and makest me to possess the iniquities of my youth.[2]

27 Thou [l]puttest my feet also in the stocks,

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reproaches. Mankind are rarely able to give things of importance a fair trial. Those who are fast running to hell often get large portions of earthly things, even the most delicate, in their way to it. But their abuse of God's creatures in this world shall witness against them, and will but increase their torments in the next. The most instructive lessons concerning God are afforded us in the volumes of creation and providence. But how mad and criminal is it to attempt contending with him who hath all possible excellence in possession, and doth according to his will in the armies of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth! No king so high but he can bring down; no politician so crafty or eloquent, but he can infatuate; no plot so well laid, but he can frustrate; no nation so mighty, but he can destroy with his nod; no general so brave, but he can intimidate. Be thou wise, my soul, to observe these things; so shalt thou understand the loving-kindness of the Lord.

CHAPTER XIII. Behold, all these things I know from my own experience and observation, or have learned from others; whereby you may see that I need none of your instructions on these points. 3. It is with God himself that I wish to debate my own integrity, and to answer his objections against it; 4. For ye are all forgers of false doctrines and accusations against me; you unskilfully and unfaithfully prescribe bad remedies for my affliction, and misapply good ones. 5, 6. It would be more agreeable to me, and show more wisdom in you, if ye would never speak a word more on the subject, but carefully listen to what I can say in my own behalf. 7. Doth God stand in need of your false doctrines, or your false accusations of me, contrary to the dictates of your own conscience, to justify his proceedings against me? 8. Hath he so little right on his side, that you must show him favour, and oblige him by wronging me? 9. Would it be for your honour or advantage that he should narrowly examine your discourses, and the springs and motives of them? Do ye think that he will be deceived with your flatteries and high pretences to piety? 10. No; he will certainly, fearfully, and openly chastise you for your hypocritical attempts to gratify him by condemning me. 11. Should not his infinite majesty, holiness, and awful justice make you afraid to deal unjustly, even on his behalf, or to speak rashly of his ways and counsels? 12. Ye yourselves are but mean worms, sprung out of the dust before him; and your boasted remonstrances on his behalf, and your bulwarks of arguments, are worthless and weak, as heaps of dirt or clay. 13. Keep silence therefore, and do not interrupt my speech; let me but speak out my mind, be the penal issue of it what it will. 14. I am so conscious of my integrity, that I must wonder why I suffer such enraging miseries, and am exposed to such evils; and I could risk all danger to obtain a thorough reasoning with God. 15. Lo! should he utterly cut me off, and not leave me the least glimmering of hope, I would, to the last gasp, maintain mine integrity. 16. Nay, I am confident that he himself, with whom no hypocrite dare lodge his appeal, will in due time vindicate me, preserve me in or deliver me from trouble; and save me with an everlasting salvation. 17, 18. Hear me then with care and attention: I have formed a process against myself, and digested what I have to say for myself; and I know that, in the issue, I shall be cleared from every charge of hypocrisy, and manifested a righteous person. 19. What impartial person dare charge me with hypocrisy, or can prove his point? If he could, I should be silent, die with shame, and be strangled with grief. But when it is otherwise, it is death to me to neglect my own just vindication. 20-22. Do thou, great Judge, remove thy oppressing rod from off me, and let not the overwhelming awe of thy majesty terrify me: then will I, in the most bold and free manner, debate my cause with thee. 23. What, and how many, O God, are those heinous sins which require such grievous punishments? Or if I am thus afflicted for some particular crime, cause me to know it. 24. Why shouldest thou in anger thus withhold thy favours and comforts? Why shouldest thou hold and treat me as an enemy to thee? 25. How canst thou find in thy heart so violently to toss and grievously persecute me, who am so mean, weak, and contemptible in thy sight? And what honour canst thou acquire by it? 26. Thou passest the most severe sentence against me; and by afflicting me with the most tormenting troubles, bringest to my mind, and punishest me for, the crimes which were committed before I well knew what I did. 27. Thy fearful judgments compass me in so close and tormenting a manner that I cannot escape. They follow me at the very heels; the tokens of thy wrath are engraven on the very soles of my feet. 28. And under these my frail carcass gradually rots into death.

Ver. 1. [*'This'* is not in the original, and the sense would be better expressed by its omission: 'Lo, mine eye hath seen all,' *i.e.* all that you have seen. My knowledge is as extensive as yours, consequently my judgments and views are deserving of as much credit as yours. *P.*]

Ver. 7. [*Wickedly*—wrongfully accusing me with the view of honouring him. *Deceitfully*—fallaciously, sophistically. *C.*]

Ver. 12. [Delitzsch translates as follows:—'Your memorable words are proverbs of dust, your strongholds are become strongholds of clay.' The meaning is that their proverbs have no bearing on the questions at issue, and are therefore as ashes; their 'strongholds,' or 'choice arguments,' are weak and worthless as ramparts of clay. *P.*]

Ver. 14. [Job may literally have taken his 'flesh in his teeth' to alleviate some torturing pain, as in the mercy of God pressure sometimes affords relief. *Put my life in my hand*—freely offering it back to the Giver, longing and praying for death. All this is no want of reliance upon God, no wish to escape his scrutiny and judgment; for though he slay me, yet will I trust in him. *C.*——'Wherefore should I bear my flesh in my teeth? I take my life in my hands:' *i.e.* Wherefore should I be intent on the preservation of my life, as a wild beast on the preservation of its prey, by carrying it away between its teeth? I will calmly submit to whatever danger comes, even to death itself. *P.*]

Ver. 27. [*Thou puttest my feet also in the stocks.* Of what kind they were is not known. From the following reference to paths, they were most probably a species of clog locked on the foot, and used to prevent a slave or prisoner from escaping.—*Settest a print upon the heels of my feet.* The allusion is very obscure; but if

and [m]lookest[3] narrowly unto all my paths; thou settest a print upon the heels[4] of my feet.

28 And[n] he, as a rotten thing, consumeth, as a garment that is moth-eaten.

CHAPTER XIV.

1 *Job entreateth God for favour, by the shortness of life, and certainty of death.* 7 *Though life once lost be irrecoverable, yet he waiteth for his change.* 18 *By sin the creature is subject to corruption.*

MAN[1] *that is* born of a woman *is* [a]of few days,[2] and full of trouble.

2 He[b] cometh forth like a flower, and is cut down: he [c]fleeth also as a shadow, and continueth not.

3 And dost thou [d]open thine eyes upon such an one, and bringest me into judgment with thee?

4 Who[3] can[e] bring a clean *thing* out of an unclean? not one.

5 Seeing [f]his days *are* determined, the number of his months *are* with thee; thou hast appointed[g] his bounds that he cannot pass.

6 Turn[h] from him, that he may rest,[4] till he shall accomplish, as an hireling, his day.

7 For there is [i]hope of a tree, if it be cut down, that it will sprout again, and that the tender branch thereof will not cease.

8 Though the root thereof wax old in the earth, and the stock thereof die in the ground;

9 *Yet* through the scent[6] of water it will bud, and bring forth boughs like a plant.

10 But man dieth, and wasteth away;[7] yea, man giveth up the ghost, and [j]where *is* he?[8]

A.M. cir. 2484
B.C. cir. 1520.

m Ps.130.3. ch.10.6. Zep.1.12.
3 Heb. *observest.*
4 Heb. *roots.*
n Ps.39.11.Ho.5.12.

CHAP. XIV.

1 This chapter should begin with the last verse of the preceding. 'And he, as a rotten thing, consumeth as a garment that is moth-eaten. Man that is born of a woman is of few days and full of trouble.' A melancholy history, but needful to admonish youth, thoughtless of death and of eternity, and to shake that confidence in health, and humble that pride of life, which betray so many to forget God. —*C.*

a Ge.47.9. Ps.90.5,6, 9.ch.7.1;10.20.Ec.2.23. Pr.27.1.
2 Heb. *short of days.*
b ch.8.9. Ps. 102. 11; 103.15; 144.4. Is.40.6. 1 Pe.1.24. Ja.1.10.
c ch.7.6,7;8. 9;9. 25, 26. Ja.4.14. 1 Co.7.31. 1 Jn.2.17.
d ch.7. 17, 18; 13. 27. Ps.143.2;144.3.
3 Heb. *who will give?*
e Ge.5.3. Ps. 51. 2, 5, 10. Jn.3.6. Ro.5.12. Ep. 2.3. Mat.7.16–18. ch.25. 4;15.14.
f ch.7.1. Ps.39.4;89. 46,47. He.9.27.
g ver.10.
h ch.7.1–3,16,19; 10. 20. Ps.39.13. Is.57.2.
4 Heb. *cease.*
i Ec.1.4,5.
6 Moisture coming near it.
7 Heb. *is weakened* or *cut off.*
j ch.7.7–10;19.26. Ps. 37.36.
8 Expressing neither ignorance nor doubt of immortality or the resurrection (see ch. 19. 25), but the certainty of that separation which has no hope of reunion upon earth.—*C.*

A.M. cir. 2484
B.C. cir. 1520.

k ch.30. 23. Is. 57. 2. Ec.12.5, 7. ver. 13. Ps. 49.14.
l Ps.102,26;89.29. Is. 51.6;65.17; 66.22. Ac.3. 21. Re.20.11;21.1. 2 Pe. 3.7.10.
m ch.3.13. Je. 51.39. Da.12.2.
9 Death in the eyes of Job is but a *sleep.* Now, in sleep the bodily senses only are affected: the mind, the spirit, is as lively, often more lively, than in waking hours. So, in the sleep of the grave, 'the dust returns to the earth as it was, the spirit unto God who gave it.' Ec.12.7. See 2 Co.5.6,8.—*C.*
n Is.57.2; 26. 20. ch. 3.13–19.
o Ac.17.31. Jn. 5. 28. ver.14.
p Da.12.2. Is. 26. 19. Jn.5.28. Ac.26. 8. ch.9. 25,26. 1 Th.4.14–16.
1 The days of my warfare, the appointed time during which a soldier is engaged, 1 Ti. 6. 12. *Change*, renovation, as of a tree springing from the roots when the trunk is cut down (ver. 7), or of grass growing after it has been mown, Ps. 90. 5, 6.—*C.*
q Ps. 16. 10; 50. 4, 5. Is. 26. 10. 1 Co.15.42–44, 51–54. Phi. 3. 21. Jn. 5. 28;14.2,3;17.24. 1 Th.4. 16.
r ch.13.22. Ps. 50. 4, 5.
s ch.10.3,8;13.27; 31. 4;14.21. Ps.56.6; 139.1–4. Pr.5.21.
t De. 32. 34. Ho. 13. 12. ch.13.26;10.6,14; 21. 19;20.27. Ps.69.27.
2 Heb. *fadeth.*
3 Heb. *overflowest.*
u Je.17.6. Lu. 12.19, 20. ch.11.20.
x Ex.15.3–12. Re.17. 14. Lu.8.8. Ps.37.35,36.
y Ec.12.3–7. Ps.90.3 –7. ch.30.23.
z Ec.9.5. Is.63.16.
a ch.19.26. Ps.49.14.
b Pr.14 32. Lu.16.23. Mat.8.12;22.13;24.51.

11 *As* the waters fail from the sea, and the flood decayeth and drieth up;

12 So man [k]lieth down, and riseth not: [l]till the heavens *be* no more, they shall not awake, nor be raised out of their [m]sleep.[9]

13 Oh that thou wouldest [n]hide me in the grave, that thou wouldest keep me secret, until thy wrath be past; that thou wouldest [o]appoint me a set time, and remember me!

14 If a man die, [p]shall he live *again?* all the days of my appointed time[1] will I wait till my [q]change come.

15 Thou shalt [r]call, and I will answer thee: thou wilt have a desire to the work of thine hands.

16 For now [s]thou numberest my steps: dost thou not watch over my sin?

17 My transgression *is* [t]sealed up in a bag, and thou sewest up mine iniquity.

18 And surely the mountain falling cometh to nought;[2] and the rock is removed out of his place.

19 The waters wear the stones: thou [3]washest away the things which grow *out* of the dust of the earth; and thou destroyest the [u]hope of man.

20 Thou [x]prevailest for ever against him, and he passeth: thou [y]changest his countenance, and sendest him away.

21 His sons come to honour, and he [z]knoweth *it* not; and they are brought low, but he perceiveth *it* not of them.

22 But his [a]flesh upon him shall have pain, and [b]his soul within him shall mourn.

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the stocks were, as we have supposed, *clogs*, the allusion may be to some peculiar mark upon the heel, whereby a runaway culprit might be distinguished and traced. *C.*]

REFLECTIONS.—Hot disputants generally magnify themselves and undervalue their opponents; and too seldom do they adhere to truth with proper exactness. There is great need then to pray that the Lord would mortify our pride, and keep us from the way of lying; and so far as is for his glory, keep us out of temptation. Deliberate lying is of all things most infamous. But what insignificant physicians are all but Christ to a sin-sick or wrath-sick soul! It is singularly criminal to manage the cause of God in a wicked and deceitful manner. What men call pious frauds are with God impious cheats; and devout persecutions are but horrid profanations of his name. Strict will be the scrutiny, and severe the rebukes of God, with respect to those found guilty of these things! No good intentions, no pious pretence, will avail at his awful bar. Let us then stand in awe of his perfections. Never let us, who are so mean and mortal, dare to contemn or trample on our neighbour. Never let us dare to exhibit weak and carnal remonstrances on God's behalf. But how supporting is it under trouble to have the testimony of a good conscience! and it is relieving to get our minds vented in kindly complaints. It is glorious, in the extremity of trouble, to be strong in the faith, giving glory to God, and coming boldly to his throne of grace, to ask mercy, and obtain grace to help us in the time of need. But how awful is it to find the greatest saints mingling their passions with their prayers! Lord, what is man, even in his best estate, if left to himself! And what a hell on earth sin sometimes forms for even the children of God! Sins long before committed fall with an awful weight on their conscience, and cause them to roar through disquiet of spirit. If then I find myself deserted of God; if I find my sins of youth remembered by him, and my present miscarriages strictly animadverted upon; if I find myself wasting away under his heavy hand, let me never murmur at his dispensations. Let me, holding fast his promise, believe him to be my friend, even when he puts on the appearance of an enemy. Let me firmly expect the performance of his promises, even when all the ways leading to it are seemingly shut up. Let me rejoice in the Lord when he hath left me nothing else; and in dying moments let me derive from him my ever-living consolation.

CHAPTER XIV. Man that is born of a poor, weak, frail woman, through whom he derives guilt, curses, corruptions, and infirmities, is of few days, and so surfeited with troubles that he needs pity rather than a violent hand to cut him off. 2. He makes a sparkling and fair show for a few days or hours, and then is cut down by an untimely death, or gradually, and without substantial happiness, posts through age into the eternal state. 3. And wilt thou, O God, debase thyself to take notice of, frown on, or contend with such an insignificant creature, or to hale to thy tribunal and execute strict justice upon me! 4. How is it possible for such as are sinfully corrupted themselves to produce innocent children! Why then should I, who am by nature no worse than others, be so peculiarly punished? 5, 6. Since the period of every man's life is unalterably fixed by thy purpose and providence, why shouldest thou now torment, and not let me alone, till I have contentedly accomplished my appointed service, and obtained the wished-for evening of death? 7–12. And the rather since there is no hope that men once dead will revive into life like the stumps of old trees in a well-watered soil; but will lie crumbled into dust, and quite insensible, till the last day. 13. O that thou wouldest hide me in the state of the dead, and cover me with a vail, till this storm of thy wrath blow over! or set some limit of time and degree to thy wrath, and in pity remember me! 14. Then, however impossible it be for men to rise from the dead before the last day, I should patiently, all the days of my troublesome warfare, wait for my dying hour; and no less patiently wait for my glorious change at the resurrection. 15. Then, in love to thy poor creature, thou shouldest by death call me to thy judgment-seat, and I should readily come: and at the resurrection thou shalt, in love to me, call me up from the grave, and I will gladly obey. 16. But now thou wrathfully observest all the steps of my life, and, as it were, greedily markest the smallest trips of my conduct in order to punish them. 17. The least of my sins of infirmity is as carefully preserved in thy remembrance against me as if it were a precious treasure; and thou huntest after forged calumnies to add to my sin and punish me for it. 18, 19. But there is no more hope of men's recovery from death, or of me from this calamity, than that fallen mountains should raise themselves up, or removed rocks resume their place, or worn stones should grow again; or that which is carried away by a flood should be brought back and the devastations repaired. 20. None can resist thy deadly stroke, but must pass into eternity whenever thou requirest. Thou wrathfully changest his countenance, spoilest his beauty, and expellest him as a leper from thy camp on earth. 21. And then whatever glory, power, or honour, or whatever debasement, disgrace, or misery, his posterity meet with, he neither knows nor regards it. 22. But his body, after pains in death, shall corrupt in the grave; and his soul, imbittered in death, often removes to an eternal anguish in hell.

Ver. 4. [As water cannot by its own gravity rise higher than its fountainhead, neither can a descendant of Adam and Eve become by their own efforts better than they; and they, alas! were ungrateful rebels. Blessed be his name who, while we were yet enemies, hath reconciled us by the death of his Son, Ro. 5. 10. *C.*]

Ver. 5. ['Job had before deplored his miserable state by nature, ch. 3. 1, and he here acknowledges himself to have been conceived and born in sin, cf. Ps. 51. 5; and he pleads the corruption of human nature, which is a consequence of the fall of man, as a reason for clemency on the part of God. It is remarkable that God himself after the flood had suggested that plea, as is recorded in Genesis' (*Wordsworth*). *P.*]

Ver. 9. [*Scent.* Literally, *odour* of water. The Arabs apply the word to any exhalation, whether aromatic or vaporous. *C.*]

Ver. 12. [There is a prophecy implied in this declar-

CHAPTER XV.

1 *Eliphaz reproveth Job of impiety in justifying himself.* 17 *He proveth from tradition the disquietude of wicked men.*

THEN answered Eliphaz the Temanite, and said,

2 Should[a] a wise man utter vain knowledge,[1] and fill his belly with the east wind?[2]

3 Should he reason with [b]unprofitable talk? or with speeches wherewith he can do no good?

4 Yea, [c]thou castest off fear, and restrainest prayer[3] before God.[4]

5 For thy mouth [d]uttereth thine iniquity, and thou choosest the tongue of the crafty.

6 Thine own mouth [e]condemneth thee, and not I; yea, thine own lips testify against thee.

7 *Art* thou [f]the first man *that* was born? or wast thou made before the hills?

8 Hast[g] thou heard the secret of God? and dost thou restrain wisdom to thyself?

9 What [h]knowest thou that we know not? *what* understandest thou, which *is* not in us?

10 With us *are* both [i]the grey-headed and very aged men, much elder than thy father.

11 *Are* the [k]consolations of God small with thee? is there any [l]secret thing with thee?[5]

A.M. cir. 2484. B.C. cir. 1520.

CHAP. XV.

a ch.13.2; 6.26; 11.2, 3.Ho.12.1.

1 Heb. *knowledge of wind.*

2 Fill his 'bosom' with the east wind; the deadly *simoom*, or tempestuous *euroclydon*, Ac. 27.14.—*C.*

b Col.4.6.Mat.12.36, 37.1 Ti.1.6,7;6.4,5.

c Heb. *thou makest void*, Ps.36.1.ch.27.10. 1 Pe.3.7. Jude 16, with Ec.12.13.ver.25,26.

3 Or, *speech.*

4 'Repressest humiliation' (*M. Good*), by denying that guilt, the acknowledgment of which must bring you to the throne of grace.—*C.*

d Heb. *teacheth*, ch. 9. 22-24; 12.4,6. Pr. 15. 12.Ja.1.26.

e Mat.26. 65. Lu.19. 22.ch.9.20. Ja.5.45.

f Ge.2.7. Ps.90.2. Pr. 8.25.

g Ro.11.34. Je.23.18. ch.12.23; 13.5, 6. 1 Co.2. 11.

h ch.12.3;13.2;36.3.

i ch. 8. 8-10; 32.6-9. De.32.7. He.5.12.

k ch. 5. 8-26; 11. 13-19.

l 1 Ki.22.24.ver.9.

5 Any *secret* principle, possession, or hope, that you can substitute for the 'consolations of God?' and whereby your heart carries you away (ver. 12) from listening to our admonitions, and confessing your guilt before God?'—*C.*

A.M. cir. 2484. B.C. cir. 1520.

m ch.17.2,4. Ja.1.14, 15.Pr.6.12,14,17,18.

n Ro.8.7,8. Zec. 11. 8.Pr.19.3. Mal.3.13.

o ch.9.22; 10. 3; 12.6; 13.22-27.

p 1 Ki. 8. 46. 2 Ch. 6. 36.ch.14.4;25.4. Ps. 14. 3;51.5.Pr.20.9.1 Jn.1.8, 10.Ep.2.3.

q ch.4.18;25.5.

6 In his holy ones, his ministering spirits. See note on ch. 4.18.—*C.*

r Ps.14.3,4. Tit. 3.3. Ep.2.1-3. Ro. 1.28-30; 8.7;3.10-18.

7 'How much *less*, then, abominableand corrupt man' (*M. Good*), 'who drinketh,' &c., with eagerness in his heart, and whose thirst is, in many cases, but increased by indulgence!—*C.*

s ch. 20.12; 34. 7.Ps. 53.1-4.Pr.19.28.2 Pe.2. 22.

t ch.5.27;13.5,6.

u ch.8.8. Ps. 44. 1, 2; 78.2-8.Ge.18.19. Is.38. 19.

x De.32.8.

y Joel 3.17. ch. 1.15, 17.

8 'No stranger,' no predatory invader, as the Sabeans and Chaldeans—an ungenerous allusion to the losses of property which Job had so lately sustained.—*C.*

z ch.36.16. 1 Ti. 6. 9, 10.Ps.7.14. Ja. 1. 14,15. Ec.9.3.

a Ps.90.12.

9 'And a reckoning of years is laid up for the oppressor.' —*M. Good.*

b Heb. *a sound of fears*, Le.26.36. Pr. 1. 26.ch.31.23.

12 Why doth thine [m]heart carry thee away? and what do thine eyes wink at,

13 That thou [n]turnest thy spirit against God, and lettest [o]*such* words go out of thy mouth?

14 What[p] *is* man, that he should be clean; and *he which is* born of a woman, that he should be righteous?

15 Behold,[q] he putteth no trust in his [6]saints; yea, the heavens are not clean in his sight:

16 How[r] much more abominable and filthy *is* man,[7] which [s]drinketh iniquity like water?

17 I will [t]show thee, hear me; and that *which* I have seen I will declare;

18 Which wise men have told [u]from their fathers, and have not hid *it:*

19 Unto [x]whom alone the earth was given, and [y]no stranger passed among them.[8]

20 The wicked man [z]travaileth with pain all *his* days, and the [a]number of years is hidden to the oppressor.[9]

21 A[b] dreadful sound *is* in his ears: [c]in prosperity the destroyer shall come upon him.

22 He [d]believeth not that he shall return out of darkness, and he is waited for of the sword.

c 1 Th.5.3.Ps.73.18-20.ch.1.13-19.Ex.vii.-xiv.Is.37.36. 10.Ps.55.15,23.De.28.66,67.

d 2 Ki.6.33.Mat.27.5.Re.13.

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ation. 'They shall not awake *till the heavens be no more;*' consequently when the heavens do pass away they shall awake, there will be a general resurrection. *P.*]

Ver. 17. [A reference to the eastern method of sewing up and sealing purses of money, which pass current without opening, either for purchases or payment of debts. See Capper's *Passage to India. C.*]

Ver. 22. [A melancholy picture of life, a sore disease without human remedy. But, 'blessed are they that (rightly) mourn, for they shall be comforted.' 'The sorrow of the world worketh death; but godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation,' 2 Co. 7. 10. *C.*]

REFLECTIONS.—If human life be so short, so sinful, and so wretched; if death and an awful eternity be so near; why should any be proud! Why unconcerned about spiritual, about eternal happiness! Why not live on that gracious God who hath a feeling of our infirmities; and look and long for that rest which remaineth for the people of God! Awful and awakening, though comfortable and heart-composing, are believing views of death and of the resurrection from the dead: and happy is the thought that while my body, as precious dust, sleeps in Jesus' arms of kindly care, my soul shall retire to sit with him on his throne, and there wait till my great, my last change come! If grace has changed my heart, death hath changed its nature to me: and the hope of a glorious resurrection is enough to support me under every human trouble. Everything around admonishes me of death: and nothing can resist it when God gives it the commission. Sharp are its pains and strange is the change it makes! It separates the chiefest friends! In view of it, to render me always content, let me maintain kind thoughts of God and a deep sense of my sin. And at last let it find me weaned from this perishing world, disengaged from all but a God in Christ; and singing, *O death, where is thy sting! O grave, where is thy victory!*

CHAPTER XV. Filled with indignation at the contempt which Job had discovered for him and his friends, Eliphaz replied, 2. Shouldest thou, who pretendest to wisdom, presume to throw forth such unsubstantial and boisterous nonsense; or to satisfy thy own conscience with such pernicious fancies? 3. Shouldest thou, instead of solid arguments, pour forth unprofitable wranglings? 4. Nay, shouldest thou cast off, and break through, all reverential regard to God, and refuse to pour forth thy humble complaints and prayers before him; and even tempt others to do the like? 5. Thy tongue proclaims the wickedness of thy heart, even while, by pretences of respect to God, thou attemptest to cover thy impious principles and practices. 6. I need produce no evidence of thy impiety; thy own words sufficiently manifest and prove it. 7. Wast thou formed before every other creature that thou pretendest to be wiser and better than other men? 8. Hast thou been acquainted with the most secret counsels and mysteries of God that thou shouldest engross all wisdom to thyself? 9. What secrets hast thou learned that we do not fully comprehend? 10. Among us, and on our side in this debate, we have the most aged and experienced men. 11. Darest thou to contemn the divine admonitions and comforting promises which we have suggested, and undervalue our kind and consoling discourses, as if thou knewest some better way of comfort? 12. Why do thy inward lusts thus violently transport thee into such pride, fury, and scornful contempt, 13. That thou shouldest dare to rage against the Most High, and insolently arraign the equity of his providence? 14. Can the corrupted child of a sinful parent be innocent or righteous before an infinitely holy God? 15, 16. When the loftiest angels are not without their mutability and comparative imperfections, how inexpressibly and universally abominable must the man be who, with greediness and delight, commits the most criminal impieties? 17-19. Listen carefully while I clearly declare and demonstrate unto thee what I myself have observed, and which the wisest, most powerful, and wealthy princes of former ages have observed, professed, or believed, and informed their children of. 20. The wicked tyrant is never free from inward torment; he lives in continual dread of disasters, death, and damnation, never knowing how soon they may overtake him. 21. Consciousness of guilt keeps him in perpetual terror of approaching mischiefs. And never is the destroyer more ready to attack him than when he is in the height of his prosperity. 22. In trouble he despairs of deliverance; in the night he dreads being killed before morning; everywhere he fears; and is indeed exposed to the most certain and sudden destruction. 23. In the most destitute and vagabond manner he is obliged to wander for bread. He finds, by experience, that terrible and inevitable ruin is just ready to seize him. 24. Straitening distress and anguish shall terrify him; they shall quickly rush on and prevail against him, as a strong and furious army commanded by a valiant prince: 25. As the punishment of his daring impiety, because he defied and set himself in opposition to the Almighty. 26. Daring to sin in the most insolent and presumptuous manner, even amidst the tokens of the divine indignation, inflicted or impending; 27. Because, grown rich, powerful, and successful, his only care is to pamper himself, and wallow in ease and luxury; 28. Dwelling in cities and stately houses, from whence he had driven, or murdered, the righteous proprietors; and which, by the curse of God, for his sake shall be quickly reduced to heaps of ruins, and he be obliged to shift for himself in the most miserable manner. 29. The riches and glory which he hath gotten by violence and oppression shall neither be lasting, complete, nor firmly rooted. 30. Having once entered into terrible and confounding troubles he shall never get out of them. The lightning, like flames of God's wrath, shall destroy his flourishing family and substance; and he himself shall be ruined and driven to hell by the threatened judgments of God, amidst his proud boasting. 31. Let therefore no one who is seduced to wicked or carnal security, trust in the uncertain profits, pleasures, or honours of this world; for vexations, losses, disappointments, and troubles shall be all he will get by them. 32, 33. These shall come upon him far sooner than he thinks. His riches, hopes, or children shall scarcely make their appearance, when, blasted by the justice of God, they shall all be reduced to ruin. 34. Thus suddenly and fearfully shall the stock and numerous family of hypocrites be utterly destroyed; and some terrible judgment of God shall consume the house built up by or stored with ill-gotten goods. 35. With no small pains such wicked men plot and practise mischief against others; but in the issue it usually brings ruin upon themselves.

Ver. 10. [The argument from experience is a good one; that from mere age is nothing. To give experience weight, there must be, (1) Capacity to observe; (2) Right disposition of heart towards God and man; (3) Light of truth, light of the Spirit (1 Jn. 5. 6) to guide; (4) Memory accurately to recollect, 1 Co. 15. 21; and (5) Sound judgment to compare and decide, 2 Tim. 5. 7. Truly such experience is a glorious guide to the possessor and to others; but all other experience, however lengthened, is but that of a blind man with colours—study without discovery, and words without meaning to him that utters them. *C.*]

Ver. 20. [From ver. 20 to the end of the chapter the speaker appears to be reciting the choice sayings of the sages of antiquity. This speech, therefore, is deserving of special note. It affords a most interesting view of the philosophy, morality, and theology of remote antiquity. There is a depth of thought, a force of truth, and terseness and beauty of expression in these words which give a high idea of Job's Arab forefathers. *P.*]

Ver. 28. [*Desolate cities.* God, who in his providential judgments has smitten the proud sinner, makes

23 He [e]wandereth abroad for bread, *saying,* Where *is it?* he [f]knoweth that the day of darkness is ready at his hand.

24 Trouble[g] and anguish shall make him afraid; they shall prevail against him, as a king ready to the battle.

25 For he [h]stretcheth out his hand against God, [i]and strengtheneth himself against the Almighty.

26 He [k]runneth upon him, *even* on *his* neck, upon the thick bosses of his bucklers;[1]

27 Because he [l]covereth his face with his fatness, and maketh collops of fat on *his* flanks.

28 And he dwelleth in [m]desolate cities, *and* in houses which no man inhabiteth, which are ready to become heaps.

29 He [n]shall not be rich, neither shall his substance continue, neither shall he prolong the perfection thereof upon the earth.[2]

30 He [o]shall not depart out of darkness: the flame shall dry up his branches, and [p]by the breath of his mouth[3] shall he go away.

A.M. cir. 2484.
B.C. cir. 1520.

e Ge.4.12. Ps. 59.15; 109.10.
f He.10.27. Is.33.14.
g ch. 18. 5-20, with Ps.22.1-21;37.1-10; 88. 1-18. Ro.2.8,9.
h Mal. 3. 13. Le. 26. 14,15,21,23. Ro. 8. 7,8. Is.27.4;28.15,22.
i ch.9.4.
k Ex.5.2,3. Is.37.4,6, 29. Ps. 73.8,9. 2 Ch.28. 22.
1 Calmet, Clarke, and Good think God is described as assailing the presumptuous sinner; Poole, Henry, Scott, &c., think the sinner is described as warring against God. On attentive consideration we agree with the former view, adopting the translation of Good, 'He shall press upon him at the neck, through the mailed bosses of his bucklers.' See ch.16.14.—*C.*
l De.32.15-18. Ps.17. 10;78.31;73.7. Je.46.21. Am.4.1. Pr.1.32.
m Ps. 73. 18-20. ch. 3.14;5.3. Mi. 7. 13. Je.17. 5,6. Zec. 5.4. Pr. 3.33.
n ch.20.22. Ps.73.18-20.1 Th.5.3.1 Ti.6.9,10.
2 The result of the sinful course of conduct begins to be indicated in this verse. Because he has acted thus, 'he shall not be rich,' &c.—*P.*
o Mat. 8. 12; 22. 13; 25.41,46;5.1. 2 Th.1.8,9.
p Is. 11.30,33. 2 Th. 2.8. Re.19.15.ch.4.9.
3 Of whose mouth?

A.M. cir. 2484.
B.C. cir. 1520.

of God's, or the sinner's? Of the sinner's; as if he had said, As his breath goes forth, is commingled in the air, and seen no more, so speedily and so irrecoverably is the sinner gone, Ps. 104.29;146.4.—*C.*
q Pr.11.4. Ec.1.2,14; 12.8. Jonah 2.8. Is.59.4.
r ch.20.4-29;4.8. Pr. 22.8. Ho.8.7. Ga.6.7,8.
s Or, *cut off,* ch. 22. 16. Ps.55.23. Ec.7.17. 1 Ki.21.21. 1 Sa.26.10.
4 The judgment on his vanity shall come before his plans have got *time* to take effect.—*C.*
5 The *olive* is peculiarly liable to have its tender flower destroyed. See Chandler's *Travels in Greece,* p.126.—*C.*
t ch.20.5;27.8. Is.33. 14,15. Hab. 2. 12, with ch.1.14-19.
u Am.5.11,12.
x Ps. 7. 14. Is. 59. 4. Ho.10.13. Ga.6.7,8.
6 Or, *iniquity.*

CHAP. XVI.

a Or, *troublesome,* ch.13.4. Phi.1.16, with ch.15.11.
b Heb. *words of wind,* ch. 15. 2, 3; 8.2; 12.2,3;13.2,4.
c 1 Pe.3.9. Mat.5.44. 1 Co.4.13.
d 2 Ki.19. 21. Ps. 22. 7,8;44.14;109.25. Je.18. 16. La.2.15.

31 Let not him that is deceived trust in [q]vanity, for [r]vanity shall be his recompence.

32 It shall be [s]accomplished before his [4]time, and his branch shall not be green.

33 He shall shake off his unripe grape as the vine, and shall cast off his flower as the olive.[5]

34 For[t] the congregation of hypocrites *shall be* desolate, and fire shall consume the [u]tabernacles of bribery.

35 They[x] conceive mischief, and bring forth vanity,[6] and their belly prepareth deceit.

CHAPTER XVI.

1 *Job reproveth his friends of inhumanity toward him.* 7 *He showeth the pitifulness of his case.* 17 *He maintaineth his innocency.*

THEN Job answered and said,

2 I have heard many such things; [a]miserable comforters *are* ye all.

3 Shall [b]vain words have an end? or what emboldeneth thee that thou answerest?

4 I also [c]could speak as ye *do:* if your soul were in my soul's stead, I could heap up words against you, and [d]shake mine head at you.

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desolate his cities, and scatters his ill-gotten wealth. The verification of which may be specially seen in the ruined cities of Edom, where we believe Job dwelt; the ruins, the very tombs of which are now inhabited by such a wretched race—wretched in poverty and wickedness—as Job here describes. *C.*——It would appear that two distinct classes of sin are here traced, both of which eventually entail punishment:—1. Arrogant opposition to God, described in ver. 25–27. Rebellion, insolence, defiance, and carnal security are the developments of this arrogance. 2. Callous and proud contentment on the ruins of the prosperity of other men, as set forth in ver. 28. Here the powerful sinner is represented as taking possession, with haughty carelessness, of those cities and houses which had been desolated by the judgment of Heaven; and which were intended to remain as perpetual monuments of God's wrath. *P.*]

Ver. 33. [The olive-tree only bears fruit fully every second year. But it blossoms with equal luxuriance *every year.* In those years in which it does not bear the blossoms *fall off;* no berries are formed. How graphic, therefore, is the language of this verse! *P.*]

REFLECTIONS.—Men too often hold fast the false principles which they have once imbibed: and it is much easier to treat an adversary with contempt than to answer him with reason. Disputants often turn revilers rather than reasoners; and charge their opponents with things which they utterly abhor. And none are more ready to indulge pride and self-conceit in themselves than those who rage against it in their neighbours! Old men often rather boast of their knowledge and wisdom than possess it. But surely it is a humbling sight to see men so corrupt in nature, so abominable in practice; and amazing that God should love any such, and deliver them from the pit of corruption! In the study of true knowledge the experience and observation of others, as well as our own, are an excellent help. But how unbounded is the patience of God that can bear with wicked monsters so long! Yet little external happiness have they even in this world. Their seemingly purest prosperity is mingled with gall and wormwood. But if they are miserable in this world, which is their heaven, what must they be in death, in judgment, in hell!

CHAPTER XVI. To this Job replied, 2. Thou hast but repeated the senseless and tormenting jargon which I had heard before. Instead of comforting, you plague, harass, and tempt me to despair. 3. When wilt thou make an end of such idle and impertinent discourse? What has instigated and emboldened thee to answer me in this censorious, scornful, and peremptory manner? 4. Were your condition and mine exchanged I could easily insult you with a multitude of words, and deride you in a grave or scornful manner. 5. I could furiously bear you down with my mouth, and restrain my lips from uttering a single sentence of consolation;—though I hope I should rather attempt to encourage, strengthen, and comfort you. 6. But now, indeed, whether I boldly defend my innocence and pour forth my complaints, or whether I forbear, my frightful sores and griefs are nothing eased. 7. This terrible trouble has quite tired me out, and made my life a burden to me. Thou, O God, hast, with thy thunderbolts and fiery tempest, utterly destroyed my large family and all that pertained to me. 8. While others murder my character and torment my spirit, thou, by plagues and griefs, hast so wasted and disfigured my body that it testifies my great affliction, and is employed against me as a witness of my great wickedness. 9. Meanwhile my pretended friends, who indeed implacably hate me, tear my reputation and torment my spirit with their speeches. They reproach me in the most spiteful and outrageous manner; and while their eyes sparkle with anger, they cruelly set themselves to spy out every, even the least, occasion to calumniate me. 10. They behave like wild beasts, gaping to devour or deride me; they treat me with the most cruel and abusive scorn and contempt; they have met together to satisfy their infernal malice in tormenting me. 11. And God hath quite abandoned me, chained me up, and dreadfully cast me down into the hands of these and other wicked men, to be abused by them as they please. 12. Great was my former happiness and prosperity; but now God has trodden and bruised me in the press of his wrath, and made me, as it were, to boil over with dregs of trouble and desperate complaints. In the most tormenting manner he has ruined my soul, my body, my children, and all that I had: he has set me up as a distinguished butt of his fearful indignation. 13. Devils, wicked men, calamities and diseases, as the instruments of his judgment, compass me round about. Without mercy he torments me with the most exquisite pains in my body, anguish of mind, and terrors of conscience. 14. As a battering-ram he breaks through me with breach upon breach, still adding one dreadful plague to another: he furiously rushes upon me with the almighty force of his wrath, which I can by no means withstand or support. 15. The sackcloth I had put on all over my body, to mark my deep mourning and humiliation under his mighty hand, sticks to my ulcers; and exhausted with wounds of trouble, I have sat down on this dunghill, where all my former authority and honour are changed into contempt. 16. My face is terribly burned and tormented with trickling tears; and the very substance of my eyes is almost consumed with weeping, so that I look like one dead and rotting; 17. Although I was never a violent oppressor of men, or a hypocritical worshipper of God. 18. O earth, if I have been guilty of bloodshed or oppression, conceal it not: let the dogs lick my blood when I am dead, and let neither God nor men regard my complaints or cries for pity while I am alive! 19. But what need these imprecations when even now the all-seeing God, who dwells in the lofty regions of heaven, is the ear and the eye witness of my virtue and true piety! 20. My companions mock and scoff at me as a hypocrite; but my soul, with floods of tears, earnestly appeals to God and begs, 21. That he would thoroughly and clearly examine my cause, and give a decision between me and my reproaching friends; 22. Since, if it be not done quickly, my troubles will soon make an end of me, and then it will be too late.

Ver. 4. [It is worthy of remark that this signal of contempt was used against our Lord upon the cross, Mat. 27. 39; Mar. 15. 39. But like all other visible signs of thought or feeling, it may have various significations, but usually those of doubt, sorrow, dissatisfaction, or scorn. *C.*——Job's anger is now kindled by the reproaches and false accusations of his 'vexatious comforters.' He shows his anger in his bitter and passionate retort. His anger not only leads him to sinful excess in replying to his assailants, but even to assume something like a tone of irreverence toward God. *P.*]

Ver. 7. [Turning from his accusers Job here directs his words to God, whom he regards as the cause of all his sufferings. It is now painful to hear Job's repinings and complaints. *P.*]

Ver. 15. [*Horn.* The horn of an animal is often both its defence and ornament. Hence the horn has been employed in Scripture as the emblem of power and glory, De. 33. 17; Ps. 132. 17. Job's losses, though great, had still left him the possession of his lands; but he had laid down all his emblems of authority, and humbled himself in the dust. *C.*]

Ver. 18. [These are words of deep pathos and great power. Yet they show that Job was not yet conscious of his true state as a sinner. He dares even to appeal to Heaven for a testimony of his innocence, and consequently, to some extent, of the injustice dealt out to him. His faith, however, has not yet deserted him. For life he has no hope, but he looks beyond it. *P.*]

REFLECTIONS.—Often much is said, and yet nothing to the purpose: and miserable comforters to a wounded spirit are all duties, all friends, if God continue his frowns! Nothing but Jesus' blood—nothing but JEHOVAH'S mercy—can grant any solid relief. Nay, alas! men are often most cruel and harsh when they ought to be most tender and compassionate: and those who riot in prosperity and ease seldom lay much to heart the case of their extremely distressed brethren. But though complicated and terrible are the troubles of saints in this world, unspeakably more so are the troubles of the wicked in hell, where there is nothing but remorse—but torment in all its horror! Happy are they who are here purged in God's furnace! They sow in tears, but shall reap in joy. And however hard it be to bring down their mind to their lot, the testimony of their good conscience, sprinkled with Jesus' blood, shall comfort them now. They have a good

MILL ON JERUSALEM ROAD, DAMASCUS—THE TRADING POINT OF THE HAURAN WHERE JOB LIVED. [JOB, xvi: 1.]—The traditions of the Arabs which make the Hauran in the neighborhood of Damascus, the home of Job, are not to be despised. In no part of the world have the native races undergone so little change as in this region. To this very day the descendants of the cotemporaries of Job, and perhaps his own, live on the same plains once occupied by their ancestors. This gives to the tradition that fixed the home of Job in the Hauran a very different value from what it would have in a country where the people were continually changing. Chrysostom, speaking of pilgrimages in his day, said: "Many pilgrims come from the ends of the earth to Arabia in order to seek for the dung hill on which Job lay, and with rapture to kiss the ground where he suffered." We give as illustrating this traditional history concerning the land of Uz a picture of the mill on the Jerusalem Road at Damascus.

5 *But* [a]I would strengthen you with my mouth, and the moving of my lips should assuage[1] *your grief.*

6 Though I speak, [f]my grief is not assuaged; and *though* I forbear, what am I eased?[2]

7 But now he hath made me [g]weary: thou hast [h]made desolate all my company.[3]

8 And thou [i]hast filled me with wrinkles,[4] *which* is a witness *against me:* and my leanness rising up in me beareth witness to my face.

9 He [k]teareth *me* in his wrath who hateth me: he gnasheth upon me with his teeth; mine enemy sharpeneth his eyes upon me.

10 They [l]have gaped upon me with their mouth; they have smitten me upon the cheek reproachfully; they have gathered themselves together against me.

11 God hath [m]delivered me[5] to the ungodly, and turned me over into the hands of the wicked.

12 I was [n]at ease, but he hath broken me asunder: he hath also taken *me* by my neck, and shaken me to pieces, and [o]set me up for his mark.

13 His [p]archers compass me round about; he cleaveth my reins asunder, and doth not spare: he poureth out my gall[6] upon the ground.

14 He [q]breaketh me with breach upon breach; he runneth upon me like a giant.

15 I have [r]sewed sackcloth upon my skin, and [s]defiled my horn in the dust.

16 My [t]face is foul with weeping, and on my eyelids *is* the shadow of death;

A.M. cir. 2484.
B.C. cir. 1520.

[a] Ga.6.1,2. ch.42.11; 44.1s.35,3,4. 2 Co.1.4. Ps.27.14. Pr.27.9.

1 With my own mouth will I overpower you till the quivering of my lips shall fail. Yet should I talk on, my affliction will not fail.'—*Good.*

[f] Ps.22.1,2; 77. 1–10; 88.1–18. La.iii.1.

2 Heb. *what goeth from me?*

[g] Ps.88.15. ch.10.1. Mat.11.28.Is.50.4.

[h] ch.1.18,19.

3 The transition in this verse from the third to the second person is exceedingly beautiful, as it marks the internal process of thought, rising from a description of his own state to a direct address to God.—*C.*

[i] Pr.17.22. ch.10.17. La.3.4. with ch.15.27. Ep.5.—.

4 'Thou hast fettered me (as a prisoner) with wrinkles,' with the wrinkles of a premature old age, induced by sore disease.—*C.*

[k] ch.10.16,17; 13.24. Ps.7.2; 50.22; 37.12. Is. 38.13. Ho. 5. 14. La. 2. 16; 3.10.

[l] Ps.22.13; 35.15,16, 21. 2 Co.11.20,21. 1 Ki. 22.24. Mi.5 1. La.3.30, 46; 2.15. Ac.7.54.

[m] ch.1.13–19; 2.7. Jn. 18.11. 2 Co. 12. 7, with Ps.22.7–21; 89.38. Ac.4. 27,28.

5 Heb. *hath shut me up.*

[n] ch.i.ii.xxix.

[o] ch. 7. 12, 20. La. 3. 12, 13.

[p] ch.6.4. Ge. 49. 23, 24. De. 32. 23. Ps.7.12, 13; 22.12–17, 20, 8.32.

6 When the vermicular motion of the intestinal canal is reversed, the bile is carried into the stomach, whence it is violently rejected, and becomes by its bitterness very distressing to the sufferer, and a striking emblem of the bitter thoughts of an afflicted man, Ps.42.5.—*C.*

[q] ch.1.13–19; 2.1–10; 6.4; 10.16,17. Ps.42.7.

[r] 1 Ki. 21. 27. Is. 22. 12. 2 Ki.6.30. Jonah 3.5.

[s] ch. 30. 19. Ps. 7. 5, with 75.4,10. 1 Sa.2.10.

[t] La.2.11. Is.52.14.

A.M. cir. 2484.
B.C. cir. 1520.

[u] ch.xxxi.; 27.5, 6. 1 Sa.12.3. Ps.44.17–21.

[x] 1 Ti. 2. 8. Ps. 26.6; 66.18,19.

[y] De.32.1. Is.1.2. Je. 22.29.

[z] Ge.4.11. Is. 26. 21. Eze.34.17.

[a] ch.27.9. Ps. 66. 18, 19.

7 'O earth! cover no blood shed by me, and let no place hide a cry against me.'—*Boothroyd.*

[b] Ro.1.9,9,1.2 Co.1. 23; 11. 31. 1 Th. 2. 10. Phi.1.8.

8 Heb. *in the high places,* Ep.1.3.

[c] Heb. *are my scorners,* ch. 12. 4, 5; ver.2,3. Ps. 109.4,5,6,7; 31.10,11.

[d] ch.9.34,35; 13.3,22; 31.35. Ec.6.10. Is. 45.9. Ro.9.20.

9 Or, *friend.*

1 Heb. *years of number.*

[e] ch.7.9,10; 14.5. 2 Sa. 12.23. Ec.12.5.

CHAP. XVII.

1 Or, *spirit is spent.*

[a] Ps.88.3,4. 2 Ti.4.6. 1 Sa.20.3.

[b] ch.12.4; 13.9; 16.20; 21.3. 1 Sa.1.7.

2 Heb. *lodge.*

3 Is not mine eye fixed on their reproaches? (*Boothroyd*). That is, am I permitted to see anything but unjust reproaches? *C.*—'Truly mockers encircle me, and mine eye lingers upon their disputings.'—*P.*

4 *Lay down*—come on, then, I pray thee. *Strike hands*—ratify my proposal of a fair and just trial before my Judge.—*C.*

[c] ch.9.33. Pr. 6.1; 17. 18; 22. 26. Ro. 8.33,34. He.7.22.

[d] Mat. 11. 25; 13. 11. ch.13.4,5; 21.34; 42.7.

[e] ch.32.22. Ps.12.2,3. Ex.20.5. 1 Ki.11.12; 21. 29.

[f] ch. 30.9. Ps. 44. 13, 14; 22.6,7.

5 Or, *before* them.

[g] ch.16.16. Ps.6.7; 31. 9, 10.

6 Or, *my thoughts.*

[h] Ro.11.33. 1 Ki.9.8.

[i] Ac.13.46.ch.42.7.

[k] 1 Pe.1.5. Pr. 4. 18. Ps. 84. 7, 11; 92.12–14. 2 Pe.3.18.

17 Not [u]for *any* injustice in mine hands, also my prayer [x]*is* pure.

18 O [y]earth, [z]cover not thou my blood, and let my [a]cry have no place.[7]

19 Also now, behold, [b]my witness *is* in heaven, and my record *is* on high.[8]

20 My friends [c]scorn me: *but* mine eye poureth out *tears* unto God.

21 Oh that one might [d]plead for a man with God, as a man *pleadeth* for his neighbour![9]

22 When a few years[1] are come, then I shall go the way [e]*whence* I shall not return.

CHAPTER XVII.

1 *Job appealeth from men to God.* 6 *The unmerciful dealing of men with the afflicted may astonish, but not discourage the righteous.* 11 *His hope is no longer in life, but in death.*

MY breath is corrupt,[1] my days are extinct, the[a] graves *are ready* for me.

2 *Are there* not [b]mockers with me? and doth not mine eye continue[2] in their provocation?[3]

3 Lay down [4]now, [c]put me in a surety with thee; who *is* he *that* will strike hands with me?

4 For thou hast [d]hid their heart from understanding: therefore shalt thou not exalt *them.*

5 He that [e]speaketh flattery to *his* friends, even the eyes of his children shall fail.

6 He hath made me also a [f]by-word of the people; and aforetime[5] I was as a tabret.

7 Mine eye also is [g]dim by reason of sorrow, and all my members[6] *are* as a shadow.

8 Upright *men* shall [h]be astonied at this, and the innocent shall [i]stir up himself against the hypocrite.

9 The righteous also shall [k]hold on his way;

God to appeal to as their judge and friend. Their tears shall be put into his bottle and marked in his book; and death, but destitute of its sting, shall soon set the prisoners free into a glorious eternity.

CHAPTER XVII. My spirit is maimed, broken, and confounded with trouble; and my breath stinks, as in dying persons: the days of my life are thunderstruck, shortened, and debased: nothing but the grave remains for me. 2. O God, do not my friends bitterly mock and deride me as a wicked hypocrite? And does not my mind so dwell and pore on their proud, insolent, and exasperating speeches that I cannot sleep nor mine eyes refrain from tears? 3. Come then, give me undoubted assurance that thou wilt take my cause in hand and do me justice; or give me an impartial man like myself, who in thy stead shall debate the matter with me. 4. For as these my friends, thou hast withheld from them a common capacity to understand thy providential dispensations, therefore they can never be honoured to judge my plea. 5. He who flatters friends in their wickedness because of their prosperity, or who manifestly makes a prey of them, his posterity shall pine away in disappointment and misery. 6. Alas! both God and my friends now combine to expose me to the common contempt of the people, though lately I was their darling and the matter of their praise. 7. My eyes are rendered dim, and my mind stupified with grief, and my body is wasted to a skeleton. 8. Upright saints in after-times shall be astonished at the sovereign dispensations of God, and the cruel abuse of my friends, with respect to me; and shall be excited to the utmost detestation of hypocrites who uncharitably censure the afflicted. 9. And, notwithstanding every scandal or discouragement, persons truly righteous shall persevere in their course of piety and virtue, and become more and more confirmed and active in it. 10. And as for you, my friends, either repent of your rash censures, or examine my cause over again; for hitherto none of you have spoken to the point. 11. Whatever hopes you give me of recovering my wonted prosperity, I find I am a dying man, and all my designs, even the most fixed and dear, are at an end. 12. My tormenting pains and anxious thoughts keep me awake through the whole night; or if I get any moments of ease, it is but little and soon over. 13. I expect, I wait for nothing now but an entrance into the state of the dead; and I have prepared for and expect speedily to lie down in the grave. 14. In the form of my trouble, and in the exercise of my mind, I have contracted a relation to and familiarity with death, corruption, and worms. 15. The future prosperity with which you attempt to flatter me, and the temporal happiness you would have me expect, are a mere imagination: 16. These hopes shall quickly appear buried in the grave along with myself.

Ver. 1. [*The graves are ready for me.* The sepulchres of Edom are generally in extensive chambers, scooped out in the rocks. In these are numerous niches or shelves ready to receive the dead bodies. *C.*]

Ver. 3. ['Lay down now, be bondsman (or *surety*) for me with thyself; who else should furnish surety to me?' This is a very remarkable passage. God is conceived of by Job in a double capacity; as a judge, who tries and condemns Job for his sins, and as a bondsman or surety, who takes the place of the guilty, and pledges himself for him. It would seem that Job was enabled by faith to look to Christ, the great Saviour and redeemer of the people. *P.*]

Ver. 5. [Not merely shall he be disappointed, but his children shall be ruined through his vain and unfulfilled expectations. *C.*]

Ver. 6. [*Tabret.* The translation of this word is diversified, according to the opinion entertained of its derivation. As it is, however, evident that Job is speaking of the present, and not of his past condition, we are disposed to adopt the translation of Tyndale, 'He hath made me a by-word of the common people. I am his *jesting-stock* among them.' Heath translates it *prodigy*, and Good translates it *dotard*. *C.*——'And I became as one in whose face they spit;' that is, an utter abomination. The parallelism shows that this is the true meaning of the Hebrew word *tophet*. *P.*]

Ver. 13. [Job gives way to despair. His comforters had become tormentors. They had shown utter ignorance of his state, his sufferings, and his wants; and now he resigns himself to his fate:—'If I hope, it is for the grave as my house; in darkness I make my bed.' *P.*]

Ver. 16. [Job's only hope of relief is in death. He believes his disease to be incurable; his life is miserable; he longs for its close; and in the grave alone does he see rest from trial and sorrow. *P.*]

REFLECTIONS.—Happy are those who have spiritual breath which cannot corrupt; life that can never fail; who have their portion in eternal blessedness, and are ready for their grave! If cruel friends exasperate my spirit and drive sleep from mine eyes, let Jesus, as my surety and redeemer, be the ground of all my hope and the source of all my joys. God can easily infatuate the wisest when they abuse his gifts. And it is mad to pursue honour and advancements by sinful methods, particularly in employing the wisdom which he has given against his cause and interest. Vain is the inconstant applause of men. While we are great the world admire us; but when depressed and poor they contemn or abhor us. But though we see things in providence which we cannot account for, we must not stagger through unbelief. And if we are faithful to God we must be zealous for his cause and take part with his oppressed people, whose bitterest enemies are usually formal hypocrites. They who are through faith brought into the way, Jesus Christ, and a course of holiness, strive not to faint or fail; nay, even difficulties and opposition quicken them. Many great pretenders to wisdom can give no profitable instructions in a day of trial; and empty are the promises and vain the hopes of carnal minds. How debasing to proud men are death and the grave! And even good men are apt to despair of that which God

and he that hath [l]clean hands [m]shall be stronger and stronger.

10 But as for you all, do ye [n]return, and come now:[7] for I cannot find [o]*one* wise *man* among you.

11 My days [p]are past, my [q]purposes are broken off, *even* the thoughts[8] of my heart.

12 They [r]change the night into day:[9] the light *is* short[1] because of darkness.

13 If I [s]wait, the [t]grave *is* mine house: I have made my bed in the darkness.

14 I have said[2] to corruption, [u]Thou *art* my father; to the worm, *Thou art* my mother and my sister.

15 And where *is* now my [v]hope? as for my hope, who shall see it?

16 They[y] shall go down to the bars of the pit, when *our* rest together *is* in the dust.

CHAPTER XVIII.

1 Bildad reproveth Job of presumption and impatience. 5 The calamities of the wicked.

THEN answered Bildad the Shuhite, and said,
2 How long *will it be ere* [1]ye [a]make an end of words? mark, and afterwards we will speak.

3 Wherefore are we counted [b]as beasts, *and* reputed vile in your sight?

4 He [c]teareth himself[2] in his anger: shall the earth be forsaken for thee? and shall the rock be removed out of his place?

5 Yea,[3] the[d] light of the wicked shall be put out, and the spark of his fire shall not shine.

6 The [e]light shall be dark in his tabernacle, and his candle[4] shall be put out with him.

7 The [f]steps of his strength shall be straitened, and his [g]own counsel shall cast him down.

8 For [h]he is cast into a net by his own feet, and he walketh upon a snare.[5]

9 The [i]gin shall take *him* by the heel, *and* [k]the robber[6] shall prevail against him.

10 The snare *is* laid[7] for him in the ground, and a trap for him in the way.

11 Terrors[l] shall make him afraid on every side, and shall drive him[8] to his feet.[9]

12 His strength shall be [m]hunger-bitten, and destruction *shall be* ready at his side.

13 It shall devour the [1]strength[2] of his skin: *even* the [n]first-born of death shall devour his strength.

14 His[o] confidence shall be rooted out of his tabernacle, and it shall bring him to the king of terrors.

15 It[p] shall dwell in his tabernacle,[3] because

A.M. cir. 2484.
B.C. cir. 1520.

l Ps.24.4.Ge.20.5.
m Heb. *shall add strength*, Is. 40. 31. 2 Sa.3.1.Ps.84.7. 2Co.4. 16.
n ch.6.29.Je.7.3. Pr. 25,8–10.
7 Go ye hence and begone.—*M. Good.*
o ver.4;ch.32.9;27.7. 1 Co.6.5.
p ch.7.6;9.25;16.22.
q Pr.16.9;19.21.
8 Heb. *the possessions.*
r De.28.67. ch.7.3,4, 13;11.17.
9 The troubled thoughts of my heart change night, the time of sleep and rest, into day, the time of working and labour, and the day that should bring light and joy is short and gloomy, because of the darkness of my sorrows.—*C.*
1 Heb. *near.*
s ch.8.6;11. 15–17; 5. 18–26.
t ch.30.23; 10. 21, 22. Ec.12.5,7. Is.57.2. Ge. 3.19.
2 Heb. *cried* or *called.*
u Ps.49.14. ch.21.26, 32;24.20;19.26.
x ch.5.16;8.6,22;6.11; 19.10.
y My hopes, ver.11, 15.2Co.1.9. Eze.37.11. ch.18.14;3.17–19;30.23. Jonah 2.6.

CHAP. XVIII.

1 Bildad addresses Job in the plural, conjoining him with that corruption and that worm which he had avowed as his kindred, and with which he purposed soon to rest in the dust, ch. 17.14,16.—*C.*
a ch.11.2,3;32.3,5;13. 5,6.
b ch.12.7;17.4,10.Ps. 73.22.Ec.3.18.

A.M. cir. 2484.
B.C. cir. 1520.

c ch.13.14;16.9; 17.1, 11,16.
2 Heb. *his soul.*
3 *Nevertheless.*
d Pr. 13.9;20. 20; 24. 20.ch.20.5. Mat. 25.29. Zec.11.17.
e 1 Ki.13.5.Re.18.23. ch.21.17. Mat.6.23.
4 Or, *lamp.*
f Pr.4. 12. ch. 20. 22. His most resolute and vigorous attempts.
g ch. 5. 12, 13. Es. 3. 9. Pr.1.30–32.
h Pr.5.22;29.6,ch.22. 10.1 Ti.6.9,10.
5 A pit digged and covered over with weak cross timbers and grass, a common method of taking wild animals.—*C.*
i Eze.12.13;32.3. Ps. 11.6. Is.8.14,15. 2 Ti.2. 26.
k ch.5.5;1.15,17.
6 The night robber of preserved parks. Boothroyd translates it *noose.*—*C.*
7 Heb. *hidden.*
l ch.6.4;7.14;9.28. Je. 6.25;20.3,4; 46.5; 49.29; 4.19,20.
8 Heb. *scatter him.*
9 Cause him to flee with terror.—*C.*
m ch.15.23, 24,. 1 Sa. 2.5,36. Pr.1.27. Ps.7.12–14;73.18–20.1 Th.5.3.
1 Heb. *bars.*
2 The frequent allusion to strength seems to indicate the snaring of the elephant, who is generally taken by a pitfall and tamed by hunger.—*C.*
n Some terrible trouble, Re.6.8.
o ch.8.14; 11. 20. Ps. 52.5; 112. 10. Pr. 10.28. Mat.7.26,27.
p Destruction, ver. 12; ch. 20.19,26,28. Pr. 3.33. Zec.5.4. Je.9.21.
3 Desolation shall dwell in his tabernacle, taking possession, and expelling its temporary occupant.—*C.*

really intends for them. Happy are they who rest in Christ here—they shall rest in death and in heaven for ever and ever!

CHAPTER XVIII. In no small heat of spirit Bildad replied, 2. How long wilt thou cast forth such confused, double-meaning, and unintelligible words, as if you wanted to entrap us? Declare plainly what you intend, and after that we shall deliver our minds with the utmost clearness, freedom, and boldness. 3. For to what purpose is it to talk with one who looks upon us as a company of dull beasts, into whom nothing of wisdom can enter! 4. With impatient rage you tear and torment yourself. Must God, to humour thee, suspend or cease his government of the world, and leave everything to chance: or must he alter his immutable counsels or the fixed laws of his providence? 5. But say what thou wilt, though the wicked man may prosper for a while, all his splendour and apparent happiness shall quickly come to an end. 6. The wealth and honour of his family shall be turned into misery, contempt, and sorrow, together with himself. 7. His bold and resolute attempts to increase or maintain his prosperity shall be unsuccessful and involve him in insurmountable difficulties, and his own devices shall prove the means of his overthrow. 8. His own wiles and works bring him into inextricable difficulty and distress; and every step he takes in prosecution of his designs, or in the way of pleasing himself, is attended with perpetual danger and farther ensnares him. 9. While ruinous snares take hold of and entangle him, they who thirst for his blood, wealth, or honours shall prevail against him. 10. Even when he neither foresees nor fears it, he is always in danger of some sudden mischief. 11. Unexpected and overturning terrors shall fearfully affright him on all hands and waste him away on his feet, while they make him to run from place to place for safety. 12. Sorrows shall insatiably, as with intense hunger, feed upon him, till his strength, wealth, and honour be entirely wasted; and nothing but prepared and terrible destruction shall everywhere attend him. 13. Rottenness, fearful affliction, and a miserable death shall consume his flesh and bones. 14. Whatever he relied upon for the support of himself and his family shall utterly fail him and hasten his unhappy death; while terrors, as a mighty king, shall drive him into the depths of hell. 15. Terrors, despair, and destruction shall dwell in his habitation, which he unjustly acquired; and thunder and lightning, or some exemplary judgment, like that of Sodom, shall destroy it. 16. His whole estate, habitation, and family shall be irrecoverably ruined. 17. And the very name of him shall be buried in everlasting infamy and forgetfulness. 18. He shall be driven from his prosperity and life into misery and death, and chased out of the world as a nuisance into eternal woe. 19. None of his descendants or kindred shall long survive him to keep up his remembrance. 20. They, on every side, who behold, and they who afterward read or hear of the fearful justice of God upon him, shall be astonished and terrified at it. 21. This, indeed, is a just description of the miserable condition of the wicked at last; and thus shall those who dishonour God be abased.

Ver. 4. [Bildad in the first member of the sentence addresses his friends, describing Job; in the second he addresses Job: 'Shall the earth be forsaken for thee?' shall God leave off the care of all his other works to attend to thy vain complaints, and anticipate the final judgment to gratify your sinful impatience? *C.*—— The meaning of the passage is:—Dost thou imagine that by thy vehement conduct, by which thou art become enraged against thyself, thou canst effect any change in the established divine order of the world? It is a divine law that sufferings are the punishments of sin; thou canst no more alter this than that at thy command, or for thy sake, the earth, which is appointed to be the habitation of man, will become desolate; or that a rock will remove from its place. *P.*]

Ver. 10. [Delitzsch translates as follows:—'The trap holdeth his heel fast, the noose bindeth him. His snare lieth hidden in the earth; his nets upon the path.' This brings out pretty clearly the sense of the passage. *P.*]

Ver. 13. [*First-born of death.* Who or what is this? Some think it the pestilence, others famine, but neither seems entitled to this terrible pre-eminence. Is it not the *destruction* or desolation (ver. 12) 'ready at his side' that is (ver. 13) twice said to 'devour his strength?' The one act points to the same agent. How blessed the hope of that time when the great *devourer* shall devour no more, but death shall be swallowed up in victory! 1 Co. 15. 54. *C.*]

REFLECTIONS.—There is much wisdom in leaving off contention before it be meddled with; it so furiously heats men's spirits, and makes them to misinterpret everything said or done by their antagonist; nay, makes them to misapply the most precious or tremendous truths of God! They suspect affronts that were never intended. They even torment themselves—their pride and passion proving hurtful to both soul and body. But to what terrible judgments of God, in time, in death, and chiefly in eternity, are the wicked exposed! Short-lived and unsubstantial is their prosperity, and heavy the curse that is upon them! Being abandoned of God, Satan first ensnares and afterwards torments them. Agitated by their lusts they rush headlong into ruin; till death in all its stings and terrors devours them! Then friends, physicians, and all human supports are vain. Their glorious prosperity is quickly turned into everlasting shame and contempt.

CHAPTER XIX. Job replied, Will ye never cease tormenting my soul, and bruising me as in a mortar, with your senseless revilings! 3. Ye have too often wounded me with the vilest reproaches. Ye have been shamelessly obstinate in your rebukes and cruel usage of me. 4. If I indeed had been mistaken in my opinion or practice, I have sufficiently smarted for it in my own person and estate, and so am a fit object of pity rather than of your reproach. 5. If you will still insolently declaim against me, and allege my debasing calamities as a proof of my impiety, 6. Know that I am sensible that it is God who hath in this fearful manner cast me down from my prosperity, and compassed me about with unavoidable miseries. 7. And my case is the more pitiable, that while friends abuse me with reproach, God, to whom I have repeatedly committed my cause, refuses to redress my wrongs or vindicate my innocency. 8. Nay, his plagues so surround me on every side that I can find no way of escape: and I am so overwhelmed with perplexity that I know not whither to turn myself. 9. He has deprived me of all my dignity, authority, wealth, and family. 10. In respect of children, wealth, honour, authority, and health, he has entirely destroyed me; and all my hopes of future comfort in this world he hath plucked up by the roots. 12. He has in the most violent and furious manner afflicted me, as if I had been one of his principal enemies. 13. Whole armies of troubles have, by his order, invaded me; and as with raised batteries so straitly besieged me, that not the smallest comfort I had could escape their fury. 14–16. While friends and neighbours are alienated from me, and refuse to do me any office of kindness, my maidens and men-servants treat me with the utmost disobedience and contempt. 17. My wife regards my complaints and cries no more than if she were a mere stranger, though I have begged

it is none of his: [q]brimstone shall be scattered upon his habitation.[4]

16 His [r]roots shall be dried up beneath, and above shall his branch be cut off.

17 His[s] remembrance shall perish from the earth, and he shall have no name in the street.

18 He[t] shall be driven from light into darkness, and chased out of the world.

19 He [u]shall neither have son nor nephew[5] among his people, nor any remaining in his dwellings.

20 They that come after *him* shall be [x]astonied at his [y]day,[6] as they that went before[7] were affrighted.[8]

21 Surely [z]such *are* the dwellings of the wicked, and this *is* the place *of him that* [a]knoweth not God.

CHAPTER XIX.

1 Job, complaining of his friends' cruelty, showeth there is misery enough in him to gratify it. 21 He craveth pity; 23 professeth his belief in a future resurrection; 28 and warneth his friends not to persecute him.

THEN Job answered and said,

2 How [a]long will ye [b]vex my soul, and break me in pieces with words?

3 These [c]ten times have ye reproached me: ye are not ashamed *that* ye make yourselves strange to me.[1]

4 And be it indeed *that* I have erred, mine error remaineth [d]with myself.

A.M. cir. 2484
B.C. cir. 1520.

q Ge.19.24. Ps. 11. 6. Is. 13. 19; 34. 9. De.29. 23.

4 Brimstone shall be rained upon his habitation. This seems an evident allusion to the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah.—*C.*

r ch.29. 19. Is. 5. 24. Jude 12. Ps. 37. 35, 36. Je.12.2. Ho.9.16. Mal. 4.1.

s Pr.10.7. Ps.109.13; 83.4;9.5,6; 49.11; 34.16. Ec.8.10;9.5.

t ver. 14. Pr. 14. 32. Lu.12.20. ch.10.21, 22; 20.8,9.

u Je.22.30. Is.14.22.

5 Neither direct nor collateral kindred—the name and race shall be extinct.—*C.*

x De.29.24.1 Ki.9.8.

y Ps. 37. 13; 137. 7. Eze.21.25. Ob.12. ch.1. 13-19.

6 His day of visitation and judgment. *They that went before*— that walked before him in his presence, his contemporaries.—*C.*

7 Or, *lived with him.*

8 Heb. *laid hold on horror.*

z ver.6,14-16.

a Ex. 5.2. Ju. 2. 10. 1 Sa. 2. 12. ch.21.14. Ps. 79.6.2 Th.1.8. Tit.1.16.

CHAP. XIX.

a ch.18.2.

b 1 Sa.1.6. Ps.42.10; 6.2;3;69.20. 2 Pe.2.8.

c Ge.31.7. Le.26.26. Nu.14.22. Ne.4.12.

1 Or, *harden yourselves against me.* [Or, 'ye astound me.' Some translate, 'Ye insultme.' The meaning seems to be that their words were only calculated to confuse Job, and in his peculiar circumstances their speeches were insults.—*P.*]

d Ps.19.12. Eze.18.4; 14.10;16.52. Ga.6.5. Pr. 9.12.

A.M. cir. 2484
B.C. cir. 1520.

e Ps.38.16;41.11. Mi. 7.8.2 Co.2.6,7.

f Ps. 66.11,12; 44.11. La. 1.13; 3.9. Ho.7.12. ch.18.8,9. Eze.5.12-17.

g Je. 20. 8. Ps. 22. 2; 80.4. Hab.1.2. La.3.8.

2 Or, *violence.*

h ch. 3. 23. Ho. 2. 6. La.3.7,9.

i ch. 29. 7,14,20. Ge. 31.1. Ps.49.16,17. Is.61. 6. Ho. 9. 11. Pr. 14. 24; 17.6.

k ch.1.13-19;2.7. Ps. 88.3,8,16,17. 2 Co. 4. 8. La.2.5,6.

l ch.6.11;7.15;24.20; 18.14.

3 *Removed*—plucked up.—*Boothroyd.*

m De. 32. 22. Ps. 89. 46.

n ch. 33. 8,10; 13. 24. La.2.5.

o Ps.34.19. ch.30.12. Is.51.23.

p Ps.31.11; 38.11; 69. 8;88.8,18.

q Pr. 18. 24. Mi. 7. 5. Mat. 10. 21. Ps. 69. 8, with Pr.17.17.

r De.10.18,19. ch.31. 32.

s ch.12.5. Ps.123.3,4.

4 It is to be noted that, though Job had lost much, he had not lost all his property; and the remarkable alienation of friends, and inattention of servants, render it probable that they held his judgment impaired by his misfortunes.—*C.*

t Pr. 29. 19; 30. 22, with 1 Ti. 6. 1. Ep.6.5. Col.3.22.

u ch.17.1;2.9,10.

5 She will not listen to my words, and I was compelled to become a suppliant to the children of mine own body—most probably his grandchildren, who had not perished with their fathers; for it is added, Yea, young children despised [illegible].—*C.*

5 If indeed ye will [e]magnify *yourselves* against me, and plead against me my reproach:

6 Know now that [f]God hath overthrown me, and hath compassed me with his net.

7 Behold, [g]I cry out of wrong,[2] but I am not heard: I cry aloud, but *there is* no judgment.

8 He [h]hath fenced up my way that I cannot pass, and he hath set darkness in my paths.

9 He hath [i]stripped me of my glory, and taken the crown *from* my head.

10 He hath destroyed me [k]on every side, and I am gone; and mine [l]hope hath he [3]removed like a tree.

11 He hath also [m]kindled his wrath against me, and he [n]counteth me unto him as *one of* his enemies.

12 His [o]troops come together, and raise up their way against me, and encamp round about my tabernacle.

13 He hath [p]put my brethren far from me, and mine acquaintance are verily estranged from me.

14 My [q]kinsfolk have failed, and my familiar friends have forgotten me.

15 They that [r]dwell in mine house, and my maids, [s]count me for a stranger: I am an alien in their sight.

16 I called my servant,[4] and [t]he gave *me* no answer; I entreated him with my mouth.

17 My[u] breath is strange to my wife,[5] though

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her sympathy for the sake of our dear children, who have been so dreadfully hurried into death. 18. The very children, and ignorant people about, following the example of the rest, despise me, and treat me with the most abusive language. 19. The very men whom I had trusted with my secrets, and who had received the most distinguished tokens of my affection, abhor and hate me. 20. I am wasted with afflictions till I am little more than skin and bone; I am bruised till the teeth have fallen out of my head; and I have scarcely left me a mouth to complain. 21. O my friends, have pity upon me, when God's afflicting hand has so grievously smitten and wounded me! 22. Why do ye persecute and harass me, as if ye were an avenging God? Why, as if unsatisfied with my external calamities, do ye cruelly torment my spirit?—23. O that my protestations of uprightness, and appeals to God, were in the most legible and indelible manner registered in a book of public records, for my vindication, and for the encouragement of other upright persons under sore troubles! 24. O that they were registered in the most indelible manner in some marble rock or pillar, to continue legible to all generations! 25. For, notwithstanding these present miseries, I by faith know, and am firmly persuaded, that Jesus Christ, my Kinsman-Redeemer, liveth, having life in himself; and shall victoriously stand as the last Adam, upon the dust of the earth, in his incarnation, resurrection, and appearance to judgment. 26. And though these vermin, bred or breeding in my afflicted body, should quickly devour the whole of it, yet even in this body, when fashioned like unto his glorious body, shall I see God in my nature. 27. Whom I shall see for my own particular comfort, in my own person, when raised from the dead—though at present I am at the point of death through sore trouble, and earnestly longing for deliverance. 28. Ye should therefore say, Why do we persecute one in whom there is such soundness and strength of faith, and who hath the right cause in the present debate? 29. Beware lest God punish your inhuman cruelty to me with some terrible judgments. Such rage as yours deserves, and such wrath as God's, provoked by your sin, will bring fearful calamities upon you, that ye may know to your cost that God vindicates his own people and punishes their enemies.

Ver. 3. [*Ten times.* This phrase is said by most expositors to stand for *many times.* This loose method of speaking seems, however, rather inconsistent with the unparalleled and necessary accuracy of Scripture, as a divine revelation. Is not the expression *ten times* literally true? Job now had spoken *five* times (ch. 3. 1; 6. 1; 9. 1; 12. 1; 16. 1), and his friends *five times* (ch. 4. 1; 8. 1; 11. 1; 15. 1; 18. 1), in all, *ten times. C.*]

Ver. 6. [Job's visitors had traced all his calamities to sins which, according to them, he had hypocritically concealed. Job, however, indignantly denies that in this respect he is guilty. He traces all his sufferings to God; he can assign no cause for them; he leaves the impression on the mind that he is hardly, if not unjustly, dealt with. Job's friends were unquestionably in error, and they were harsh and cruel; but Job himself was far from the truth. *P.*]

Ver. 17. [In aggravated forms of elephantiasis, the mouth and throat become ulcerated; breathing is difficult, and the breath is foul. In fact, as the disease progresses the limbs decay, and the half-putrid members emit a most offensive odour. *P.*]

Ver. 22. [The meaning of this reproachful question is, that Job regarded his persecutors as usurping to themselves a judicial divine authority over him. They were at best only his equals; they were not infallible; they might be mistaken; they had no right therefore to condemn him. *P.*]

Ver. 25. [From the depth of his affliction and despair, so far as regards earthly happiness and even life, the faith of the patriarch rises clear and triumphant, and finds utterance in these noble words:—'And I know, my Redeemer (my judge and vindicator) liveth (he is in existence; he knows, and will save me), and he will arise the last one (the final judge and disposer of all things) from (or over) the dust (of the grave, to call from it those who sleep, and to raise the mortal to immortality).' *P.*]

Ver. 26. [*Yet in my flesh shall I see God.* 'Worms' and 'body' are not in the original, so that we are not bound to contemplate them in the exposition. May not the verse be paraphrased thus: 'Though as my skin is destroyed by disease, this flesh beneath it be destroyed by death, yet in my (resurrection) flesh shall I see God,' 1 Jn. 3. 2. *C.*]

Ver. 27. [These words may be rendered as follows. There is a terseness and concentration of thought in them, such as characterize the most ancient literature of the Shemitic race:—'And after my skin (after its decay—after death), thus destroyed (rent and torn by the ravages of my loathsome disease), and without my flesh (in a disembodied state, when my soul is freed from this vile body), I shall see God (I shall see him with my spirit); whom I shall behold for myself (for my good, for my vindication from the unjust and cruel accusations of those now before me), and mine eyes shall see him and no other (no accuser, no stranger, but my own redeeming God)—my reins consume within me (*i.e.* I languish and pine here for that glorious vision).' *P.*——*Not another*—not estranged as you, my friends, nor ashamed to call me brother, He. 1. 11. *C.*]

Ver. 29. [There is a threat implied in this verse. God, in whom Job trusts, and who will in the end vindicate him, will prove a judge to those who now persecute him. *P.*]

REFLECTIONS.—Hard is the trial when inward vexation and outward reproach meet together; and distressing the situation when those who ought to comfort us, again and again reproach and disquiet us; and especially when men abuse us with revilings, and God shuts out our prayer, and loads us with trouble! But when God strikes a saint, almost every person and thing is ready to second his blow; and then the sparing of his relations becomes a heavier cross than the removal of them by death. It is hard to discern God's love and endeared affection amidst many and heavy strokes of paternal wrath. But happy are those who, when earth is turned into a kind of hell to them, can by faith solace themselves with the views of a future judgment; and of being for ever with Jesus Christ—their Relation, their Husband, their Deliverer, their Lord! It is dangerous to persecute the saints while their Kinsman-Redeemer lives and sees, and shall quickly judge the world. But here let me stand still, and with pleasure remark, that there is a Kinsman-Redeemer provided for fallen men; that he is a living and divine Redeemer; that I have a new-covenant interest in him, and know that I have it; that there will be a last day, when time shall be no more; that then my Redeemer, who stood as the last Adam upon earth, shall appear without sin unto my salvation; and so shall I be for ever with the Lord; I shall be like him, for I shall see him as he is!

I entreated for the [a]children's *sake* of mine own body.[6]

18 Yea, [v]young children despised me; I arose, and they spake against me.

19 All [z]my inward friends[7] abhorred me; and they whom I loved are turned against me.

20 My [a]bone cleaveth to my skin and[8] to my flesh, and I am escaped with the skin of my teeth.[9]

21 Have [b]pity upon me, have pity upon me, O ye my friends; for the hand of God hath touched [c]me.

22 Why do ye [d]persecute me as God,[1] and are not satisfied with my flesh?

23 Oh that my words were now written![2] oh that they were printed in a book![3]

24 That they were graven with an [e]iron pen and lead in the rock for ever!

25 For [f]I know *that* my [g]Redeemer liveth, and *that* he shall [h]stand at the latter *day* upon the earth:

26 And *though* after my skin *worms* destroy this *body*, yet [i]in my flesh shall I see God:[4]

27 Whom I shall see [k]for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another;[5] *though* my reins be consumed [6]within me.[7]

28 But ye should say, Why [l]persecute we him, seeing the root of the matter is found in me?[8]

29 Be ye afraid of the sword: for wrath *bringeth* the punishments of the sword, [m]that ye may know *there is* a judgment.

CHAPTER XX.

Zophar showeth in his turn the certain downfal and portion of the wicked.

THEN answered Zophar the Naamathite, and said,

2 Therefore [a]do my thoughts cause me to answer, and for *this* I make haste.[1]

3 I have [b]heard the check of my reproach, and [c]the spirit of my understanding causeth me to answer.

4 Knowest[d] thou *not* this of old, since man was placed upon earth,

5 That[e] the triumphing of the wicked *is* short,[2] and the joy of the hypocrite *but* for a moment?

6 Though his excellency [f]mount up to the heavens, and his head reach unto the clouds;[3]

7 *Yet* [g]he shall perish for ever, like his own dung: they which have seen him shall say, [h]Where *is* he?

8 He [i]shall fly away as a dream, and shall not be found; yea, he shall be chased away as a vision of the night.

9 The [k]eye also *which* saw him shall *see him* no more; neither shall his place any more behold him.

10 His [l]children shall seek to please the [4]poor, and his hands shall [m]restore their goods.[5]

11 His [n]bones are full *of the sin* of his youth, which shall lie down with him in the dust.

12 Though wickedness be [o]sweet in his mouth, *though* he hide it under his tongue;

13 *Though* he [p]spare it, and forsake it not, but keep it still within his mouth;[6]

14 *Yet* [q]his meat in his bowels is turned, *it is* the gall[7] of asps within him.

15 He hath swallowed down riches, and [r]he shall vomit them up again: God shall cast them out of his belly.

16 He [s]shall suck the poison of asps; the viper's tongue shall slay him.

17 He [t]shall not see the rivers, the [8]floods, the brooks[9] of honey and butter.

18 That [u]which he laboured for shall he restore, and shall not swallow *it* down: according to *his* substance *shall* the restitution[1] *be*, and he shall not rejoice *therein*.

19 Because[x] he hath oppressed[2] *and* hath forsaken the poor; *because* he hath violently taken away an house which he builded not;

20 Surely[y] he shall not feel[3] quietness in his belly, he shall not save of that which he desired.

21 There shall none of his meat[4] be [z]left;[5] therefore shall no man look for his goods.

22 In[a] the fulness of his sufficiency he shall be in straits: every hand of the [b]wicked shall come upon him.

23 *When* [c]he is about to fill his belly, *God* shall cast the fury of his wrath upon him, and shall rain *it* upon him while he is eating.

24 He[d] shall flee from the iron weapon, *and* the bow of steel shall strike him through.

25 It[e] is drawn, and cometh out of the body; yea, the glittering sword cometh out of his gall:[6] terrors *are* upon him.

26 All [f]darkness[7] *shall be* hid in his secret places: a fire not blown[8] shall consume him; it

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A.M. cir. 2484. B.C. cir. 1520.

x ch.1.2,19.
6 Heb. *my belly.*
y Or, *the wicked,* ch.30.1.2 Ki.2.23.
z Ps.41.9; 55.13,14, 20;109.4.
7 Heb. *the men of my secret.*
a La.4.8. Ps.102.5. ch.30.30;7.5.
8 Or, *as.*
9 Generally interpreted, of the *gums;* the peculiar severity of his disease having caused the teeth to fall out. But may it not rather signify the white enamel with which the teeth are covered, and which Job describes as the only part that had escaped disease? —*C.*
a Ga.6.2. Col.3,12. He.13.3. ch.6.14. Ro.12.15.
c ch.2.10.Ps.38.2.
d Ps.69.26.Zec.1.15. ch.10.16. Mi.3.3. Re.17.16.
1 Is not the judgment of God enough? why will ye add to my affliction?—*C.*
2 Heb. *Who will give,* &c.
3 *Recorded* in a book, with an iron style and lead—that they were engraven in a rock for ever! The ancient practice of writing upon rolls of lead is testified by Pliny, l. xiii. c.11. For an account of the numerous inscriptions upon the rocks in the upper regions of Sinai, see Burckhardt's *Travels.*—*C.*
e Je.17.1. Is.8.1;30.8. Hab.2.2.
f Ro.8.28,38,39.2 Ti.1.12.
g 1 Co.15.45. Mat.20.28. ch.33.23,24. Is.49.26.
h Da.12.1. Ac.17.31. Mat.26.64. Jn.5.22,28.
i Phi.3.21. 1 Co.15.29,53; 13.12. Ps.16.11; 17.15. Mat.5.8. 1 Jn.3.2. Re.22.4.
4 Or, *after I shall awake, though this* body *be destroyed, yet out of my flesh shall I see God.*
k Is.26.19.1 Co.15.53.
5 Heb. *a stranger.*
6 Heb. *in my bosom.*
7 *Though* should not be inserted, and this clause should commence the following verse, thus:—28. 'My reins,' my ardent affections, 'are consumed in my bosom,' through longing after the judgments of God. See Ps.119.20. 'But ye should say, Why persecute we him, seeing the root of the matter (faith in a Redeemer) is found in him?'—*C.*
l ver.22. Ga.4.29. He.11.36. Ps.69.26.
8 Or, *and* what *root of matter is found in me?*
m Ec.11.9. Ps.58.10, 11. Mat.7.1. Ro.14.4. Ja.4.11.

CHAP XX.

a Ro.10.2. Ga.4.18.
1 Heb. *my haste is in me.*
b 2 Ti.4.3. ch.19.29. *c* ch.33.3.
d Ps.44.1; 48.8. ch.4.7; 8.8; 15.10.
e Ps.37.35,36; 73.18–20. Da.4.31. Ac.12.22, 23. Ec.7.6. Mat.7.21.
2 Heb. *from near.*
f Ge.11.4. Is.14.13, 14. Da.4.11. Ps.37.35, 36. Mat.11.23.
3 Heb. *cloud.*
g 1 Ki.14.10. 2 Ki.9. 37. Ps.33.10.

A.M. cir. 2484. B.C. cir. 1520.

h Is.14.16,17. Ps.37. 36. ch.14.10.
i Ps.37.20; 90.5. Is. 29.7,8. ch.18.18.
k ch.7.8,10; 8.18. Ps. 103.15,16.
l Pr.28.3; 14.19. Ps. 109.9,10.
4 Or, *the poor shall oppress his children,* Pr.28.3.
m Ex.22.36. Le.6.4, 5 ver.18.
n Pr.5.11–14; 14.32. Ps.25.7. ch.13.26. Eze. 24.13;32.27.
o Pr.9.17. Ps.10.7. Ro.1.32. ch.15.16;34.7.
p Je.13.23, with Mat.5.29,30. Ro.8.13. Pr.28.13.
6 Heb. *in the midst of his palate.*
q Je.2.19; 4.18; 6.26. Mat.26.75. Pr.1.32; 14. 14;23.35.
7 It is translated *gall,* because that fluid was anciently supposed to be the poison, as Pliny testifies. Anatomy, however, has discovered that the poison lies beneath some of the teeth; and *poison* should therefore be substituted for *gall.* —*C.*
r Pr.23.8. Mat.27.3, 4 ver.10,18.
s De.28.26–29. Mal. 2.2. Pr.23.32. Ac.28.3,4. Is.59.4–8. Ro.3.13.
t 2 Ki.7.2. Je.17.6. Ps. 36.6,8,9. Is.48.18.
8 Or, *streaming brooks.*
9 Boothroyd translates it *valleys,* which renders the passage more easily intelligible. He shall not see those rivers, those floods of pleasure, nor those valleys of rich possession for which he laid aside all compassion, and foolishly bartered his soul. See ver.19.—*C.*
u ver.10,15. Je.51.44. Pr.6.31. Ex.22.1.
1 Heb. *according to the substance of his exchange.*
x Pr.22.22,23. Mat. 5.42. Ja.2.13. Mi.2.2.
2 Heb. *crushed.*
y Ec.5.13,14. Lu.12. 20. ch.1.13–19,21.
3 Heb. *know.*
4 Or, *There shall be none left for his meat.*
z Lu.16.24. Je.17.11; 22.19. ch.18.19;7.21.
5 Not even a crumb to feed a dog or a beggar during his life, nor anything for heirs or creditors after his death.—*C.*
a Lu.12.19. Re.18.8. ch.18.7.
b Or, *troublesome,* ch.1.15,17.
c Nu.11.33. Ps.78.30, 31; 11.6. ch.1.13–19. Ge. 19.24. De.32.34,35. Lu. 17.28,29.
d Pr.5.22. Is.24.18. Je.48.43,44. Am.5.19; 9.1–3.
e De.32.41. ch.16.13; 18.11. Ju.3.21,22. Ps.73. 19.
6 Having therefore penetrated the liver to which the gall-cyst is attached, and rendered recovery hopeless.—*C.*
f ch.18,5,6. Is.8.22; 30.33. Jude 13. De.32. 34,35. Mat.3.12; 8.12. Ps.21.9.
7 Every horror treasured up in reserve for him.—*M. Good.*
8 The internal fire of a guilty and accusing conscience.—*C.*

—Let me blush to behold an ancient patriarch, amidst his darkest nights of trouble, with clearer views of Jesus and eternal things, and his happy interest therein, than I, upon whom the light of the glorious gospel hath so clearly shined.

CHAPTER XX. Interrupting Job, Zophar the Naamathite in no small fury replied, 2. My thoughts make me burn and swell with matter of refutation, and oblige me to answer; therefore, highly provoked with thy speech, I make haste to the dispute, as a person fully prepared. 3. I have indeed heard a most reproachful answer to my own and my friend's former speeches, but my heart enables me to answer in the most prudent and considerate manner. 4, 5. Knowest thou not, that all along from the creation the prosperity of a wicked man and hypocrite has been very short-lived and momentary. 6. Though his high-towering excellency mount up to heaven, and his temporal honours and happiness be advanced to the highest pitch, 7–9. He shall quickly perish in the most disgraceful and contemptible manner, without any hope of recovery. 10. His children, in their wretchedness, shall court the favour of the meanest, or attempt to satisfy them for the wrongs done to them by their father; and the works of his hands shall render him sorrow for his reward. 11. His youthful and secret wickedness shall bring such distempers upon him as shall hasten him to his grave, and shall attend him to hell. 12–14. If he with great fondness and pleasure indulged himself in his wickedness, it shall prove most bitter, unwholesome, painful, and destructive to him in the fearful miseries attending it. 15. The riches which he has greedily and unjustly got into his possession, he shall be forced to restore with great shame and torment. God shall so torment him with trouble and anguish of mind that he shall be sick of them. 16. That which he has been so eager in getting shall bring upon him the most terrible, painful, and destructive judgments. 17. Never shall he enjoy the least real comfort in all his plenty of outward things. 18. He shall be obliged to restore the hire which he unjustly withheld; nay, even what he laboured for

shall[g] go ill with him that is left in his tabernacle.

27 The [h]heaven shall reveal his iniquity; and the earth shall rise up against him.[g]

28 The[i] increase of his house shall depart, *and his goods* shall flow away in the day of his [k]wrath.

29 This[l] *is* the portion of a wicked man from God, and the heritage appointed unto him by God.[1]

CHAPTER XXI.

1 Job showeth that even in the judgment of man he hath reason to be grieved. 7 Sometimes the wicked do so prosper that they are tempted to despise God. 16 Sometimes their destruction is manifest. 23 The happy and unhappy are alike in death. 27 The judgment of the wicked is in another world.

BUT Job answered and said,

2 Hear[a] diligently my speech, and let this be your [b]consolations.[1]

3 Suffer me that I may speak; and after that I have spoken, [c]mock on.

4 As for me, [d]*is* my complaint to man? and, if *it were so,* why should not my spirit be troubled?[2]

5 Mark me,[3] and [e]be astonished, and [f]lay *your* hand upon *your* mouth.

6 Even when I remember [g]I am afraid, and trembling taketh hold on my flesh.

7 Wherefore[h] do the wicked live, become old, yea, are [i]mighty in power?

A.M. cir. 2484. B.C. cir. 1520.

g Ex.20.5. Ps.109.9-15. Is. 14. 21, 22. ch.18. 19.

h Ro.1.18. Is. 26.21. 1 Co.4.5.

9 The *heaven,* as by the lightning and storm (ch. 1. 16, 19); the *earth,* as by its inhabitants, the Sabeans and Chaldeans, ch.1.16,17.—*C.*

i Re. 18. 14. 2 Ki. 20. 17.ch.5.5.

k ver.23; ch.5.2. De. 29.20,21.

l ch.27.13; 18.21; 31. 2.Ps.11.5,6. Mat.24.51. Ro.2.8,9;6.23.

1 Heb. *of his decree from God.*

CHAP. XXI.

a ch.33.1,31;34.2. Ja. 1.19.

b ch.15.11.

1 Let this produce your retractations, for the word translated *consolations* signifies also to change a man's mind. —*C.*

c ch.12.4,5; 16. 9, 10; 17.2.

d 2 Ki.6.26,27. Ps.22. 1-3;102. title.

2 Heb. *shortened.* [That is, Why should I not be impatient? You trouble me with your vain words, and I am wearied and weakened by disease. I feel unable, therefore, longer to endure your reproaches.—*P.*]

3 Heb. *Look unto me.*

e ch.17.8. Ps.119.120. Ro.11.33.

f Ju.18.19. ch. 29. 9; 40.4. Ps.39.9. Am.5.13.

g Ps. 119. 120. Hab. 3.16.

h Ps.17. 10; 73.3-12. Je. 12.1-3. Hab. 1. 16. ch.12.6. Ec.7.15.

i Re.13.4;17.2-4. Ps. 37.35,36. Lu.12. 16-20; 16.19,22.

A.M. cir. 2484. B.C. cir. 1520.

k Pr. 17. 6, with ch. 20,5;10,21,26,28.

4 Heb. are *peace from fear.*

l Ps.73.5.ch.9.34.

m Ps.144.13,14. Ex. 23.26.

n Ps.107.41;127.3-5; 128.3,6;144.12,13.

o Ge.4.21. Am.6.5,6. Is.22.13;5.12.

6 The pipe (*Boothroyd, Good*).—*C.*

p ch.36. 11. Ps.73.4. Mat. 24. 38, 39. Lu. 12. 19.

6 Or, *in mirth.*

7 That is, without lengthened sickness or any ardent and continued infliction to mark the divine displeasure.—*C.*

q ch.22.17. Lu.19.14. Mal.3.14, 15; 1. 13. Je. 12.2.

r Ex.5.2. Pr.30.9. ch. 35.3. Mal.3.14, with Is. 45.11,19. Mat.7.7.

s Ps. 52. 7. ch. 1. 21. De.8.18.

t Ps.1.1. Ge.49.6. Pr. 1.10-19;5.8.

8 Lo! their prosperity is not in their own keeping—far be from me the advocacy of the wicked. *C.*—The first clause of this verse is Job's judgment regarding the source of the wicked's prosperity; it is not from themselves, it is the gift of that God whom they deny. Then in the 2d clause he expresses his abhorrence of their conduct—far be it from me to act as they act.—*P.*

u ch. 18. 5, 6, 12. Ps. 73.18-20.

9 Or, *lamp.*

x Ps. 32. 10. Ho. 13. 13. Lu.12.46.1 Th.5.3.

y Ps.1.4. Is.17.13; 29. 5. Ho.13.3.

1 Heb *stealeth away.*

z That is, *the punishment of his iniquity,* Ex.20.5. Ps.109. 9-15. Is.14.21. Re.18.6. Eze.18.14.

8 Their [k]seed is established in their sight with them, and their offspring before their eyes.

9 Their houses *are* safe from [l]fear, [m]neither *is* the rod of God upon them.

10 Their[m] bull gendereth, and faileth not; their cow calveth, and casteth not her calf.

11 They[n] send forth their little ones like a flock, and their children dance.

12 They [o]take the timbrel and harp, and rejoice at the sound of the organ.[5]

13 They [p]spend their days in wealth,[6] and in a moment[7] go down to the grave.

14 Therefore[q] they say unto God, Depart from us; for we desire not the knowledge of thy ways.

15 What[r] *is* the Almighty, that we should serve him? and what profit should we have, if we pray unto him?

16 Lo, [s]their good *is* not in their hand: the counsel of the wicked [t]is far from me.[8]

17 How [u]oft is the candle[9] of the wicked put out? and *how oft* cometh their destruction upon them? *God* [z]distributeth sorrows in his anger.

18 They are as [y]stubble before the wind, and as chaff that the storm carrieth away.[1]

19 God layeth up [z]his iniquity for his children: he rewardeth him, and he shall know *it.*

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shall be cursed to him, and quickly lost along with his unjust gain; and he shall have no comfort in anything he has. 19. Because he furiously oppressed the poor till he rendered them destitute, and violently seized houses which he built not. 20. Therefore shall he have no solid satisfaction in his own mind, but be in pain, as a travailing woman; and shall be deprived of all his desirable things. 21. He shall scarcely have wherewith to sustain himself in life, and shall have no goods left for any to look after. 22. In the very height of his prosperity he shall be terribly distressed; and even his fellows in impiety shall concur to render him miserable. 23. Whenever he shall attempt to satisfy himself in what he has, some extraordinary judgment shall of a sudden overtake him. 24. When he shall attempt to avoid one danger, another more dreadful shall overtake him; 25. And terribly shall the judgments of God torment and destroy him. Horrors of conscience shall seize upon him, as one who cannot live, and who dares not die. 26. Every kind of fearful calamities shall be reserved for him as his treasure, and shall follow him wherever he thinks to hide himself. Some awful judgment, which comes none knows how, shall consume him. His posterity and family shall, for his sake, be cursed of God, and entirely wasted and ruined. 27. God, by remarkable judgments of thunder, lightning, or the like, shall discover his notorious wickedness; and all creatures on earth shall exert themselves for his ruin. 28. His estate, which he had got by the labour of his family, shall quickly be taken from him, or destroyed, in the day when God manifests his wrath against him. 29. This is the portion and reward which God has allotted to impious and insolent sinners.

Ver. 16. [The *pethen* and *epheh* are the two serpents mentioned; most probably the *bætan* and *effah* of the Arabians, both remarkable for the rapid and fatal effects of their poison. *C.*]

REFLECTIONS.—Alas! the most confident and forward in a dispute are seldom in the right: and with such the kindest warning is interpreted into an affront, and returned with insolence; and the dictates of passion pass for the arguments of reason. The truths of God are often, as here, excellently explained, but miserably applied. Short-lived is a wicked man's prosperity and a hypocrite's profession. If not in this life, sin and ruin shall in the next appear certainly inseparable. And the higher men tower in sinful prosperity, their fall into the pit of destruction shall be the more dreadful. What terrible consequences have the often unthought-of sins of youth! Bitter are the issues of those sins which are reckoned sweet; and inexpressible the loss of those which are reckoned gainful. Where God's curse lies there can be no real felicity. But dreadful shall it be to the wicked when all their dreams of happiness shall be disappointed, their secret sins revealed, and the wrath of God shall take an everlasting hold of them! Let the sound of destruction—terrible destruction—everlasting destruction, that is in my ears, drive me to Jesus Christ, and the everlasting redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of my sins, according to the riches of his grace.

CHAPTER XXI. Job immediately replied, 2. Instead of pretending to comfort me, patiently and attentively hear my speech. 3. Permit me freely to declare my mind without interrupting me; and when I have finished my pertinent reasoning mock on as long as you please. 4. I have made my appeal to God; and had it been to man, I could not but be vexed to find myself thus interrupted, reproached, and abused. 5. To see in me a religious and upright man so fearfully afflicted, might overwhelm you with the most confounding astonishment at the awfully dark providence of God, and at least make you willing to hold your peace while I speak. 6. For truly, when I think on it, I am filled with the most terrifying awe of his awful judgments. 7. But if wicked men always meet with such fearful calamities as you have pretended, whence is it that many of them, for a long time, flourish in uncommon prosperity and power? 8. Nay, live to see their children, and children's children, settled and prosperous? 9. Their habitations and families live in peace and security, and are not loaded with any afflictions; 10. While their cattle are extremely healthful, prosperous, and fruitful, 11, 12. Their wives with the greatest ease bring forth multitudes of children, who employ themselves in nothing but carnal joy and mirth. 13. Even unto old age they spend their days in earthly prosperity and carnal indulgence, and at last die very easily, without any sense of pain. 14, 15. Gratified and puffed up with their prosperity, they in the most daring manner testify their dislike and contempt of the knowledge, service, and worship of God. 16. It is God, however, not themselves, who renders them wealthy and powerful. Yet far be it from me to join with them in their impiety; 17. But let facts speak for themselves. How often are wicked men's shining prosperity and honour extinguished by fearful judgments and justly merited destruction? How often does God, as by lot, distribute to them entangling bonds of trouble and sorrow in his anger? 18. How often are they of a sudden fearfully carried away before the sweeping whirlwinds of his awful judgments? 19. How often are either wicked men's children or themselves rewarded with fearful punishments? 20. How often do wicked men on earth experience the distinguishing judgments and hot burning wrath of the Almighty? 21. And though their children should prosper, what pain, care, or pleasure can they have about their house and family when they are cut off by an early death? 22. Dare any of you pretend to teach God how to govern the world, and whom to prosper and whom not? or to prescribe rules by which he must judge men, who, even the highest, are in death but the food of worms? 23, 24. Some men, both good and bad, die in the very prime of their life, and height of their prosperity, and in a very easy manner. 25. Others die amidst torments of body and anguish of mind, without ever partaking of earthly happiness or pleasure: 26. They lie down together in the same condition in the grave, and the vermin make an equal prey of both; so that none can tell who is good or who is bad by any external events. 27. I can indeed easily foresee what you, in your reproachful speeches and imaginations, will think and say. 28. You will ask, What is become of my own once princely family and of the dwellings of my children? And if Providence hath not plainly marked us out for wicked by the fearful judgments which have befallen us? 29, 30. But cannot even the most common passenger tell you that they have observed that wicked men are often preserved, as in a secret place, amidst destructive judgments, and are carried forth with pomp in the day of overflowing wrath, and the punishment of their crimes reserved for the other world? 31. Their power is often so great on earth that nobody dare reprove or can punish them for their crimes. 32. Nay, they are brought in pomp to the grave, and honourably and quietly rest in their tombs. 33. They sleep as quietly in their graves as the best; and all men, whether good or bad, by little and little follow them into that state of the dead, without any visible difference betwixt them. 34. Why then attempt ye to comfort me with unsubstantial hopes of

20 His[a] eyes shall see his destruction, and he shall drink of the wrath of the Almighty.

21 For what [b]pleasure *hath* he in his house after him, when the number of his months is cut off [c]in the midst?

22 Shall[d] *any* teach God knowledge? seeing he judgeth those that are [e]high.

23 One dieth [f]in his full strength, being wholly at ease and quiet;

24 His[g] breasts[2] are full of milk, and his bones are moistened with marrow:

25 And[h] another dieth in the bitterness of his soul, and never eateth with pleasure.

26 They shall lie down [i]alike in the dust, and the [k]worms shall cover them.

27 Behold, I know your [l]thoughts, and the devices *which* ye wrongfully imagine against me.

28 For ye say, Where *is* the [m]house of the prince? and where *are* the dwelling-places of the wicked?[3]

29 Have ye not asked them that [n]go by the way?[4] and do ye not know their tokens,

30 That the wicked [o]is reserved to the day of destruction? they shall be brought forth to the day[5] of wrath.[6]

31 Who[p] shall declare his way to his face? and who shall repay him *what* he hath done?

32 Yet[q] shall he be brought to the grave,[7] and shall remain in the tomb.[8]

33 The clods of the valley shall be [r]sweet unto him, and [s]every man shall draw after him, as *there are* innumerable before him.[9]

34 How [t]then comfort ye me in vain, seeing in your answers there remaineth falsehood?[1]

A.M. cir. 2484.
B.C. cir. 1520.

a Je.52.10;25.15. Ps. 75.8. Re.14.10;20.15.
b ch.14.21.
c Ps.55.23;102.24.
d Is.40.13, 14; 45. 9. Ro.11.34. 1 Co.2.16.
e ch.34.17–19. Ge.18 25. Ec.5.8.
f Heb. *in his very perfection*, or *in the strength of his perfection*, ch.20.22. Ec.9.1–3.
g Ps. 73. 4, 7; 17. 10, with ch.15.27.
2 Or, *milk-pails*. [The original word occurs nowhere else in Scripture, but is found in the Arabic, and signifies the green pastures around ponds where camels are led to drink (*Schultens*). Its collocation, however, and contrast with *bones*, seem to establish the authorized translation, which is well explained by a reference to Is. 60.16.—*C.*]
h Mat.27.3–5. Ec.6. 2.ch.3.20. Ru. 1. 20,21. He.2.15.
i Ec.9.2.ch.3.18.
k Is.14.11. Ps. 49.14, ch.17.14;19.25.
l ch.20.5.;9.4.8–11.
m ch.1.13–19.Ge.19. 24;9.5–7. Ps.49.11.
3 Heb. *the tent of the tabernacles of the wicked.*
n ch.31.32. Ps.109.8.
4 Have ye not inquired of travellers, and do you not know their remarks (*Boothroyd, Good*).—*C.*
o Pr. 16.4,5; 11.21. 2 Pe.2.9;ch.3.5,6.
5 Heb. *the day of wraths.*
6 An evidence unquestionable that Job believed in the resurrection and future judgment. See Ro.2. 5.—*C.*
p Ju.1.7.2 Ki.25.6,7. Mat.12.4,34; 7.2. Ga.2. 11. Ja.5.13.
q ch.3.13. Lu.16.22.
7 Heb. *graves.*
8 Heb. *watch in the heap.*
r ch.3.17,18;14.21.
s He.9.27. ch. 30.23. Ge.3.19. Ec.12.7.
9 All shall follow to the grave, as all that have preceded. The generations of men are but one great funeral procession—some *before* the bier, others following *behind* the dead.—*C.*
t ch.13.4;16.2.
1 Heb. *transgressions.*

A.M. cir. 2484.
B.C. cir. 1520.

CHAP. XXII.

a ch.35. 2. Ps. 16. 2. Lu.17. 10. 1 Ch. 29. 14. Ro.11.35,36.
1 Or, *if he may be profitable*, doth his *good success* depend thereon?
b Pr.9.12. De. 10.13. Ga.6.9.1 Co.15.58.
c ch.35.6,7. Is. 65. 5. Lu.18.9–14.
d Ps.39.11; 76. 6; 80. 16. He.12.6,7.
e Ge.13.13;19.13. Ps. 19.13;25.11.2 Sa.24.10.
f Ex.22.26,27. De.24. 10–13. Eze. 18. 10. ch. 31. 16–22.
2 Heb. *stripped the clothes off the naked.*
g Pr.3.27. Ja.2.15,16. Is.58.7.
3 Heb. *the man of arm.*
h Ps.12.8; 17.14. Ja. 2.1–3.
4 Heb. *eminent*, or *accepted for countenance.*
5 You did not interfere against the powerful, and as a judge you accepted the persons of men, and decided in their favour without due investigation.—*C.*
i De.27.19. Ps. 94. 6. ch.24.3,21, with 29.12–17;31.16–22.
k ch. 18. 8–10; 19. 6. Ps.11.6.
l 1 Sa.28. 20. He. 10. 26,27. ch.9.28;31.23. Is. 24.17,18.
m ch. 18. 6–18; 20.5–29. La.3.1,2. Is.8.22.
n Ps.69.1, 2; 42.7;32. 6. Is.43.1,2.
o Ps.115.3. Is.66.1;14. 13,14.
6 Heb. *the head of the stars.*
p Ps.73.11, 12; 94. 7; 10. 11, 14. Zep. 1. 12. Eze.8.12;9.9.
7 Or, *What.*
q Ps.139.12;97.2. ch. 34.21,22.
r Eze.8.12; 9.9, with Ps. 14. 2; 33. 13, 14. Is. 40.22.
8 Walketh only in the circuit of heaven, and so far from the inspection of the world. This was the very doctrine of certain of the Epicurean philosophers, who did not deny the being of a God or gods, but placed him (rather them) above the care of a particular providence.—*C.*

CHAPTER XXII.

1 *Eliphaz showeth that man's goodness profiteth not God.* 5 *He accuseth Job of divers sins.* 21 *He exhorteth him to repentance, with promises of mercy.*

THEN Eliphaz the Temanite answered and said,

2 Can[a] a man be profitable unto God,[1] as he that is wise may be profitable [b]unto himself?

3 *Is* [c]*it* any pleasure to the Almighty, that thou art righteous? or *is it* gain *to him*, that thou makest thy ways perfect?

4 Will he [d]reprove thee for fear of thee? will he enter with thee into judgment?

5 *Is* not thy wickedness [e]great? and thine iniquities infinite?

6 For [f]thou hast taken a pledge from thy brother for nought, and stripped the naked of their clothing:[2]

7 Thou[g] hast not given water to the weary to drink, and thou hast withholden bread from the hungry.

8 But *as for* the mighty man,[3] he [h]had the earth; and the honourable[4] man dwelt in it.[5]

9 Thou[i] hast sent widows away empty, and the arms of the fatherless have been broken.

10 Therefore [k]snares *are* round about thee, and sudden [l]fear troubleth thee;

11 Or [m]darkness, *that* thou canst not see; [n]and abundance of waters cover thee.

12 *Is*[o] not God in the height of heaven? and behold the height of the stars,[6] how high they are!

13 And thou sayest, [p]How[7] doth God know? can he judge through the dark cloud?

14 Thick[q] clouds *are* a covering to him, that he seeth not; and he walketh in [r]the circuit of [s]heaven.

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future happiness? And why doth the vilest prevarication, inconsistent with the cause of God or your duty, continue to be the whole sum of your discourses?

Ver. 7. [Job here meets his accusers on their own ground. He shows them that the patent facts of the divine government do not harmonize with the principles laid down by them. According to their theory the wicked alone are judged and punished. But Job points them to the case of wicked men who, notwithstanding notorious wickedness, are yet rich, prosperous, joyous, and full of children. *P.*]

Ver. 19. [*God layeth up his iniquity for his children.* Not an unjust, but a most merciful dispensation of God; for many who disregarded themselves have been moved to conversion by seeing the evil consequences their wicked examples and principles were entailing upon their offspring. *C.*]

Ver. 22. [*High.* He ruleth those that are *on high*, the principalities and powers in heaven; who then on earth shall instruct him in its government? *C.*]

Ver. 26. [All this being true—the wicked, whether in the enjoyment of full temporal prosperity, or pinched by poverty and wasted by disease, come to the same end, and are laid in the same grave. Such being the case, what is become of the law of retribution in this world, as maintained by the friends? *P.*]

Ver. 34. [This is the summing up—the application of the whole argument. Seeing your arguments are so fallacious, your words so illogical, why do ye attempt to comfort me? It is a mockery and an insult. *P.*]

REFLECTIONS.—Those who are once engaged in hot disputes often lose their way through want of attention to their opponents. But what a mercy it is that saints have a gracious God to complain to when their friends refuse to hear what they say, or to regard their distress! And though the present dispensations of Providence sometimes stagger the faith and hope of the best of men, the last judgment will make all clear and plain. What a certain fact, and often a sad stumbling-block to the godly, is the prosperity of wicked men! It often hardens them in presumptuous impiety to their own destruction; but it will never reconcile a tender saint to their manner of life. It entails upon themselves and families at last the greatest misery. And however different their lot on earth or the manner of their death, or pompous their burial, everlasting punishment in hell shall be their final portion. Let therefore their heart, their counsel, their practice, be far from me. And while I adore the high wisdom of God in his providence, let me never comfort myself with vain words! Where there is no truth there can be no solid comfort.

CHAPTER XXII. Imagining that Job had accused God of injustice, in suffering the wicked to prosper and the righteous to be afflicted, Eliphaz, in great anger, replied, 2. Darest thou imagine that God is a gainer by our virtue, as we ourselves are, and so bound to reward us for it? 3. Can it add anything to his joy or profit that thou art ever so righteous and perfect? 4. Dost thou imagine that he corrects thee out of reverence to thee, or for fear thou shouldest hurt him? Will he, for fear of thee, either punish thee or give thee an account of his conduct? 5. Are not thy own monstrous and unnumbered iniquities the true cause of thy fearful sufferings? 6. For without any just cause thou hast taken pledges from thy very brethren, and hast in the cruelest manner deprived the poor of their small remains of the preservatives of life. 7. Most inhumanly thou hast withheld from the weary and starving, the most cheap and common supports of their life. 8. But the man who was high-born, wealthy, and honoured, was thy favourite, and had thy land and estate at his service, and was sure to carry his cause at thy tribunal. 9. Thou hast spoiled widows of their just property, and cruelly oppressed, broken, and crushed the orphans, depriving them of all their supports and comforts. 10. Therefore entangling troubles and dangers are everywhere round about thee, and sudden fears and terrible judgments affright thee. 11. Fearful troubles and perplexities so overwhelm thee that thou hast neither a comfortable sense nor hope of relief left; and multitudes of afflictions have with violence burst forth upon thee. 12. Is not God higher in place and dignity than the loftiest stars which thou observest? 13, 14. But like an atheist, you seem to think that God cannot know, or doth not care, what is done upon earth, but merely amuses himself in walking round the heavens. 15. Hast thou not eagerly followed, rather than prudently observed, the conduct or fate of those companions of vanity and wickedness who lived before the flood? 16. To whose horrid impieties God put a stop, by destroying them before their time, and carrying them off the earth by an overflowing deluge. 17. Who, in the most insolent manner, wished to have nothing to do with God, and imagined that nothing he could do for them could really profit them? 18. Yet it was he who granted them their whole prosperity. But God forbid that I should ever join in either principles, purposes, or practices with such abandoned wretches. 19. The righteous shall with pleasure behold the destruction of such men, as a vindication of the honour, holiness, and justice of God; and shall deride their folly in taking such courses as issue therein. 20. While the estates of such as are truly pious and virtuous remain unhurt by the providence of God, those who imitate these ancient sinners are consumed by thunder, lightning, or some other fearful judgment. 21. But since God hath not entirely consumed thee, try, without a moment's delay, to get the spiritual knowledge of God; accustom thyself to him by re-

15 Hast thou marked the [s]old way which wicked men have trodden?

16 Which [t]were cut down out of time, whose foundation [u]was overflown with a flood;

17 Which said unto God, [x]Depart from us; and what can the Almighty do for them?[9]

18 Yet he [y]filled their houses with good *things:* but [z]the counsel of the wicked is far from me.[1]

19 The [a]righteous see *it,*[2] and are glad; and the innocent laugh them to scorn:

20 Whereas our substance[3] is not cut down, but the remnant[4] of them the [b]fire consumeth.[5]

21 Acquaint[c] now thyself with[6] him,[7] and [d]be at peace: thereby [e]good shall come unto thee.

22 Receive,[f] I pray thee, the law from his mouth, and [g]lay up his words in thine heart.

23 If[h] thou return to the Almighty, thou shalt be built up, thou shalt [i]put away iniquity far from thy tabernacles.

24 Then [j]shalt thou lay up gold as dust,[8] and the *gold* of Ophir as the stones of the brooks.

25 Yea, the Almighty shall be thy [k]defence, and thou shalt have plenty[9] of silver.[1]

26 For then shalt thou [l]have thy delight in the Almighty, and shalt [m]lift up thy face unto God.

27 Thou [n]shalt make thy prayer unto him, and he shall hear thee, and thou shalt pay thy vows.

28 Thou shalt also [o]decree a thing, and it shall be established unto thee; and the [p]light shall shine upon thy ways.

29 When[q] *men* are cast down, then thou shalt say, *There is* lifting up; and he [r]shall save [s]the humble person.

30 He[t] shall deliver the island[2] of the innocent: and it is delivered by the pureness of thine hands.

A.M. cir. 2284.
B.C. cir. 1520.

s Ge. 6. 5, 11–13, or ch.34.7,8.
t ch.15.32. Ps. 55.23; 37.35,36;129.5,6. Ec. 7. 17.
u Heb. *foundation was a flood poured out,* Ge.7.10–24.2 Pe.2. 5.
x ch.21.14. Mat.8.29, 34.
[9] Or, *to them.*
y Ps.17.14. Ac.14.15 –17. Je.12.1,2.
z ch.21.16. Ps.1.1. See note on ch.21. 16.—*C.*
a Ps.107.42;58.10;48. 11;91.8;97.8. Re.18.20; 19.1–3.
[2] Let the righteous see it.—*M. Good.*
[3] Or, *estate.*
[4] Or, *their excellency.*
b Ge.19.24. 2 Pe.2.6, 7. ch.20.26;21.16.
[5] Does not this passage from ver. 16 refer to the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, and not to the flood of Noah? The parties mentioned (ver. 16) had literally their 'foundation overflown with a flood,' the waters of the Dead Sea; and 'the remnant,' rather the excellency, of them 'the fire consumed;' and they are still 'set forth for an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire,' Jude 7. —*C.*
c 1 Ch.28.9. Ps.46.10.
[6] That is, *with God.*
[7] Instead of questioning his omniscience (ver. 13), or bidding him depart, ver.17.—*C.*
d Mat.5.25. Is. 27.5. Phi.4.7.
e Mat.6.33. 1 Ti.4.8. Is.1.19;3.10.
f Eze.3.17. De.4.1,2.
g Ps.119.11. Pr.4.21. Mat.13.9. Lu. 2.19,51. ch.23.12.
h ch.8.5, 6; 11. 13; 8. 1;9.13. Ho.14.1,2.
i 2 Ti.2.19.
j 2 Ch.1.15;9.27.
[8] Or, *on the dust.*
k Or, *gold,* Ps.16.5, 6. 2 Ti.4.8. Mic. 6. 33. Ec.3.18.
[9] Heb. *silver of strength.*
[1] Mountains of silver.—*M. Good.*
l Ps.37.4. Ca.2.3. ch. 27.10.
m ch. 11. 15. 1 Jn. 3. 21.
n Ps.50.14,15; 91.15; 66. 13, 14, 17–20; cxvi. cxviii.; 56. 12, 13; 61. 8. Is.58.9.

A.M. cir. 2484.
B.C. cir. 1520.

r Ja. 4. 6. 1 Pe. 5. 5. Lu.14.11.
s Heb. *him that hath low eyes,* Ps.138. 6. Is.62.2.
t Or, *The innocent shall deliver the island,* ch.42.8. Ge.18. 32. Je.5.1. Eze.22.30.
[2] The house.—*M. Good.* A house may have been called 'island,' as commonly insulated by a *fosse* or other defence, in a country so exposed to predatory incursions as the land of Uz in the days of Job.—*C.*

CHAP. XXIII.

a Ps.77.2–9.
b ch.10.1; 6.2,3. La. 3.19,20.
[1] Heb. *hand.*
[2] That is, the stroke whereby I am smitten. The Septuagint accordingly reads 'his (God's) stroke.'—*C.*
c ch. 31. 35–37; 13. 3; 16.21;17.3. Ps.77.1. Ju. 2.1–5. Ca.1.2;3.1–3. Is. 40.8;55.6,7.
d ch.13.3,18. Ps. 35. 1–3;51.1;15.3. Is.41.21.
e ch.10.2; 13.22,23. 1 Co 4 3.
f Is.27.4,8; 57.16. ch. 9.3,9,19;13.21. Je.10.24. Ho.12.3,4.
g He.4.16;10.22. Ro. 8.33,34. Is.1.18. Ho.14. 2,3.
[3] 'By my judge.'—*Boothroyd.*
h ch.9.11;34.29. 1 Ti. 6.16. Ps.10.1;13.1–3;44. 24. Is.45.15.ver.3.
[4] I cannot comprehend the objects of his providence—no uncommon state with afflicted men. The knowledge of Jesus Christ, and him crucified, is the only light of the sufferer in the day of sorrow and darkness.—*C.*
i Ps.139.1,23,6. He. 4.13.
[5] *Approveth,* Ps. 1. 6. The way of a godly man is Jesus alone. See Jn. 14. 6. —*C.*
[6] Heb. *the way* that is *with me.*
j Ps.17.3;66.10. 1 Pe. 1.7. He.12.6–11. Is.48 10. Mal.3.3.
k Ep. 2.1. Ps. 18. 21; 44.17,18. Re.2.10.
l ch.22.27. Ps.119.11. 72,103,97, 111; 19. 9, 10. Jn.4.34.
[7] Heb. *I have hid* or *laid up,* Ps.119.11.

31 Whereby [u]my foot hath held his steps, his way have I kept, and not declined.

32 Neither have I gone back from the commandment of his lips; [v]I have esteemed[7] the

CHAPTER XXIII.

1 *Job longeth to appear before God,* 6 *in confidence of being heard with mercy and acquitted.* 8 *God, though invisible, observeth our ways.* 11 *Job's innocency.* 13 *God's decree is immutable.*

THEN Job answered and said,

2 Even [a]to-day *is* my complaint [b]bitter: my [1]stroke[2] is heavier than my groaning.

3 Oh[c] that I knew where I might find him! *that* I might come *even* to his seat!

4 I [d]would order *my* cause before him, and fill my mouth with arguments.

5 I [e]would know the words *which* he would answer me, and understand what he would say unto me.

6 Will[f] he plead against me with *his* great power? No; but he would put *strength* in me.

7 There[g] the righteous might dispute with him; so should I be delivered for ever from my judge.[3]

8 Behold, [h]I go forward, but he *is* not *there;* and backward, but I cannot perceive him:[4]

9 On the left hand, where he doth work, but I cannot behold *him:* he hideth himself on the right hand, that I cannot see *him.*

10 But [i]he knoweth the way[5] that I [6]take: *when* he [j]hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold.

11 My [k]foot hath held his steps; his way have I kept, and not declined.

12 Neither have I gone back from the commandment of his lips; [l]I have esteemed[7] the

o Ps.20.4;21.4. Pr.16.3. Is.45.11.2 Sa.7.29. Mat.21.22.
p Ps.1.3;80.3,19;119.105.
q Ps.9.1–10. ch.5.19–26.

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peated supplications; receive peace from him; and quietly submit to him by an unfeigned repentance. Thus shall all manner of blessings, temporal and eternal, come to thee. 22. Receive, and duly meditate on, the instructive revelations which he may be pleased to afford thee. 23. If by a true faith and sincere repentance thou turn to the Lord, thou shalt be again advanced to thy former honours and prosperity; and the punishment which thy sins have brought upon thee shall be removed far from thee and whatever belongs to thee. 24. Then shalt thou lay up gold, and fine gold, in such amazing plenty, and with such ease, as if they were the most common things. 25. For the all-sufficient and almighty God shall be thy portion and the protector of thy treasures; and thou shalt have astonishing heaps of silver. 26. Thou shalt delight thyself in the enjoyment of God's love and favour; and shalt with confidence and comfort present thyself at his throne of grace, and hope for his eternal felicity. 27. With sweet pleasure shall he hear thy prayers; and thou shalt pay thy vows of gratitude to him with the warmest affection. 28. Whatever thou hast purposed shall be accomplished; and divine direction, success, and comfort shall attend all thy proceedings. 29. When wicked men around thee are distressed or destroyed, thou shalt confidently expect honour and felicity; and God shall bring to eminent and extensive happiness the person who is cast down in his own eyes. 30. Nay, at thy request he shall marvellously deliver not only many innocents, but even the guilty, and their country, by means of thy prayers, piety, and virtue.

Ver. 2. [Eliphaz charges Job with presumption. He accuses him of magnifying himself in the sight of God. His argument is to this effect:—'Can even a *great man* (such is the meaning of the Hebrew term) be profitable to God? Thou seemest to think that God is thy debtor, on the ground of thy righteousness. But suppose that thou art righteous, wouldst thou thus be conferring a favour on God? No; by righteousness a wise man is profitable to himself. But I affirm that thou art not righteous, and that thou art injuring thyself by unrighteousness' (*Wordsworth*). *P.*]

Ver. 6. [This being a grievous and direct charge, it is probable that Job, in the midst of his charities which his friends cannot deny (ch. 29. 15; 31. 16–22), had, as a man of business, been careful of his rights, righteous exacting being to the poor themselves frequently better than promiscuous and inconsiderate giving, and that Eliphaz now exaggerates this carefulness and justice into this hideous picture of unfeeling oppression. *C.*]

Ver. 7. [A charge of inhospitality, one of the most grievous in the estimation of the Arabians and their kindred nations. *C.*]

REFLECTIONS.—Nothing can be more absurd than to imagine that we can make God our debtor by anything which we can do. We have nothing good in us, or done by us, but what is God's gift. None are too great for God to humble. And if he spare the wicked, it is not for fear of them, but in patient pity towards them. Even good men, from a pretended regard to God, are apt to charge their neighbour with things which he heartily abhors. But if God's greatness, omniscience, and equity should deter men from crimes, they should also deter us from unjustly charging our neighbour with them. He that condemns the righteous is an abomination to the Lord. How tremendous are the judgments of Heaven, and happy they who can safely rejoice amidst them; or who, in a Christian manner, take warning from them! Through ignorance of and enmity against God, through neglect and contempt of his word, and through obstinate continuance in sin, men lose the greatest blessings and incur the greatest evils. But oh the delight in God, the bold confidence towards him, the intimate fellowship with him, the satisfaction even in managing outward affairs, the safety in times of common calamity, and usefulness towards others—that knowledge of and peace with God, spiritual improvement of God's word, and sincere repentance do produce!

CHAPTER XXIII. Job replied, 2. Notwithstanding all your pretended advices and comforts, I have as much reason for bitter complaints as ever; and my sufferings far exceed my expressions of grief. 3. O that I were admitted into God's own immediate presence, and allowed to present myself before his judgment-seat! 4. I would, in an orderly manner, set the justice of my cause before him, and fully support it with arguments, vindicating myself, and confuting your reproachful allegations. 5. I would insist for his decision whether I be a hypocrite or not; and that he would show me plainly why he hath so afflicted me. 6. Would he employ his infinite power and majesty to bear me down? No; but would mercifully strengthen and encourage me to plead with him. And suppose he should plead against me in the multitude of his strength, he certainly would lay no false charge against me, nor make any hostile attack upon me. 7. For at his throne of grace a righteous person, such as I am, may argue the matter with him; and by this means I should fully and for ever escape condemnation, being acquitted by him as my Judge. 8, 9. I have tried all methods to obtain a fair hearing for my cause before him, but have not hitherto been able to procure it. 10. But he knows the integrity of my heart and life; and whenever I am tried at his bar I shall come off sufficiently vindicated; and it is to render me more holy and pure that he tries me in this furnace of affliction. 11. I have always, in the most fixed and steady manner, followed his pattern and guidance. I have steadfastly observed his commandments without ever

words of his mouth more than my [m]necessary[8] *food.*

13 But he *is* in one *mind,* and [n]who can turn him? and *what* [o]his soul desireth, *even* that he doeth.

14 For he performeth *the thing that is* [p]appointed for me: and [q]many such *things*[9] *are* with him.

15 Therefore [r]am I troubled at his presence: when I consider, I am afraid of him.

16 For God [s]maketh my heart soft,[1] and the Almighty troubleth me:

17 Because I was not cut off [t]before the darkness, *neither* hath he covered the [u]darkness from my face.[2]

CHAPTER XXIV.

1 Wickedness goeth often unpunished. 17 There is a secret judgment for the wicked.

WHY, seeing [a]times are not hidden from the Almighty,[1] do [b]they that know him not see his days?[2]

2 *Some* [c]remove the land-marks; they violently take away flocks, and feed *thereof*,[3]

3 They [d]drive away the ass of the fatherless; they take the widow's ox for a pledge;

4 They[e] turn the needy out of the way: the poor of the earth hide themselves together.[4]

5 Behold, *as* [f]wild asses in the desert, go they forth to their work, rising [g]betimes for a prey; the wilderness *yieldeth* food for them *and* for *their* children.

6 They reap *every one* his corn[5] in the [6]field; and they gather the vintage of the wicked:[7]

7 They [h]cause the naked to lodge without clothing, that *they have* no covering in the cold:

8 They are [i]wet with the showers of the mountains, and embrace the rock for want of shelter:

9 They [k]pluck the fatherless from the breast, and take a pledge of the poor:

10 They [l]cause *him* to go naked without clothing, and they take away the sheaf *from* the hungry;

11 *Which* make oil within their walls, *and* tread *their* wine-presses, and suffer thirst.[8]

12 Men[m] groan from out of the city, and the soul of the wounded crieth out; yet God [n]layeth not folly[9] *to them.*

13 They are of those that [o]rebel against the light; they know not the ways thereof, nor abide in the paths thereof.

14 The[p] murderer, rising with the light, killeth the poor and needy, and in the night is as a thief.

15 The[q] eye also of the adulterer waiteth for the twilight, saying, No eye shall see me; and [r]disguiseth *his* face.

16 In[s] the dark they dig through [t]houses,

A.M. cir. 2484. B.C. cir. 1520.

m Je.15.16.
8 Or, *my appointed portion.*
n ch.9.12, 13; 11. 10; 12.14. Nu.23.19. Mal.3. 6.1 Sa.15.29. Ja.1.17.
o Ps.115.3. Da. 4.34, 35. Mat.20.15.
p 1 Th.3.3. Mi.6.9.
q Da.4.34,35. Ps.115. 3.
9 Such additional judgments, should God please to inflict them.—*C.*
r Hab.3.16. ch.31.23. Ps.119.120;99.177.3.
s Ru 1. 20, 21. 1 Sa. 28.20. Ps.22. 14; 88. 16. Is.57.16.
1 Faint.—*C.*
t Is.57.1.
u ch.1.13–19;2.7; 10. 21,22.
2 O! why can I not draw darkness over my face? Why may not thick darkness cover my face?—*M. Good.*

CHAP. XXIV.

a Ac.1.6,7. Ps.31.15.
1 The diseased state of public morals and events periodically attaining a crisis, in which they strikingly resemble diseases of the human body.—*C.*
b Ps.36.10;107.42,43. Is.2.12. Am.3.7.
2 God's appointed days of judgment, as in the times of Noah, Lot, and the latter days of Jerusalem, Ge. 6.13,7. 13;18.17, 20; 19.15,22. Lu.19.42.—*C.*
c De.19.14;27.17. Pr. 22.28;23.10. Ho.5.10.
3 Or, *feed* them.
d De.24.6–17. ch.22. 6. Ex.22.26,27. 1 Sa.12. 3,4.
e ver.14. Is.10.2. Ps. 109.16. Eze. 18. 12; 22. 29. Pr.30.14;28.28. Am. 8.4,6.
4 Fleeing to the desert to escape punishment, slavery, or death.—*C.*
f ch.11.12. Je. 2. 24. Ho.8.9.
g Pr.4.16. Zep. 3. 7. Ro.3.15. ver.14.

A.M. cir. 2484. B.C. cir. 1520.

5 Heb. *mingled corn,* or *dredge.*
6 Yet are their own fields sown and reaped, so that they are under no temptation to rob because of want; nay, in their wickedness (see marginal reading) they gather the vintage, ver. 11, and enjoy all that luxury could desire.—*C.*
7 Heb. *the wicked gather the vintage.*
h ch.22.6. Ge. 31.40. ver.10.
i Ca.5.2. La.4.5. He. 11.38.
k 2 Ki.4.1. Ex.22.26, 27. ch.22.6.
l ch.22.6; ver.7. 1 Jn. 3. 17. Ja. 2. 15, 16; 5.4. De.25.4; 23. 25. Je. 22. 13, with De.24.19. Lu. 6.1.
8 Between their walls they make them toil at noonday; they make them tread their wine-vats, yet suffer thirst (*M. Good*). They compel them to toil between their walls, the reflection from which would render the heat almost insupportable.—*C.*
m Ex.2.23;3.7. Ps.12 5. Ec.3.16.
n Ps.50.21. Ec. 8.11. Mal.2.17.
9 Regardeth not the supplication.—*M. Good.*
o Jn. 3. 20. Tit. 1. 16. Ro.1.32;2.1–6;3.10–18.
p Ps.10.8–11. Mi.2.1. Pr.4.16. Ep.5.7,11. Ro. 3.15.
q Pr.7.8–27;9.17. Ps. 10.11.2 Pe.2.14.
r Heb. *setteth* his *face in secret,* Ge. 38. 14,15. 1 Ki.14.2; 20. 38; 22.30.
s Ex. 22. 2. Mat. 24. 43,44.
1 The walls of many eastern houses being composed of sun-burned brick or mud.—*C.*

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swerving from them. 12. I have never apostatized from his doctrines nor precepts; and have more earnestly sought, more highly prized, more heartily delighted in, and more carefully stored up his words of revelation, than my necessary food, or most valuable and precious things. 13. But his purposes are unchangeable, and he immovably persists in afflicting me, and does whatever he pleases, without giving to any a reason for his conduct. 14. Whatever trouble he has intended for me he will inflict: and in his purposes and providential conduct there are many instances of deep mystery, of which, though both wise and just, we cannot see the reason. 15. In consideration of his infinite majesty and wondrous and infinite power, I am troubled at the tokens of his anger; and when I leisurely consider his hard dealings with me I am afraid of him. 16. For in his infinite power he hath quite broken and melted my heart with fiery tribulations; and I am in perpetual terror of his inflicting still heavier strokes. 17. For he keeps me still alive under these terrible troubles and perplexities, and refuses me the favour of dying by his fearful and confounding strokes.

REFLECTIONS.—Our groanings should never be heavier than our strokes. God allows us to complain of our troubles, but never to murmur at them. It is becoming for saints to be earnestly desirous of close dealing with God; and to be particular and importunate in their requests at his throne of grace. However men abuse us, God will not only deal in equity, but even in great mercy, with his people. And it is proper always to keep up kind and exalted thoughts of him. They who fly to him in distress shall find their spiritual strength increased by every application; and if he acquit us, we need neither fear nor care who condemn us. But O what dark and perplexing nights of desertion and perplexity are God's choicest saints often afflicted with! Happy are those who, amidst all, cleave to his commandments, walk uprightly in his way, and feed daily by faith on his word! Their trials shall issue to their lasting honour and advantage. But it is sad when the mystery of God's counsels, and the deep wisdom of them, the greatness of his power, and ordinary methods of providence, disquiet instead of composing our minds. Let him do what he will, he cannot but do right. However terrible he is in himself, in Christ he is infinitely engaging. Let us therefore always acquiesce in his works and delight in himself. There is no reason rashly to wish for death when God can so quickly render life a comfort to us and a service to his church.

CHAPTER XXIV. But if God always punishes the wicked in this world, as you pretend, why are not particular seasons of it fixed by him? And why do not those who are best acquainted with him observe those days of judgment of his enemies? 2. Certain it is that in this world some are notoriously covetous and unjust, and even open robbers. 3. They cruelly oppress widows and fatherless children. 4. They harass, terrify, or even imprison the meek, poor, and afflicted. 5. In the most unconcerned manner they carry on their oppressions, and by rapine and violence maintain themselves and families in the desert. 6. They reap fields and gather vintages not their own. 7, 8. They force from the poor whatever they have, till they reduce them to absolute misery, in a state similar to that of wild beasts. 9–11. While they inhumanly deprive infants of their provision, that the enslaved mothers may work, and deprive their poor underlings of the meanest necessaries of life, they force them to labour in the hardest services. 12. Those whom they have oppressed, wounded, or unjustly condemned, mightily cry to God for judgment against them; yet he punishes them not, even in the slightest manner. 13. They sin impudently in the face of the sun, and against the light of nature, conscience, and revelation: they do not approve, delight in, or observe God's laws; and if at any time they stumble on a good action they quickly give it over, however easy and reasonable. 14–17. Hating the light, robbers and unclean persons, in defiance of an all-seeing God, earnestly carry on their murder and whoredom in the night season. 18. Lighter than froth, they rush on every opportunity of uncleanness or bloodshed; their inheritance is spent in the most accursed manner; and they quite disregard the management of the vineyards or other most profitable business. 19. After all the grave, in a quick and easy manner, consumes these notorious sinners. 20. Their very mothers easily forget their death, it is apparently so pleasant. Rottenness shall be sweet to them. They do not become infamous in the world, but their crimes are quickly and altogether forgotten. 21, 22. They abuse barren women, injure widows, and with great activity, craft, and cruelty oppress everybody around. 23. And though men give them presents, that they may have their protection and friendship, they still watch for opportunities to injure these dependants. 24. After being exalted a while they come to their graves as seasonably in appearance, and as easily, as their neighbours. 25. But if you will insist that the wicked are always fearfully punished in this life, I dare challenge the whole world to find me the person who can disprove the facts which I have now stated.

N.B. Ver. 18–20, 23, 24, may be interpreted as a representation of the miserable state of wicked men after all their prosperity.

Ver. 5. [The wild ass—intractable, untamable, rejoicing in its freedom—is an emblem of the nomad Ishmaelite of the Arabian desert. Such too as are poor, who are driven from settled habitations by oppression, seek a refuge in the wide and free desert. It is often the case in the present day that those who are ground down by the tyranny and avarice of Turkish rulers, desert their homes in the agricultural districts of eastern Syria, and escape to the wilderness. *P.*——*Go they forth.* Who? Not the poor (ver. 4), but the unjust oppressors described in ver. 2, 3, &c., whose work becomes the robbery of the caravans in the wilderness, as it has continued downwards through all their generations. *C.*]

Ver. 18. [The general idea here is the quickness with which the wicked man passes away. True he may live to an old age; yet at length he must return to dust. There is no hope for him. *P.*]

REFLECTIONS.—There is no doubt but that all sin will be punished; and none can know either love or hatred by all that is before him in his outward lot. While the saints and poor, who are in the mind of God, are remarkably afflicted, the most daring sinners are often remarkably prosperous in this world. But the Lord has not forsaken the earth: he takes notice of every injury done to his children. And however long his patience may bear with the presumptuous insult of sinners to his character and government, he will resent their wickedness at last. Even when they are most secure they are least safe. Though their success promise them impunity a while,

which they had marked for themselves in the day-time:[2] they [t]know not the light.

17 For the morning *is* to them even [u]as the shadow of death: if *one* know *them, they are in* the terrors of the shadow of death.

18 He *is* [v]swift as the waters;[3] their portion is cursed in the earth: he [y]beholdeth not the way of the vineyards.[4]

19 Drought and heat consume[5] the snow-waters; *so* [z]*doth* the grave *those which* have sinned.

20 The womb shall forget him;[6] the worm shall [a]feed sweetly on him; he [b]shall be no more remembered; and wickedness shall [c]be broken as a tree.

21 He [d]evil-entreateth the barren *that* beareth not; and doeth [e]not good to the widow.

22 He [f]draweth also the mighty with his power: he riseth up, and no *man* is sure of life.[7]

23 *Though* [g]it be given him *to be* in safety, whereon he resteth; yet [h]his eyes[8] *are* upon their ways.

24 They are exalted [i]for a little while, but are gone[9] and brought low; they are taken[1] out of the way as all *other*, and cut off [k]as the tops of the ears of corn.[2]

25 And [l]if *it be* not *so* now, who will make me a liar, and make my speech nothing worth?

A.M. cir. 2484. B.C. cir. 1520.

2 In the daytime, they seal themselves up—conceal themselves.—*M. Good.*

[t] Ju.3.20. Je.8.7.

[u] Ge.38.23.ch.3.5.

[x] Is.23.10. Ps.73.18-20. De.28.16-19. Pr. 3. 33.

3 He disappears like evaporated waters. Compare ver. 19.—*C.*

[y] Ps.37.36;103.16.

4 He lives in deserts, and avoids through fear the cultivated districts of the vineyards.—*C.*

5 Heb. *violently take.*

[z] ch.17.14;21.23. Ps. 58.8;68.2;49.14;73.4.

6 The mother that bare him shall yield him no affectionate remembrance.—*C.*

[a] Ps.49.14; ch.19.26; 21.23.

[b] Ec.8.10. Is.26.14.

[c] Ps.37.35,36;104.35. ch.18.16,17. Pr.10.7.

[d] x Sa.1.6,7. Ob.12.

[e] ver.3;ch.29.13.

[f] Es 3.8. Re. 16.14; 17,2,3. Pr.4.16; 28, 28. Ps.10.9. De.28.66.

7 Or, *he trusteth not* his own *life.*

[g] Ps.73.3. Je.12.1-3. Ge.6.3.

[h] God's, He. 4. 13. Am.9.8; 8.7. Ps.10.13, 14. Pr.5.21-23.

8 The eyes of him by whom it is given; and as it is the Lord who giveth, *his eyes* mean the Lord's eyes.—*C.*

[i] ch.20.5. Ps.37.1-10, 35,36;73.3-20;39.5. Ec. 9.1,2. 1 Th.5.3.

9 Heb. *are not.*

1 Heb. *closed up.*

[k] Ps.55.23. Is.12.20.

2 As all the corn, ears, stalks, and stubble, at harvest; or cut off as the tops of the ears by the action of the thrashing-floor.—*C.*

[l] ch.9.24.

A.M. cir. 2484. B.C. cir. 1520.

CHAP. XXV.

[a] Da.4.3,34. Mat.28. 18. Je.10,7. Re.6.16. ch. 22.4. Jude 25.

[b] Ep.1.10. Col.1.20.

1 Amongst the high and mighty of the earth he causes wars to cease when he pleases. See Ps.46.9.—*C.*

[c] Da. 7.10. Re. 5.11. 13. Ge.2.1;32.1,2. Ps. 68. 17. Joel 2.11. Ju.5.20.

[d] Mat.5.45. Jn.1.4,9. Ja.1.17.

2 The glory of our empire is, that the sun never sets upon its dominions. Remember, O Britain, that this is thy praise! but seek rather that 'the Sun of righteousness' never set upon thee, that Sun which ariseth with healing in his wings.—*C.*

[e] ch.4. 12-19; 15. 14-16;14.4. Ps.130.3; 143.2; 51.5. Ro.5.1,21.

[f] Zec. 13. 1. 1 Co. 6. 11. 1 Jn.1.9. Re.1.5.

[g] ch.15. 15; 4. 17-19. Is.24.23.

[h] ch.4.19; 15.16. Ps. 22.6. Is.41.14.

CHAP. XXVI.

[a] Pr.25.11. Ec.12.10, 11. ch.4.3,4. Is.40.14.

1 This is no irony, but a solemn question—a question that strongly denies the thing after which it inquires.—*C.*

[b] ch.11.2,3;13.2,4;16. 2,3.

[c] Ac.20.20. 1 Co.2.4. 2 Ti.3.15-17.

[d] ch.12.3,4. Eze. 13. 19.

[e] Ec.12.7.

2 That of God or man? affirming it, by the question, to be the spirit, not of God, but of man, by which they had spoken.—*C.*

[f] Ps.88.10. Is.14.9;26. 14,19, with Re.20.13.

[g] Or, *with the inhabitants*, Ps.104.25.

CHAPTER XXV.

Bildad asserteth the sovereignty of God, before whom man cannot be justified.

THEN answered Bildad the Shuhite, and said,

2 Dominion[a] and fear *are* with him; he [b]maketh peace in his high places.[1]

3 Is there any [c]number of his armies? and [d]upon whom doth not his light arise?[2]

4 How [e]then can man be justified with God? or how can he be [f]clean *that is* born of a woman?

5 Behold [g]even to the moon, and it shineth not; yea, the stars are not pure in his sight:

6 How [h]much less man, *that is* a worm; and the son of man, *which is* a worm?

CHAPTER XXVI.

Job, reproving the uncharitable spirit of Bildad, 5 acknowledgeth the power of God to be infinite and unsearchable.

BUT Job answered and said,

2 How hast thou [a]helped *him that is* without power?[1] *how* savest thou the arm *that hath* no strength?

3 How hast [b]thou counselled *him that hath* no wisdom? and [c]*how* hast thou plentifully declared the thing as it is?

4 To[d] whom hast thou uttered words? and [e]whose spirit[2] came from thee?

5 Dead[f] *things* are formed from under the waters, [g]and the inhabitants thereof.

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and though their crimes should be concealed on earth, they will be openly discovered at last and punished for ever. Amidst the perpetration of crimes terror often seizes them; but how much more in sharing the certain, the fearful, the eternal punishment of them!

CHAPTER XXV. Bildad replied, 2. To God belongs that supreme authority over all things in heaven and earth, and that infinite majesty which strikes every beholder into solemn awe. In perfect quietness and order he rules all the luminaries in the firmament, and all the angels and glorified saints above. Why then darest thou pretend to find fault with him? 3. His creatures are absolutely innumerable to us, and every one shares of his light, his benefits of nature or grace;—why then contend with him? 4. And how then can a poor wretched man stand as righteous before God? And he that is born of a sinful woman be pure before him? 5. In his view the bright luminaries of heaven are spotted and dark. 6. How mean and vile then must the frail and dying children of a corrupted progenitor and federal head be in his sight!

Ver. 6. [This closing speech of Bildad is beautiful and true, but it does not touch the point at issue. The friends had argued that Job was punished because of his sin—his sin was great, though concealed beneath a cloak of hypocrisy, therefore his punishment was great. In reply Job affirmed a great fact, namely, that the ungodly often live happily and prosperous; and from this he argues with conclusive force that punishment does not always overtake the sinner. Consequently the fact of his being greatly afflicted was no certain proof of his having grievously sinned. *P.*——*Worm.* This word rather signifies a *maggot*, a creature bred of corruption. *C.*]

REFLECTIONS.—After long and hot disputing, people often come to see that there was less difference between them than they thought. Job's friends were obliged to acknowledge that wicked persons might prosper for a time, and Job owned that they would be destroyed at last. It were a great mercy for religious disputants to have their hearts always filled with awful thoughts of God and humble thoughts of themselves. But how infinite is the condescension of God to hold fellowship with men, so mean, so loathsome! Let me never forget how JEHOVAH assumed my nature, and in it, for me, became a worm and no man; a reproach of men, and despised of the people! What manner of love hath the Father bestowed on us in thus sending forth his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, that we, sinful worms, might, through his blood, become the sons of God!

CHAPTER XXVI. To this Job, in a derisive manner, answered, 2, 3. To what purpose serve these hints, either to support the cause of the Almighty, or to direct him in his government of the world, or to comfort a dispirited and instruct an ignorant soul? Who can be a whit bettered by aught you have so confidently uttered, that is quite foreign to the point in hand? 4. Do you imagine that I need to be instructed in these points? or that you, as one inspired of God, can by such hints revive and refresh my spirit? 5. I myself can discourse to far better purpose concerning God. While terrible monsters, minerals, pearl, coral, and the like, are formed in the bottom of the sea or heart of the earth, and fishes and animals on the surface of it, the departed ghosts tremble and travail in pain in the deep and dark regions of misery. 6. The whole state of the dead, whether of soul or body, is perfectly obvious to God's all-seeing eye; and all the depths and miseries of hell are perpetually visible to him. 7. He spreads the heavens over the apparently empty regions of air; and so balances the earth by his power, that it hangs like a ball in the air supported by nothing. 8. He binds up large collections of water in the clouds (by which he covers his glory, and on which he rides in majesty) as in firm bags, till he please to make them distil in dew, rain, snow, or hail. 9. He conceals his own glorious abodes; he firmly fixes the visible heavens, and spreads his veiling collection of clouds over them, to conceal his glory and restrain the scorching beams of the sun. 10. Everywhere, while the revolutions of day and night continue, he has fixed the shores and boundaries of the sea, that, rage as it will, it cannot exceed them. 11. The lofty mountains, which seem the supporting pillars of heaven, tremble and shake when he corrects men by earthquakes, thunders, or tempests. 12. By his power he tosses the sea into a terrible fury, and as it were divides it into ridges and mountainous billows; and by his wise government he again calms it at pleasure, and mortally wounds the crocodiles and other proud monsters which inhabit it. 13. By the influence of his Holy Spirit he at first adorned the heavens by his power; he formed the Milky Way and all their winding constellations. By his wind he clears up the sky; and his almighty power strikes prostrate the most direful and destructive monsters of sea or land. 14. Nay, behold, these are but the outlines and a very small parcel of his works. It is but very little that we either hear or know concerning him; but the thunder-like declarations of his prevailing, his infinite excellency, who can comprehend?

Ver. 5. [The mighty dead (the giants of the ante-diluvian world, Ge. 6. 4) are laid open from below, and the (living) inhabitants thereof 'are naked before God.' *C.*——Job's object in this sublime speech is to show that his view of the power, wisdom, and goodness of God is far more comprehensive than that of Bildad. God's dominion is not confined to the heavens, it extends to the grave, to the world of spirits:—in universal nature, in fact, Jehovah reigns supreme. *P.*]

Ver. 13. ['By his Spirit (his creative, omnipotent Spirit) the heavens are beautiful;' *i.e.* it was the Spirit's work which made them so. *P.*——*The crooked serpent.* The *zodiac*, whose constellations mark the apparent annual place of the sun in the heavens. *C.*——Others think reference is made either to the constellation of the Dragon, which lies between the Greater and Lesser Bears, and winds round a great part of the Polar Circle; others, again, suppose the Milky Way is meant. *P.*]

REFLECTIONS.—Sometimes self-conceited persons may be ridiculed out of their notions when reasoning is not effectual: and in disputes much is ordinarily said that is not to the present purpose; and not the edification of their neighbour, but victory over him, is the great aim of the disputants. Little is it remembered, that not the displays of God's highness, but of his grace in Christ, can give ease to a wounded spirit. But it is happy when disputes end in men's glorifying God with one mind and one mouth. The perfections of the Deity are plainly marked in all his works of nature and grace; and all things must be well done where God himself is the sole or principal agent. Let me therefore in all behold his hand, his face. If he conceal the glories of his throne from this lower world, let me walk by faith, not by sight. If he has garnished the heavens, let me set my affections on things above and not on things of the earth. If his perfections are unsearchable, let me always admire and adore him.

CHAPTER XXVII. None offering to speak, Job continued his substantial but dark and mysterious dis-

6 [h]Hell[3] *is* naked before him, and destruction hath no covering.

7 He [i]stretcheth out the north[4] over the empty place, *and* hangeth the earth upon nothing.

8 He [j]bindeth up the waters in [k]his thick clouds; and the cloud is not rent under [l]them.

9 He [n]holdeth back the face of his throne,[5] *and* spreadeth his cloud upon it.

10 He [m]hath compassed the waters with bounds,[6] until the day and night come to an end.[7]

11 The [n]pillars[8] of heaven tremble, and are astonished at his reproof.

12 He [o]divideth the sea[9] with his power, and by his understanding he smiteth through the [p]proud.[1]

13 By [q]his Spirit he hath garnished the heavens; his hand hath formed [r]the crooked serpent.

14 Lo, these *are* parts of his ways: but how[s] little a portion is heard of him? but the thunder of his power who can understand?[2]

CHAPTER XXVII.

1 *Job protesteth his sincerity.* 8 *The hypocrite is without hope.* 11 *The blessings which the wicked possess are sometimes turned into curses.*

MOREOVER, Job [a]continued[1] his parable,[2] and said,

2 *As* [b]God liveth, *who* [c]hath taken away my judgment;[3] and the Almighty, *who* hath [d]vexed my soul;

3 All the while my breath *is* in me, and [e]the spirit of God *is* in my nostrils;

4 My [f]lips shall not speak wickedness, nor my tongue utter deceit.

5 God forbid that I should [g]justify you: till I die I [h]will not remove mine integrity from me.

6 My [i]righteousness I hold fast, and will not let it go: my [k]heart shall not reproach *me* so long as I live.[4]

7 Let [l]mine enemy be as the wicked, and he that riseth up against me as the unrighteous.

8 For [m]what *is* the hope of the hypocrite,

f ch.2.3.Ps.18.21–23. *k* Ac.24.16.2 Co.1.12.1 Jn.3.20,21. 4 Heb. *from my days.* *l* 1 Sa.25. 26.2 Sa.18.32.Da.4.19.ch.42.7.Is.55.7. *m* ch.13.15,16;18.14;11.20.Mat.16.26.Lu.12.20.Is.33.14.

A.M. cir. 2484.
B.C. cir. 1520.

h Pr.15.11. Ps.139.8, 11.He.4.13.

3 *Sheol,* the invisible world of the dead, covered from our eyes, is naked before him.—*C.*

i ch.9.8.Ps.24.2;104. 2.

4 The northern hemisphere, in which Job resided; and if the one hemisphere was so supported, so was the whole earth. —*C.*

j Pr.30. 4. Je. 10. 13. ch.36. 27–29; 37. 11, 16; 38.37.Ge.1.6,7.Pr.30.4.

k Ps.18.11.97.2. De. 33.26. Is.19.1.

l Is.66.1.Ps.18.11;97. 2.

5 Heaven is his throne (Is. 66. 1), and this he covers with the veil of clouds.—*C.*

m ch.38.8–11. Ps.33. 7; 104.9. Pr.8.29. Je. 5. 22.

6 He hath set a *bow* upon the face of the waters—that is, the waters in the clouds —the ever-renewed sign of the gracious covenant with Noah, Ge.8.21;9.12–17.—*C.*

7 Heb. *until the end of light with darkness.*

n 2 Sa.22.8. Ps.68.8; 114.4,6,7;104.7. 2 Pe. 3. 10. He.12.26.

8 The lofty mountains which, penetrating the clouds, seem to support the heavens, and are therefore so called. —*C.*

o Is.51.15; 63. 11–13. Je.31.35. Ps.29.10;93.3, 4;65.7.

9 The Red Sea, Ex. 14.21;15.7.—*C.*

p Heb. *pride,* or *Rahab,* Is.51.9. Ps.89. 9,10;74.13–15. Da.4.37.

1 The proud Egyptians, that violate their promise and seek again to enslave God's people.—*C.*

q Ge.1.2. Ps.33.6;104. 30.

r Is.27.1. Ps.74.13,14. *s* 1 Co. 13. 9–12; 2. 9. ch.11.7;40.9. Jn. 16.12. Ps.29. 3–9.

a M. Good renders it, 'And the mere whisper we can hear of him! but the *thunder*' (the full heavenly voice) 'of his power who can understand?'—*C.*

CHAP. XXVII.

a Nu.23. 7; 24. 3, 15. Ps.49.4;78.2. Pr.26.7.

1 Heb. *added to take up.*

2 The Hebrew for *parable* is derived from a word that signifies to rule, whence it here means the *authorities* adduced by Job in support of his argument.—*C.*

b 1 Sa.25. 34. 2 Sa.2. 27. Re.10.6. Je.4.2.

c Is.40.27. ch.34.5.

3 Rejected my cause.—*M. Good.*

d Heb. *made my soul bitter,* Ru. 1. 20, 21.2 Ki.4.27. Ps.80.16.

e That is, *the breath which God gave him,* Ge.2.7. Is.2.22.

f Ps.39.1;141.3; 27.3. Zep.3.13. Ja.3.2.

g De.25.1. Pr.17.15.

h ch.2. 3, 9; 13. 15. 2 Co.1.12.

A.M. cir. 2484.
B.C. cir. 1520.

5 *Gained*— either the riches or power he sought by his pretentions to patriotism or religion.—*C.*

n Pr.1.28;28.9. Is. 1. 15. Eze. 8. 18. Mi. 3.4. Ps.18.41; 109. 7; 66. 18. Jn.9.31. Ja.4.3. ch. 35. 12,13.

o Ps.37.4;78.34. Is.58. 2. Mat.13.21.

p ch.4.3,4; 6. 10. Ac. 20.20,27.

6 Or, being *in the hand,* &c.

7 'The dealings of God' (*M. Good*). The mysteries of his providence.—*C.*

8 I will teach you concerning the hand of God'—I will show you how he acts in providence; the principles which guide him I will not conceal.—*E.*

q Ex.8.1;30.1–3.

r ch.15.5. Ps.50.19. Pr.11.9. xvii.xx.xxii.xxv.

s Learn in your reasonings about the ways of God.—*C.*

t ch.20.21;31.3. Ps.11. 5,6 Is.3.11. Ro.2.8,9.

u De.28.32,41. Es.9. 10. Ho.9.11. Ps.109.12–12. Is.14.20–22.2 Ki.10. 7,8.

v 1 Ki.14.10;16.3,21. 2 Je.22.18,30.

w Ps.78.64.

x Ha.2.6. Lu.12.18. 1 Ki 1 ..1.25,27. Ps. ch.22.24,25. Zec.

1 Lay up raiment. The collection of raiment is quite a passion with rich men in the East.—*C.*

y Pr.13.22; 28.8. Ec. 2.26. Ex.12.35.

z ch.8.13–15. Is.51.8. Mat.7.26,27.

a Is.1.8;38.12. La.2.6.

2 The temporary booth of a watchman in a vineyard or garden.—*C.*

b ch.30.23. Ec. 12. 7. Lu.16.22,23.

c Nu.20.26. 2 Ki. 22. 20. Je.8.2. Ps. 49.15,16. 1 Ti.6.7.

d Ps. 58.9; 73. 18–20; 37.36.

e ch.18.11. Is. 33.14. Am.5.24. Ps.42.7.

f Ps.11.5,6. Lu.12.20. Ex. 12. 29. 2 Ki. 19.35. Da.5.30. ch.34.20.

g Ho.13.15. Ps.90.7; 103.16.

h Ps.58.9.

i Ex.14.21. De.32.23.

j Ex.14.25. Am.2.14. Ju.4.17.

3 Heb. *in fleeing he would flee.*

k Eze.25.6. La.2.15. Re.18. 20. Na. 3. 19. 1 Ki.9.8. Mi.6.16.

4 A just description of the mightiest conquerors and empires. So passed away Alexander of Macedon, so proud Babylon, and so the empire of covetous and imperial Rome.—*C.*

CHAP. XXVIII.

a Or, *a mine,* Ge. 2. 11.12.

b Pr.27.21;17.3.

1 Rather, 'which they fine,' by separating from the mass in which the grains are imbedded, or washing it from the sand in which it is commingled.—*C.*

c Or, *dust,* Ge.4.22. De.8.9;33.25.

though he hath gained,[5] when God taketh away his soul?

9 Will [n]God hear his cry when trouble cometh upon him?

10 Will [o]he delight himself in the Almighty? will he always call upon God?

11 I [p]will teach you by the hand[6] of [7]God: *that* which *is* with the Almighty will I not conceal.[8]

12 Behold, all ye yourselves [q]have seen *it;* why then are ye thus [r]altogether vain?[9]

13 This[s] *is* the portion of a wicked man with God, and the heritage of oppressors, *which* they shall receive of the Almighty.

14 If[t] his children be multiplied, *it is* for the sword; and his offspring shall not be satisfied with bread.

15 Those[u] that remain of him shall be buried in death; and his [v]widows shall not weep.

16 Though he [x]heap up silver as the dust, and prepare raiment[1] as the clay;

17 He may prepare *it,* but [y]the just shall put *it* on, and the innocent shall divide the silver.

18 He buildeth his house [z]as a moth, and [a]as a booth[2] *that* the keeper maketh.

19 The rich man shall [b]lie down, but he shall not be [c]gathered: he [d]openeth his eyes, and he *is* not.

20 Terrors[e] take hold on him as waters, [f]a tempest stealeth him away in the night.

21 The[g] east wind carrieth him away, and he departeth; and as a [h]storm hurleth him out of his place.

22 For *God* shall [i]cast upon him, and not spare: he would [j]fain flee[3] out of his hand.

23 *Men* shall [k]clap their hands at him, and shall hiss him out of his place.[4]

CHAPTER XXVIII.

1 *There is a knowledge of natural things.* 12 *But wisdom is an excellent gift of God.*

SURELY there is [a]a vein for the silver, and a place for gold, *where* [b]they fine[1] *it.*

2 Iron is taken out of the [c]earth, and brass *is* molten *out of* the stone.

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course, saying, 2. I protest by the Almighty God, who refuses me an opportunity of clearing myself before him, and who has tormented me with all these fearful strokes of his judgment. 3, 4. That while I live I will never utter an untruth, either to vindicate myself where I am guilty, or to condemn myself where I am innocent. 5, 6. God forbid that ever I should justify your opinions and censures, deny my own sincerity, and confess myself to be a hypocrite! 7. It is mine enemies and opposers whom God will condemn and punish as wicked. And indeed I could wish nothing worse to my greatest enemy and injurer than to be wicked. So much I detest it. 8. For what avails the firmest hopes of a hypocrite in all his covetously-gained prosperity, or even inward tranquillity of soul, when he comes to die? 9. Will God always hear his prayers in the time of trouble and death? 10. Or will he find comfort in God when the world affords none? or will he in prosperity, as well as in adversity, continue in the earnest worship and service of God? 11. Attend, therefore, while, by God's assistance, I candidly inform you of some of the mysteries of his almighty providence. 12. Certain it is that every one of you knows from experience the truth of what I am to say. Why then should you thus absurdly attempt to prove the contrary? 13. Far be it from me to imagine that God loves hypocrites and oppressors. No; though for a time they prosper, the Almighty has reserved treasures of judgment for them and their posterity as the just reward of their wickedness. 14. Their numerous and once flourishing families are condemned to destruction by the sword of justice or war, or to be starved by famine. 15. Such as escape the sword and famine shall be cut off by the noisome pestilence. And none adventuring to bury them, they shall lie unburied, or be interred in an ignominious manner; and their widows shall either want affection, or not be in life, to bewail their unhappy end. 16, 17. Though these wicked men should treasure up ever so much wealth or costly apparel, they shall have only the labour of procuring it; for God shall destroy them, and bestow their wealth upon such as will do more good with it. 18. They may build their houses as strong as they please, and settle their estates in the surest forms; but God will quickly shake them out of all, or render them useless to them. 19. In the twinkling of an eye death shall overtake these rich sinners, and carry them off, as wretchedly poor, into the eternal state; and even perhaps without an honourable burial or monument on earth. 20. Manifold terrors seize upon them; and some surprising calamity often hurries them unexpectedly into the other world, where the terrors of God shall overwhelm them, as the waters did the old world; and in that eternal night shall the sweeping tempest of infinite wrath unexpectedly seize on and ruin them. 21. Some violent and pestilential affliction, some raging and burning storm of God's just judgment, hurls them out of their wonted felicity, residence, and life, and deprives them of all the good which they expected. 22, 23. While God pursues them with manifold forms of unmixed and unavoidable judgment, men, who are thereby delivered from their oppressions, shall return thanks to God for their deliverance.

3 He setteth an end to darkness,[2] and [d]searcheth out all perfection; the stones of darkness, and the shadow of death.

4 The flood breaketh out from the inhabitant; *even the waters* [e]forgotten of the foot: they are dried up, they are gone away from men.[3]

5 *As for* the earth, [f]out of it cometh bread; and under it is turned up as it were [g]fire.

6 The stones of it *are* the place of [h]sapphires; and it hath dust of gold.[4]

7 *There*[i] *is* a path[5] which no fowl knoweth, and which the vulture's eye hath not seen:

8 The lion's whelps have not trodden it, nor the fierce lion passed by it.

9 He putteth forth his hand upon the [k]rock; he overturneth the mountains by the roots.

10 He [l]cutteth out rivers among the rocks; and his eye seeth every precious thing.

11 He bindeth the floods [m]from overflowing; and *the thing that is* hid bringeth he forth to light.

12 But where shall [n]wisdom be found? and where *is* the place of understanding?

A.M. cir. 2484. B.C. cir. 1520.

2 He (the rich man, ch. 27. 13–23) diggeth into the region of darkness in search of precious metals or gems. See ver. 6.—*C.*

d Ec. 1.13. 1 Ki. 4.33.

e Ps. 137.5.

3 Amongst several amended translations, the following seems most agreeable to the scope of the illustration from mining. 'He (ch. 27. 13–23) breaketh up the valley near the bottom of the mountains, forgotten of the foot' (the untrodden mountains). 'They (the miners) sink down' (like creatures that burrow in the earth). 'They wander from men,' that is, in the vast subterraneous galleries which often extend many miles beneath the ground.—*C.*

f Ps. 104.14, 15. Is. 28. 28. Jn. 12. 24.

g Eze. 28. 14.

h ver. 16. Ex. 24. 10; 28. 18. 1 Ch. 29. 2. Is. 54. 11.

4 Or, *gold ore.*

i Comp. Is. 35. 8, 9. Ro. 3. 17. Mat. 11. 25. 1 Co. 2. 14. ch. 11. 6.

5 The subterraneous path to which man's avarice or necessities have conducted him.—*C.*

k Or, *flint.* Comp. Ca. 2. 8. Is. 49. 11; 64. 1, 2. Zec. 4. 7.

l Comp. Ps. 74. 15. Is. 41. 18, 19. Hab. 3. 9.

m Heb. *from weeping.* Comp. ch. 38. 8–11; 26. 8. 1 Co. 4. 5.

n ver. 20, 28. Ec. 7. 24. Ro. 11. 33; 10. 6, 7. Ps. 51. 6. 2 Ti. 3. 15–17. Pr. viii.

A.M. cir. 2484. B.C. cir. 1520.

o ver. 14–19. 1 Co. 2. 14. Pr. 3. 13–15.

p ver. 14, 21, 22.

q Ro. 11. 33, 34. ver. 22.

r Pr. 3. 13, 14; 8. 11, 19; 16. 16.

6 Heb. *fine gold shall not be given for it.*

s ch. 22. 24. Ex. 28. 8–10.

7 Or, *vessels of gold.*

t Or, *Ramoth*, Eze. 27. 16. Pr. 3. 11, 15, 19.

8 The stones distinguished in modern times by the names of onyx, sapphire, topaz, and rubies, are very precious; crystal is less valuable; but the original most probably means the diamond. The pearl, when large, is of great price, and is ranked with the coral, as they are both productions of the sea.—*C.*

9 Cush in Arabia.

u ver. 12. Ec. 7. 24. Ja. 1. 5, 17.

x Mat. 13. 11, 44. 1 Co. 2. 7, 9.

1 Or, *heaven.*

y ver. 14. Ps. 88. 10–12.

2 The dead, the past generations, speak either by their recorded sayings, their tombs and epitaphs, or the fact of their mortality; and *their voice* is as audible to the ear of *reason* as the voice of a living man to the ear of *sense.*—*C.*

z Ac. 15. 18. He. 4. 13. Jn 21. 17. Pr. 2. 6.

13 Man [o]knoweth not the price thereof; neither is it [p]found in the land of the living.

14 The [q]depth saith, It *is* not in me; and the sea saith, *It is* not with me.

15 It [r]cannot be gotten for gold,[6] neither shall silver be weighed *for* the price thereof.

16 It cannot be valued with [s]the gold of Ophir, with the precious onyx, or the sapphire.

17 The gold and the crystal cannot equal it: and the exchange of it *shall not be for* jewels of fine gold.[7]

18 No mention shall be made of [t]coral, or of pearls: for the price of wisdom *is* above rubies.

19 The topaz[8] of Ethiopia[9] shall not equal it, neither shall it be valued with pure gold.

20 Whence[u] then cometh wisdom? and where *is* the place of understanding?

21 Seeing [x]it is hid from the eyes of [y]all living, and kept close from the fowls of the air.[1]

22 Destruction[y] and death say,[2] We have heard the fame thereof with our ears.

23 God[z] understandeth the way thereof, and he knoweth the place thereof.

Ver. 7. [*Let mine enemy be as the wicked.* This is not an imprecation of evil, but a description of character, and assertion of Job's total want of sympathy with the wicked or unrighteous, as the only persons he counted his enemies. *C.*]

Ver. 18. [*As a moth.* The moth builds the most beautiful but the most frail mansion, of which the silk-worm is a remarkable example. Neither does any moth remain long in its house, for it soon undergoes a change, and casts aside its useless covering. *C.*]

REFLECTIONS.—Appeals to God ought to be necessary, deliberate, serious, and in matters of importance. Prevarication or concealment is as much perjury before God as direct falsehood asserted. But how often our high praises of God are mingled with something unkindly and disparaging! Not our most solemn vows, but Jesus' blood and Spirit, must chiefly maintain our purity of conscience and integrity of life. And while he enables to exercise a conscience void of offence towards God and men, we ought never to believe either devils or men suggesting that we are hypocrites. But it is best to refute the calumnies cast upon us by living well. Miserable indeed are hypocrites, whose hopes will never be crowned with enjoyment, their prayers never accepted nor graciously answered, and whose religion is neither comfortable nor constant! And yet, alas! how many such, amidst a glare of profession, continue with hearts unrenewed! Miserable is the condition of the wicked, even at its best, in this life: and what then must it be in hell? When once dead, their riches strangely vanish, and even fall into the hands of the godly, whom they hated: nor is any habitation secure and lasting but that which is not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. And in the most alarming forms of death God often ushers wicked men into eternal fire.

CHAPTER XXVIII. No wonder that I cannot tell you the reasons why God punishes some wicked men in this world and not all, when, after all our researches, we have so scanty a knowledge of natural things. There are secret mines for the silver, and a country for gold, which men melt and refine. 2. And iron is, with art and labour, dragged from the dust, and stones are melted into brass; 3. The miners, in the most earnest and daring manner, dig till they have quite lost the light of day, and bring their ore from the dark caverns of the earth, where pestilential damps and other dangers often prove mortal. 4. While, with infinite labour, they drain off the springs that disturb them, they break into veins of metal about the bottom of mountains; and, unheeded by the men who walk above them, they wander in the dark bowels of the earth. 5, 6. While the surface of the ground produces herbs and corn for food to animals; lime, brimstone, and such other combustibles are found in its bowels; nay, the most precious stones and gold in some parts of it. 7, 8. So mysterious are the passages of these miners that the most quick-sighted fowls never looked into them, and the most fierce and courageous animals never dared to enter them. 9. But the miners artfully cut their way through rocks of flint, and dig to the bottoms of mountains, to come at the precious metals. 10. They make passages for draining off the water that breaks in upon them, and cleave asunder the veins of ore, and earnestly discover the precious stones and metals. 11. They stop the springs from overflowing their mine, turning them another way, and bring up these precious gems or metals which had been long sealed up in the heart of the earth. 12. But to find out solid wisdom, or obtain the knowledge of God's reasons in his providential conduct, is still more difficult. 13. God hath so disposed it that no man knows the order, method, or importance of his procedure; and no man on earth can attain to it. 14. No search into the depths of the earth or sea can procure it. 15–19. Not all the precious metals or gems in the world can purchase it. 20, 21. No, not the most quick-sighted creatures on earth can point out a method to obtain it. 22. The solid consideration of death and hell are a proper introduction to true wisdom; and yet in death and damnation there are manifold instances of God's wise procedure which are not sufficiently comprehended in the reasons of them. 23–27. God alone—who is infinite in wisdom and knowledge, and who rules and governs all things for the best—who manages winds, waters, rains, and thunders in all their circumstances, degree, time, place, or form—properly understands the reasons of whatever he does, particularly his dealings with men. 28. But what he inculcates and bestows upon men as their proper wisdom is such a knowledge and filial awe of his unbounded excellencies, as makes them to flee to him as their only refuge and portion; and, hating everything sinful, to love him and keep his commandments.

Ver. 1. [The general scope of this address on mining operations is well indicated by Delitzsch:—'According to the most natural connection Job desires to show that the final lot of the rich man is well merited, because the treasures which he made the object of his avarice and pride, though ever so costly, are still earthly in their nature and origin.' It is interesting to inquire where Job got his knowledge of mining. There is monumental evidence that mining operations were carried on in the peninsula of Sinai long before the exodus. The remains of smelting furnaces, the dwellings of the miners, the temples they erected, and the works they undertook, may be seen on the spot to this day; and they are testimonies to the scientific acquirements and enterprising spirit of some great primeval nation. With these or kindred works Job must have been acquainted. *P.*]

Ver. 4. [Delitzsch's translation of this difficult passage is as follows:—'He breaketh away a shaft from those who tarry above; there, forgotten by every foot, they hang and swing far from men.' Allusion is manifestly made to the operations of the miner, especially in the copper-mines. 'The shaft' is the perpendicular aperture to the mine. Down it the miners are let by a rope, on which they hang and swing unseen by those above. *P.*]

Ver. 5. [That is, the surface of the earth is heaved up and tossed by the operations of the miner, just as volcanic fire heaves up a mountain. *P.*]

Ver. 11. [*Bindeth the floods.* It is probable the reference of Job is to the ingenious methods and gigantic efforts whereby mines were drained in his days; but of the literal binding of the floods, many parts of the Low Countries of the European continent, rescued by embankment from the sea, afford the most striking examples. Roberts in his *Illustrations* refers the greater part of this chapter to the eastern works for irrigation; but we can see no good reason for supposing them so obscurely combined with the evident reference to mining. See ver. 1, 2. *C.*]

Ver. 25. [The writer here refers to those great fixed laws which regulate all physical nature. These laws are divine in origin. God appointed them. He appointed to the wind the measure of its force; he distributed the seas and oceans by measure; he appointed to the rains, the lightning, and the thunder their laws. God thus rules the world in every department. *P.*]

REFLECTIONS.—Alas! how men rack their wits, and toil their members, to obtain riches, which, while enjoyed, are unsubstantial, and which quickly take to themselves wings and fly away, as an eagle towards heaven! Why are we not more industrious in digging for Jesus' hidden treasures, which answer all things and endure for ever! Surely Jesus and his mysteries, Jesus and his grace, must be strangely mistaken when men can thus prefer created trifles and rarities of dust! But how great is that God whose eye overlooks all, whose power effects all, whose purpose rules all things! Let me never dare to pry into his private counsels, whereby he regulates his conduct. Let me leave the secrets of other men's hearts and the deep mysteries of providence to the Lord. And let me and my children study what he has revealed to us as the standard of our faith and practice. Let us learn the wisdom which comes from above, which is pure and peaceable, manifested in fearing the Lord and departing from evil.

24 For [a]he looketh to the ends of the earth, *and* seeth under the whole heaven;

25 To [b]make the weight[3] for the winds; and he weigheth the waters by measure.

26 When [c]he made a decree for the rain, and **a** way for the lightning of the thunder:

27 Then did he see it, and [d]declare it; he prepared it, yea, and searched it out.

28 And [e]unto man he said, Behold, [f]the fear of the LORD, [g]that *is* wisdom; and to [h]depart from evil *is* understanding.

CHAPTER XXIX.

Job calleth to mind his former prosperity and honour, and the worthy use he had made of it.

MOREOVER, Job [a]continued his parable, and said,

2 Oh that I were as *in* [b]months past, as *in* the days *when* God preserved me;

3 When his [c]candle shined upon my head,[1] *and when* by his light I walked *through* darkness;

4 As I was in the days of my youth, when the [d]secret of God[2] *was* upon my tabernacle;

5 When the [e]Almighty *was* yet with me, *when* [f]my children *were* about me;

6 When [g]I washed my steps with butter, and the rock poured me[3] out rivers of oil;[4]

7 When I went out [h]to the gate through the city; *when* I prepared my seat in the street!

8 The young men saw me, and [i]hid themselves; and the aged [k]arose, *and* stood up.

9 The princes [l]refrained talking, and laid *their* hand on their mouth.

10 The nobles held their peace,[5] and their tongue [m]cleaved to the roof of their mouth.[6]

11 When[n] the ear heard *me*, then it blessed me; and when the eye saw *me*, it gave witness to me:

12 Because [o]I delivered the poor that cried, and the fatherless, and *him that had* none to help him.

13 The [p]blessing of him that was ready to perish came upon me; and I caused the widow's heart to sing for joy.

14 I[q] put on righteousness, and it clothed me: my judgment *was* as a robe and a diadem.

15 I was [r]eyes to the blind, and feet *was* I to the lame.

16 I *was* [s]a father to the poor: and the [t]cause *which* I knew not[7] I searched out.

17 And I [u]brake the jaws[8] of the wicked, and [x]plucked the spoil out of his teeth.

18 Then [y]I said, I shall die in my nest,[9] and I shall multiply *my* days [z]as the sand.

19 My [a]root *was* spread[1] out by the waters, and the dew lay all night upon my branch.

20 My [b]glory *was* fresh[2] in me, and my bow was renewed[3] in my hand.[4]

21 Unto[c] me *men* gave ear, and waited, and kept silence at my counsel.

22 After[d] my words they spake not again; and my speech [e]dropped upon them.

23 And [f]they waited for me as for the rain; and they opened their mouth wide *as* for the latter rain.

24 *If* I laughed on them, they [g]believed *it* not; and the light of my countenance they cast not down.

25 I[h] chose out their way, and sat chief, and dwelt as a king in the army, as one *that* [i]comforteth the mourners.

CHAPTER XXX.

1 *Job's honour is turned into extreme contempt.* 15 *His prosperity into the deepest distress.*

BUT now *they that are* younger[1] than I [a]have me in derision, whose fathers I would have [b]disdained to have set with the dogs of my [2]flock.

A.M. cir. 2484. B.C. cir. 1520.

a 2 Ch. 16. 9. Pr. 15. 3. Zec. 4. 10.
b Ps. 135. 7. Is. 40. 12. ch. 37. 9–17.
3 Job's reference to the *weight* of the atmosphere is a striking evidence of his extensive natural knowledge. How many things are thus revealed in the Scriptures of old which have since claimed the merit of modern discoveries! —*C.*
c Am. 4. 7. Je. 5. 22. Zec. 10. 1. ch. 38. 22–26; 37. 2–22; 36. 27–33. Pr. 8. 27–31.
d Or, *number it*, Ps. 19. 1. Ro. 1. 20.
e De. 29. 29. 2 Ti. 3. 15–17.
f Ps. 111. 10, ch. 4. 6. Pr. 1. 7; 9. 10. Ec. 12. 13. De. 4. 6.
g Ja. 3. 17.
h Ps. 34. 14; 37. 27. Is. 1. 16. 3 Jn. 11. Pr. 8. 13; 16. 6. ch. 1. 1, 8.

CHAP. XXIX.

a Heb. *added to take up*, ch. 27. 1.
b ch. 1. 1–5. Ps. 42. 6; 77. 11. Je. 2. 2; 31. 3. ver. 4.
c Or, *lamp*, ch. 18. 5, 6; 21. 17. Is. 2. 5. Ps. 18. 28; 23. 4.
1 Alluding to the eastern method of suspending lamps at festivals.—*C.*
d Ps. 91. 1; 25. 14; 42. 2–4; 63. 2. Am. 3. 7.
2 Even as the Shechinah glory marked the presence of the invisible God in the wilderness.—*C.*
e Ju. 6. 12. De. 33. 27–29. Ca. 2. 3–5.
f ch. 1. 2, 5.
g Ge. 49. 11; 18. 4; 19. 2. ch. 20. 17. De. 32. 13; 33. 24. Ps. 81. 16.
3 Heb. *with me.*
4 When his flocks were so abundant that their rich milk washed his verysteps, and when the rocky mountains, covered with the olive, poured out their oil as in rivers.—*C.*
h Je. 38. 7. Zec. 8. 16. De. 16. 18. Ru. 4. 1, 2. Ne. 8. 2, 3. 2 Ch. 32. 6.
i Ro. 13. 1–4. Tit. 3. 1.
k Le. 19. 32. Ro. 13. 7. ch. 12. 12.
l Ja. 1. 19. ch. 21. 5. Ju. 18. 19.
5 Heb. *the voice of the nobles was hid.*
m Ps. 137. 6. Eze. 3. 26.
n Pr. 29. 2. Mar. 7. 37. Lu. 11. 27; 1. 48; 4. 22.
o Ps. 72. 12; 82. 3. Pr. 21. 13; 24. 11, 12, with ch. 22. 5–9.
6 All this is thoroughly oriental. I have often seen tributes of respect similar to those here mentioned paid to venerated chiefs, who were distinguished for benevolence, charity, wisdom, or valour.—*P.*
p 2 Ti. 1. 16. Pr. 31. 8, 9; 24. 11, 12; 31. 5, 6. Ps. 80. 3; 72. 12–24.
q De. 24. 13. Ps. 132. 9. Is. 59. 17; 61. 10. Ep. 6. 14; 24. 1 Th. 5. 8. 1 Sa. 12. 3–5. Col. 3. 10.
r Nu. 10. 31. Mi. 4. 6, with Mat. 11. 5. Ac. 26. 18.
s Ps. 72. 4, 12, 13. Ja. 1. 27. De. 10. 18.
t De. 13. 14. Pr. 25. 2; 29. 7; 31. 8.
7 The cause of the unknown,' of the stranger and friendless.—*C.*
u Ps. 3. 7; 58. 6, with Pr. 30. 14.
b Heb. *the jaw-teeth* or *the grinders.*
x 1 Sa. 17. 35. Am. 3. 12.
y Ps. 30. 6, 7. ch. 42. 10–17.
9 As an eagle on the fortress of her lofty rock, inaccessible to anyinvasion.—*C.*
z Ge. 41. 49; 32. 12. Ps. 91. 16.
a ch. 18. 16. Ps. 1. 3. Je. 17. 8. Is. 44. 3, 4. Ho. 14. 6–8.
1 Heb. *opened.*
b Ge. 49. 24. Is. 40. 31. Ps. 103. 5.
2 Heb. *new.*
3 Heb. *changed.*
4 My personal vigour and political influence were constantly renewed, as a bow, after every strain with the arrow, immediately recovers its elasticity.—*C.*
c Ro. 13. 5, 7. Tit. 3. 1. ver. 9, 10, 22.
d Is. 52. 15. Ac. 16. 14; 17. 11.
e De. 32. 2. Ca. 4. 11; 7. 9. Am. 7. 16. Eze. 20. 46.
f Ps. 72. 6. ch. 8. 10. Pr. 16. 15.
g Lu. 24. 41. Ge. 45. 26. Ps. 126. 1, with Ge. 4. 6.
h Mat. 8. 9. Ge. 41. 40, 44. Ac. 14. 12.
i ch. 4. 3, 4. Is. 35. 3, 4; 61. 1–10. 2 Co. 7. 4, 6; 1. 3, 4. Ro. 12. 15. Ga. 6. 2. He. 13. 3.

CHAP. XXX.

1 Heb. *of fewer days than I.*
a ch. 19. 13–19. 2 Ki. 2. 23. Is. 3. 5.
b ver. 2–8. Tit. 1. 12.
2 This is not an example of arrogant contempt for the poor, but of deep abhorrence of the immoral: and truth it is, immoral and abandoned men are not fit companions for dogs.—*C.*

CHAPTER XXIX. After another pause, Job proceeded in his spirited vindication of himself, saying, 2. O that God would re-establish me in my former prosperity of person, family, and estate, as in the days wherein he watched over and protected me! 3. When his blessing and favour directed and prospered me in all my affairs, and made me to pass untouched through all the troubles and inconveniences of life, and the various dangers, difficulties, and calamities which befel others around me. 4. When I was in the days of my ripe prosperity, and had the authority, the oracles, and secrets of God with me; 5. When God Almighty continued so kind to and familiar with me, and my children and servants were round about me; 6. When whithersoever I turned myself I abounded in all sorts of the choicest blessings; 7. When I took my seat in the places of judicature and concourse, 8. The young men stood in the most profound awe of me, and the aged stood up in reverence and ceased to speak. 9, 10. Nay, from a regard to my superior authority, princes, the most noble not excepted, refrained from speaking. 11. They who heard me judge in a cause pronounced me highly favoured of God, and richly endowed with his gifts and grace, and prayed for his distinguished blessings upon me: and they who observed my just procedure attested my pious, just, and blameless conversation; 12. Because I never failed to redress the grievances of poor, fatherless, and destitute persons who complained to me. 13. Many blessed me as the instrument of delivering them when they were upon the point of being ruined by false accusations; and I caused the widow's heart to sing with joy for her great and unexpected deliverances, and the favours which I granted her. 14. In all my sentences I fixed my attention on what was just and upright: and the decisions I gave were an honour to me. 15. I instructed, directed, and assisted such as could not manage their own affairs; and was ever ready to help and comfort such as could not help themselves. 16. I was a kind teacher, provider, and protector to the poor; and carefully inquired into their circumstances, as well as into their difficult and obscure pleas. 17. By proper punishments and restraints I rendered the wicked incapable of oppressing, and forced them to restore that which they had violently extorted. 18. Then I vainly imagined that, after a long life of amazing prosperity, I should die quietly in my own house among my children and friends; 19. That my remarkable happiness should certainly continue, as I had every mean of preserving and securing it; 20. That the honour and respect which I had from others, and my abilities and powers, should still continue with me; 21, 22. That men should still regard my advices and decisions with the profoundest respect; 23. That they should always be exceedingly desirous to hear my opinion and judgment on a point; 24. That, though I carried myself familiarly towards them, they should still stand in awe, and carefully avoid everything which might deprive them of my favour; 25. And that I should still be regarded as their principal director in their conduct, and affectionate comforter under their troubles.

N.B. Ver. 20–25 may also be read in the past tense, as in our translation.

Ver. 7. [*Sat.* His seat for the administration of justice in the forum or market-place. *C.*——Not only in his own house, or on his own property among his own servants and retainers, was he respected and honoured; but even when he went to the city, and took his accustomed place in the public market, all men honoured him as a prince. *P.*]

Ver. 24. [*If I laughed on them, they believed it not.* 'If I smiled upon them they became not confident;' that is, my utmost familiarity never bred contempt; a result ever difficult to attain, and requiring the most exact tempering of affection with firmness, of condescension with dignity, and of rebuke with tenderness—a result of which polish may produce an imitation, while grace alone can exhibit the original. *C.*]

Ver. 25. [There is an amount of self-glorification in this passage which would be offensive in western society. The customs and feelings of the East, however, are very different from ours. Such language as this would not be considered egotistic when uttered by eastern magnates. *P.*]

REFLECTIONS.—What holiness, comfort, and honour God bestows upon all believers when it is for his glory and their good! But those who prosper in youth know little what dark and cloudy days may be in reserve for them. It is pleasant, however, to commemorate our early intimacies with God, and his kind protection of us, or communications of light, life, and comfort to our heart: and if they be lost, God allows us to pray for the restoration of our mercies, spiritual and temporal. Faith in God, and intimate fellowship with him, remarkably contribute to render men truly honourable and useful in this world. And it is comely

2 Yea, whereto *might* the strength of their hands *profit* me, in whom old age was perished?

3 For want and famine *they were* solitary;[3] fleeing[c] into the wilderness in former time[4] desolate and waste:

4 Who [d]cut up mallows[5] by the bushes, and juniper-roots[6] *for* their meat.

5 They [e]were driven forth from among *men,* (they cried after them as *after* a thief,)

6 To dwell in the cliffs of the valleys, *in* caves[7] of the earth, and *in* the rocks.

7 Among the bushes they [f]brayed; under the nettles[8] they were gathered together.

8 *They were* children of fools, yea, children of base men:[9] they were viler than the earth.

9 And [g]now am I their song; yea, I am their by-word.[h]

10 They[i] abhor me, they flee far from me, and spare not to spit in my face.[1]

11 Because[k] he hath loosed my cord,[2] and afflicted me, they have also [l]let loose the bridle before me.[3]

12 Upon *my* [m]right *hand* rise the youth; they push away my feet, and they raise up against me the ways of their destruction.

13 They [n]mar my path; they set forward my calamity; they have no helper.[4]

14 They came *upon me* [o]as a wide breaking in *of waters:* in the desolation they rolled themselves *upon me.*

15 Terrors[p] are turned upon me: they pursue my soul[5] as the wind; and my welfare passeth away [q]as a cloud.

16 And now my [r]soul is poured out upon me;[6] the days of affliction have taken hold upon me.

A.M. cir. 2484.
B.C. cir. 1520.

3 Or, *hard as a flint.*
c He. 11. 37, 38, with Pr. 23, 21.
4 Heb. *yesternight.*
d Am. 7. 14, 2 Ki. 4. 39. Lu. 15. 10.
5 By some supposed to be the *Salsorinia fruticosa,* or salt-wort by others the *Mesembryanthemum edule,* which grows in desert places, and possesses large succulent leaves in the midst of aridity and surrounding barrenness. It is eaten in Africa by the Hottentots.—*C.*
6 The word in Arabic, the same as the Hebrew, is applied to a species of *broom.*—*C.*
e Ge. 21. 10; 4. 12, 14. Ps. 109. 10.
7 Heb. *holes.*
f Ja. 4. 2. Ge. 16. 12. ch. 11. 12. Lu. 14. 23.
8 'Under the briars.'—*M. Good.*
9 Heb. *men of no name,* Ps. 49. 10–13.
g Ps. 35. 15, 16; 69. 12. La. 3. 14, 63. ch. 14. 6. Re. 11. 9, 10.
h ch. 17. 6.
i ch. 19. 13, 14. Is. 3. 5; 49. 7. 53. 3. Am. 5. 10. Zec. 11. 8.
1 Heb. *and withhold not spittle from my face,* Nu. 12. 14. De. 25. 9. Is. 50. 6; 52. 14. Mat. 26. 67; 27. 30.
k ch. 12. 18. Ps. 39. 9.
2 He (God) hath left me as a bow unstrung, and dissolved my former influence and authority for good amongst the people. Compare ch. xxix. throughout, and especially ver. 20, with Ps. 2. 3.—*C.*
l Ps. 35. 15, 16, 19, 21.
3 Cast off all restraint, and took their own course, as an unbridled horse.—*C.*
m Ps. 109. 6. Zec. 3. 1. ch. 19. 15, 16, 18; ver. 1. Is. 3. 5. 2 Ki. 2. 23.
n Ac. 13. 10. Zec. 1. 15. Ps. 69. 26.
4 They need no assistance, so cordially do they combine to do me injury.—*C.*
o Ps. 18. 4; 22. 12, 13, 16; 69. 1, 2, 15. Is. 8. 7, 8.
p ch. 4. 6; 9. 27, 28; 7. 14; 20. 16. Ps. 88. 15. Je. 17. 17.
5 Heb. *my principal one.*
q Ho. 4. 6; 13. 3.
r 1 Sa. 1. 15. Ps. 22. 14; 42. 4; 44. 11–13.
6 I am dissolved in tears.—*C.*

A.M. cir. 2484.
B.C. cir. 1520.

s ch. 33. 19. Ps. 6. 2, 6. Is. 38. 13.
7 'My gnawing pains suffer me not to rest.'—*M. Good.*
t ch. 2. 7; 5. 15; 9. 31.
8 'With irresistible violence he taketh hold of my garment, and infolds me by the collar of my tunic.' *C.*——This is a sad description. What a picture of misery he must have been! His loose robe clinging to his wasted frame, and bearing the marks of his loathsome disease.—*P.*
u ch. 9. 31. Ps. 40. 2; 69. 1, 2.
x ch. 2. 8. Ge. 18. 27.
y Je. 15. 1. Ps. 22. 2; 80. 4, 5. Mat. 15. 23. La. 3. 8, 44.
z Heb. *turned to be cruel,* Ps. 77. 8–10. Je. 30. 14.
9 Heb. *the strength of thy hand.*
a Ps. 55. 8. Is. 27. 8. Eze. 5. 2. ch. 1. 19. Ho. 13. 15. Je. 4. 11, 12.
1 'Thou tossest me,' like some light thistle-down, 'into the eddying whirlwind.'—*C.*
2 Or, *wisdom.*
b Ec. 12. 5. He. 9. 27. Ge. 3. 19. 2 Sa. 14. 14.
c Heb. *heap,* ch. 21. 32.
3 'Surely then in its ruin there is freedom' (*M. Good*), ch. 3. 17.—*C.*
d Ps. 35. 13, 14. Ro. 12. 15. He. 13. 3. ch. 31. 17–20. Ga. 6. 2.
4 Heb. *for him that was hard of day.*
e Heb. *burned,* 2 Co. 11. 29. ch. 31. 16–20.
5 Should I not then weep for the inexorable hour? (that is, of death), would not my soul pine for the rock? that is, the sepulchral rock—the tombs of Edom generally being natural or artificial caves.—*C.*
f Je. 15. 18; 8. 15. Mi. 1. 12. Ps. 69. 20. Is. 59. 9.
g La. 1. 16, 20. Ps. 22. 14; 32. 3, 4; 39. 3. Je. 4. 19. ch. 16. 13.
h Ps. 38. 6; 42. 9; 43. 2. La. 3. 1, 2. Je. 20. 8, 9. Ca. 1. 5, 6.
6 Probably his disease had rendered him blind for a season.—*C.*
i Ps. 102. 6; 57. 4. Mi. 1. 8. Is. 38. 14.
7 Or, *ostriches.*
k Je. 8. 21. Ps. 119. 83; 102. 3, La. 4. 8; 5. 10.
l Is. 38. 17; 21. 4. 2 Sa. 19. 2. La. 5. 15. Am. 8. 10.

17 My [s]bones are pierced in me in the night-season: and my sinews take no rest.[7]

18 By[t] the great force *of my disease* is my garment changed: it bindeth me about as the collar of my coat.[8]

19 He hath [u]cast me into the mire, and I am become like [x]dust and ashes.

20 I[y] cry unto thee, and thou dost not hear me; I stand up, and thou regardest me *not.*

21 Thou art [z]become cruel to me: with thy strong hand[9] thou opposest thyself against me.

22 Thou [a]liftest me up to the wind;[1] thou causest me to ride *upon it,* and dissolvest my substance.[2]

23 For I know *that* thou wilt bring me *to* death, and [b]*to* the house appointed for all living.

24 Howbeit he will not stretch out *his* hand to the [c]grave, though they cry in his destruction.[3]

25 Did[d] not I weep for him that was in trouble?[4] was *not* my soul [e]grieved for the poor?[5]

26 When[f] I looked for good, then evil came *unto me;* and when I waited for light, there came darkness.

27 My [g]bowels boiled, and rested not; the days of affliction prevented me.

28 I went [h]mourning without the sun;[6] I stood up, *and* I cried in the congregation.

29 I[i] am a brother to dragons, and a companion to owls.[7]

30 My[k] skin is black upon me, and my bones are burnt with heat.

31 My[l] harp also is *turned* to mourning, and my organ into the voice of them that weep.

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in a state when judges are grave, solemn and impartial helpers to the poor, and terrors to the oppressors; and when people are modest, submissive, and grateful: but when men have great wealth at home, and are regarded as the oracle, the darling sovereign, and comforter of their country, how apt are they to suppose their felicity secured, and to forget the evil day!

CHAPTER XXX. But now, alas! the youths, who durst scarcely look me in the face, mock and deride me, even those whose infamous parents I would have disdained to have employed in attending my dogs, or in other of the vilest services; 2. Being indeed so lazy, listless, and weak, that it was in vain to employ them in anything, after they had lived so long abandoning themselves to wickedness; 3–8. Base and beggarly fellows, who, ashamed of their poverty, and to prevent the punishment of their wickedness, had fled into deserts; and there, like wild beasts, lived upon roots and herbs, and lodged in dens, caves, and bushes. 9. But now they triumph over me, and make my calamities the subject of their songs and merry conversation. 10. Heartily abhorring me, they disdain to come near me, unless it be contemptuously to spit in my face. 11. Because God has deprived me of my authority, wealth, and honour, and has grievously afflicted me, they take an unrestrained liberty in their insolent behaviour towards me. 12. The very boys place themselves as my accusers; they insolently abuse me; and attempt, by different methods, to destroy me. 13. They endeavour to obstruct all means of comfort and relief to me. They so disturb my mind that I know not what to do. Without having or needing any assistance, they in the most presumptuous manner increase my calamities. 14. With the most furious and destructive violence they assault me; and when God has deprived me of my substance, family and health, they insult me in the most noisy forms. 15. Terrors directed by God against me, seize upon me in the most violent and irresistible manner; and my abundant prosperity is quickly, in a moment, over and gone. 16. By reason of my terrible afflictions my courage and resolution are quite exhausted, and the powers of my soul so wasted that I can do nothing but melt into tears and faint away with grief. 17. In the night, when others rest, my bones are, as it were, pierced and bruised with pain; and the worms, terrors, and agonies that torment me never take rest. 18. By their fearful force my boils, which cover me all over, are like an outer garment to me, and gird me round about; and their filthy matter stains my clothes, and glues them fast to my skin, that I can scarcely get them changed. 19. I am fearfully plunged into filthy troubles. My foul sores render me like dust and ashes, and reduce me to the point of death. 20. When I present myself before thee, O God, and continue instant in the most fervent supplications, thou dost but contemn me. 21, 22. Acting as an implacable enemy to me, thou exercisest thy almighty power to destroy me. Thou liftest me up to the wind of thy judgment, and makest me to ride upon it as stubble driven to and fro. My body is consumed by the violence of my trouble; and my firmest things are made to reel as the waters of the sea tossed with a storm. 23. Truly by thy thus dealing with me I see that I need look for nothing but death and the grave, that common sanctuary of mankind. 24. And I hope God will neither exert his almighty power to rescue me from the grave, nor let me in my passage cry out of pains, let friends entreat for my life as they will; nor use it to molest me there, but give me refreshing ease in the state of the dead. 25. Did not I always sympathize with others in their distress and poverty? And do not I now weep as one condemned to a period of trouble? Does not my soul, as a poor distressed object, pine away with grief? 26. For when I firmly expected great and lasting prosperity terrible miseries came upon me. 27. How insupportable are the inward torments of my body and the anguish of my soul! Days of fearful affliction have rushed upon me before I was aware. 28. I spend my days without any comfort; and sadness makes me quite unconcerned about light or any other agreeable object. My trouble forces me to cry out, be as many around me as will. 29. I can do nothing but seek to be alone, and hiss and howl over my dreadful case. 30. The hot moisture of my boils has rendered my skin black, and has inflamed all my bones. 31. All my joy and mirth are laid aside; and nothing but weeping and wailing are come in their stead.

Ver. 2. ['In whom old age (untaught by experience) had become profligate.'—*Note,* However melancholy be the sight of a thoughtless young man, still there is hope that time may teach him a better lesson; but of an abandoned old man, lost to all experience, what can we hope? Grace alone can teach either the young or the old; but the aged sinner is surely the more frightful picture. *C.*]

Ver. 24. [The 'stretching out' of God's hand, signifies his afflicting judgments. See Is. 9. 12, 17, 21. They will not pursue to the grave. *C.*]

Ver. 31. [That is, of them that weep for the dead. Of the plaintive and doleful cries for the dead, eastern travellers assure us that Europeans can form no conception without the actual hearing. *C.*]

REFLECTIONS.—Unsubstantial, uncertain, and transient are all things but God and the spiritual blessings of his blessed word. But sin, even on earth, makes many the most base and miserable of wretches; the youngest in age, the meanest in extraction, the poorest in property, and the most scandalous in character, are generally the most ready to contemn, insult.

CHAPTER XXXI.

Job maketh a solemn protestation of his integrity in several duties.

I MADE[a] a covenant with mine eyes; why then should I think upon a maid?

2 For [b]what portion of God *is there* from above?[1] and *what* inheritance of the Almighty from on high?

3 *Is*[c] not destruction to the wicked? and a strange *punishment* to the workers of iniquity?

4 Doth[d] not he see my ways, and count all my steps?

5 If[e] I have walked with vanity, or if my foot hath hasted to deceit;

6 Let[f] me be weighed in an even balance, that God may know mine integrity.

7 If[g] my step hath turned out of the way, and mine heart walked after mine eyes,[2] and if any blot hath cleaved to mine hands;

8 *Then* [h]let me sow, and let another eat; yea, let my offspring be rooted out.

9 If [i]mine heart have been deceived by a woman,[3] or *if* I have laid wait at my neighbour's door;

10 *Then* let my wife [k]grind unto another,[4] and let others bow down upon her.

11 For this *is* an [l]heinous crime; yea, it *is* an iniquity *to be punished by* the judges.

12 For it *is* a [m]fire *that* consumeth to destruction, and would root out all mine increase.

13 If I [n]did despise the cause of my man-servant or of my maid-servant, when they contended with me;

14 What then shall I do when [o]God riseth up?[5] and when he visiteth, what shall I answer him?

15 Did[p] not he that made me in the womb make him? and did not one fashion us in the womb?[6]

16 If I have [q]withheld the poor from *their* desire, or have caused the eyes of the widow to fail;

17 Or have [r]eaten my morsel myself alone,[7] and the fatherless hath not eaten thereof;

18 (For from my youth [s]he was brought up with me, as *with* a father, and I have guided her[8] from my mother's womb,)[9]

19 If I have [t]seen any perish for want of clothing, or any poor without covering;

20 If [u]his loins have not blessed me, and *if* he were *not* warmed with the fleece of my sheep;

21 If I have [v]lifted up my hand against the fatherless, when I saw my help in the gate:

22 *Then* [z]let mine arm fall from my shoulder-blade, and mine arm be broken from the [1]bone.

23 For [y]destruction *from* God *was* a terror to me, and by reason of his [z]highness I could not endure.

24 If I [a]have made gold my hope, or have said to the fine gold, *Thou art* my [2]confidence;

25 If I [b]rejoiced because my wealth *was* great, and because mine hand had gotten [3]much;

26 If [c]I beheld the sun[4] when it shined, or the moon walking *in* [5]brightness;[6]

27 And my heart hath been secretly enticed, or my mouth[7] hath [d]kissed my hand:[8]

28 This also *were* [e]an iniquity *to be punished by* the judge: for I should have [f]denied the God *that is* above.

29 If I [g]rejoiced at the destruction of him that hated me, or lifted up myself when evil found him;

30 (Neither have I suffered my mouth[9] to sin, by wishing [h]a curse to his soul;)

31 If[i] the men of my tabernacle said not, Oh that we had of his flesh![1] we cannot be satisfied:

32 The [j]stranger did not lodge in the street: *but* I opened my doors to the traveller;[2]

33 If I covered my transgressions as [3]Adam, by hiding [l]mine iniquity in my bosom:

34 Did [m]I fear a great multitude, or did the contempt of families terrify me, that I kept silence, *and* went not out of the door?[4]

35 Oh[n] that one would hear me! behold, my desire *is*, *that* the Almighty would answer [5]me, and *that* mine adversary had written a book:[6]

36 Surely I would take it [o]upon my shoulder, *and* bind it *as* a crown to me:

37 I [p]would declare unto him the number of my steps; as a prince would I go near unto him.

A.M. cir. 2484. B.C. cir. 1520.

CHAP. XXXI.

a Mat.5.28,29. Pr.4.25;6.25;23.33. Ge.34.2. 2 Sa.11.2.

b ch.20.29;27.13. Ep.5.5.1 Co.6.9,10.

1 What *portion* does God, *from above*, allot to those who purpose any act of wickedness?—*C.*

c Ps.11.5,6. Is.28.21. Jude 7. He.13.4. Mat.25.41.

d 2 Ch.16.9. He.4.13. ch.34.21;14.16. Pr.5.21; 15.3. Je.32.19. 2 Ch.16.9. Ps.139.1-5. Jn.1.48.

e Ps.7.3-5;44.20;144.20, 21. Pr.13.11;28.20.

f Heb. *Let him weigh me in balances of justice*, Ps.26.1;139.23;18.20-24;17.2,3.

g Ps.73.2;51.44.18,20. Ec.11.9. 1 Jn.2.16, with ch.9.20,31. Ezek.14.3,7.

h Le.26.16. De.28.30-33. ch.18.26-20.

i Ec.7.26. ch.24.15, 16. Je.5.8. Pr.7.8,19,21; 5.8.

3 Allured towards another man's wife. —*Septuagint.*

k Ex.11.5. Is.47.2. Mat.24.41. Lu.17.35. 2 Sa.12.11.

4 Be made a slave unto another: grinding at the hand-mill for the daily bread of the family being a common and almost constant employment of female slaves. See Mat.24.41.—*C.*

l Pr.6.29,33. Ge.20.9; 39.9. 38.24. Lev.20.10. Deu.22.22. Ex.20.14.

m Pr.6.27,29, 34, 35; 5.10. He.13.4. Re.21.8. Ge.38.24. Je.29. 22, 23. Mal.3.5.

n Ep.6.9. Col.4.1. Ro.12.19.

o Ps.68.1;144.21. Zec. 2.13. Is.10.3. ver.23.

5 The *rising up* of God is the day of appearing at 'the judgment-seat of Christ;' for, until that time he is represented as 'sitting' at the right hand of God, waiting until his enemies be made his footstool, Ac. 2. 34,35. 2 Co.5.10. He.1. 13;10.12,13,37.—*C.*

p ch.34.19. Mal.2.10. Pr.14.31;22.2.

6 Or, *did he not fashion us in one womb?*

q Lu.16.21. ch.29.9.

r Ro.12.13. Ja.2.16. 1 Jn.3.17.

7 If I have lived solitary and inhospitable, especially to the needy. See Lu. 14.13.—*C.*

s Ja.1.27. Eze.18.16, 17. ch.29.13,16.

8 That is, *the widow.*

9 'He,' that is, my man-servant, or the poor (ver.13,16), 'was brought up with me' as my brother. 'I have guided her,' that is, my maid-servant, or the widow (ver.13,16), and treated each as a sister or mother.—*C.*

A.M. cir. 2484. B.C. cir. 1520.

t Mat.25.43. Ja.2.16. ch.22.6.

u De.24.13. Mat.25. 36.2 Ti.1.16.

v Is.58.6. ch.29.12.

x Ps.7.5;137.5,6. 1 Ki. 13.4. ch.22.9.

1 Or, *the channel-bone.*

y Is. 13. 6. Ge. 39.9. Joel 1. 15. 2 Co. 5. 11. Mat.10.28. Ps.119.120.

z Ps.76.7.

a Ps.52.7;49.6;62.10. Pr.10. 15. Mar. 10. 24. Lu. 12. 15. 1 Ti. 6. 17. Col.3.5,6.

2 In this paragraph Job shows that he was as free from avarice, and sordid desire for wealth, as he was from uncharitableness and injustice toward his fellowmen.—*P.*

b Es. 5. 11. Ho. 12.8. Lu.12.19;16.19. Ja.5.5.

3 Heb. *found much.*

c De.4.19;17.3. 2 Ki. 17.5. Eze.8.16.

4 Heb. *the light.*

5 Heb. *bright.*

6 The worship of the sun, moon, and stars was one of the earliest forms of idolatry; the splendour of these bodies, and the benefits derived from them, being made the excuse for worshipping the creature and forgetting the Creator.—*C.*

7 Heb. *my hand hath kissed my mouth.*

d Ps.2.12. Ho. 13. 2. 1 Ki.19.18.

8 The kissing of the hand, whence the word *adoration*, literally signifying *to the mouths*, was the common form of worship paid to the statues of the heathen idols.—*C.*

e ver.11. De.13.1-17; 17.2-7. 2 Ch.15.13. Re. 21.8.

f Ex.20.3,5. Is. 42.8. Mat.4.10.

g Pr.24.17;17.5. Ps. 35.13,14.

9 Heb. *my palate.*

h Mat.5.44. Ro. 12. 14. Ec.5.6.

i ver. 17, 18, 32. He. 13.2. 1 Pe.4.9. 1 Ti. 3.2; 5.10. Ge.18.2-8; 19.2,3. Ju.19.20,21.

1 If my own dependants or relatives could ever say they had wanted any thing I could afford to bestow.—*C.*

j Is.58.7. .

2 Or, *to the way.*

3 Or, *after the manner of men*, Ho.6.7.

l Ge.3.7,8,12. Pr. 28. 13. Ac.5.8.

m Ex.23.2. Pr.29.25.

4 Then let me dread the great assembly, let the contempt of the tribes terrify me, let me be struck dumb, and never venture from my door.—*C.*

n ch.9.33-35;10.2;13. 3,21,22;17.3;23.3-7;33. 6.

5 Or, *behold my sign*, is *that the Almighty will answer me.*

6 A charge against me journalizing all my steps, ver. 37.—*C.*

o With Is.9.6; 22.22.

p 1 Pe. 3.15. Pr.28.1. ch.23.3,4.

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and abuse the greatest and best, when Providence once frowns upon them. And it is hard for wounded spirits to bear up under complicated troubles, terrors of mind, loathsome and painful diseases of body, and frowns of God. But happy are they who can by faith take up the eternal enjoyment of God as a full balance to all the troubles which they can suffer on earth! Happy are they who have the testimony of a good conscience, that in simplicity and godly sincerity they have had their conversation in this world!

CHAPTER XXXI. Ver. 6. Let me be tried by an upright impartial judge, that God may acknowledge and approve mine integrity. 7, 8. If I have knowingly, willingly, and ordinarily wandered out of the way of my duty, have indulged my heart in covetousness or lust, or my hands in bribery and injustice, let all that I have be bestowed on others, and my children, plants, and trees be rooted up. 9, 10. If I have been enticed to unclean lust by any woman, or if I have watched for opportunities to defile my neighbour's bed, let my own wife be a slave and a whore to others. 26, 27. If I have beheld the sun or moon with any idolatrous regard, or have had any inward inclination to esteem them as deities, or have given them any external worship. 34. Did ever fear of men terrify me from candid confession of my sin or from any other duty? or if I have concealed my faults, let me be overwhelmed with the terror and contempt of men till I be ashamed to be seen. 35–37. O that I had but an impartial judge, and that my accuser would give me a written charge! I should prize it as an honour, since every article would then be proved false: I would, with undaunted courage and confidence of success, give a candid account of my past conduct, to see of what he would accuse me.

Ver. 1. [Job was charged with the commission of secret sins. His friends alleged that he would not have been so heavily punished had he not been guilty of grievous offences. In reply Job reviews his whole conduct, both public and private. He enters into particulars so as to show that the charge preferred against him was entirely false. It may be noted that while Job indignantly repudiates the charge of hypocrisy, he is wanting in that humility which must ever characterize the true child of God. Paul boasted of his faith, and endurance, and labours; but he ascribed all his power and grace to Christ, 1 Co. 15. 10; Phi. 2. 13. Job speaks only of himself. *P.*]

Ver. 15. [Job here means that he had been kind and indulgent as a master. He admitted the great principle that all men are by nature equal. No man has a right to rule or tyrannize over his fellows. In all his dealings with his servants he acted in accordance with this principle. *P.*]

Ver. 22. [This imprecatory conclusion has reference to all the hypothetical expressions from ver. 16. Job adopts this strong mode of affirming his innocence and purity of heart, as well as of life. *P.*]

Ver. 35. ['Job refers to the procedure in ancient courts of justice, where the accused party appended his

38 If my land [q]cry against me, or that the furrows likewise thereof complain;[7]

39 If I [r]have eaten the fruits thereof[8] without money, or have [s]caused the owners thereof to lose their life:[9]

40 Let [t]thistles grow instead of wheat, and cockle[1] instead of barley. The words[2] of Job are ended.

CHAPTER XXXII.

1 Elihu is angry with Job and his three friends. 6 Because wisdom cometh not from age, he excuseth the boldness of his youth. 11 He reproveth them for not satisfying of Job. 16 His zeal to speak.

SO these three men ceased to answer[1] Job, because he *was* [a]righteous in his own eyes.

2 Then was [b]kindled the wrath of Elihu[2] the son of Barachel the [c]Buzite, of the kindred of Ram; against Job was his wrath kindled, because [d]he justified himself[3] rather than God.

3 Also against his three friends was his wrath kindled,[4] because they had found no answer, and *yet* had condemned [e]Job.

4 Now Elihu had [f]waited till Job had [g]spoken, because they *were* [h]elder than he.

5 When Elihu saw that *there was* no answer in the mouth of *these* three men, then his wrath was kindled.

6 And Elihu the son of Barachel the Buzite answered and said, I *am* [i]young, and ye *are* very old; wherefore I was afraid, and [j]durst not show you mine opinion.

7 I said, [k]Days should speak, and multitude of years should teach wisdom.

8 But *there is* [l]a spirit in man; and [m]the inspiration of the Almighty giveth them understanding.

A.M. cir. 2484.
B.C. cir. 1520.

q Hab.2.11.Ge.4.10.
7 Heb. *weep.*
r Is.5.4.
8 Heb. *the strength thereof.*
s 1 Ki.21.13.
9 Heb. *caused the soul of the owners thereof to expire* or *breathe out.*
t Ge. 3. 18. Is. 7. 23. Zep.2.9.
10 Or, *noisome weeds.* [The original intimates that some offensive and ill-smelling weed is intended. The precise species is unknown. Some have supposed it to be the *Solanum incanum*, others the *aconite*; amongst British plants the *Scrophularia nodosa* would best correspond to the etymology.—*C.*]
2 His dispute with his friends.

CHAP. XXXII.

1 Heb. *from answering.*
a ch.9.15.20; 10.15; 13.18; 27.5,6; Pr.20.9. Ec.7.20. 1 Jn.1.8,10.
b ch.42.7. Ge.18.8. Ps.69.9.
2 *Elihu*, he is my God himself; *Barachel*, who blesses God; *Buzite*, despised, plundered; *Ram*, elevated, rejected. To the meaning of these names special attention is requested, as the exposition of the subsequent discourse greatly depends upon the description they afford of the speaker *Elihu*.—*C.*
c Ge 22.21.
d ch. 34. 5, 6; 35. 2, with Pr. 30. 12. Lu. 16. 15.
3 Heb. *his soul.*
e As a wicked hypocrite, ch. 5. 1, 2; 8.6;15.34;22. 5.
f Heb *expected Job in words.*
g 'After Job for a reply.'—*M. Good.*
h Heb. *elder for days*, ch.15.10.
i Heb. *few of days.*
j Heb. *feared*, Tit. 2.4,6.1 Pe.5.5.
k ch.8.8,9,12.12.He. 5.12.
l Pr.20.27.
m ch.38.36;35.11.Pr. 2.6. Ec.2.26. Da. 1. 17; 2.21. Ja.1.5. 1 Co.2.10-12;12.8-10. Jn.20.22.
4 Not a burning

A.M. cir. 2484.
B.C. cir. 1520.

wrath to destroy, but a righteous and holy displeasure at their weakness and injustice. Even so Jesus was *angry*, being *grieved* at the hardness of men's hearts, Mar.3.5.—*C.*
o 1 Co. 1. 21, 26, 27. Mat. 11. 25. Jn.7.48; 3. 10.
p ver.3,12.
5 Heb. *understandings.*
6 Heb. *words.*
q Pr.18.13, with ch. 22.5-9.
r Jo.7.21; 10. 23. ch. 29.1-13;28 .8.
s ch.21.4; 8.3-6; 11. 5; 15. 2-35; xviii. xx. xxii. with 2 Co.2.6,7.
7 God, not man, must bring him down (*Boothroyd*). In these words Elihu gives the first intimation of that dignity of God-head with which, as we shall endeavour to show, he was invested, and in which he now appeared to Job as he had appeared to Abraham, Jacob, and Moses upon former occasions. See Ge. 15.1 18; 17. 1. Exodus 3. 2. &c. &c. The meaning of this verse is well expressed by Wordsworth: — 'It was providentially ordered by God himself that ye, who rely on your own intelligence, should not be able to answer Job, *lest ye should say, We have found out wisdom.*'—*P.*
8 Or, *ordered his words.*
9 Heb. *they removed speeches from themselves.*
1 Heb. *words.*
2 Words, sayings, from the Spirit within him given of the Father without measure, Jn.3.34.—*C.*
3 Heb. *the spirit of my belly.*
t 2 Co.5.14. Ps.39.3. Je.20.9. Ac.4.20;17.16.
4 Heb. *is not opened.*
u Mat.9.17.
5 'Like skin bottles of new wine.'—*Boothroyd.*
6 Heb. *that I may breathe*, Ro.15.32.
x Le.19.15. Ex.23.3. Ac.12.22.
y Mat.22.16. Ac.12. 22;24.2,3. Ga.1.10.
z Ac.12.23. Ps.12.2,3.

9 Great [o]men are not *always* wise; neither do the aged understand judgment.

10 Therefore[p] I said, Hearken to me; I also will show mine opinion.

11 Behold, I waited for your words; I gave ear to your reasons,[5] whilst ye searched out what to say.[6]

12 Yea, [q]I attended unto you; and, behold, *there was* none of you that convinced Job, *or* that answered his words;

13 Lest[r] ye should say, We have found out wisdom: [s]God thrusteth him down, not man.[7]

14 Now he hath not directed *his* [8]words against me: neither will I answer him with your speeches.

15 They were amazed; they answered no more; they left off speaking.[9]

16 When I had waited, (for they spake not, but stood still, *and* answered no more,)

17 *I said*, I will answer also my part; I also will show mine opinion.

18 For I am full of [1]matter;[2] the spirit within [3]me [t]constraineth me.

19 Behold, my belly *is* as wine *which* hath no vent;[4] it is ready to burst like [u]new bottles.[5]

20 I will speak, that I may be refreshed:[6] I will open my lips and answer.

21 Let me not, I pray you, [v]accept any man's person, neither let me give flattering titles unto man.

22 For I know not to [y]give flattering titles: *in so doing* my Maker would [z]soon take me away.

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mark to the legal instruments in the cause, and he means that he would gladly affix his signature to articles of impeachment laid against him, in token of his desire to debate the question of his own integrity' (*Wordsworth*). Job feels strong in the consciousness of his innocence. He has now put the three friends to silence; and he makes a general appeal to any one who will hear him. He boldly appeals to God himself to try and judge him. Seeing only with human eye, comparing himself only with a human standard, Job forgets man's frail and guilty nature. *P.*]

REFLECTIONS.—How diversified are the forms in which inward corruption breaks forth among mankind! And there is great need of purifying the heart, of solemn dedication to God, of watchfulness over both soul and senses, and of constant, awful, and engaging impressions of God, to promote a holy and circumspect life. It is highly honourable to be followers of those ancient patriarchs who through faith and patience inherited the promises. But, alas! that many things, by them held horrid and detestable, are now become common and fashionable!—What dangerous enemies to our souls are fleshly lusts! And they call for especial watchfulness. If we would keep our heart pure our eye must be single. However unexceptionable our outward conduct appear, there is a God who marks our secret sins; and no impurity of temper can consist with the enjoyment of him. Such as will lodge sin in their heart now must lodge in hell for ever. How rare truly honest men are in this world! None are more to be suspected of fraud than such as are full of talk in their worldly dealings. Honesty needs no varnish. The gains of covetousness, however secret, leave a blot in the sight of God, which nothing but Jesus' atoning blood can wash away. The fruits of injustice must either be restored or they will damn us: and they who are conscious of integrity never shun a trial. What a crying sin is adultery; and how damning!—Great humanity and tenderness is due to servants and the poor, who have the same Maker and God as ourselves: and there is great need of grace to wean our heart from this world and from every rival of God. It is a hard task to forgive injuries without reluctance. But to rejoice in the fall of an enemy is malicious and murderous. The greatest provocation will never justify our revenge. Hypocritically to hide our sins is destructive to our souls. And it is very dangerous to be partakers with other men in their sins. Let us therefore avoid the fear of man, which causeth a snare. Let us never hear a good cause run down without vindicating it, nor see injustice committed without remonstrating against it. In all our conduct let us study to approve ourselves unto God.

CHAPTER XXXII. Ver. 1. He was resolutely bent to justify himself, let them say what they would. 2. He insisted too much upon his own vindication. Yea, not without reflecting upon the severity of God. 7, 8. Old men ought to instruct their inferiors in age in the matters of God. But I find that, whatever advantage old age may give for knowledge and experience, it is chiefly men's own rational soul, and the inspiring Spirit of God, which qualify them to apprehend the mysteries of religion and providence. 13. Lest you should think you have said all that needs to be said in the cause, and that God's immediate strokes upon Job are an evidence that he is a hypocrite.—14. Job hath given me no provocation to speak; nor will I use such weak reasoning and provoking language as you have done.—21. Do not expect that I should flatter you in your errors and mistakes out of respect to your age, gravity, or the like; for I am resolved to deal freely, plainly, and impartially with you.

Ver. 1. [The first three verses of this chapter are introductory. They explain the appearance of the new speaker upon the scene. Elihu, as it appears, had heard the whole controversy—alike the charges brought against Job and his reply. He observed both the illogical reasoning and its effect. Job was confirmed in his high idea of his integrity, while the friends were silenced. Elihu waited to the end of the discussion in hopes of hearing something calculated to convince Job of his real error. It was in vain. He heard nothing. The three friends failed to reply to Job; and Job justified himself in the sight of God. *P.*]

Ver. 8. ['But the Spirit in man it is, and the inspiration of the Almighty, that giveth him understanding.' Whatever opinion may be entertained regarding the person and character of Elihu, there can be no doubt that he here lays claim to divine inspiration. He acknowledges that all wisdom must come from God. *P.*]

REFLECTIONS.—In angry disputes there is ordinarily much to reprove on both sides. But when the disputants are warm they are loath to own that they have lost the cause. Yet it is much better to say nothing than to talk error and nonsense. When we have fault to find, it should be done before men, not behind their backs. A gracious heart is jealous for the honour of God, and cannot, unmoved, see him slighted. And it is highly commendable to show a holy indignation against sin and warmth in the cause of truth. In disputes it is proper that each should speak in his own order, and that each be animated by a true and discreet zeal for God. And it is extremely agreeable when great sense and courage are directed by great humility and modesty. In matters of doubtful disputation we ought to be diffident of our own judgment, and to be more swift to hear than to speak. Yet after we have given others a long and patient hearing it is but reasonable that we should be heard in our turn. And by-standers, who hear without prejudice, often see further into a dispute than those who have their minds blinded by passion. God deals very sove-

CHAPTER XXXIII.

1 Elihu offereth himself instead of God, with sincerity and meekness, to reason with Job. 8 He excuseth God from giving man an account of his ways, by his greatness. 14 God calleth man to repentance by visions, 19 by afflictions, 23 and by his ministers. 31 He inciteth Job to attention.

WHEREFORE, Job, I pray thee, [a]hear my speeches, and hearken to all my words.

2 Behold, now [b]I have opened my mouth, my tongue hath spoken in my mouth.[1]

3 My words *shall be of* the [c]uprightness[2] of my heart; and my lips shall [d]utter knowledge clearly.[3]

4 The[e] Spirit of God hath made me, and the breath of the Almighty hath given me life.

5 If thou canst answer me, set *thy words* in order before me, stand up.

6 Behold, [f]*I am* according to thy wish[4] in God's stead;[5] I also am formed out of the clay.[6]

7 Behold, [g]my terror shall not make thee afraid, neither shall my hand be heavy upon thee.

8 Surely thou hast spoken [h]in mine hearing, and I have heard the voice of *thy* words, *saying*,

9 I am [i]clean without transgression, I *am* innocent; neither *is there* iniquity in me.

10 Behold [j]he findeth occasions against me, he counteth me for his enemy;

11 He [k]putteth my feet in the stocks, he marketh all my paths.[7]

12 Behold, *in* this thou art [l]not just: I will answer thee, that [m]God is greater than man.[8]

13 Why [n]dost thou strive against him? for he [o]giveth not account[9] of any of his matters.

14 For [p]God speaketh once, yea twice, *yet man* perceiveth it not.

A.M. cir. 2484. B.C. cir. 1520.

CHAP. XXXIII.

a ch:34.2; 13.6. Ja.1. 19. Ac.10.33.

b ch.3.1. Mat.5.2.

1 Heb. *in my palate.*

c Pr.8.6–9. 1 Ti.2.3,4.

2 Had Elihu been a mere man, this account of his attainments in knowledge and uprightness had been a proof of self-ignorance rather than of self-knowledge; but if the 'Word of the Lord' in human form, then is the account in perfect consonance with the scriptural character of Christ. See Jn.1.14;8.46. 2 Co. 5.21.—*C.*

d Tit.2.7,8.

3 Heb. *purely.*

e Ps.33.6; 149.2. Ge. 2.7, ch.32.8; 10.12. Ec. 12.1.

f ch.9.32–35; 13.3,21, 22;23.3,4; 31.35. 2 Co.5. 20;4.7. Is.64.8.

4 Heb. *according to thy mouth.*

5 Can any mere man, however inspired, say, 'I am in God's stead?' Is not this the Son, "the brightness of the Father's glory, the express image of his person?" He.1.2.—*C.*

6 Heb. *cut out of the clay.*

g ch.9.34; 13.21. Ps. 32.4.

h Heb. *in mine ears*, De.13.14.

i ch.9.17; 10.7; 13.23; 16.17; 23.10–12; 27.5; 29. 7; 29.14.

j ch. 14.17; 13.24,26; 16.9; 19.11; 10.6.

k ch.13.27; 10.14; 14. 16; 31.4.

7 See notes on ch. 13.27.—*C.*

l 1 Ki.8.46. Ec.7.20. Ja.3.2. 1 Jn.1.8.

m Ps. 82. 1, 8; 135. 6. Da.4.34,35.

8 *Greater* not merely in power, for that alone would be no answer to Job's complaint, but greater also in wisdom, in comprehension of all relations and results, in justice, truth, goodness, and mercy, so that while man pitied himself, God pitied him still much more (Ps. 103. 13), though in wisdom he may determine to display his love by the rod of his chastisements, He.12.6.—*C.*

n Is.45.9. Ro.9.20.

o Ps.115.3. Mat.20. 15. Da.4.35.

9 Heb. *he answereth not.*

p Ps.62.11.

A.M. cir. 2484. B.C. cir. 1520.

q Ge.20.3;31.24. Da. 4.5. He.1.1. Nu.12.6. ch.4.12,13.

r Heb. *he revealeth* or *uncovereth*, ch.36.10,15. Lu.24.45. Ps.94.12.

s Pr.16.9;19.21. 2 Co. 12.7. Is.2.11. ch.17.11.

1 While afflictions are often deserved chastisements for the past, they are also often merciful preventives of sins into which continued prosperity would conduct; and especially of pride, the first among the sins that spring up of nature, the last to be subdued by grace.—*C.*

2 Heb. *work.*

t Is.23.9.

u 1 Co. 11. 32. Ho.2. 6,7. Ps.94.12.

3 Heb. *from passing by the sword.*

v Mi.6.9. Is.27.9; 38. 13. He. 12.6–11. Re.3. 19. Ps.94.12; 107.17; 119. 67,71. ch.7.3; 4; 30.17.

w Ps. 107. 18; 102. 4. ch.3.24; 6.7.

4 Heb. *meat of desire.*

x Pr.5.11. Ps. 102.3–5; 22.17. ch.19 20.

y ch.17.1. 1 Sa.20.3. 2 Sa.24.16. Ps.88.3; 107. 17.

z Mal.3.1. Is.61.1–3. Jn.1.18. Ca.5.10. 2 Co. 5.20. Mat.13.52.

a Ro. 3. 24–26; 5. 20, 21. Zec. 9. 11. Mat. 20. 28; 26.28. 2 Co. 5.19.

5 Or, *an atonement.*

6 An atonement, the central truth of the glorious gospel, the one perfect and perfecting sacrifice of the Son of God, He. 9.26; 10.14.—*C.*

7 Heb. *than childhood.*

b Ps.103.5. Ho.2.15.

c Ps.50 14,15; 91.15; 97.1. 2 Ch.33.12. Ps.81. 25. Ro. 5.1, 5,10,11,20, 21.

8 Not a *righteousness* of merit; for the character drawn is that of a self-acknowledged sinner, ver. 27, 30; but the righteousness of God, which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto and upon all that do believe, Ro. 3. 20–26. Phi.3.8,9.—*C.*

d Jo. 3. 13. Pr. 28. 13. 2 Sa. 12. 13. Lu. 18. 13. Ro.6.21.1 Jn.1.9.

9 Or, *He shall look upon men and say, I have sinned*, &c.

1 Or, *He hath delivered my soul*, &c., *and my life.*

2 Be prolonged in prosperity and comfort.

15 In a dream, [q]in a vision of the night, when deep sleep falleth upon men, in slumberings upon the bed;

16 Then [r]he openeth the ears of men, and sealeth their instruction,

17 That he may [s]withdraw man[1] *from his* purpose,[2] and [t]hide pride from man.

18 He [u]keepeth back his soul from the pit, and his life from perishing by the sword.[3]

19 He [v]is chastened also with pain upon his bed, and the multitude of his bones with strong *pain*.

20 So[w] that his life abhorreth bread, and his soul dainty meat.[4]

21 His [x]flesh is consumed away, that it cannot be seen; and his bones *that* were not seen stick out.

22 Yea, his soul [y]draweth near unto the grave, and his life to the destroyers.

23 If there be a [z]messenger with him, an interpreter, one among a thousand, to show unto man his uprightness;

24 Then he [a]is gracious unto him, and saith, Deliver him from going down to the pit; I have found a [5]ransom.[6]

25 His flesh shall be fresher than a [7]child's; he shall [b]return to the days of his youth:

26 He [c]shall pray unto God, and he will be favourable unto him; and he shall see his face with joy: for he will render unto man his righteousness.[8]

27 He looketh upon men; and *if any* say, [d]I have sinned,[9] and perverted *that which was* right, and it profited me not,

28 He will deliver his soul[1] from going into the pit, and his life shall see the light.[2]

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reignly in the disposal of knowledge or other gifts. Men may have rational souls and yet know little: but they ought to cultivate this distinguished privilege. All the wisdom of fallen men in spiritual matters is but darkness till the Spirit of God enlighten their mind.—And, alas! how often disputes are closed before the question be rightly stated or impartially handled! And hence the issue is so seldom a seeing eye to eye in the truth. They have therefore good right to speak who can set the cause of truth in a more convincing and striking light than had been formerly done. And they who speak for God ought to be earnest in their discourses, inflamed with zeal for his glory and the good of souls; and to be so impressed with his perfections and laws as to regard neither the fear nor the favour of men.

CHAPTER XXXIII. Ver. 3. I shall not speak from passion or prejudice, as others have done before me; but from a sincere desire of doing thee good, and in such a clear manner that thou mayest be fully convinced of the truth of what I say. 4–6. I am a man like thyself, fit to reason with thee on equal terms, and inclined to plead the cause of God against thee. 7. There is nothing about me to terrify or torment thee. 8–11. Nor do I intend to charge thee with hypocrisy, but with uttering of self-justifying language, dishonourable to God, as if he had dealt more severely than was just with thee. 12, 13. Let thy former life be as holy and unblamable as it will, yet thou art certainly culpable in quarrelling with the dispensations of God, who is infinitely superior to thee in every respect, and accountable to none for his conduct. 14–18. Nay, so dull are men that, when God takes repeated pains in dreams, visions, or the like, to instruct them effectually for their humiliation and eternal salvation, they do not take notice of, or do not understand, his meaning. 19–22. Hence, for their awakening to a proper attention, he severely afflicts them, till they are brought to the very point of death. 23, 24. If then, by the instruction of some faithful minister, and especially by the instruction of Jesus Christ, the unparalleled Angel and Interpreter of the new kingdom, the afflicted man be brought, not only to discern the equity of God in afflicting him, but to discern, and by faith apply, Jesus' blessed righteousness to himself, God intimates to his soul a full and free redemption through that all-inclusive atonement. 25,26. In consequence hereof not only the man's body and mind recover their wonted health and alacrity, but he is enabled, with boldness and success, to pour forth his requests before God, who allows him the comfortable sense and gracious reward of that righteousness imparted to or implanted in him. 27, 28. While God exactly observes, the man, all influenced by cordial gratitude, shall publicly confess his sinfulness of heart and life, and that the due reward of his deeds has never been rendered unto him; and shall profess his full assurance of faith, that God has redeemed him by the mighty power of his Son's blood, and will bestow his fulness of grace and glory upon him.

Ver. 3. [It appears to me that Elihu here contrasts his own motives and form of address with those of the three friends who had preceded him. They spake ignorantly, bitterly, and reproachfully; Elihu, on the other hand, addresses Job in words of well-meaning kindness and sincerity. Delitzsch translates the verse thus:—'Sincere as my heart are my utterances, and knowledge that is pure my lips declare.' *P.*]

Ver. 4. [The twofold nature of man is here indicated—the material organization and the spiritual soul. The Spirit of God *made*—moulded and framed—the body of clay; then the breath of the Almighty breathed into the moulded framework gave it life. The body was *made*, not *created;* the soul was *created*, not *made*. The spirit of man was a direct emanation from God. *P.*]

Ver. 6. [Yet though in God's stead, a body is prepared for me *of clay* like thine own, so that while my arguments convince, my terrors may not affright, alluding to what Job had said, ch. 9. 34. *C.*]

Ver. 23. [*A messenger*—Christ the Angel of the covenant, Mal. 3. 1. *An interpreter*—Christ as a prophet, preaching the gospel to the poor and afflicted, Lu. 4. 14–32. *One among a thousand*—Christ as a leader and commander, Is. 55. 4. *His uprightness*—his duty, as was shown to the jailer at Philippi, Ac. 16. 31. *C.*]

[Ver. 9–11 are the statements attributed by Elihu to Job. They are substantially accurate, as may be seen by comparing them with ch. 9. 21; 16. 7; 12. 4. The tendency of Job's arguments was to indicate that as an innocent man he had been exceptionally if not unfairly treated. Elihu shows that there was a grand fundamental error in all his speeches, for God alone is pure, and all men are guilty before him. *P.*]

Ver. 18. [The first object of God in putting man through a course of discipline is indicated in ver. 17, 18—it is to free him from the dangerous sin of carnal security and pride. God warns him in dreams and visions. *P.*]

Ver. 22. [Ver. 19–22 indicate another mode in which God is pleased to instruct man. It is painful and exhausting to the body; but the final result is glorious. The same great truth is embodied by our Lord in his parable of the vine:—'And every branch in me

29 Lo, all these *things* worketh God [f]oftentimes with man,

30 To [g]bring back his soul from the pit, to be enlightened with the [h]light of the living.

31 Mark[i] well, O Job; hearken unto me: hold thy peace, and I will speak.

32 If thou hast anything to say, [j]answer me: speak; for I desire to justify thee.[3]

33 If not, [k]hearken unto me: hold thy peace, and I shall teach thee wisdom.[4]

CHAPTER XXXIV.

1 Elihu accuseth Job for charging God with injustice. 10 God omnipotent cannot be unjust. 31 Man must humble himself before God. 34 Job is blamed for his rash discourses.

FURTHERMORE, Elihu answered and said,
2 Hear my words, O [a]ye wise *men;* and give ear unto me, ye that have knowledge;

3 For[b] the ear trieth words, as the mouth[1] tasteth meat.

4 Let us [c]choose to us judgment: let us know among ourselves what *is* good.

5 For Job hath said, [d]I am righteous: and God hath taken away my judgment.

6 Should[e] I lie against my right? [f]my wound *is* incurable without transgression.[2]

7 What man *is* like Job, *who* [g]drinketh up scorning like water?[3]

8 Which [h]goeth in company with the workers of iniquity, and walketh with wicked men.

9 For he hath said, It [i]profiteth a man nothing that he should delight himself with God.

10 Therefore hearken unto me, ye [k]men of understanding: [l]Far be it from God, *that he should do* wickedness; and *from* the Almighty, *that he should commit* iniquity.

11 For the [m]work of a man shall he render unto him, and cause every man to find according to *his* ways.

12 Yea, [n]surely God will not do wickedly, neither will the Almighty pervert judgment.

13 Who [o]hath given him a charge over the earth? or who hath disposed the whole[4] world?

14 If [p]he set his heart upon[5] man,[6] *if* he gather unto himself his spirit and his breath;

15 All [q]flesh shall perish together, and man shall turn again unto dust.

16 If now *thou* [r]*hast* understanding, hear this; hearken to the voice of my words:

17 Shall [s]even he[7] that hateth [7]right [8]govern? and wilt thou condemn him that is most just?

18 *Is*[t] *it fit* to say to a king, *Thou art* wicked? *and* to princes, *Ye are* ungodly?

19 *How* [u]*much less to him* that [v]accepteth not the persons of princes, nor regardeth the rich more than the poor? for they all *are* [w]the work of his hands.

20 In [x]a moment shall they die, and the people shall be troubled at midnight, and pass away: and the mighty shall be taken [9]away [z]without hand.[1]

21 For [a]his eyes *are* upon the ways of man, and he seeth all his goings.

22 *There is* [b]no darkness, nor shadow of death, where the workers of iniquity may [c]hide themselves.

23 For [d]he will not lay upon man more *than right,* that he should enter into judgment with God.[2]

24 He shall [e]break in pieces mighty men without number,[3] and set others in their stead.

25 Therefore he [f]knoweth[4] their works, and

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f Heb. *twice* and *thrice,* Jn. 5. 17; 8. 12. Mi. 7. 18, 19.
g Is. 38. 17. Zec. 9. 11. Ps. 40. 1–3 86. 13; 118. 17, 18. 1 Ti. 2. 4.
h Ps. 56. 13. Ac. 26. 18.
i ch. 13. 5, 6; 21. 2, 3.
j 2 Co. 1. 24. 1 Pe. 3. 15. Is. 41. 21.
3 Against the harsh censures of thy friends.—*C.*
k Ps. 34. 11. Pr. 2. 1–11; 3. 11–26; 4. 1–13; 5. 1, 2 17. 1–4.
4 A promise not becoming in any mere man, but every way becoming him who is 'the wisdom of God,' 1 Co. 1. 24.—*C.*

CHAP. XXXIV.

a Pr. 1. 5. 1 Ti. 4. 12. 1 Co. 10. 15; 14. 20.
b ch. 12. 11; 6. 30.
1 Heb. *palate.*
c Ju. 19. 30. 1 Th. 5. 21. ch. 36. 16.
d ch. 33. 9; 9. 17; 10. 7; 16. 17; 27. 2.
e ch. 9. 17; 16. 17–20; 27. 5, 6.
f Heb. *mine arrow,* ch. 6. 4; 16. 13.
2 Several new translations of this passage have been proposed, but that in the text seems both accurate and intelligible. *My wound* (as with the arrow of the Lord, see Ps. 38. 2) *is incurable;* and yet I am innocent of all the crimes charged against me, and altogether *without transgression.*—*C.*
g ch. 15. 16; 11. 3; 12. 21; 16. 2, 3; 26. 2, 3. Pr. 4. 17.
3 *Drinketh up scorning*—that is, of the multitude (see ch. 30. 9–14), not as a bitter draught of scorning from the Lord, but, through a perverted appetite, as *water,* to satisfy his thirst of self-righteousness.—*C.*
h ver. 9; ch. 15. 5; 36. 21; 11. 3.
i ch. 9. 22; 30. 26, with ch. 21. 15; 22. 17; 35. 3. Mal. 3. 14. Ps. 73. 13.
k Heb. *men of heart,* ver. 2, 3. 1 Co. 10. 15.
l De. 32. 4. 2 Ch. 19. 7. ch. 8. 3; 36. 23. Ps. 92. 15; 145. 17. Ro. 9. 14.
m Ps. 62. 12. Pr. 24. 12. Je. 32. 19. Eze. 33. 20. Mat. 16. 27. Ro. 2. 6. 2 Co. 5. 10. 1 Pe. 1. 17. Re. 22. 12.

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n Ge. 18. 25. Ex. 15. 11. Ps. 11. 7; 145. 17. Hab. 1. 12, 13. Zep. 3. 5.
o 1 Ch. 29. 11. 2 Ch. 36. 23. Da. 4. 34, 35.
4 Heb. *all of it.*
p Ps. 104. 29.
5 Heb. *upon him.*
6 *Against man.*—'If he recall his spirit.'—*Boothroyd.* That is, for judgment without a ransom (ch. 33. 24. Ec. 12. 7), then all flesh should perish together.—*Note,* Against this apprehension and possibility the whole system of grace is revealed, Jn. 3. 16.—*C.*
q Ge. 3. 19. Ec. 7. 15; 12. 7. ch. 30. 23. Is. 57. 1.
r 1 Co. 10. 15; 2. 12, 15. 2 Ti. 3. 15–17. Jn. 6. 45. Is. 42. 23.
s 2 Sa. 23. 3. Ge. 18. 25. Ro. 3. 5, 6.
7 If God were indifferent to right, he could not be just; how then, if he *hated* right, could he govern?—*C.*
8 Heb. *bind.*
t Ex. 22. 28. Ac. 23. 3–5. Ro. 13. 7.
u He. 12. 28.
v De. 10. 17. 2 Ch. 19. 7. Ac. 10. 34. Ro. 2. 11. Ga. 2. 6. Ep. 6. 9. Col. 3. 25. 1 Pe. 1. 17.
w ch. 31. 15. 1 Sa. 2. 7. Pr. 22. 2.
x Ps. 73. 18–20. Lu. 17. 26–29. Ex. 12. 29. Is. 37. 36.
9 Heb. *they shall take away the mighty.*
z Is. 30. 33. Da. 2. 34, 35; 8. 25. ch. xviii. xx.
1 Is not this, most probably, an allusion to the death of the first-born in Egypt, which took place at midnight, without any stroke of the human hand?—*C.*
a 2 Ch. 16. 9. ch. 31. 4. Pr. 5. 21; 15. 3. Je. 16. 17; 32. 19. Ps. 139. 1–6.
b ch. 3. 5. Ps. 139. 12. He. 4. 13. Am. 9. 2, 3.
c Re. 6. 15, 16.
d Je. 12. 1. Da. 9. 7–9. Ezr. 9. 13. La. 3. 39. Ps. 119. 137. Is. 42. 3. 1 Co. 10. 13.
2 Behold! not to man hath he intrusted the time of entering into judgment with God.—*M. Good.*
e Ps. 2. 9; 75. 7; 113. 7, 8. Da. 2. 34, 35.
3 Heb. *without searching out.*
f Ps. 30. 21. Am. 8. 7.
4 '*For* he knoweth.'—*M. Good.*

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that beareth fruit, *he purgeth it,* that it may bring forth more fruit.' It is also embodied in the statement, 'Whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth.' *P.*]

Ver. 30. [This is a summary of God's gracious design in all the chastenings and afflictions which he sends upon his elect. It is to redeem them from sin's power. Elihu just develops the same principle which the apostle Paul enunciates; that 'all things work together for good to them that love God.' *P.*]

REFLECTIONS.—We ought seriously to hear out a discourse before we form a judgment on it. And they who speak for God ought to speak with great deliberation and plainness. Those who are in great trouble ought to be tenderly, as well as convincingly, dealt with. And yet a faithful testimony must be borne against the dishonours which we see or hear done to God by even the greatest of saints. In the rage of temptation or dispute, or in the depth of trouble, they often speak things very unadvisedly; and yet their words are apt to be taken in a worse sense than they meant them. To make us conceive aright of God's providence we must carefully keep in view his infinite greatness, sovereignty, grace, and wisdom. And there is great need to keep our heart with all diligence, that even in our dreams we may enjoy profitable fellowship with and instruction from God, which may humble our pride and secure the salvation of our soul. For God, at his pleasure, makes the most fearful changes upon the bodies or minds of men. But honourable to God and profitable to men are sanctified troubles. They lead to Jesus and his word as our instructors; to Jesus and his blood as our atonement and ransom; to Jesus and his law as our way in which we must walk; in our grateful returns for his mercies. They render our sins bitter and heavy, and our deliverances admired, and instigate us to invite others to a share of his goodness. And often God brings men through great tribulation to their comforts on earth as well as to their glories in heaven. Departures from God issue in ruin unless he recover us by grace. And so manifold are his admonitions that, if we perish, our ruin lies at our own door. The wiser men are, they are the more humble and willing to learn; and the more desirous to be undeceived if they have been mistaken.

CHAPTER XXXIV. Ver. 2. I appeal to you, O men of sense, and I beseech you seriously to consider what I say. 3. For the mind can judge of the truth or falsehood of doctrines, as well as the mouth can judge of the taste of food. 4. Let us, without any passion or prejudice, thoroughly examine this cause: 5, 6. For Job has uttered some very dangerous expressions in his own justification, as if he could not vindicate himself without accusing God of unjust severity towards him, 7, 8. Did ever a good man deride, not only his friends, but even his God, with such greediness and delight? Did ever a good man under trouble speak and act so like the wicked? 10–12. It is impossible that God can deny justice to any, or punish without cause, or forbear to reward men according to their deeds, either in this life or in that which is to come. 13–17. Without supposing him perfectly just he could never govern the world; and men are so far from being able to give him his charge or directions, that their existence and life depend wholly upon his mere good pleasure and bounty. 18, 19. If it be improper rudely to charge earthly princes with wickedness and impiety, how daring is it to accuse him who formed all mankind equally subject to his power and pleasure, and therefore regards the greatest no more than the least, and can never do anything unjust to gain their favour or to avoid their anger. 20. At his pleasure whole nations, in their midnight security, are in a terrible manner, by earthquakes or the like, hurried into eternity; and the mightiest princes or warriors are, by his immediate influence, displaced from their station or deprived of their life. 21. His omniscient eye discerns enough in men for which he may justly punish them. 25. He takes a full and exact account of their works; and because they are wicked he rolls a night of destructive judgment upon them; and they are bruised, as in a mortar, under the weight of it. 26. He suddenly, and with shame, hisses away these eminent ones in the open view of unnumbered spectators. 27. Because of their manifest apostasy from and obstinate rebellion against him: 28. That he may encourage mean persons to apply to him for relief; and may graciously hear the plaintive cries of the poor and afflicted. 29. And if he give deliverance, rest, and comfort, none can make trouble. If he withhold his favourable smiles, none can procure help from him. 30. He also punishes wicked men, that their insolence may be controlled, and that their subjects may not be encouraged to imitate their impieties or be perpetually held in the fetters of tyranny and oppression. 31, 32. Instead of quarrelling with God's afflictive providences, we should kindly submit to them, and with holy resolution to avoid it, beseech him to discover to us the sinful cause of them, however secret. 33. Has not God inflicted these troubles upon thee as a part of thy due reward, because thou hast grievously murmured against him? Since thou hast chosen what I never would, declare plainly thy reason for it.

Ver. 8. [Not as if Job had ever practically or intentionally taken part with these, but that his doctrines finally coincided with theirs, and rendered him a party to all their erroneous conclusions.—*Note,* How easily may any one, through oversight, be found in the sight of God walking with the very men whom, in his judgment and heart, he fancies that he most abhors! *C.*]

Ver. 32. [Delitzsch translates, 'For one, indeed,

he overturneth *them* [g]in the night, so that they are destroyed.[5]

26 He striketh them as wicked men [h]in the open sight of others;

27 Because they [i]turned back from him,[6] and would not [j]consider any of his ways:

28 So [k]that they cause the cry of the poor to come unto him, and he [l]heareth the cry of the afflicted.[7]

29 When [m]he giveth quietness, who then can make trouble? and when he [n]hideth *his* face,[8] who then can behold him? whether *it be done* against a nation, or against a man only:

30 That[o] the hypocrite[9] reign not, lest the people be ensnared.

31 Surely [p]it is meet to be said unto God, I have borne *chastisement*, I will not offend *any more:*

32 *That* [q]*which* I see not, teach thou me: if I have done iniquity, [r]I will do no more.

33 *Should* [1]*it be* according to thy mind?[2] he will[s] recompense it, whether thou refuse, or whether thou choose; and not I:[3] therefore speak what thou knowest.

34 Let men [t]of understanding tell me, and let a wise man hearken unto me.

35 Job [u]hath spoken without knowledge, and his words *were* without wisdom.

36 My[x] desire *is, that* Job may be tried unto the end, because of [y]*his* answers for wicked men.[4]

37 For he addeth rebellion unto his sin; he [z]clappeth *his hands* among us, and [a]multiplieth his words against God.

CHAPTER XXXV.

1 *Comparison is not to be made with God, because our good or evil cannot extend unto him.* 9 *Many cry in their afflictions, but are not heard for want of faith.*

ELIHU spake moreover, and said,

2 Thinkest[a] thou this to be right, *that* thou saidst, [b]My righteousness *is* more than [1]God's?

3 For thou saidst, [c]What advantage will it be unto thee? *and,* What profit shall I have *if I be cleansed* from my sin?[2]

4 I will answer thee,[3] and thy companions with thee.

5 Look[d] unto the heavens, and see; and behold the clouds[4] *which* are higher than thou.

6 If thou sinnest, what doest thou [e]against him? or *if* thy transgressions be [5]multiplied, what doest thou unto him?

7 If[f] thou be righteous, what givest thou him? or what receiveth he of thine hand?

8 Thy wickedness *may hurt* [g]a man as thou *art,* and thy righteousness *may profit* the son of man.

9 By[h] reason of the multitude of oppressions they make *the oppressed* to cry; they cry out by reason of the arm of the mighty:[6]

10 But [i]none saith, Where *is* God my [k]maker, who [l]giveth songs in the night;

11 Who [m]teacheth us more than the beasts of

A.M. cir. 2484. B.C. cir. 1520.

[g] ver.20. Ps.73.19,20. 1 Th.5.2,3.
[5] Heb. *crushed.*
[h] Heb. *in the place of beholders,* Ps. 58. 10;48.4-8. Ex.14.30. Is. 66.24. Re.xviii. 1 Ti. 5. 24.
[i] De.11.16. Ps. 40. 4; 125.5;78.41. Je.11.10.
[6] Heb. *from after him.*
[j] Ps.28.5. Is.5.12;1.3; 42.25. Pr.1.29,30.
[k] Ja.5.4,8. Ex. 2. 23, 24; 3. 7, 9. Ps. 12. 5; 34. 6.
[l] Ex 22. 27.
[7] This seems still farther to confirm the idea of allusion to the judgments at the exodus. Compare Ex. 3.—*C.*
[m] 2 Sa.7. 1. Is. 26. 3; 32.17; 14.3, 4. Ro.8.31-34.
[n] Ps.30.7; 27. 9; 143. 7. ch.13.8,9.
[8] When he refuses to answer the enforced prayer of terror, Pr.1.24,27,28.—*C.*
[o] ver.24. Ps. 10. 8. Pr. 29.2, 4, 8, 12. Ho. 5. 11. Mi.6.16. 1 Ki.12.28.
[9] The profligate.—*Boothroyd.*
[p] Le.26.41. Ps. 39.9. Je.31.19;3.13,14. Da.9. 7–14. Mi.7.9.
[q] Ps.19.12;119.27;32. 8. 1 Co.13. 12. ch. 42. 4–6;40.4,5.
[r] Ep.4.22.
[1] Heb. Should it be *from with thee?*
[2] Is God bound to judge according to thy views and feelings?—*C.*
[s] Am.3.2. Ps. 89. 30–32; 135. 6. Mat. 20. 15. Da.4.34,35.
[3] *Not I.* Christ came not in the flesh for condemnation, but for salvation, Jn. 3.17.—*C.*
[t] Heb. *of heart,* ver.2,4,10.
[u] ch.35.16; 38. 2; 42. 3;40.4,5.
[x] Or, *My father, let Job be tried,* Ge. 22. 1. Ps. 17. 3; 26. 1, 2; 139.23.
[y] ch.xii.xxi.xxiv.
[4] *My Father, let Job be tried*'—because of his replies like wicked men.'—*Boothroyd.* The marginal reading plainly presents an address of the Son of God to his Father in heaven.—*C.*
[z] ch.27.23; 17. 8. Ps. 47.1.
[a] ch.33.8–12;35. 2,3; ver.5-7.

CHAP. XXXV.

[a] Ro.2.15. Lu.19.22.
[b] ch. 16. 12–17; 19. 7; 27.2–6;9.17,34.
[1] I am righteous *before* God.—*Septuagint.*
[c] ch.9.22;10.15; 31.2. Ps.73.13. Pr. 28. 13. Is. 55.7.
[2] Or, by it *more than by my sin.*
[3] Heb. *I will return to thee words.*
[d] Ps.8.3,4. ch. 22.12; 25.2–6. Da.4.35.
[4] The original conveys the idea of *conflicting clouds,* tossed by the winds, and ever changing shape.—*C.*
[e] 1 Sa.7.19.ver.8, with Ps.51.4.
[5] Though thy sinful passions war and change and be multiplied as the clouds, they no more affect God than the clouds affect the sun.—*C.*
[f] ch. 22. 3. Ps.16.2,3. Ro.11. 35. 1 Ch. 29. 14. Pr.9.12.
[g] Ec.9.18. Jos.22.18, 20. Ge.6.18; 18. 24–32. Ps.106.23, 30. Eze. 22. 30. 1 Ti.4.8. Tit.3.8,14.
[h] ch.24.12. Lu.18.7. Ps.12.5; 43. 2; 55.2,3,9; 10;57.4;56.1,2.
[6] 'By reason of the multitude of oppressions they raise a cry; they call for help by reason of the arm of the great' (*Delitzsch*).—*P.*
[i] Ho.7.14. ch.36.13.
[k] Makers, Is. 54. 5. Ec.12.1. Ge.1.26.
[l] Ps.42.8;119.62;149. 5. Ac.16.25.
[m] ch. 32. 8. Ge. 2. 7. 1 Jn.5.20, with Is. 1. 3, 4. Je.8.7–9.

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saith to God, I have been proud, I will not do evil; what I see not, show thou me; if I have done wrong, I will do it no more.' This is given by Elihu as a model confession. It is not directly urged upon Job; but indirectly it is recommended to his consideration. Job was proud of his own integrity. To humble him, and bring him a suppliant to the throne of grace, was the object of all Job's afflictions. *P.*]

Ver. 33. [*Speak what thou knowest.* What thou truly knowest upon divine evidence, and not what is the product of thine own dissatisfied feelings. *C.*]

Ver. 36. ['O would that Job were proved to the extreme on account of his answers after the manner of evil men' (*Delitzsch*). The Hebrew word translated in the text 'my desire,' and in the margin 'my father,' appears to be from an Arabic root, and is equivalent to our expression 'O that.' It expresses an earnest wish or petition. The wish here is that Job's trials may continue until the whole controversy regarding his boasted uprightness be decided. *P.*]

REFLECTIONS.—Mutual assistance is necessary in searching out truth or convincing the mistaken. But often good men, in the heat of their spirit, speak worse than they mean; and reproach both themselves and their God, in speaking or acting like the profane world. Just views of God's perfections are requisite to prevent our sinful freedoms with him, or to render us penitent for them. The eye of God constantly observes our hearts and ways. How foolish is it then to hide our sin! Rejection of his warnings, and obstinate disregard of his will, fill up men's iniquity. And they who will not be guided by his word shall be smitten with his rod of judgment: and quickly will he resent the groans of the poor and oppressed, and redress their grievances. What God gives to nations or persons none but himself can take from them. If a soul enjoy a sense of his favour through faith in Jesus, no accusations of sin, nor fears of death or hell, can any longer disturb him. And when God is our enemy the whole world cannot protect us. Let wicked men crouch as they will, and profess as they will, in order to obtain power, he can easily disappoint them in mercy to mankind. The more persons are humbled for sin the less they will complain of their sufferings; but, conscious of the depth of iniquity in their heart, and the spread of it in their life, will search out the cause, and turn from it to God. Humble confessions of our ignorance and crimes, earnest supplications for necessary instructions and supplies of grace, and holy resolutions to walk in his way, are necessary in all our dealings with God. To struggle with him who best knows how to manage us, and does all things well, is at once extremely foolish and criminal. But, alas! how often the best of men, when left to their own passions under heavy troubles, practically take part with God's enemies, insult his friends, and obstinately murmur against himself! And it is then a distinguished kindness faithfully to reprove them, and to help them to see and be affected with their offence.

CHAPTER XXXV. Ver. 9–13. Many, under terrible troubles and inhuman oppressions, cry to God for relief, and for vengeance on their oppressors: but as their prayers are mingled with no faith in God or kind sense of his goodness, but merely forced from them by the pressure of their distress and the haughty violence of their oppressors, God pays no regard to them. 14, 15. Therefore, although thou complainest that he hath not, and despairest that he will ever appear for thy relief, yet he still attends to wisdom and equity in every dispensation; therefore do thou patiently wait and earnestly look for him; and remember that it is because there is nothing of this in thy carriage that God has thus severely afflicted thee; and because of thy excessive pride he quite disregards thy former prosperity, and overlooks thy present extremity of trouble. 16. And it is owing to thy ignorance or thoughtlessness of this that so many foolish and wicked words have proceeded out of thy mouth.

Ver. 10. [To glory in afflictions, and to render thanks for disappointments and persecutions, are undoubtedly beyond the power of 'flesh and blood,' but are the constant evidences and products of divine grace. See Ps. 42. 8; 77. 6; Ac. 5. 41; Ro. 5. 3; Ep. 5. 20. *C.*]

Ver. 16. ['The sense is, *And now, because his* (God's) *wrath hath not visited* (the wicked), but sometimes leaves them unpunished in this world, and because he (God) does not clearly take cognizance of guilt, . . . therefore Job will open his mouth in vanity, and will multiply words without knowledge' (*Wordsworth*). *P.*]

REFLECTIONS.—There is great need to be well rooted in the knowledge and faith of God's infinite greatness and goodness, in order to prevent many fatal mistakes in principle or practice. We can never make him our debtor. The best we do is unworthy of his notice; and the worst he dispenses to us is less than our iniquities deserve. Whatever trouble now attends his service, it will appear infinitely profitable at last. But many groan under their troubles who never show any humiliation for sin or desire after God. Yet irreligious poverty and suffering is, of all human miseries on earth, one of the most deplorable. It cannot be expected that such men's selfish prayers, without any regard to God or the good of their soul, should issue in help from him. While they are insensible of the most distinguishing mercies they enjoy, they cannot reasonably expect deliverance from the evils they feel, or the experience of those divine joys which overbalance every sorrow and pain. While our unhumbled hearts only murmur and groan under our troubles, it is a mercy to be denied the removal of them. But when God corrects his saints severely for their humiliation, Satan is ever ready to drive them to despair. The greatness of their sufferings makes them to overlook their unbelief, impatience, and rashness; by which means they lose the comforts and defer the removal of them. It is only strong faith in God that can guide us aright through temptations and trouble. Despair of relief is as high a reflection upon his power and grace as impatience is on his goodness and wisdom. And if our troubles are not removed but increased, it becomes us to look well if we have not provoked God by our insolent behaviour under them.

CHAPTER XXXVI. Ver. 2. Patiently permit me to inform thee a little further, for I have yet something more to speak on God's behalf. 3. While I treat of distant matters, and fetch my arguments from the inspiration of God's Spirit, or from his wonderful works, I will maintain the justice of God in all his proceedings, and give him the glory thereof. 4. And assure thyself I will not attempt to baffle thee with sophistical arguments; but as I have thoroughly studied the point, I will make use of no reasoning but what is sincere and solid. 5. Behold, such is the infinite

LIBRARY OF CÆSAR AUGUSTUS. [JOB xxxv: 16.]—"He multiplieth words without knowledge." The above picture is of a scene on the Palatine hill, known as the Library of Cæsar Augustus. Reference is made in this sixteenth verse of the thirty-fifth chapter of Job to multiplying words without knowledge. It would be very interesting to go back through the centuries and look at the volumes in the library of Cæsar Augustus. We would find, however, by comparing his library with one of the modern period, that the difference between ancient books and modern books consists in the fact that ancient books, especially outside of the range of history, were made up of words without knowledge, while it is characteristic of the books of modern times, that the words they contain must be based upon accurate knowledge of the facts which they describe.

the earth, and maketh us wiser than the fowls of heaven?

12 There [n]they cry,[7] but none giveth answer, because of the pride of evil men.

13 Surely God will not hear [o]vanity, neither will the Almighty regard it.

14 Although thou sayest [p]thou shalt not see him, *yet* [q]judgment *is* before him; therefore trust thou in him.

15 But now, [r]because *it is* not so, he[8] hath visited in his anger; yet he[9] knoweth *it* not in great[s] extremity:[1]

16 Therefore doth Job [t]open his mouth in vain: he multiplieth words without knowledge.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

1 *Elihu showeth how God is just in his ways.* 16 *How Job's sins hinder God's blessings.* 24 *God's works are to be magnified.*

ELIHU also proceeded, and said,

2 Suffer[a] me a little, and I will show thee that *I have* yet to speak on God's behalf.[1]

3 I will [b]fetch my knowledge from afar,[2] and will [c]ascribe righteousness to my Maker.

4 For [d]truly my words *shall* not *be* false: he that is [e]perfect in knowledge[3] *is* with thee.[4]

5 Behold, God *is* mighty, and [f]despiseth not[5] *any: he is* [g]mighty in strength *and* wisdom.[6]

6 He [h]preserveth not the life of the wicked; but [i]giveth right to the poor.[7]

7 He [k]withdraweth not his eyes from the righteous: but with kings *are* [l]*they* on the throne; yea, he doth establish them for ever, and they are exalted.

8 And if [m]*they be* bound in fetters, *and* be holden in cords of affliction,

9 Then [n]he showeth them their work, and their transgressions that they have exceeded.[8]

10 He [o]openeth also their ear to discipline, and commandeth that they return from iniquity.

A.M. cir. 2484. B.C. cir. 1520.

n ch. 27. 9. Is. 1. 15. Pr.1.28;15.29. Je.11.11. Jn.9.31.

7 They *cry* under oppressions, but the pride of their heart hindering them from crying to God, there is none that giveth answer.—*C.*

o Pr.15.8;21.27; 28.9. Ec.5.2. Ps.4.6. Ja. 4.3. Is.1.15.

p ch.9.11;23.8,9.

q Ps.37.6; 62.5,8; 77. 5-10. Is.30.18; 50.10; 8. 17. Mi.7.7-9.

r Ps.37.5,7. Mi. 7. 9. Nu.20.12. Zep.3.2.

8 God.

9 Job.

s Ps.88.16. ch. 4.3,4, 20;xxx. Ho.11.8,9.

1 But now, because he hath not visited in his anger, nor noticed great arrogance.—*Boothroyd.*

t ch.34.5,6,35,37; 33. 8-12;42.3;40.4,5;ver.3.

CHAP. XXXVI.

a ch.21.3. He.13.22.

2 Heb. *that* there are *yet words for God.*

b 2 Co.3. 5. ch. 32. 8, 18;xxxvii.ver.24-33.

2 I will bring forth knowledge concerning him that is afar off.—*Aben Ezra.*

c De.32.4. Re. 15. 3. Da.9.7. Ps.11.7;145.17.

d 2 Co.2.17. Col.3.9.

e ch. 37. 16, or 1 Co. 2.10,12, with Pr.25. 14.

3 Or, 'one perfect in knowledge stands before thee.' Elihu was conscious of divine inspiration.—*P.*

4 Is not this a *personal character* that none but THE WORD OF THE LORD could legitimately claim?—a character not essentially affected by any proposed change of translation.—*C.*

f ch. 10. 3, with Ps. 138.6;22.24;72.12-14.

5 Will not be despised.—*M. Good.*

g ch.9.4;12.13,16;37. 23. Ps.99.4;147.5. Je.32. 19.

6 Heb. *heart.*

h 2 Pe.2.9. Ps.55.23; 104.35.

i Ps.9.4,9;72.2,4,12-14.

7 Or, *afflicted.*

k Ps.34.15; 33.18; 11. 7. 2 Ch.16.9. Zep. 3.17. He.13.5.

l 1 Sa.2.8. Ps. 113. 7, 8. Ge.41. 40-44. Es. ii. viii.

m Ps.107.10,17; 116. 3;118.4,5. La.3.7. Ho. 2. 6.

n 2 Ch.33.12. Lu.15. 16-19. Ps. 119.67,71.

8 Wherein they have rebelled.—*M. Good.*

o ver. 15, ch. 33. 16. Ac.16.14. Ho.2.6,7,14.

A.M. cir. 2484. B.C. cir. 1520.

p Is. 1. 19. Le. 26. 3-13. De. 28. 1-14. ch. 42. 10-17. 2 Ch. 33. 13. Ec. 8. 13.

q Le. 26. 14-39. De. 28. 15-68. Is. 1. 20; 3. 11. 2 Ch. 35. 22-24.

9 Heb. *they shall pass away by the sword.*

r Is. 33. 14. ch. 15. 4. Ro. 2. 5. 2 Ch. 28. 13, 22.

1 They (the *hypocrites*—the profligate) *cry* not to God as a merciful Father and righteous Judge, but rebel more and more. See Re. 16. 9, 11.—*C.*

2 Heb. *Their soul dieth.*

s ch. 15. 32; 22. 16. Ps. 55. 23.

t Or, *Sodomites*, Ro. 1. 27.

u Ps. 12. 5; 22. 24; 72. 4, 12-14.

3 Or, *afflicted.*

x ver. 10. Ho. 2. 6, 14. Lu. 15. 16-19.

4 Gives them joy in tribulation, Ro. 5. 3.—*C.*

y Ps. 40. 1-3; 18. 19; 31. 7, 8. ch. 19, 8, with 42. 10 -17.

z Heb. *the rest of thy table*, Ps. 23. 5; 36. 8. ch. 42. 12.

a ch. 34, 8, 36. Re. 18. 4. Pr. 13. 20. Am. 3. 2.

5 'Thou hast *supported* the judgment of the wicked,' by questioning or arraigning the providence of God.—*C.*

6 Or, *judgment and justice should uphold* thee.

b Ps. 2. 12. Zec. 2. 13.

7 'When there is wrath.'—*C.*

c Ps. 49. 7, 8; 89. 48. Ec. 8. 8. Mat. 16. 26. Lu. 12. 20. He. 10. 26-29.

8 Heb. *turn thee aside.*

d Pr. 10. 2; 11. 4. Ps. 33. 16, 17. Is. 37. 36.

e ch. 3. 20, 21; 9. 9; 7. 15, 16. 1 Th. 5. 2, 3.

9 As Job had prayed for, ch. 3. 4, 6, 7, &c.—*C.*

f Ps. 66. 18. Eze. 14. 4-8. Mat. 5. 29, 30.

g ch. 33. 8, 9; 34. 5, 6; 35. 3. Ps. 66. 18.

h Ps. 18. 18, 19; 40. 1-3; 113. 7, 8. Is. 48. 17. Da. 4. 25, 32.

i Ps. 94. 12.

1 'Who, like him, can cast down?'—*M. Good.*

j Is. 40. 13, 14. Ro. 11. 34. 1 Co. 2. 16. ch. 34. 13.

k ch. 8, 3; 34. 10. De. 32. 4. 2 Ch. 19. 7. Ro. 9. 14. 1 Jn. 1. 5; 3. 5.

l Re. 15. 3, 4. Ps. 86. 8, 10; 72. 18; 92. 5; 104. 24; 111. 2-8.

m Ps. 19. 1-6. Ro. 1. 19, 20. Ac. 14. 17; 17. 25.

n 1 Ki. 8. 27. ch. 11. 7; 26. 14; 37. 5. Ps. 147. 5. 1 Co. 13. 12.

o Ps. 90. 2; 102. 24, 27. He. 1. 12. 2 Pe. 3. 8.

11 If[p] they obey and serve *him*, they shall spend their days in prosperity, and their years in pleasures:

12 But [q]if they obey not, they shall perish by the sword,[9] and they shall die without knowledge.

13 But the hypocrites in heart [r]heap up wrath; they cry not when he bindeth them.[1]

14 They die[2] in[s] youth, and their life *is* among the [t]unclean.

15 He [u]delivereth the poor[3] in his affliction, and [x]openeth their ears in oppression:[4]

16 Even[y] so would he have removed thee out of the strait *into* a broad place, where *there is* no straitness; and [z]that which should be set on thy table *should be* full of fatness.

17 But thou hast [a]fulfilled the judgment of the wicked:[5] judgment and justice take hold *on thee.*[6]

18 Because[b] *there is* wrath,[7] *beware* lest he take thee away with *his* stroke: then a [c]great ransom cannot deliver thee.[8]

19 Will he [d]esteem thy riches? *no*, not gold, nor all the forces of strength.

20 Desire[e] not the night,[9] when people are cut off in their place.

21 Take[f] heed, regard not iniquity: for [g]this hast thou chosen rather than affliction.

22 Behold, God [h]exalteth by his power; [i]who teacheth like him?[1]

23 Who[j] hath enjoined him his way? or [k]who can say, Thou hast wrought iniquity?

24 Remember that thou [l]magnify his work, which men behold.

25 Every[m] man may see it; man may behold *it* afar off.

26 Behold, [n]God *is* great, and we know *him* not; neither [o]can the number of his years be searched out.

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power and wisdom of God that he never despises any, however mean! 6. He will bestow no solid happiness upon wicked men, but will do justice to the humble, poor, and afflicted. 7. He never ceases his special care of the righteous; but sometimes advances them, however poor, to the highest stations; and continues, establishes, and exalts them therein. 8–10. Or if they be brought into and fixed in sore troubles, he by that means makes them to consider their ways, discern their sinfulness, and turn from it to himself. 11. If their afflictions effect their reformation to piety and virtue, great and manifold shall be the blessings and comforts bestowed upon them here and hereafter. 12. But if, notwithstanding their troubles, they continue obstinate in wickedness, they shall be cut off by some fearful calamity, and shall perish in their ignorance, folly, and sin. 13, 14. Thus hypocrites heap up treasures of wrath for themselves; they neglect to implore God's help and deliverance in their troubles; therefore their life is early cut off, in a fearful storm of his wrath, by some exemplary judgment in death; and through eternity he reckons them with, and punishes them as, the cursed and abominable. 15. But he delivers the poor and humble in their affliction, and teaches them to know and practise their duty under it. 16. And hadst thou behaved thyself aright under thy pressures, he would even now have delivered thee from thy pressing and tormenting troubles into a state of freedom and affluence, in which there should be nothing to straiten thee; and that which fell from heaven upon thy table should be full of fatness. 17. But thou hast earnestly pleaded the cause of the wicked, and justified their reproachful murmurings against the providence of God: therefore his just indignation has already seized thee, and holds thee fast in bonds of fearful affliction. 18, 19. Since he is manifesting his hot displeasure against thee, take heed lest he cut thee off without remedy; and then no ransom, however great, can redeem thy life again; nor will all the united power and virtue in the world be able to deliver thee, if God resolve to destroy thee. 20. Never wish for a period of awful judgments, in which multitudes of men are often destroyed amidst all their comforts and enjoyments. 21. Never give way to sinning, particularly to rash and intemperate speeches concerning God's providential procedure. Thus shalt thou be chosen in, and plucked out of, the furnace of affliction. But, alas! hitherto thou hast preferred rash censuring of God's ways to a patient bearing of thy afflictions. 22. It is God alone who can effectually deliver and exalt men; and none can cast down, scourge, instruct, or govern like him. Pretend not therefore to direct him. 23. None hath directed him how to govern the world, or can call him to account for his management. None can charge him with anything unjust or imprudent. Never therefore rashly complain of him. 24. Instead of censuring, always admire and speak honourably of his works of creation and providence, which men cheerfully behold, and should cordially celebrate. 25. There are scarcely any so ignorant but they must observe these, and acknowledge his greatness and excellency in them. 26. Behold, such is the unbounded perfection of God, that we can never comprehend it; and such his eternal duration that we cannot search it out. How unfit are we then to judge of and censure his conduct? 27, 28. It is he who exhales from the sea, and forms the drops of rain which fall from the clouds. 29. How incomprehensible are his spreadings of the thick clouds all along the face of the heavens, and the crashing thunder of his cloudy residence! 30. How marvellously he extends the flashing lightning all over the sky, makes it penetrate to the bottom of, or vails it with the rainy waters exhaled from the sea! 31. By such rains, thunder, and lightning, he punishes wicked men for their sins; and by rendering the earth fruitful, makes liberal and magnificent provision for his creatures. 32. By his hollow clouds he conceals the thundering flash as well as the bright and scorching sun, and restrains it by their interposing influence. 33. Its crashing noise informs concerning it: as a red flaming treasure of wrath it hangs over the proud; or the noise of the clouds, as well as the motions of animals, portends the approach of the rain formed of vapours exhaled from the sea by the sun.

Ver. 7. [Good translates the first part thus:—'He withdraweth not his eyes from the *judge*, nor even from kings on the throne.' The authorized version, however, seems more consonant with Ps. 34. 15, and those promises of exaltation which are not given to kings, as such, but to the righteous of whatever rank, Ps. 89. 16; Ja. 1. 9; 1 Pe. 5. 6, and also perfectly accordant with fact, for even when the righteous are not on the throne in person, they are there by influence. See Mar. 6. 20. *C.*]

27 For he [p]maketh small the drops of water: they pour down rain according to the vapour thereof;

28 Which the clouds do drop *and* distil upon man abundantly.

29 Also can *any* understand the [q]spreadings of the clouds, *or* the [r]noise of his tabernacle?[2]

30 Behold, he spreadeth his [s]light[3] upon it, and [t]covereth the bottom[4] of the sea.[5]

31 For by them [u]judgeth he the people; he giveth[x] meat in abundance.

32 With [v]clouds he covereth the light;[6] and commandeth it *not to shine* by *the cloud* that cometh betwixt.[7]

33 The [r]noise thereof showeth concerning it, the cattle also concerning the [a]vapour.[8]

[x] Ac.14.17.He.6.7.Ps.136.25. [y] 1 Ki.18.45.Ps.135.7.ch.26.9.Ac.27.20. [z] ver.29.1 Ki.18. 41.45.Ps.18.13;104.7.Je.10.13. [a] Heb. *that which goeth up.*

A.M. cir. 2484. B.C. cir. 1520.

[p] Ps.147.8,9;65.9,10; 68.9;135.7. Am.5.8.ch. 38.22–29.

[q] Ps.104.2,3.1 Ki.18. 44,45.ch.37.16;38.9.

[r] 1 Ki.18. 41. Ps. 18. 11,13;29.3–9;104.3,7.

[2] Modern observation has discovered many *facts* in meteorology; but the *clouds* and the *thunder* have mysteries still as profoundly secret as in the days of Job.—*C.*

[s] ch.37.3. Ps.77.18. 2 Sa.23.4. Lu.17.24.

[3] 'Lightning.'—*Boothroyd.*

[t] ch.38.8–10. Is.11.9.

[4] Heb. *the roots.*

[5] He covers it with water derived from the clouds, again successively to be exhaled.—*C.*

[u] ch.37.13;38.23. Ju. 5.20.1 Sa.2.10;7.10. Ge. 19.24. De.8.2–15.

[6] The lightning covereth the skies.—*Boothroyd.*

[7] 'He chargeth it as to whom it may strike.'—*Boothroyd.*

[8] The noise thereof discovereth before him a storehouse of wrath against the impious. *C.*—'His noise announceth him, the cattle even that he is approaching' (*Delitzsch*).—*P.*

A.M. cir. 2484. B.C. cir. 1520.

CHAP. XXXVII.

[a] ch.38.1; 36. 24. Ps. 89. 7; 119. 120. Je.5. 22. Da.10.7,8. Mat.28.2–4. Ac.16.26–29.

1 Heb. *Hear in hearing.*

[b] ch.38.1;40.9. Ps.29. 3–9;104.7;ver.5. Ex.19. 16.

[c] Mat. 24. 27. Ps. 77. 18;97.4.

[2] Heb. *light.*

[3] Heb. *wings of the earth.*

[d] Ps.68.33.

[e] Rain and storm, ch.36.27–33;38.22–27.

[4] Yet no one can trace him out, though his voice is heard.—*C.*

[f] Ps.18.7–15;29.3–9.

[g] ch.5. 9; 36. 26. Re. 15. 3. Ps. 77. 19; 72. 18. Ec.3.11. Ro.11.33.

[h] Ps.147.15–17;11.6; ch.36.27.Is.55.10.

[5] Or, 'Fall thou towards the earth'—indicating that all the elements are subject to him.—*P.*

[6] Heb. *and to the shower of rain, and to the showers of rain of his strength.*

CHAPTER XXXVII.

1 *God is to be feared because of his great works.* 15 *His wisdom is unsearchable in them.*

AT this also my heart [a]trembleth, and is moved out of his place.

2 Hear attentively[1] the [b]noise of his voice, and the sound *that* goeth out of his mouth.

3 He [c]directeth it under the whole heaven, and his lightning[2] unto the ends of the earth.[3]

4 After it a [d]voice roareth: he thundereth with the voice of his excellency; and he will not stay [e]them when his voice is heard.[4]

5 God [f]thundereth marvellously with his voice; [g]great things doeth he, which we cannot comprehend.

6 For [h]he saith to the snow, Be thou *on* the earth;[5] likewise to the small rain, and to the great rain of his strength.[6]

Ver. 18. ['Because of anger rebel not against his stroke; let not the greatness of the ransom (which you may be able to offer) tempt thee to sin.' *P.*]

Ver. 27. [Because rain is so common, men seldom calculate the power exhibited in its production and distribution. Yet, lo! without hand, it waters and fructifies the whole earth, while all the men of the world could not so irrigate a single kingdom. *C.*]

Ver. 31. [*Judgeth he the people.* The old world with the deluge; Sodom and Gomorrah with lightning, thunder, &c. Yet by them he also fructifies the earth and provides food for every living thing. So various are the purposes for which his wisdom employs the same natural agency. *C.*]

REFLECTIONS.—Plain and important speeches for God deserve the most fixed attention. Faithful souls are always zealous to vindicate God's dispensations from men's foolish and sinful aspersions; and truth and simplicity of speech always become such as profess themselves teachers of God's good ways. It is proper that we should always retain exalted thoughts of God: that he thinks none below his notice, however mean; countenances none of the wicked, however great; is always ready to redress the injured; takes a peculiar pleasure to protect those that are good; and brings special ruin on hypocrites, as the treacherous enemies of his government. If God exalt me to honour, let me exert myself for the welfare of mankind, and prepare for giving my account to him. If he afflict me, let me thankfully believe it done to discover my past sins, and to dispose me to receive his sanctifying instructions; fully persuaded that deliverance and comfort shall appear whenever his merciful end is gained. If my deliverance be delayed, my continued sin is the cause. But if I am not bettered by his rod, let me fear, lest my stupidity and dissimulation should issue in the suffering of his everlasting judgment. In affliction let me never be secure or make light of his stroke. Let me never hope to find out ways of my own to withstand or avoid it. Let me never dare to persevere in self-vindication or quarrelling with God;—never dare to prescribe to him who is an absolute ruler, an incomparable teacher, and unexceptionably just in all his procedure; and with whom neither riches can bribe nor darkness conceal. In the glory of his works let me discern the perfections of his nature. If he makes the clouds fountains to the lower world and vails to the upper, let me view everything formed in them—rain, hail, snow, or thunder—as his workmanship. And while I am here, let me live by faith, not by sight. Whom, having not seen, let me love; and in whom, though now I see him not, let me rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory.

CHAPTER XXXVII. Just now my heart trembles, and is like to start out of its place, at the thought or hearing of the terrible thunder. 2. Hear attentively the roaring noise of JEHOVAH'S voice, and the breathing murmur that proceeds from his lips. 3. By his providence he guides the forcible and straight darting of the thunderbolts along the whole extent of the sky, and makes the blaze of lightning to fly over the confines of the earth. 4. After the blazing flash of lightning the noise roars. He thunders with the voice of his majesty: nor will he restrain the storm and rain when the roaring of his thunder is heard. 5. By thundering the mighty God produces many marvellous effects: he does many things in nature which we cannot comprehend. 6. At his command the snow falls, as also the gentle showers and the deluging rains, the impetuous showers and tempestuous storms. By the winter storm he restrains men from labour, and keeps them within doors, that they may have opportunity to consider his works. 8. The very wild beasts are obliged to shut up themselves in their thickets and dens. 9. The whirlwind is generated in the moist clouds of the south as in a chamber; and cold proceeds from the scattering north wind. 10. By God's will and appointment the frost is produced, and the rivers are congealed that they cannot flow. 11. As by pouring down continual showers he weareth the thick cloud, so his clear brightness dispels it; and by his light he disperses the transparent duskiness of the sky. 12. While the clouds are carried hither and thither at his pleasure, he himself, on every side, holds the reins of their motions, that he may accomplish his own purposes by them all over the world; 13. Whether it be for punishing the guilty by pestilential vapours and storms, or for rendering the earth fruitful, or for graciously rewarding his people with remarkable plenty. 14. Stop therefore thy censures of, and murmurings at, the dispensations of God's providence; seriously consider his wondrous works; and think how little thou understandest of the most obvious of them. 15. Knowest thou how God lays his orders or impresses his powerful influence upon them? or how he makes the rainbow-light of the transparent cloud to shine? 16. Canst thou tell how, in his marvellous wisdom, he hangs the clouds in the air, as if balanced by one another? 17. Dost thou know how thy garments wax warm when the earth is calmed by the southern sun and the pleasant gale? 18. Hast thou assisted him in clearing the sky after rain; and in making it to stand fast by its own strength, as a mirror, in which we may behold his admirable wisdom, power, goodness, and glory? 19. Teach us, if thou canst, how to speak to or of God: for by reason of his incomprehensible excellencies, and our great ignorance, we cannot speak of him to any purpose. 20. Nothing which I have said is worthy of his notice or answerable to the subject. If any attempt to describe his excellencies he will be quite confounded by their dazzling glory. 21. And just now men cannot look upon the bright shining of the sun in the sky when the wind has dispelled every cloud. 22. The godlike glancing sun shines clearly by the purifying north winds: and upon God is a robe of terrible majesty. 23. We cannot comprehend his essence, perfections, purposes, or works. His power indeed is infinite: but he will not afflict his people in strict judgment or severity of justice. 24. Men should therefore stand in awe of him and beware of quarrelling with his conduct; for he regards none who are wise in their own conceit, or who dare to contend with their Maker, or presume to censure his proceedings.

Ver. 2. [Man may speak by the mouth, by the trumpet, or other such instrument, and, in either case, the utterance is called *his voice*, because his will is the moving cause, and the sound is the interpreter of his spirit. So whatever organ the will of God may select is called *his voice* and *mouth*, because it speaks to the ear of reason, and interprets the secrets of his Spirit. *C.*]

Ver. 6. [*Great rain.* The rains of the tropical and bordering climates, such as that of Edom, are often such torrents, that they are justly characterized as the 'great rain of his strength.' *C.*]

Ver. 7. [The meaning of this verse is:—He sendeth cold so intense that man cannot perform his ordinary work in the field; and this he does that all men may be taught to see and acknowledge him and his work in everything. *P.*]

Ver. 9. [Out of the inmost recesses of the south—out of the depths of the great Arabian desert, come the burning sirocco, and the sweeping and destructive whirlwind which often prove fatal to travellers. *P.*]

Ver. 11. ['Also by watering he weareth the thick cloud'—or, 'He loadeth the dense clouds with water,' maketh them carry it through the air, and scatter it wherever he willeth. *P.*]

Ver. 15. [It is to the clouds, or vapours, more or less densely commingling with the atmosphere, and not to direct light itself, that we are indebted for the chief beauties of the earth and sky. See Somerville's *Physical Sciences*, Herschel's *Astron.*, Tomlinson's *Nat. Phil. C.*]

Ver. 16. [*Balancings.* So that they ascend and descend in the exact proportion required. *C.*]

Ver. 17. [Delitzsch translates:—'Those whose garments become hot when the land is sultry from the south (that is, by the influence of the south wind); dost thou with him spread out the sky?' *P.*]

Ver. 21. [Even now we cannot look at the light when it is resplendent in the heavens, and a wind from the north hath swept along and cleared them. *M. Good.*]

Ver. 23. ['The Almighty—we cannot discover him; the excellent in power, judgment, and justice, he perverteth not.' This is one of the most sublime passages in the Bible. With equal clearness and beauty the speaker sets forth the majesty, the power, and the perfection of God in government. *P.*]

Ver. 24. ['In this last speech Elihu's chief aim is to defend God against Job's charge of injustice. He shows how omnipotence, love, and justice are all found in God. When judging of God's omnipotence, we are to beware of censuring him who is absolutely exalted above us and our comprehension; when judging of God's love, we are to beware of interpreting his afflictive dispensations, which are designed for our well-being, as the persecution of an enemy; when judging of his justice, we are to beware of maintaining our own righteousness at the cost of the divine, and of thus avoiding the penitent humbling of one's self under his well-meant chastisement' (*Delitzsch*). *P.*]

REFLECTIONS.—O how much of God is to be seen in the works of nature, in the forms of clouds, and in the changes and forms of weather! If all creatures thus fulfil his pleasure, why should men be rebels and refuse his direction and government! Why do we not improve his corrections and mercies! It is absurd for

7 He [t]sealeth up the hand[7] of every man; that all men may [u]know his work.

8 Then the beasts [k]go into dens, and remain in their places.[8]

9 Out of the south[9] cometh the [l]whirlwind, and cold out of the [m]north.

10 By [n]the breath[1] of God frost is given; and the breadth of the waters is straitened.

11 Also by [o]watering he wearieth the thick cloud: he [p]scattereth his bright[2] cloud:[3]

12 And it is [q]turned round about by his counsels;[4] that they may do [r]whatsoever he commandeth them upon the face of the world in the earth.

13 He [s]causeth it to come, whether for correction,[5] or for his land, [t]or for mercy.[6]

14 Hearken unto this, O Job; [u]stand still, and consider the wondrous works of God.

15 Dost[v] thou know when God disposed them, and caused the light of his cloud to shine?

16 Dost thou know the [w]balancings of the clouds, the wondrous works of him which is perfect[x] in knowledge?

17 How [y]thy garments *are* warm, when he quieteth the earth by the south *wind?*

18 Hast thou with him [z]spread out the sky, *which is* strong, *and* as a molten looking-glass?

19 Teach[a] us what we shall say unto him; *for* we[b] cannot order *our speech* by reason of darkness.

20 Shall it be told him that I speak? If a man speak, surely [c]he shall be swallowed up.[7]

21 And now *men* [d]see not the bright light which *is* in the clouds: but the wind passeth, and cleanseth them.

22 Fair[8] weather cometh [e]out of the north: with God [f]*is* terrible majesty.[9]

23 *Touching* the Almighty, [g]we cannot find him out: *he is* [h]excellent in power, and in [i]judgment, and in [k]plenty of justice: he [l]will not afflict.[1]

24 Men do [m]therefore fear him:[2] he [n]respecteth not any *that are* wise of heart.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

1 *God out of the whirlwind challengeth Job to answer.* 4 *God, by his mighty works, convinceth Job of ignorance,* 31 *and of weakness.*

THEN the LORD answered Job out of the whirlwind,[a] and said,

A.M. cir. 2484. B.C. cir. 1520.

t With ch. 5. 12. Ps. 104.23.
7 An allusion to frost, as closing every man's hand as with a seal.—*C.*
u Ps.111.2; 19. 2; 109. 27. Ro. 1. 19, 20.
k Ps.104.22.
8 Alluding to the hybernation of the bear, and various other animals, that become wholly or partially dormant during winter.—*C.*
l Heb. *Out of the chamber.*
m Heb. *scattering* winds, Pr.25.23.
n Ps. 18. 15; 147. 16-18. ch.38.29.
1 The air, like all other simple or compound elements, is God's, and therefore is justly called *his breath.*—*C.*
o ch.36.27,28. Ps.65. 9,10.
p With ch.36.32. Is. 18.4. Jude 12. Zec.10.1.
2 Heb. *the cloud of his light.*
3 'His splendour dispelleth the thick cloud, and his light disperseth the extended cloud.'—*Boothroyd.*
q Am.4.7. Ps.104,24; 107.25,29; 65. 9,10. Le. 25.21. Joel 2.23. Je. 14. 22.
4 'Thus revolveth he the seasons by his counsels.'—*M. Good.*
r Ps.148 8.
s Ex. 9. 18. 1 Sa. 12. 18, 19. Ezr.10.9. ch.36. 31; 38.26,27. 2 Sa. 21. 10. 1 Ki. 18. 45. Mat. 5. 45. Ac.14.17,.
5 Heb. *a rod.*
t Joel 2.23.
6 Whether for correction, or in mercy, he causeth it to come on the earth.—*Boothroyd.*
u Ps. 111. 2. ch. 36. 24.
v Is.40.13,14. Ro.11. 34. Ps.119.90.1 Co.2 16.
w ch.36.27, 32; 26. 8. Je.10.13. Ps.135.7; 104. 3.
x Ps.104.24; 147. 5. 1 Sa.2.3.
y Hag.1.6.Zec.9. Lu. 12.55.
z ch.9.8. Is.40.22;44. 24. Ge.1.6. Ps.150.1;19. 1.
a ch.13.3,6;12.3.
b Pr.30.3,4. Ps.73.21, 22. Ec.3.18. ch.38.2; 42. 3.
c ch.11. 7; 26. 14. Pr. 30.2,3.
7 Equivalent to *destroyed.* See ch. 2. 3, *marg.* 2 Sa.20.20.—*C.*
d ch.36.32;26.9. 2 Co. 13.9.
8 Heb. *Cold.*
e Pr.25.23.
f De.4.24; 28. 58. Ps. 76.12. Re.6.15-17. Is.2. 19,2 Co.5.11.
9 Surely, then, there is splendour with God! with God intolerable majesty! 1 Ti.6.16.—*C.*
g ch.11.7. Ps. 35. 10. 1 Ti.6,16.
h ch.9.4;12.13,16;36. 5. Ps.147.5;62.11;66.3.
i Ps.99.4.
k Is.45.21.
l La. 3. 33, 39. Is. 27. 8, 9.
1 'Oppress.'—*M. Good.*
m Mat. 10. 28. Je. 5. 22.
2 'Should fear him whom none of the wise in heart can see.'—*Boothroyd.*
n Ec. 9. 11. Mat. 11. 25. Is. 5. 21. Pr. 26. 12.

CHAP. XXXVIII.
a ch.37.1,2,14;42.5.

A.M. cir. 2484. B.C. cir. 1520.

b ch. 42. 3; 35.16; 34. 35;37.1 Ti.1.7.
c ch.40.7. Ex. 12. 11. 2 Ki.4.29; 9.1. Je.1.17. Ac.12.8.1 Pe.1.13.
d With ch. 13.15,22; 23.3–10;31.35,37.
1 Heb. *make me know.*
e Ps.104.5;102.25. Pr. 30.4; 8. 22–30. He. 1. 3, 10.
2 Heb. *if thou knowest understanding.*
f Pr. 8. 27. Is. 40.12, 22.
g Ps.24.2; 104.3. ch. 26.7. Zec.12.1.
3 Heb. *sockets.*
4 Heb. *made to sink.*
h Ps.19.1; 148.3; 104. 4. Re. 2. 28; 5.11, with Ezr.3.10. Zec.4.7.
i ch.1.6;2.1.
k Ps.104.6,9;33.7. Pr. 8.29. Ge.1.9. ch.26.10.
l ch.36.29;37.16. Ge. 1.2.
m Or, *established my decree upon it,* Ge.1.9,10. Je.5.22.
n ch.26.1.
o Je. 5. 22. Ps. 124. 5; 104.5;89.9. Pr.8.27,29.
5 Heb. *the pride of thy waves.*
p Ps.74. 16; 136. 7, 8; 148.5. ch. 37.3. Ge.1.3-5. Is.43.13.
q Heb. *wings,* Ps. 19.4-6.
r Ps. 101. 8; 104. 35. Je.21.12. Ex.14.27.
s Ec. 11. 7. Ps.65.12, 13. He.6.7.
6 The earth revolves before the sun as the potter's clay to the seal, impressing various ornaments upon its softened surface; and 'the ends of the earth' 'stand as' if decked with 'a garment' in all the beauties of spring and summer.—*C.*
t ch.18.5;25.14.
7 That is, the light of the 'morning and day-spring' (ver. 12) are withholden from the wicked. How? From some reserved in everlasting chains under darkness, Jude 6; from others when they flee to hide themselves from observation or danger, Is.2.10. Jos.10.17; and from others when God rises to judgment, Je.4.23-28.—*C.*
u Ps. 10. 15; 37. 17. Eze.30.22, Is.14.10,12.
x Ps.79.16; 74.13–15. ch.26.5,6. Pr.8.24.
y Ps.9.13; 23.4. ch.3. 5; 10.22.
z Ps.89.11,12; 74. 17. Is.40.12,22,28. ch.26.7.
8 Man can geometrically and exactly measure the 'breadth of the earth,' but who 'knoweth it all?' To understand this and some of the subsequent verses as ironical is unworthy of a divine discourse. The passage, so far from being ironical, contains a most solemn catechism.—*C.*
a Jn.3.8. Ps.74.16,17. ver.12,13.
9 'Which is the way to where the light dwelleth; and darkness, where is its place?'—*P.*
1 Or, *at.*
b Ps.19.4-6.

2 Who[b] *is* this that darkeneth counsel by words without knowledge?

3 Gird[c] up now thy loins like a man; for I [d]will demand of thee, and answer thou me.[1]

4 Where[e] wast thou when I laid the foundations of the earth? declare, if thou hast understanding.[2]

5 Who [f]hath laid the measures thereof, if thou knowest? or who hath stretched the line upon it?

6 Whereupon [g]are the foundations[3] thereof fastened?[4] or who laid the corner-stone thereof;

7 When [h]the morning stars sang together, and all the [i]sons of God shouted for joy?

8 Or [k]*who* shut up the sea with doors, when it brake forth, *as if* it had issued out of the womb?

9 When [l]I made the cloud the garment thereof, and thick darkness a swaddling-band for it,

10 And [m]brake up for it my decreed *place,* and set [n]bars and doors,

11 And said, [o]Hitherto shalt thou come, but no further: and here shall thy proud waves[5] be stayed?

12 Hast [p]thou commanded the morning since thy days; *and* caused the day-spring to know his place,

13 That it might take hold of the [q]ends of the earth, that the wicked [r]might be shaken out of it?

14 It[s] is turned as clay *to* the seal; and they stand as a garment.[6]

15 And [t]from the wicked their light[7] is withholden, and the [u]high arm shall be broken.

16 Hast[x] thou entered into the springs of the sea? or hast thou walked in the search of the depth?

17 Have the [y]gates of death been opened unto thee? or hast thou seen the doors of the shadow of death?

18 Hast [z]thou perceived the breadth of the earth? declare if thou knowest it all.[8]

19 Where [a]*is* the way *where* light dwelleth? and *as for* darkness, where *is* the place [9]thereof,

20 That thou shouldest take it to[1] the bound thereof, and that thou shouldest know [b]the paths *to* the house thereof?

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us to quarrel with him when we understand so little of his nature, or even of his most obvious works. And it is highly necessary to maintain the most awful, kind, and honourable thoughts of him, and the most cordial submission to everything which he does. But by what terrible harbingers doth he sometimes introduce himself to his people? If clouds thicken, if thunders roar, if lightnings flash, if rains descend, and winds blow, let me hope that my God is near, my God that saveth me.

CHAPTER XXXVIII. Ushered in by a terrible whirlwind, to make Job more humble and attentive, God himself next addressed him, saying, 2. Who art thou that hast sought to eclipse, misrepresent, and censure the wisdom and justice of my providence, by discourses proceeding from ignorance, mistake, inconsiderateness, and passion? 3. Now, according to thy proud challenges, prepare thyself to debate the cause with me; nay, to answer me a few plain questions; that convinced by these of the weakness of thy understanding, thou mayest perceive how incapable thou art of judging as to my secret counsels or mysterious providences. 4–7. If thou art so skilful as thou pretendest, tell me how I laid the foundations of the earth: how I planned and adjusted the whole form and boundaries of it: how, without any foundation to stand on, I settled it upon its own centre, and firmly connected all the parts of it, while angels, whom I had previously created to be my honorary guard, celebrated the wisdom, goodness, and power which I therein manifested! 8–11. Tell me how with banks, or even sand, I set bounds to the newly formed ocean, which often rages as if it would cover the earth, from which its waters were separated; how I covered it with thick mists and fogs, restraining its fury; how I made hollow places in the earth for it; and notwithstanding its furious raging, confined it in them! 12. Hast thou, before or since thy birth, governed the morning light, making it to observe its punctual time, and orderly to appear in its ever-varying place; 13. That it might suddenly spread itself over the whole hemisphere, that wicked men who rage in the night, being detected, might by condign punishment be restrained or cut off; 14. That the earth, as the wax beneath the seal, may put on a new form, and the things on it appear as its adorning garment; 15. And that by this light the wicked may be deprived of that success and comfort which they promised themselves in their crimes, and their tyrannical power may be repressed? 16. Hast thou ever personally surveyed the springs and rough places in the

21 Knowest thou *it*, because thou wast then born? or *because* the number of thy days *is* great?

22 Hast thou entered into the [c]treasures of the snow; or hast thou seen the treasures of the hail;

23 Which [d]I have reserved against the time of trouble, against the day of battle and war?

24 By what way is the light parted,[2] *which* scattereth [e]the east wind upon the earth?

25 Who[f] hath divided a water-course for the overflowing of waters; or a way for the lightning of thunder;

26 To [g]cause it to rain on the earth, *where* no man *is; on* the wilderness, wherein *there is* no man;

27 To [h]satisfy the desolate and waste *ground;* and to cause the bud of the tender herb to spring forth?

28 Hath [i]the rain a father? or who hath begotten the drops of dew?

29 Out[k] of whose womb came the ice? and the hoary frost of heaven, who hath gendered it?

30 The waters are hid as *with* a stone, and the face of the deep is frozen.[3]

31 Canst [l]thou bind the sweet influences of [4]Pleiades,[5] or loose the bands of [m]Orion?

32 Canst thou bring forth [n]Mazzaroth in his season? or canst thou [o]guide Arcturus with his sons?

33 Knowest thou the [p]ordinances of heaven? canst thou set the dominion thereof in the earth?

34 Canst[q] thou lift up thy voice to the clouds, that abundance of waters may cover thee?

35 Canst thou [r]send lightnings, that they may go, and say unto thee, Here we *are?*[6]

36 Who[s] hath put wisdom in the inward parts? or who hath given understanding to the heart?

37 Who [t]can number the clouds in wisdom? or who can stay[7] the bottles of heaven,

38 When the dust[8] groweth[9] into hardness, and the clods cleave fast together?

39 Wilt[u] thou hunt the prey for the lion, or fill the appetite[1] of the young lions,

40 When they [x]couch in *their* dens, *and* abide in the covert to lie in wait?

41 Who[y] provideth for the raven his food? when his young ones cry unto God, they wander for lack of meat.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

God proceedeth to show his own power, and man's weakness and ignorance, by instances from the animal creation: 1 *of the wild goats and hinds,* 5 *of the wild ass,* 9 *the unicorn, &c.*

KNOWEST thou the time when the [a]wild goats[1] of the rock bring forth? *or* canst thou mark when the [b]hinds do calve?

2 Canst thou number the months *that* they fulfil? or knowest thou the time when they bring forth?

A.M. cir. 2484. B.C. cir. 1520.

c Ps. 135. 7; 33. 7. Je. 10. 13.

d ch. 36. 31. Ex. 9. 18, 24, 25. Jos. 10. 11. Is. 30. 30. Re. 16. 21.

e The inseparable connection of sunlight, heat, and the winds are, as facts, perfectly well known to every observer of nature. But the manner in which light and heat are derived from or produced by the sun, is beyond human knowledge. —*C.*

e Ge. 41. 6. Jonah 4. 8.

f ch. 28. 26; 36. 27, 28; 37. 3-6. Ps. 29. 3-9.

g Mat. 5. 45. Ps. 147. 8. Je. 14. 22.

h Ps. 107. 35; 65. 12, 13; 104. 13, 14. He. 6. 7.

i Je. 14. 22; 5. 24; 10. 13. 1 Sa. 12. 17, 18. Ps. 110. 3. Mi. 5. 7.

k Ps. 147. 16, 17. ch. 6. 16; 37. 10.

[3] Heb. *is taken.*

l ch. 9. 9. Am. 5. 8. Is. 40. 26. Ju. 5. 20.

[4] Or, *the seven stars.*

m Heb. *Kesil.*

n Or, *the twelve signs.*

o Heb. *guide Aish.*

[5] Heb. *Kimah.* (*Kimah* denotes whatever is *lovely* or *delightful;* and hence it is by universal consent applied to that constellation, the heliacal rising of which in the days of Job announced the spring. The *Pleiades,* now so called, are a cluster of stars in the constellation *Taurus.* Of this constellation *Fayette,* the northernmost, was in the colure of the vernal equinox 2136 years before Christ, which would date the time of Job much earlier than has been indicated in former notes. Dr. Hales, by a similar calculation, draws from Aldebaran, fixes it 2337 years before the Christian era. The error of these calculations lies in assuming the

A.M. cir. 2484. B.C. cir. 1520.

period when this constellation became the leader of the spring, whereas the Pleiades, in the same latitude, might serve for centuries to be the most remarkable constellation of the spring. See this point still further established in Landseer's *Sabean Researches,* p. 215.— *C.*

p Ps. 119. 91. Je. 31. 35, 36; 33. 25. Ge. 1. 16.

q Je. 14. 22; 5. 24; 10. 13. Zec. 10. 1. Am. 5. 8; 4. 7.

r Le. 10. 2. Nu. 11. 1; 16. 35. 2 Ki. 1. 10.

[6] Heb. *behold us.*

s ch. 32. 8. Ex. 36. 1, 2. Is. 28. 23-29. Ec. 2. 26. Ps. 51. 6, 7. Ja. 1. 5, 17.

t Ps. 147. 4, with Is. 60. 8. He. 12. 1. Ge. 8. 1, 2; 9. 15.

[7] Heb. *who can cause to lie down?*

[8] Or, *when the dust is turned into dust.*

[9] Heb. *is poured.*

u Ps. 34. 10; 104. 21; 145. 15, 16.

[1] Heb. *the life.*

x Ps. 10. 8-10. Na. 2. 11, 12.

y Ps. 147. 9; 104. 27, 28; 145. 15, 16. Mat. 6. 26. Lu. 12. 24.

CHAP. XXXIX.

a 1 Sa. 24. 2. Ps. 104. 18.

1 The *wild goat* (*jaal*) is a beautiful creature, commonly called the *ibex,* dwelling among the lofty rocks of Arabia and other eastern countries. The *hind* (*ayalah*), the female stag, noted for its graceful beauty, swiftness, and sureness of foot upon the rock. See Ps. 18. 33. The question is not, 'Dost thou *know* as *fact,* but hast thou appointed their periods of gestation, and provided for them and their young?'—*C.*

b Ps. 29. 9. Thunder promotes their birth.

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bottom of the ocean, or walked, as in state, through the inmost corners of the deep, to know and direct everything there? 17. Art thou fully acquainted with all the dark caverns and inmost parts of the earth: or with the whole nature and circumstances of death and the grave, and of the eternal state? 18. Are the dimensions of the earth, with its whole substance and product, perfectly known to thee? 19–21. Dost thou, by thy great experience and long observation, fully understand the orderly returns of light and darkness, day and night? or canst thou direct their motions in a proper manner? 22, 23. Art thou fully acquainted with the collections of snow and hail in the clouds? and canst thou, like me, regularly bring them forth in the winter season or in the seasons of wrathful calamities? 24. How is the light of the sun, moon, or stars so equally and so widely diffused? How is the way prepared for the overflowing rains, or for the lightning and thunder? and how are their motions so regularly directed? 26, 27. Is it by thy direction that the rain waters those places of the earth where no one lives to do it, or which, without seasonable rains, could produce nothing? 28–30. Canst thou form drops of rain or dew; or produce ice or hoar-frost; or tell how they are formed; and how the surface of the waters is congealed into a kind of stone? 31. Canst thou alter the seasons of the year by restraining the influences of the heat and summer-boding stars? or free the earth from the tempestuous influence of the winter and sloth-boding stars? 32. Canst thou make to appear, and lead round, the luminaries of the middle region of heaven in their season? Canst thou direct the round whirling pole-stars and their attendants? 33. Knowest thou all the order and laws of the heavenly bodies? Couldest thou settle the whole government of them, and their influence upon the earth? 34, 35. Canst thou, just now, by a call bring down an abundant rain on the place where thou art; or make the thunder to dart forth its flames over thine head; or do whatever thou pleasest? 36. Canst thou direct the random darting of thunder and lightning to strike as regularly as if it had solid wisdom and distinct perception? or didst thou give thyself rational understanding? Canst thou tell how a single thought is formed? 37, 38. Canst thou number and govern all the clouds of heaven; or restrain the rain when the earth is sufficiently watered? 39–41. Canst thou provide food even for the most ravenous creatures, particularly for the lioness and her whelps, or for old lions incapable of leaving their dens; or for the young ravens when by their dams they are expelled from the nest?

Ver. 1. [No notice is taken of the transition from Elihu, God visible in human form, to JEHOVAH invisible in the whirlwind or stormy cloud. To those who feel any difficulty in identifying Elihu (God himself, see Mat. 1. 23) with JEHOVAH, it may be useful to examine the appearance of JEHOVAH to Abraham, and his familiar converse with him, Ge. 18. 13–33; and afterwards his appearance to Moses, Ex. 3. 2; 19. 9, 16, 18, 21; 20. 18, 22; and recollect that in each case this was the same JEHOVAH variously manifested; and when these facts are compared, the various appearances in Job will be more easily understood as alike *manifesting* 'the Word that was with God, and was God.' *C.*]

Ver. 2. [This ought rather to be rendered—'Who then darkeneth counsel,' &c. The words are addressed not to Elihu, who had just concluded speaking, but to Job, who said (ch. 31. 35), 'O that the Almighty would answer me!' And Job applies them to himself in ch. 42. 3. *P.*]

Ver. 7. [This is a suggestive as well as a beautiful passage. In the lofty imagery peculiar to the East there is embodied the truth that 'the sons of God,' or angelic hosts, existed before the formation of the world in its present state, and rejoiced at the construction of the splendid home of the future human family. It farther seems to indicate that the stars had been created previous to the preparation of this earth for man. *P.*]

Ver. 10. [*Bars and doors.* How wonderful that the iron-bound rock and the loose disconnected sand should alike barrier out the encroachments of the ocean! The chief *bars* and *doors,* however, are the balancing of the relative attractions of the sun and moon, on the one hand, and of the earth on the other. Were the attractions of the sun and moon greater, and of the earth less, the earth would be swept over by a continuous ocean tide. *C.*]

Ver. 13. [The figure is taken from the shaking of a great floor-cloth or carpet. The morning light taking hold, as it were, of the whole covering of the earth's surface, shakes off from it all evil-doers. They flee from the light lest their deeds should be seen. *P.*]

Ver. 14. [The meaning seems to be, that it (the earth) when turned round to the full light of the sun, is like the clay on which the definite impress of the signet-ring is stamped. When all was dark the lineaments upon its surface were invisible, but the light revealed them, and made them stand out in bold relief. *P.*]

Ver. 15. [Darkness is the light of the wicked. They love it, and work in it. The morning sun dispels the darkness, and the power ('the high arm') of the wicked is then broken. *P.*]

Ver. 24. [*East wind.* The east wind of Scripture geography is uniformly that of destruction. See Ge. 41. 6; Job 27. 21; Ps. 48. 7; Je. 18. 17; Eze. 17. 10; 18. 12; Jn. 4. 8. *C.*]

Ver. 25. [The *water-course* refers not to river-beds, but to the *aerial channel* by which the rain descends, when produced by the lightning in the sky; as by passing the electric spark through oxygen and hydrogen gases water is formed. *C.*]

Ver. 31. [*Orion. Kesil* in Arabic signifies *cold, inactivity, torpor,* and seems justly applied by Aben Ezra to the star *Antares* in the heart of the constellation *Scorpio;* and it is opposed to *Pleiades* by nearly half the heavens, and would consequently denote the benumbing influences of winter. *C.*]

Ver. 32. [*Mazzaroth.* The twelve monthly signs of the zodiac.—*Arcturus.* Most probably the *Great Bear,* the apparent nightly changes of which always render it a most remarkable object to observers. *C.*]

Ver. 36. [The Hebrew word here rendered 'heart' has been variously interpreted. It is derived from a root which signifies to 'look at' or 'contemplate;' and hence it is natural to understand it as meaning the intellect. This is the meaning given to it by the best Jewish authorities. In the Vulgate version it is translated *cock,* as the bird which announces the coming of the morning. *P.*]

REFLECTIONS.—How infinite the kindness and condescension of God, to appear himself and catechize his obstinate friend for his humiliation, in order to prepare him for deliverance! And how much more

3 They bow themselves, they bring forth their young ones, they cast out their sorrows.[2]

4 Their young ones are in good liking, they grow up with corn;[3] they go forth, and return not unto them.

5 Who hath sent [c]out the wild ass free? or who hath loosed the bands of the wild ass?[4]

6 Whose[d] house I have made the wilderness, and the barren land[5] his dwellings.

7 He scorneth the multitude of the city, neither regardeth he the crying of the driver.[6]

8 The range of the mountains *is* his pasture, and he searcheth after every green thing.[7]

9 Will the unicorn[8] be willing to serve thee, or abide by thy crib?

10 Canst thou bind the unicorn with his band in the furrow? or will he harrow the valleys after thee?

11 Wilt thou trust him, because his strength *is* great? or wilt thou leave thy labour to him?

12 Wilt thou believe him, that he will bring home thy seed, and gather *it into* thy barn?

13 *Gavest thou* the goodly wings unto the peacocks? or wings and feathers[9] unto the ostrich?

14 Which leaveth her eggs in the earth, and warmeth them in the dust,

15 And forgetteth that the foot may crush them, or that the wild beast may break them.

16 She is [e]hardened against her young ones, as though *they were* not her's: her labour is in vain without fear;[1]

17 Because God hath [g]deprived her of wisdom, neither hath he imparted to her understanding.

18 What time she lifteth up herself on [2]high, she scorneth the horse and his rider.[3]

19 Hast thou given the horse [h]strength? hast thou clothed his neck with thunder?

20 Canst thou make him afraid as a grasshopper?[4] the glory of his nostrils *is* terrible.[5]

21 He [i]paweth in the valley, and rejoiceth in *his* strength: he goeth on to meet the armed men.[6]

22 He mocketh at fear, and is not affrighted; neither turneth he back from the sword.

23 The quiver[7] rattleth against him, the glittering spear and the shield.

24 He swalloweth the ground with fierceness and rage: neither believeth he that *it is* the sound of the trumpet.

25 He saith among the trumpets, Ha, ha! and he smelleth the battle afar off, the thunder of the captains, and the shouting.

26 Doth the [k]hawk fly by thy wisdom, *and* stretch her wings toward the south?[8]

27 Doth the [l]eagle mount up at thy command,[9] and make her [m]nest on high?

28 She dwelleth and abideth on the rock, upon [n]the crag of the rock, and the strong place.

A.M. cir. 2484.
B.C. cir. 1520.

2 Young ones born with much pain.

3 'In the desert.'—*Bonhroyd.*

c Je. 2. 24, with Ge. 49.14;16.12. Ho.8.9.

4 The *paire* and *arod* are both translated *wild ass;* but whether they describe the *onager* or *jicta*, or be merely two names for the same animal, is uncertain.—*C.*

d ch.24.5. Je.2.24.

5 Heb. *salt places.*

6 Heb. *of the exactor.*

7 The wild ass is still well known in Arabia. The Bedawin regard it as one of the wildest and swiftest of animals. It seeks the most solitary spots, and instinctively avoids human dwellings.—*P.*

8 Wild bull or rhinoceros, Nu. 23. 22. Ps. 22.21; 92.10. De.33.17. [*The reem.* The animal commonly called *unicorn* has no existence except in heraldry, though Barrow (see his *Travels in Africa*, p. 294) describes such a creature, but does not affirm having seen it. A few consider the *reem* to be of the deer species; but the common opinion turns to the *rhinoceros*, which well accords with the description, and is also a literal unicorn. See Campbell's *Travels in S. Africa*, vol. ii. p. 294. Robinson (see *Biblical Researches*, vol. iii. p. 306) thinks it is the *buffalo*, but this animal does not seem to correspond with the powerful creature described in the text. While the mighty elephant is perfectly tamed, the rhinoceros is considered utterly irreclaimable. See ver.12.—*C.*]

9 Or, *the feathers of the stork and ostrich.*

e La.4.3.

A.M. cir. 2484.
B.C. cir. 1520.

1 Her labour is *in vain* if the wild beast break her eggs; yet, void of understanding, she is also void of maternal 'solicitude.'—*C.*

g ch.35.11. Pr. 7. 23; 27.8;1.17.

2 Using her wings as sails, she runs swifter than a horse.

3 The *ostrich* generally remains *couchant*, but when 'she lifts herself up' to her full height, and runs at her utmost speed, she can easily distance the fleetest horse, and is taken or killed simply because she runs in a circle, so that her path may be crossed by the hunter and his associates.—*C.*

h Ex.15.1-4. Je.8.6. Zec.10.3.

4 'Canst thou make him skip like the *grasshopper*,' with equal or almost imperceptible swiftness? Any one who has tried to lay hold of the grasshopper for inspection will fully comprehend the expressive aptness of the similitude.—*C.*

5 Heb. *terrors.*

i Or, his feet *dig*, Ju.5.22. Je.8.6, with 1 Sa.17.2.

6 Heb. *the armour.*

7 Arrows of it.

k Le.11. 16. De. 14. 15.

8 The *nets* or hawk species are numerous, and some are well known to be *migratory*, stretching their wings to the south at the approach of winter, and by a wonderful instinct following a perpetual summer.—*C.*

l Ex.19.4. Ps. 103.5. Le.11.13. De.14.12. Is. 40.31.

9 Heb. *by thy mouth.*

m Je.49.16. Ob.4.

n Heb. *tooth*, 1 Sa. 14.4.

difficult is it to converse with God than is generally thought by those who appeal to him! Infinite is his wisdom who knows all things! and great his power who can do, and has made, and manages all things. All things around us are full of God: all monitors to teach us concerning him, and to stir us up to worship and glorify him! But the boasted knowledge of mankind is vain and scanty, which can everywhere be nonplussed in the most common things of nature. Let me then never contend with God;—never pretend to be a judge of his nature, purposes, or works:—but be always content with things as they are; and to be led by him, as one blind, in the ways which I know not. If he has made all things in nature so well, my new-covenant portion and lot is certainly exactly wise and kind. And if he take such care of the works of his hands, the most ravenous not excepted, it is impossible that he should forget, forsake, starve, or mismanage any of those who believe.

CHAPTER XXXIX. Ver. 1–4. Is it by thy wisdom, power, care, and providence, that the wild goats and hinds are assisted in their painful births, or their young ones so well nourished? 5–8. Or that while the tame ass is so dull and stupid, the wild ass is so nimble, untractable, regardless of mankind, and lodged and maintained in the desert mountains? 9–12. Art thou capable, by all thy power and skill, to tame a wild bull, and train him to the labours of the field performed by the ox? 13–18. Dost thou adorn with wings and feathers the ostrich, that is so careless of her eggs and young, that the sun must hatch the former, and Providence alone takes care of the latter, and so fleet in running with extended wings? 19–25. Hast thou given strength and bravery to the horse? Dost thou produce the triumphant shaking of his mane, or the neighing and snorting of his throat, when he is bent upon the battle? Canst thou make him to bounce like a grasshopper? The disdainful and courageous snortings of his nostrils are terrible. When armies meet for battle he paweth in the valley, fiercely priding himself in his strength: he springs forth to meet the armour of war, rushing into the battle without any fear of danger. Quite unaffrighted he laughs at the terror of the battle: he turns not back from the sword. Over him regardless rattle and hiss the arrows of the quiver, the flaming spear, and ruinous lance. With fierceness and rage he gallops over and tears up the ground. For joy he reckons the sound of the trumpet but an encouraging blast: and at the full blowing of the trumpet he dances and sports for joy. He smells the battle afar off, the thunder-like roaring of the princes, and the alarm of war. 26. Is it by thy direction that hawks fly away so strongly, steadily, swiftly, unweariedly, and cunningly, to catch their prey; and that they bask in the sun, or remove to warmer climates in the winter? 27–30. Is it by thy direction that eagles fly directly upward, or choose their rocky residence, or spy out and rush upon their prey?

Ver. 9. [The term 'unicorn,' or 'one-horned,' is a misnomer. The Hebrew word is *reem*, and it is evident from De. 33. 17, where 'the *horns* of an unicorn' are mentioned, that the animal referred to had two horns. *P.*]

Ver. 13. [Rather—'The wings of the *ostrich* vibrate, but are they as the pinions of the *stork* and the *falcon*?' The wings of the ostrich never lift her from the earth, yet God compensates this defect by swiftness, so that she is as safe as the soaring falcon. God has deprived her of parental instincts, yet her young are protected by Providence as well as the young of the *stork*, the example and the emblem of maternal tenderness. *C.* ——This is a very obscure passage. The true meaning of the verse seems to be, 'The wing of the ostrich (*renanim*, 'the female ostrich;' so called on account of her peculiar cry) vibrates joyously; but is wing and feather affectionate?' *i.e.* as explained in the context, does she exhibit ordinary parental instinct or affection, when abandoning her eggs in the desert? *P.*]

Ver. 17. [It is a singular fact that among the Bedawîn 'more foolish than an ostrich' is a common proverb; and it is evidently as old as the time of Job. 'Fleeter than an ostrich' is another proverb almost as common as the former. *P.*]

Ver. 24. [Rather—'And he standeth not still when the trumpet soundeth;' *i.e.* so soon as his ear catches the sound of the war-trumpet he will scarcely bear restraint, he rushes to the battle. A remark of Layard, the truth of which I can myself verify, beautifully illustrates this passage:—'Although docile as a lamb, and requiring no other guide than the halter, when the Arab mare hears the war-cry of the tribe, and sees the quivering spear of her rider, her eyes glitter with fire, her blood-red nostrils open wide, her neck is nobly arched, and her tail and mane are raised and spread out to the wind.' *P.*]

Ver. 29. [*Her eyes behold afar off.* The extraordinary far-sightedness of the eagle is well known. It can descry its prey on the ground when, to the human eye, it is perfectly invisible in the clouds; those species that live upon the dead fully realize our Lord's description, Mat. 24. 28, and an animal is scarcely fallen until they appear on the verge of the horizon hastening to its destruction. *C.*]

REFLECTIONS.—Behold how all things mark the excellencies of their Maker and depend on God! The eyes of all wait on him; and he giveth them their meat in due season. And surely it is absurd for men to boast of beauty, strength, swiftness, or other bodily endowments, when one or more of the brute animals excel them in all these. But, alas! how often are we like them in their worst qualities; like hinds in sinful cowardice; like wild asses in our unsettled temper; like unicorns or wild bulls in untamableness and rage in the net of affliction; like ostriches in stupidity and unconcern about the real welfare of children; like horses in pride and fury; like hawks and eagles in ambition, greediness, and cruelty! But if God feed these, he will never let the redeemed sheep of his pasture want. Lo, in what lofty manner he speaks of these animals! But how much sweeter to my soul are his descriptions of Jesus and his love, Jesus and his work, Jesus and his fulness!—All for men! all for me!

CHAPTER XL. Ver. 2. Has there not been enough said to chastise and convince thee of thy mistakes in contending with and censuring the providence of God? 3. Job replied to the Lord, 4. Behold, with grief and shame, I acknowledge my own meanness, folly, and filthiness. I have nothing to say against thee or for myself. 5. I have too often desired a dispute with thee; but I dare not defend my conduct. I dare not proceed further in such bold and presumptuous expressions and accusations of thy providence. 6. Job's acknowledgment of his sin and profession of

SOURCE OF THE JORDAN. [JOB, xl: 23.]—"Behold, he drinketh up a river, and hasteneth not: he trusteth that he can draw up Jordan into his mouth." Perhaps the two leading sources of the river are found in the Hasbany arm and the Banias tributary. The view we give above was taken at Banias or ancient Cæsarea Philippi. Nothing can be imagined more beautiful than the very vigorous way the Jordan breaks from under the Hermon range of mountains, creating in ancient Cæsarea Philippi a tropical vegetation. This is a very beautiful historic spot. Here is the temple with its Greek inscriptions dedicating the place to Pan and the nymphs of the fountain. Then here is abundance of game. Wild boars, foxes, jackals, gazelles, deer, hare, wolves, hyenas, bears and panthers are said to infest this region.

29 From thence she seeketh the prey, *and* her eyes behold afar off.

30 Her young ones also suck up blood: and where[o] the slain *are*, there *is* she.

CHAPTER XL.

1 God challengeth an answer. 3 Job humbleth himself. 6 God calleth upon Job to show by instances of power that he is able to save himself. 15 God's great power is seen in the behemoth.

MOREOVER the LORD answered Job, and said,

2 Shall he that [a]contendeth[1] with the Almighty instruct *him?* he that [b]reproveth God, let him answer it.

3 ¶ Then Job answered the LORD, and said,

4 Behold, [c]I am vile; what shall I answer thee? I will [d]lay mine hand upon my mouth.

5 Once have I spoken, but I will not answer; yea, twice, but I will [e]proceed no further.[2]

6 ¶ Then answered the LORD unto Job [f]out of the whirlwind, and said,

7 Gird[g] up thy loins now like a man: I will demand of thee, and declare thou unto me.

8 Wilt[h] thou also disannul my judgment? wilt thou condemn me, that thou mayest be righteous?

9 Hast thou [i]an arm like God? or canst thou thunder with a voice like him?

10 Deck[j] thyself now *with* majesty and excellency, and array thyself with glory and beauty.

11 Cast abroad [k]the rage of thy wrath; and behold[l] every one *that is* proud, and abase him.

12 Look on [m]every one *that is* proud, *and* bring him low; and tread down the wicked in their place.

13 Hide[n] them in the dust together, *and* bind[o] their faces in secret.

14 Then will I also confess unto thee that thine own right hand can save thee.

15 ¶ Behold now [3]behemoth,[4] which I made with thee; he eateth grass as an ox.

A.M. cir. 2484.
B.C. cir. 1520.

o Mat.24.28. Lu. 17 37.

CHAP XL.

a ch.33.13;34.37. Is. 27.4;45.9. 1 Co.10.22.

1 All murmuring against providence is a contending against God, and implies the supposed superiority of human wisdom, with an acknowledged but lamented deficiency of human power. The error of man lies in not perceiving that he that wants the power must want the wisdom also.—*C.*

b ch.3.3–26;6.2–13;7. 1–21;9.17–34; 10. 1–22, &c.

c Ge.32. 10. 2 Sa. 24. 10. Ezr.9.6,15. Is.64.6; 6.5. ch. 42. 6. Ps. 51. 4. Da.9.5,7. Lu.18.13.

d ch.29. 9. Ps. 39. 9. Zep.2.13. Mi.7.16. Ro. 3.19.

e 1 Pe.4.3. ch. 34.31, 32. Je.31.18,19.

[f] Job is already convinced, 1. Of God's infinite power, justice, and mercy; and, 2. Of his own utter unworthiness and sinfulness. He throws himself, a convicted sinner and humble suppliant, at the feet of Jehovah.—*P.*

f ch.38.1. Ps.50.3.

g ch.38.3, with 13.22; 31.35; 33.1; 34.

h Ps.51.4. Ro.3.4. ch. 32.2.

i Ps. 147. 5; 20. 3–9. Ge.18.14. ch.37.5.

j Ps.104.1;93.1;xcvi. -xciv.

k ch.21.30. De.32.22.

l Da 4.37. Mal. 4. 1. Is.2.11,12,17;28.3. Lu. 14.11. Eze.17.24.

m Ex. 18. 11. Pr.15. 25.

n Ps.90.3,5,7;49.14.

o Es. 7. 8. Jn. 11. 44; 20.7. Ac.5.6,10.

3 Or, *the elephant* or *river horse.*

4 *Behemoth* is plural, and literally signifies cattle, in opposition to wild and destructive animals; and in this sense it is used, ch.35.11. Ps. 50. 10; 73. 22. The most learned expositors, however, consider it as used in a singular sense, expressive of the magnitude and dignity of the animal. By some *behemoth* is supposed to be the *elephant*, by some the *hippopotamus*, by others the *mammoth*, or some such extinct animal. We feel disposed to consider it as neither, but to understand it, as in ch. 35. 11, &c., for cattle in general; and *leviathan* as the sole animal described. The subject will be found discussed in many works, but

A.M. cir. 2484.
B.C. cir. 1520.

a sufficient abridgment of the whole will be found in Harris' *Natural History of the Bible.*—*C.*

5 'Muscles.'—*C.*

6 Or, *he setteth up.*

7 This description applies neither to the *elephant* nor *hippopotamus*, as the tail of both is comparatively trifling. That of the *hippopotamus* is the stronger, but is still short, and in appearance unimportant; nor can all the efforts of *Scheuchzer* give it any appearance of a cedar. —*C.*

8 Sinews of his thighs.—*C.*

p Ps.104.24.

9 'He that made him hath girt on his sword,' or weapon for attack or defence. —*C.*

q Ps.104.14,26;147.9. ch.39.8.

1 Heb. *he oppresseth.*

2 Should a river overflow, he hasteneth not; he is secure though Jordan rush to his mouth.—*Boothroyd.*

r Ge.13.10. Jos.3.17.

3 Or, *Will* any *take him in his sight*, or *bore* his *nose with a gin?* [The marginal is the true translation, and prepares, under the specific name of *leviathan*, for the introduction of the animal, thus already described by his general properties.—*C.*]

CHAP. XLI.

a That is, *a whale* or *crocodile*, Ps. 104. 26. Is.27.1.

1 Heb. *which thou drownest.* Part of the description agrees best to whales, and part of it to crocodiles, it has been long uncertain which of them is meant; perhaps it is the teethed whale which is here intended.—The more ancient commentators supposed *leviathan* to be the *whale;* Schultens concluded it was an enormous *serpent;* and several have believed it to be directly descriptive of *Satan.* Since the days of Beza it has generally been supposed the *crocodile.* See M. Good, and Harris' *Natural History of the Bible.*—*C.*]

b Is.37.29.

c Eze. 29. 3,4. ver.9, 10.

d Ju.14.31. 2 Ki.10. 4. 1 Ki.20.11. Na.1.9.

2 Make no more vain attempts at conquest.—*C.*

16 Lo now, his strength *is* in his loins, and his force *is* in the navel[5] of his belly.

17 He moveth[6] his tail like a cedar:[7] the sinews of his stones[8] are wrapped together.

18 His bones *are as* strong pieces of brass; his bones *are* like bars of iron.

19 He *is* the chief of the [p]ways of God: he that made him can make his sword to [9]approach *unto him.*

20 Surely the mountains [q]bring him forth food, where all the beasts of the field play.

21 He lieth under the shady trees, in the covert of the reed, and fens.

22 The shady trees cover him *with* their shadow; the willows of the brook compass him about.

23 Behold, he drinketh[1] up a river, *and* hasteth not:[2] he trusteth that he can draw up [r]Jordan into his mouth.

24 He taketh it with his eyes: *his* nose pierceth through snares.[3]

CHAPTER XLI.

God's great power seen in the leviathan.

CANST thou draw out [a]leviathan with an hook? or his tongue with a cord *which* thou lettest down?[1]

2 Canst thou put an [b]hook into his nose? or bore his jaw through with a thorn?

3 Will he make many supplications unto thee? will he speak soft *words* unto thee?

4 Will he make a covenant with thee? wilt thou take him for a servant for ever?

5 Wilt thou play with him as *with* a bird? or wilt thou bind him for thy maidens?

6 Shall thy companions make a banquet of him? shall they part him among the merchants?

7 Canst thou [c]fill his skin with barbed irons? or his head with fish-spears?

8 Lay[d] thine hand upon him, remember the battle, do no more.[2]

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his repentance not being sufficiently full, God further required him to pluck up his spirits if he could, and answer some further interrogations. 8. Wilt thou, in the manner of wicked men, arraign and attempt to overturn my sentence against thee, and my government of human affairs? Wilt thou censure me as unjust in afflicting thee that thou mayest appear innocent? 9, 10. Art thou God's equal in infinite power, majesty, or glory? 11–14. Canst thou, as God, scatter abroad the tokens of thine anger; or exhibit thy frowns for the debasement and destruction of thy most powerful and insolent enemies? If so, I will acknowledge thou canst uphold thyself, and hast some pretence to contend with me; but if not, it becomes thee humbly to submit to my most afflictive providences. 15–24. But that thou mayest be further convinced of thy inability to contend with me, behold how incapable thou art of contending with the elephant or river-horse, which I formed along with thee as thy fellow-creature, and not far from thy residence? He quietly feeds upon the herbs produced by the earth. Behold what strength is in his loins; what mighty force is in the warped sinews of his belly! His tail is large, stiff, and strong as a cedar; and with it, or his trunk, he could rend cedars. The sinews of his thighs are interwoven and wrapped together; his smaller bones are as pipes of brass, and the larger ones as bars of iron for strength. He is a principal creature on earth. The mighty God, who made him and gives him his power, can easily subdue and destroy him. The mountains afford him pasture, while the other wild beasts securely sport themselves around him. His ordinary residence is under the shadow of trees or reeds, growing in fens or on the banks of rivers. No outrageous overflowing of waters affrights him, or makes him to run off in haste. And while he dives into a river, or drinks excessively, no terror can make him leave off till his thirst be altogether quenched.

Ver. 11. [First try thy power against man, and if thou fail in humbling or conquering him, thy fellow, how wilt thou contend with God thy maker and judge? *C.*]

Ver. 19. [*Chief of the ways of God.*] The greatest size of the *hippopotamus* is 17 feet in length and 7 in height—a description that in point of animal size and power, the only points in question, could never entitle it to the character in the text. *C.*]

REFLECTIONS.—To what arrogant quarrelling with God afflicted saints sometimes proceed! but it always issues in great shame and grief at last. Communion with God himself effectually convinces and humbles a saint, and makes him glad to part with his most beloved sins. But there is need of thorough convictions and humiliation to prepare us for remarkable deliverance. And it is unsafe to heal wounded consciences slightly, or to catch at comforts to be rid of convictions. Men may be humbled and yet not duly humbled. God takes pleasure in debasing the proud who attempt to rival his honours. And woe to him that contends with his Maker! But easily can that God who made, manages, feeds, lodges, and works these monstrous animals, provide for and manage me and all my concerns!

CHAPTER XLI. Ver. 1, 2. And to give thee another evidence of thy weakness even to contend with one of my creatures, canst thou, by a hook fastened in his tongue, nose, or jaw, draw the crocodile or the toothed whale out of the water! 3–5. Canst thou force him to supplicate thy favour to let him go, or make him enter into an agreement to serve thee? or canst thou make him a mean of diverting thyself and children? 6. Wilt thou and thy partners in catching him make a feast upon his flesh, or part your shares of him among the merchants? 7. Where is the dart with which thou canst penetrate his skin, or the fish-spear that can wound his head? 8. Touch him if thou darest; immediate destruction will prevent thy remembrance of the conflict or repeating thy blow. 9. The hope of taking him is quite vain. The very sight of him is enough to terrify and dispirit one. 10. No, not the fiercest dare awake him when sleeping or stir him up when resting himself. Who then is able to contend with me, who am infinitely more strong and terrible? 11. And since everything in the world is my sole property, who hath prevented me with favours that I should repay them? or who, by first attacking me, hath forced me to submit to his terms of peace? 12. But

9 Behold, the hope of him is in vain:[3] shall not *one* be cast down even at the sight of him?

10 None *is so* fierce that dare stir him up: who[e] then is able to stand before me?

11 Who [f]hath prevented me, that I should repay[4] *him?* [g]*whatsoever is* under the whole heaven is mine.

12 I will not conceal his parts, nor his power, nor his comely proportion.[5]

13 Who can discover the face of his garment? *or* who can come *to him* with[6] his double bridle?

14 Who can open the doors of his face? his teeth *are* terrible round about.

15 *His* [h]scales *are his* pride, shut up together *as with* a close seal.

16 One is so near to another, that no air can come between them.

17 They are joined one to another, they stick together, that they cannot be sundered.

18 By his neesings a light doth shine, and his eyes *are* like the eyelids of the morning.

19 Out of his mouth go burning lamps, *and* sparks of fire leap out.

20 Out of his nostrils goeth smoke, as *out* of a seething pot or caldron.[7]

21 His breath kindleth coals, and a flame goeth out of his mouth.[8]

22 In his neck remaineth strength, and sorrow is turned[9] into joy before him.[1]

23 The flakes[2] of his flesh are joined together: they are firm in themselves; they cannot be moved.

24 His heart is as firm as a stone; yea, as hard as a piece of the nether *millstone*.

25 When he raiseth up himself, the mighty are afraid: by reason of breakings they purify themselves.[3]

26 The sword of him that layeth at him cannot hold;[4] the spear, the dart,[5] nor the [6]habergeon.[7]

27 He esteemeth iron as straw, *and* brass as rotten wood.

28 The arrow cannot make him flee: slingstones are turned with him into stubble.

A.M. cir. 2484.
B.C. cir. 1520.

3 The hope of overcoming him is vain.—*C.*

e Je.12.5. ch.40. 2,9; 9.4.1 Co.10.22.

f Ro.11.35. ch. 22.2, 3[5]35.5-8.

4 'Whose debtor am I?'—*C.*

g Ps.24.1 50.12.1 Co. 10.26,28. De.10.14. Ex. 19.5.

5 'Structure of his frame.'—*M. Good.*

6 Or, *within.*

h Heb. *strong pieces of shields*, Eze. 29.4.

7 'As from the rush-kindled oven.' The Egyptians heated their ovens with dried rushes gathered from the marshes of the Nile.—*C.*

8 It must be readily admitted, that if behemoth and leviathan be the river-horse and the crocodile, then 'no one would dream of interpreting these words literally;' but if, on the other hand, behemoth, as elsewhere in this same book, be a generic and not a specific name; and if leviathan be, for strength, courage, and natural defence, 'chief of the ways of God,' and, by consequence, one of those extinct animals described by Cuvier and others, then might it be questionable were the description pronounced merely figurative. To the observers of nature, who have examined the wonderful night lamps afforded by various creatures both by land and sea, to those who have further examined the terrible electrical powers possessed by others, the existence of an animal whose breath became luminous, and possessed of the electric power of literally sending 'sparks of fire' out of his mouth, will appear neither extravagant in supposition nor impossible in fact. Had some ancient traveller spoken of a fish that 'wielded the lightning, and smote to death the invader of its waters,' this, some years ago, would have been pronounced absolutely false, or, at best, figurative; but the student of natural history would now instantly recognize it as a literal description of the gymnotus. —*C.*

9 Heb. *sorrow rejoiceth.*

1 'Destruction exulteth before him.'—*C.*

2 Heb. *the fallings.*

3 'They are terrified at the tumult of the waters.'—*C.*

4 Is shivered.—*C.*

5 The battle-axe.—*C.*

6 Harpoon.—*C.*

7 Or, *breastplate.*

A.M. cir. 2484.
B.C. cir. 1520.

8 He laugheth at the quivering of the javelin.—*C.*

9 Heb. *Sharp pieces of the potsherd.*

i Is. 11. 15. Eze. 32. 14.

1 He maketh the deep to boil as a caldron: he snuffeth up the tide as a perfume. Behind him glittereth a path-way: the deep is embroidered with hoar.—*M. Good.*

2 Or, *who behave themselves without fear.*

3 Over proud man, who though terrified at the aspect of a mere creature, would yet madly challenge his Creator.—*C.*

29 Darts are counted as stubble: he laugheth at the shaking of a spear.[8]

30 Sharp stones[9] *are* under him: he spreadeth sharp-pointed things upon the mire.

31 He maketh the deep to boil like a pot: he maketh the [i]sea like a pot of ointment.[1]

32 He maketh a path to shine after him; *one* would think the deep *to be* hoary.

33 Upon earth there is not his like, who is made without fear.[2]

34 He beholdeth all high *things:* he *is* a king over all the children of pride.[3]

CHAPTER XLII.

1 *Job submitteth himself unto God.* 7 *God, preferring Job's cause, maketh his three friends submit themselves to him.* 9 *He accepteth and blesseth Job.* 16 *His age and death.*

THEN Job answered the LORD, and said,

2 I know that [a]thou canst do every *thing*, and *that* [b]no thought can be withholden[1] from thee.

3 Who[c] *is* he that hideth counsel without knowledge?[2] therefore have I uttered that I understood not; things [d]too wonderful for me, which I knew not.

4 Hear, [e]I beseech thee, and I will speak: I will demand[3] of thee, and declare thou unto me.

5 I have [f]heard of thee by the hearing of the ear; but now [g]mine eye seeth thee:[4]

6 Wherefore[h] I abhor *myself*, and repent in [i]dust and ashes.

7 ¶ And it was *so*, that, after the LORD had spoken these words unto Job, the LORD said to [j]Eliphaz the Temanite, My wrath is kindled against thee, and against thy two friends: for ye have not [k]spoken of me *the thing that is* right, as my servant Job *hath*.[5]

8 Therefore take unto you now [l]seven bullocks and seven rams, and [m]go to my servant Job, and offer up for yourselves a burnt-offering; and my servant Job shall [n]pray for you: for [o]him will I accept: lest I deal with you [p]*after your* folly, in that ye have not spoken of me *the thing which is* right, like my servant Job.

9 ¶ So Eliphaz the Temanite, and Bildad the Shuhite, *and* Zophar the Naamathite [q]went,

CHAP. XLII.

a Ge.18.14. Je.18.14; 32.17,27. Mar.10.27 14. 36.Is.43.13. Mat.19.26.

b Ps. 139. 2; 94. 11. He.4.13. 1 Ch.28.9. Is. 66.18. Jn.21.17.

1 Or, *no thought of thine can be hindered.*

c ch.38.2,3.

2 'Pretendeth wisdom without knowledge.'—*M. Good.*

d Ps.40.5; 139.6; 131. 1;73.22. Pr.30. 2-4. Ro. 11.33.

e Ge.18.30, 32. Pr. 3. 5,6. Is. 45. 11, with ch. 40.7;38.3;34.31,32.

3 Ask.—*M. Good.*

f Is.55.3. Ro.10.17.

g Is. 6. 1. Ac. 7. 56. Ep.1.17. Ga.1.16.

4 This does not indicate a previous knowledge by *hearing*, and a present attainment by *seeing*, but a hearing of faith (Ro. 10. 17), which faith, purifying the heart (Ac. 15. 19. ch. 26.18), enabled him to see God, Mat.5.8. Jn. 14.7.9.—*C.*

h Je. 6. 5. Ge. 18. 27. Eze. 16. 63; 36. 31. Ps. 51.17; 73. 22. Lu.18.13; 7.37,47. Zec.12.10. ch. 40.4. Ezr.9.6. Je. 31.19. Ja.4.10.1 Ti.1.13. ch.2. 8. Jonah 3.6.

i Da.9.3. Mat.11.21.

j ch.2.11;4.1;8.1;11. 1.

k ch.iv.v.viii.xi. xv. xviii.xx.xxii.Ps.51.4.

5 Job and his friends had all erred in their estimates of Providence; but Job had now confessed his fault to God, and humbled himself in dust and ashes; wherefore God bears witness to the work of grace in his heart, and rebukes the tardiness of his friends in following his example.—*C.*

l Nu. 23. 1. 1 Ch. 15. 26. He.10.10,14. Ep.5. 2.

m Mat.5.24.

n Eze.14.14. Ja.5.14, 16. Ge.20.17. 1 Jn.5.16.

o Heb. *his face* or *person*, ver.9.

p De.32.6;4 6. Pr.8. 36.

q Ps. 119. 59. ch. 34. 31,32.

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to take a particular view of the strength and well-proportioned parts of the monster which I have mentioned; 13. Who dare strip him of his scaly skin, or put a bridle in his mouth? 14. Who dare open his jaws? The surrounding rows of his teeth are terror itself. 15–17. They, as well as his scales, are closely and inseparably connected. 18. His neesings, while he lies gaping in the sun, make a light to shine, and the water which he spouts up into the air reflects the sunbeams. His sparkling eyes emit a reddish and bright shining light. 19–21. How terribly hot is the stream of breath which proceeds from his mouth or nostrils? 22. In his neck strength lodges to an amazing degree. Before his face sorrow and desolation triumphantly leap, as, without fear or pity, he destroys every animal he meets with. 23. The flakes of his flesh are, as it were, soldered into a lump of metal, which cannot be moved or easily cut asunder. 24. His heart consists of the most solid flesh; and is quite destitute of every form of compassion. 25. When he appears above water the courageous mariners are rendered almost distracted with terror, and forced to their confessions and prayers, expecting nothing but present death. 26–29. No sword, spear, dart, javelin, arrows, or slinged stones can be made to penetrate his body. 30. Without hurt or pain he makes his bed on sharp-pointed rocks, stones, or pieces of ice. 31. When he breathes and tumbles about in the water, he makes it to foam and rage as if it were a boiling pot full of ointment. 32. When he swims along, he leaves the furrows behind him all marked with froth and foam, on the surface of the sea. 33. No animal on earth is equally fearless and terrible. 34. With contempt he beholds the highest animals or loftiest ships, and brings them down with a sweep of his tail, tearing and rending them at his pleasure. He is king of all the huge and fierce-looking monsters.

Ver. 1. [*Leviathan.* From the description of ver. 33, we believe leviathan to be some of those extinct species of animals whose gigantic remains prove the existence of creatures 60 feet and upwards in length and 25 in height; but of whose instinctive endowments and habits we can know nothing, unless they be contained in the wonderful description of this chapter. *C.*——The minute description given of *leviathan* in this sublime passage will leave no doubt on the mind of the naturalist that the *crocodile* is the animal here referred to. The enormous tail, 'like a cedar;' the impenetrable skin (ver. 7); the great mouth and formidable teeth (ver. 14); his lair among the reeds by the river's brink—all point to the great crocodile. *P.*]

REFLECTIONS.—If I am so unacquainted with animals, how scanty must be my knowledge of their infinite Maker! If these are a terror to me, how much more ought the Almighty and his infinite majesty! If I could not tame or manage some one of these, how dare I presume to attempt wresting the government of providence out of God's hand! Surely then, above all, I must not dare to imagine him my debtor, or to interrogate him concerning his conduct. And if my God governs these monsters, I need not be afraid of either men or devils. But why should I indulge pride, when, after all my boastings, I am to have some ugly and ravenous monster my superior in it?

CHAPTER XLII. [Ver. 3. Job here refers to his own previous conduct. He had attempted by his rash statements, and his insinuations of injustice on God's part, and injured innocence on his own part, to obscure the gracious purpose the Almighty had in view

and did according as the LORD commanded them: the LORD also accepted [r]Job.[6]

10 And the LORD [s]turned the captivity of Job, when he prayed for his friends: also the LORD gave[t] Job twice as much as he had before.

11 Then[u] came there unto him all his brethren, and all his sisters, and all they that had been of his acquaintance before, and did eat bread with him in his house; and they bemoaned[x] him, and comforted him over all the evil that the LORD had brought upon him: every man also gave him a piece of money, and every one an ear-ring of gold.[7]

12 So the LORD [y]blessed the latter end of Job more than his beginning: for he had four-

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[r] Heb. *the face of Job*, with Mat. 3. 17. Ep. 1. 6. 1 Pe. 2. 5. Pr. 3. 11, 12.

6 'Made him accepted in the Beloved' (Ep. 1. 6), that Redeemer for whom he waited, ch. 19. 25.—*C.*

[s] Ps. 14. 7; 126. 1; 69. 33. Pr. 22. 4. Lu. 14. 14; 23. 34. Ge. 20. 17.

[t] Heb. *added all that* had been *to Job unto the double*, Zec. 9. 12.

[u] Pr. 16. 7; 14. 20, with ch. 19. 13, 14; 30. 1.

[x] Ro. 12. 15. He. 13. 1, 3; 12. 12. 1 Th. 5. 14. Is. 35. 3. ch. 2. 11, with Am. 3. 6.

[y] ch. 1. 2, 3; 8. 7. Ps. 119. 71. Mat. 19. 29. 1 Ti. 6. 17. Ja. 5. 11. He. 12. 11. Is. 61. 7. Eze. 36. 11. De. 8. 16.

7 What a picture is this of human character and human society! In sorrow, humiliation, and poverty, friends are few; but when brighter prospects dawn, and when the sun of prosperity shines, swarms of friends flit and flutter in the sunbeams. Presents flow upon the rich; but the poor, though hungry and naked, are overlooked and forgotten.—*P.*

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[z] Is. 49. 17–21.

8 Turtle-dove or shining day.

9 Sweet-smelling cassia.

1 Fulness of paint, or ray of a ruby, carbuncle, or emerald.

[a] Ps. 144. 12. 1 Ki. 1. 3. Es. 2. 3.

[b] Nu. 27. 7. Jos. 17. 4.

[c] Ps. 91. 16. De. 5. 16; 6. 1, 2. Pr. 3. 16.

[d] Ge. 50. 23. Ps. 128. 6. Pr. 17. 6.

[e] Ge. 15. 15; 25. 8. ch. 5. 26. Pr. 16. 32.

teen thousand sheep, and six thousand camels, and a thousand yoke of oxen, and a thousand she-asses.

13 ¶ He[z] had also seven sons and three daughters.

14 And he called the name of the first, Jemima;[8] and the name of the second, [9]Kezia; and the name of the third, Keren-happuch.[1]

15 And in all the land were no women found [a]*so* fair as the daughters of Job; and their father [b]gave them inheritance among their brethren.

16 After this lived Job an [c]hundred and forty years, and [d]saw his sons, and his sons' sons, *even* four generations.

17 So[e] Job died, *being* old, and full of days.

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in his afflictions. Now he fully perceives and faithfully and humbly acknowledges all. *P.*]

REFLECTIONS.—How serious and humble fellowship with God makes a soul! And it is a great mercy that, when he demands of us answers of obedience, we may freely demand of him knowledge and grace to answer his requirements. If his gracious convictions render us exceeding vile and loathsome in our own view, let us expect that our deliverance is at hand. Jesus' blood and grace can more than balance our sins. Whom God humbles and pardons he delights to honour and acknowledge as his own. Yea, tenderly he regards his afflicted saints, notwithstanding their peevish quarrellings with him. He resents in the most humiliating manner the injuries done to them by their angry friends: and he often finds them sadly mistaken who were positive of their being in the right. But it is pleasant to see saints reconciled to one another through Jesus' death, in order to their enjoyment of comfortable fellowship with God. And our consolation is certainly approaching when our repentance towards God, faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ, and forgiving kindness to and prayer for injurious friends, are become remarkable. God can easily make all things concur for the welfare or enrichment of his people. And it is absurd therefore to despair in distress, when this very book was written for our encouragement in it.—But was not Job a type of our blessed Redeemer? He was infinitely rich and righteous; yet for our sakes he became poor, till he had not where to lay his head. Quickly was he reduced to the depths of abasement: and behold how he lay bearing our sins, and carrying our sorrows, in the stable—in the manger—in the garden—on the cross—and in the grave! Stupendous and amazing were the troubles, the assaults, he suffered from God—from sinners—from saints! How tempted—how reproached—how afflicted and tormented! But marvellous was his faith, resignation, and patience; and undeserved and powerful his intercession; till at last he arose into illustrious and lasting glory and honour; and a great church of Jewish and Gentile saints succeeded and proceeded from his troubles.

THE BOOK OF PSALMS.

The Book of Psalms is one of the most extensive and useful in Holy Scripture, as it is everywhere suited to the case of the saints. It is at first much mixed with complaints and supplications, and at last issues in pure and lasting praise. That Heman composed Ps. lxxxviii., Ethan the lxxxixth, and Moses the xcth is certain. But whether those under the name of Asaph were mostly penned by him, or only assigned to be sung by him as a master of the temple music, as others were to Jeduthun, or to the sons of Korah, or other chief musicians, we cannot determine. Some, as Ps. lxxiv. lxxix. cxxvi. cxxxvii., appear to have been composed after the captivity to Babylon was begun; but by whom we know not. The rest, including those two marked with the name of Solomon, might be composed by David, the sweet Psalmist of Israel.

Twenty-five of the psalms have no title at all; and whether the titles of the rest are of divine authority is not altogether agreed. But when it is considered that these titles everywhere appear in the Hebrew originals, and how often they serve as a key to the psalm, and are sometimes connected with it by the accentuating points, there is no real ground to suspect their authenticity. Nor are interpreters agreed with respect to the signification of some of the Hebrew words standing in these titles. We think that MASCHIL always signifies that the psalm is designed for *instruction*, Ps. xxxii. xlii. xliii. xlv. lii. liii. liv. lv. lxxiv. lxxviii. lxxxviii. lxxxix. MICHTAM denotes the *precious* or *golden* nature of the psalm; as Ps. xvi. lvi.–lx. ALTASCHITH, that the scope of the psalm is to deprecate *destruction*, Ps. lvii. lviii. lix. MUTHLABBEN, that the psalm was composed on the occasion of the *death of his son*, or of Goliath the *duellist*, Ps. ix. AIJELETH SHAHAR, that its subject is Jesus Christ, the *hind of the morning*, Ps. xxii. JONATH-ELEM-REHOKIM, that David is therein represented as a *mute dove among foreigners*, Ps. lvi. SHOSHANNIM, SHOSHANNIM-EDUTH, or SHUSHAN-EDUTH, may either signify that Christ and his people, who are *lilies*, or *lilies of the congregation or testimony*, are the subject of it; or that it was sung on an instrument of six strings, Ps. xlv. lx. lxix. lxxx., as SHEMINITH denotes an instrument of eight strings, Ps. vi. xii. MAHALATH may either signify the *disease*, and MAHALATH-LEANOTH the *afflicting disease;* or MAHALOTH may signify a wind-instrument of music, Ps. liii. lxxxviii. NEGINATH and NEGINOTH denote stringed instruments of music, Ps. lxi. iv. vi. liv. lv. lxvii. lxxvi. NEHILOTH, wind ones, Ps. v. GITTITH, a musical instrument, or tune invented at Gath, Ps. viii. lxxxi. lxxxiv. ALAMOTH, the *virginals*, or a song to be sung by the virgins, Ps. xlvi. SHIGGAION, or SHIGIONOTH, may denote the *diversified* matter or tune of the psalm, Ps. vii. The cxxth and fourteen next following are called SONGS OF DEGREES; perhaps because they were sung on the different steps of the temple-stairs; or were sung at certain halts made by David and the Israelites when they brought up the ark of God from Kirjath-jearim to Jerusalem, 2 Sa. vi.; or were sung by the Hebrews at their different rests when they came up from the country to their three solemn feasts; or were partly sung by the Jews at their different resting-places in their return from Babylon, Le. xxiii.; Ezr. ii.

The Hebrews divided this book into FIVE, ending with Ps. xli. lxxii. lxxxix. cvi. and cl.; the first four of which are concluded with AMEN. Interpreters have attempted to arrange or class the Psalms into a variety of different forms. To me it appears not improper to distinguish them into, I. INSTRUCTIVE; which are either (1) HISTORICAL, relating what God had done for the psalmist or for the Jewish nation, &c., as Ps. xviii. lxviii. lxxiii. civ. cv. cvi. cxiv. cxxv. cxxvi. (most of which are also EUCHARISTIC); or (2) DOCTRINAL, declaring and explaining the principles and duties of religion; as Ps. i. xiv. xv. xix. xxxvi. xxxvii. xlix. l. liii. lxiv. lxxvi. lxxvii. lxxviii. lxxxi. lxxxii. xc. ci. cxii. cxix. cxxvii. cxxxi. cxxxiii. cxxxix.—II. PROPHETIC; foretelling events relative to Christ or his church; as Ps. ii. viii. xvi. xxi. xxii. xxiv. xxix. xl. xlv. xlvii. xlviii. lxvii. lxviii. lxix. lxxii. lxxxvii. lxxxix. xciii. xcv. xcvi. xcvii. xcviii. c. cx. cxvii. cxxxii. cxlix.; not a few of which are also EUCHARISTIC. III. CONSOLATORY; in which the psalmist comforts himself and others in the promises, perfections, or works of God; as Ps. iv. xi. xxiii. xxvii.

xxxi. xxxvii. xlvi. lviii. lxxiii. xci. cxxi. cxxv. cxxviii cxxix. IV. PETITIONARY; in which he bewails his own or the church's condition, and supplicates deliverance; as Ps. iii. v. vi. vii. x. xii. xiii. xvii. xx. xxv. xxvi. xxvii. xxviii. xxxv. xxxviii. xli. xlii. xliii. xliv. li. liv. lv. lvii. lix. lx. lxi. lxiii. lxiv. lxx. lxxi. lxxiv. lxxix. lxxx. lxxxiii. lxxxv. lxxxvi. lxxxviii. cii. cxix. cxx. cxxiii. cxxx. cxxxii. cxxxvii. cxl. cxli. cxlii. xviii. Seven of these, in which the psalmist makes confession of his sin, viz. Ps. vi. xxii. xxxviii. li. cii. cxxx. cxliii., are called PENITENTIAL. V. EUCHARISTIC; in which he stirs up himself and others to praise and thank the Lord for his favours; as Ps. ix. xviii. xxx. xxxiii. xxxiv. lx. lxv.–lxviii. xcv.–c. ciii.–cviii. cxi. cxiii. cxv.–cxviii. cxxii. cxxiv. cxxvi. cxxxiv.–cxxxvi. cxxxviii. cxliv.–cxlviii. cxlix. cl. But indeed historical narratives, doctrinal instructions, prophecies, consolations, supplications, praises, and thanksgivings, are often so pleasantly and profitably connected in the same psalm that it is difficult to assign it to one class rather than to another. And what is HISTORICAL, as it relates to David and the Jewish church, is often TYPICAL and so PROPHETIC, as it relates to Jesus Christ and the gospel church or heavenly state. Many, too, of the SUPPLICATIONS respecting deliverances from or the destruction of enemies, are to be considered as real PREDICTIONS of the events, they being dictated by the inspiration of Him who can declare the end from the beginning.

[The Book of Psalms presents itself before the Editor united to all the music of the ear, the voice, and the heart. It has occupied much of his study, not as a mere subject of criticism, but as a light to Jesus in all his offices of Prophet, Priest, and King—and specially as a key to his inmost heart—a spiritual revelation and record of those 'prayers and supplications, with strong crying and tears,' which he offered up 'in the days of his flesh,' He. 5. 7, as well as a descriptive history of his kingdom of providence, grace, judgment, and glory, in all its periods, past, present, or to come.

To this conclusion the Editor was conducted by a process nearly as follows:—

1. From the confident reference to the Psalms made by our Lord himself.

2. From the equally confident reference of the apostles to the same authority; as, for example, amongst many others, Ac. 13. 33, where a psalm not unfrequently represented as descriptive of the instalment of David on his throne in Israel, is distinctly affirmed by the Holy Spirit to be descriptive of the sitting down of the glorified Saviour upon his throne in heaven.

3. By the evident insufficiency of every other principle of interpretation. Throughout the entire series of Psalms, he found so frequently and so constantly the character of *some one* so righteous, that to apply it to David would outrage all his history; and which, to apply to any mere man, would gainsay all observation and experience. But this righteous character, in all its various forms of exhibition, he found most exactly to correspond to the evangelical history of Christ: the conclusion was therefore inevitable—this character was that of Christ. It was in contemplating the first psalm that this conclusion first forced itself upon his mind. He had often heard that psalm, by what is called the principle of 'accommodation,' expounded as descriptive of the 'happiness of the godly,' contrasted with 'the misery of the ungodly;' and in this interpretation all ordinary authority induced him to acquiesce. Yet still did he feel himself unable to account for the fact—that the description so far exceeded the reality. 'Blessed *is* the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful: but his delight *is* in the law of the LORD; and in his law doth he meditate day and night. And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season: his leaf also shall not wither: and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper.' In real life he had never seen such a man; he had never read of such a one amongst the most eminent Scripture saints. Why then did the Spirit of God, in full command of all the words of truth, proceed to draw a moral picture so far surpassing the alleged original? This was a question to which no satisfactory answer was ever presented to his mind. Yet this was the very question that never ceased to recur demanding a solution. True he had found some excellent commentators, amongst whom may be recorded the honoured names of Gill, Romaine, and Horne, who had taught that the opening of this psalm was descriptive of Christ; but whereas for this opinion they assigned no obvious *principle of interpretation*, he found in it no positive satisfaction, because it appeared as much depending upon the principle of *accommodation* as that from which he was anxious to retreat. It was while thus puzzled between these two forms of authority, in neither of which he could discover any *principle of interpretation*, that his mind was earnestly turned to inquire whether any such *principle* actually existed. In human science he readily and clearly perceived its existence. He saw that if a book contained the names and descriptions of a thousand plants, the accomplished botanist might have some search, but no difficulty, in discovering, amidst the thousand, any plant whatsoever, and declaring its name, provided merely that the description were truly and fully drawn. To the inexperienced eye, many of the plants might appear not merely similar but the same; but the distinctive characteristics would, to the eye of the botanist, be as obvious as the sun at noonday. And were there, in the Scriptures, any such simple *principle* of interpretation as this, how easily might it be applied in directing our inquiries and settling our conclusions. And was there not such a *principle*, and was not this the very principle—the mere, but exact correspondence of the recorded description with the object described, and its obvious *want* of such exact correspondence with any other object? Of the existence and application of this principle the Editor soon found numerous examples in the New Testament; for instance, Ac. 2. 29–36. Now in many copies of the Scriptures lying before him he found this psalm distinctly interpreted as primarily descriptive of David, and only in some secondary or derivative and typical sense applicable to Christ. It is remarkable, however, that the apostle makes no such distinction, but directly affirms that it is a prophecy concerning our Lord. Now from what *principle* of interpretation does he draw this conclusion? From the simple and obvious principle that *it is not true concerning David*, 'for David (when he speaks) is not ascended into the heavens;' but is *literally true concerning Christ*, whom God hath 'raised up,' of which fact the apostles 'all are witnesses.' This principle perceived—and perceived it irresistibly commends itself to adoption—the meaning of the first psalm became most obvious. It did not describe any of the mere children of men from Adam, their head, downward. But the moment Christ is discovered, it is found exactly to correspond to the evangelical history of 'the days of his flesh.' It is, therefore, not a prophecy but a description of Christ—a moral, a spiritual picture of his character drawn by the Holy Ghost, by whom the holy men of old being moved did speak; and by which, before he appeared, the church knew what to expect; and by which, when he did appear, she should have instantly recognized her Lord.

The following are accordingly the principal rules of interpretation by which the Editor has been guided, and to which, however unimportant they may appear, he ventures to solicit the earnest attention of the disciples of the Bible.

1. The Old Testament is interpreted by the Spirit speaking in the New Testament; even as the 'perfect day' more clearly exhibits, but does not change, what is dimly seen at the dawn.

2. When one part of a psalm is thus, by the Holy Ghost, applied to Christ, every other part of the psalm must be applied to him in a way consistent with the analogy of faith in the other Scriptures.

3. When one psalm is found, by quotation in the New Testament, to apply to Christ, every parallel psalm must likewise apply to him.

4. When a description in the whole or part of a psalm is found absolutely inapplicable to any of the patriarchs, prophets, apostles, or other saints, but, at the same time, perfectly applicable to Christ, then, according to the principle above developed, that psalm is not to be interpreted of such patriarch, prophet, apostle, or saint, but of Christ in his person, qualifications, trials, warfare, victories, or kingdom.

5. A large amount of interpretation must, as in the other Scriptures, be referred to the grammatical construction, especially in the bearing of the words 'I, thou, he,' and their plurals, taken in conjunction with the attributes or acts ascribed to them respectively. *C.*]

[The Book of Psalms is a connecting link between the Old Testament and the New. In them the great purposes and lessons of the Mosaic law are set forth. In them is expressed the very essence of the symbolical institutions and manifold transactions of Providence, through which the members of the old covenant were instructed in the knowledge and trained to the service of the true God. In them the Jew was taught that the form without the spirit was vain—that a spiritual God required spiritual worship. In them the mind of the worshipper was concentrated upon the Messiah—the Shepherd, the Saviour, the King of his people. While the Psalms were thus wondrously adapted for the expression of praise under the old economy, they were no less adapted, from the fulness and clearness of their typical bearings, to give expression to the devout praise, and to give right direction to the spiritual thoughts, of the Christian. There is not a feature in the divine character now developed in the gospel—there is not an aspiration in the heart of the enlightened disciple of Jesus—there is not a matter of vital experience in the divine life—of which the record is not to be found in the Psalms of David. To say that they are wholly Jewish in their cast and character, is totally to mistake their object and to misapprehend their meaning. The poetry, even the Christian poetry of the world, is as far behind the inspired Psalms in lofty Christian sentiment, and in depth and fulness of Christian doctrine, as it is in sublimity of thought and beauty of expression. I would refer in proof to Ps. xxiii. xlvi. li. lxvii. c. ciii.

cxlv. The old and the new meet and blend gloriously in the Psalms;—the old, with its gorgeous but instructive ritual, and its sublime but suggestive imagery; and the new, with its simple but glorious and cheering truths. Thus the Book of Psalms, standing midway between both covenants, and serving equally to the members of each as the handmaid of a living piety, is a witness of the essential identity of their primary and fundamental ideas. The Psalms can never be superseded in the service of the sanctuary. Alike in seasons of deepest sorrow and holiest rapture, the Christian will instinctively turn to them. *P.*]

PSALM I.

1 *The happiness of the godly.* 4 *The unhappiness of the ungodly.*

BLESSED *is* the man that [a]walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the [1]scornful:[2]

2 But [b]his delight[3] *is* in the law of the LORD; and[c] in his law doth he meditate day and night.

3 And he shall [d]be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season: his leaf also shall not wither:[4] and whatsoever[e] he doeth shall prosper.[5]

4 The ungodly *are* not so: [g]but *are* like the chaff which the wind driveth away.

5 Therefore the ungodly [h]shall not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous.

6 For the LORD [i]knoweth the way of the righteous: but the [j]way of the ungodly shall perish.

PSALM II.

1 *The kingdom of Christ.* 10 *Kings are exhorted to accept it.*

WHY do[a] the heathen rage,[1] and the people imagine[2] a vain thing?

2 The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, [b]against the LORD, and against [c]his Anointed, *saying,*

3 Let [d]us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us.

4 He[e] that sitteth in the heavens [g]shall laugh: the LORD shall have them in derision.

5 Then [h]shall he speak unto them in his wrath, and vex[3] them in his sore displeasure.

6 Yet [i]have I set[4] my King upon my holy hill of Zion.[5]

7 I will declare the decree:[6] the LORD hath said unto me, [j]Thou *art* my Son; this day have I begotten thee.[7]

8 Ask[k] of me, and I shall give *thee* the heathen *for* thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth *for* thy possession.

9 Thou[l] shalt break them with a rod of iron; thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel.

10 Be[m] wise now therefore, O ye kings: be instructed, ye judges of the earth.

11 Serve[o] the LORD with fear, and rejoice with trembling.

12 Kiss[p] the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish *from* the way, when his wrath is kindled [q]but a little. [r]Blessed *are* all they that put their trust in him.

PSALM III.

The security of God's protection.

A psalm of David [a]when he fled from Absalom his son.

LORD, how[b] are they increased that trouble me? many *are* they that rise up against me.[1]

2 Many *there be* which say of my soul, [c]*There is* no help for him in God. [d]Selah.

3 But thou, O LORD, *art* [e]a shield for[2] me; my [g]glory, and the [h]lifter up of mine head.

4 I[i] cried unto the LORD with my voice, and he heard me out of his holy hill. Selah.

5 I[j] laid me down and slept; I awaked: for the LORD sustained me.

6 I[k] will not be afraid of ten thousands of

A.M. cir. 3554. B.C. cir. 450.

PSALM I.

a Ge.49.6.2Ch.22.3–5. Pr.1.15; 4.14, 15. Mi. 6.16. Ps.6.8;26.4,5; 119, 115. Je.15.17.

1 Or, *wicked.*

2 This psalm forms a suitable introduction to the whole book. It embodies the fundamental principles of all true piety and devotion. It shows the necessary and indissoluble connection between the divine blessing and human happiness. Its date is unknown; its authorship is not stated; the occasion of its composition we cannot now discover: but its general tone and character give it a right to its place at the commencement of the book of Psalms. —*P.*

b Job 23. 12. Ps. 119. 11, 16, 24, 47, 103, 127, 143; 19.10. Je.15.16. Ro. 7.22. 1 Jn.5.3. Ac.26.22.

3 His will, his desire, is in the *law*, that is, in all the doctrine or revelation of God.

c Jos.1.8. Ps. 119.15, 55, 62, 81, 97.

d Je.17.8. Eze.47.12. Is.44.3–5. Ps. 52. 8; 92. 12.

4 Heb. *fade.*

e Ge.30.2.2Ch.31.21; 32.20. Ps.128.2. Is.3.10. Ro.8.28.

5 All that he *beareth* (under emblem of a tree) shall prosper.

g Mat.3.12. Ps. 35.5; 15.4. Is.17.13; 29.5. Ho. 13.3. Job 21.18.

h Mat.25.41, 46. Ps. 5.5; 24. 3. Lu.21.28, 36. Mat.13.49. Re.6.16, 17; 22.15.

i Job 23.10. Na. 1.7. Je.23.10. Pr.2.8. Jn. 10. 14.

j Pr.15.9; 14.12, 21, 32; 11. 7. Mat. 25.46. Is. 3. 11.

PSALM II.

B.C. cir. 1040.

a Ps.46.6. 2 Sa. 5.17; viii. xx. xii. xv. xx. Ac. 4. 25–28. Lu.18.32. Is.8.9, 10. Mat.21, 38. Re. 17. 14; 20.9.

1 Or, *tumultuously assemble.*

2 Heb. *meditate.*

b Ro.1.30; 8.7, 8. Pr. 21.30. Job 9.4, 13.

c 1 Sa.2.10. Ps. 45.7. Is.61.1. Jn.1.41; 3.34.

d Je.5.5. Lu.19.14.

A.M. cir. 2964. B.C. cir. 1040.

e Ac. 5, 31. Ps. 45. 6; 110. 1–7. Da. 7, 10–14. Mat.28. 18. 1 Ti. 6. 15. Ep.1.22.

4 Heb. *anointed*

5 Heb. *upon Zion the hill of my holiness.*

6 Or, *for a decree.*

f Mat.3.17; 17.5. Ac. 13.33. Ro.1.4. He. 1.5; 5.5.

7 'Adopted thee,' in sight of Jew and Gentile, as manifested in thy resurrection from the dead (Ro. 1. 4), and exhibited thee to the holy angels as the legitimate object of their worship, He.1.5.—*C.*

h Ps.22. 27–31; 72. 8; 89. 21–37. Da. 7. 13, 14. He.2.7, 8.

i Re.2.27; 19.15. Da. 2. 44. Re. 6. 12–17; xvi. xix. Mat. 22. 14, with Is.30.14. Je.19.11.

n Is.26.9; 52.15; 60.3, 10, 11, 16; 49. 23. Je.6.8. Ps.72.10, 11; 45.12.

o He.12.28, 29. Mat. 17.5. Jn.5.22, 23. Ps. 89. 7; 65.1–7; xcvi.–c.

p Jn.5.23. 1 Sa. 10.1. 1 Ki. 19. 18. Job 31.27. Ho.13.2.

q Mat.22.7. Re.6.12–17; 16.1–21, with 2 Th. 1.9. Re.14.9–11.

r Pr.16.20. Is.30. 18; 26. 3, 4. Je.17. 7. Ro.9. 33; 10. 11. 1 Pe. 2.6. Ps. 34.8; 40.4; 84.12; 146.5.

PSALM III.

B.C. cir. 1027.

a 2 Sa.xv.–xviii.

b 2Sa.15.12; 17 11–24.

1 If this psalm was written, as the title states, when David fled from Absalom, it exhibits in a noble light the character of the psalmist. In the midst of an unnatural rebellion, when to human eye all seemed lost, David declares his implicit faith in God, and his conviction of the final triumph of truth, and the welfare of God's people.—*P.*

c Ps.71.11. 2 Sa.16.8.

d ver.4,8; Ps.4.2,4.

e Ge.15.1. De.33.29. Ps.84.9, 11; 91.2, 3.

2 Or, *about.*

g Is.60.19; 45.25.

h Ps.27.6; 110.7. Ge. 40.15.2 Ki.25.27.

i Ps. 50.15; 91.15; 99. 6; 18.6; 116.1–8.

j Ps.4.8; 127.2. Pr.3. 24. Le. 26.6. Job 11.18, 19. Eze. 34.25.

k Ps.27.1–3; 118.6–12.

PSALM I. Ver. 1. *Blessed is the man.* Rather, 'O the blessedness of *that* man,' that man of a thousand, who walketh not in the counsel of the *unjust*, who withhold God's due of love and obedience; who *standeth* not in the way of *transgressors*, to meet them, or converse with them on their own terms; who *sitteth* not in the seat of the *mocker* of God's authority and institutions. Has any son of Adam ever realized these three negatives in character but Christ? Is not this then the Christ described by character? *C.*

Ver. 4. The imagery of the psalm is thoroughly oriental. The 'tree planted by the rivers of water' would not be exposed to the withering influence of a parched soil and scorching sun during the long rainless and cloudless summers. The chaff of the threshing-floor, driven away by the wind from the midst of the rich grain—what a picture of the wicked! *P.*

Ver. 6. Christ the truth is the *way* of the righteous to glory, Jn. 14. 6. Satan and lies are the *way* of the wicked to destruction. *C.*

REFLECTIONS.—How dangerous is the company of wicked men, and how headlong the progress of sin! They who walk in the counsel of sinners will quickly wait for opportunities of sinning, and will with pleasure accompany with scorners. But precious and useful are the oracles of God, as means to preserve us from temptation, and to animate us to every good word and work. And it is the heavenly-minded and thoughtful Christian that will be the thriving one. It is absurd for saints to study conformity to this world, when God has marked such a difference, such an opposition, between them and the men of it. And when their end answers so exactly to their life and to the glory of the divine perfections. May God's company, God's word, God's influences, God's approbation, and God's final judgment, and the eternity consequent thereon, be ever dear to my heart!

PSALM II. Ver. 1. *Why do the heathen rage?* The heathen nations being madly attached to idolatry and the Jewish people to self-righteousness, united in opposition to Christ, Ac. 4. 26; and for the same reasons all who inherit their principles still persevere in the same opposition. *C.*

Ver. 2. *The kings of the earth set themselves,* &c. 'Array or marshal' their hosts—their military power and cruel legal enactments and agents, as in the Jewish and Roman persecutions of the early Christians, or the terrible machinery of the Inquisition in the later days of the Reformation. *C.*

Ver. 3. The main purpose or object of this psalm is to celebrate the dignity, power, and ultimate triumph of the *Anointed One.* The ode is divided into four parts of three stanzas each. In the first, the presumptuous rebellion of the princes of the earth is mentioned, ver. 1–3. In the second, the Lord Jehovah expresses his contempt for the rebels, and announces his purpose to overthrow them by the agency of his Anointed One, ver. 4–6. In the third, the Anointed One declares his office, and his resolve to carry out Jehovah's will, and execute vengeance, ver. 7–9. In the fourth, a practical and solemn warning and admonition is given to the whole princes and people of the earth. *P.*

Ver. 4. LORD. ADONAI, not JEHOVAH, as in ver. 2, 7, 11. Adonai signifies *my pillars*, God in the character of providential upholder. *C.*

Ver. 7. *My Son.* A title of the 'Word that was God' (Jn. 1. 1), that 'eternal life that was with the Father' (1 Jn. 1. 1), and who thus being 'eternal life with the Father,' must have been his eternal *Son;* for as Father necessarily implies a *Son*, if the Father were eternal, a point that cannot be disputed, so must the Son have been eternal. *C.*

Ver. 12. The *Son* is the Anointed of ver. 2; the King of ver. 6; and the omnipotent Conqueror of ver. 9. The Hebrew word translated 'Son' is different from that used in ver. 7. It is an older, and appears to have been a more dignified, term. It will be observed that the three last verses of the psalm correspond to the three first. The revolt against the Lord and his Anointed finds its parallel in the injunction to serve the Lord and to kiss the Son. *P.*

REFLECTIONS.—Bitter and inveterate is the enmity of mankind against Jesus Christ our Saviour. The agents of hell, Jews and Gentiles, readily drop their private animosities to harmonize in opposition to him! If his cause is to be run down they cordially unite in the work! And not well-grounded fear, but enraged enmity, makes the princes of the earth to oppose his kingdom, which is not of this world. But in vain are all their contrivances and fury. His church, and every believer, is fixed on a rock, against which the powers of hell and earth can never prevail. Jesus' person, as the only begotten Son of God from eternity, and declared to be such in his resurrection from the dead, and the new covenant made with him, are their everlasting foundation. His intercession, and the saving power of his Spirit, endear them to himself. But dreadful is the judgment executed on his Jewish, heathen, antichristian, or other opposers! And if the great are not good they shall receive the deeper damnation. O how mixed is the service of Christ on earth! Whilst we rejoice in him and his fulness, we need to tremble on account of our own guilt and corruption, and the snares and dangers that attend us. But holy jealousy and filial fear produce joys unspeakable and full of glory. While the world contemn him and riot in wantonness, let my soul kiss, receive, love, adore, and submit to God's Son; so shall I be blessed in him with all spiritual blessings in time and eternity.

PSALM III. Ver. 2. *Selah.* Though this word occurs upwards of seventy times in the Psalms, its meaning is much disputed. By some it has been reckoned a musical pause, by others a mark of attention; by others a repetition; by others as equivalent to Amen! while some consider it indicative of the eternal value of the preceding passage. *C.*

RUINS OF THE SYNAGOGUE AT CAPERNAUM—WHERE CHRIST HEALED THE MAN WITH THE WITHERED HAND. [PSALMS, ii : 7.]—"I will declare the decree: the Lord hath said unto me, Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee." We give this view of the ruins of the synagogue at Capernaum because it was at Capernaum that our Saviour wrought the majority of his miracles and delivered many of his discourses. The ruins at Capernaum indicate that this was once a place of importance, but now it is in a state of perfect decay and desolation. The ruins extend for half a mile along the coast and as far back into the interior. Here are fragments of ancient walls and foundations. The rank growth of bushes and weeds almost prevent travelers from making careful measurements. There are architectural fragments in the above synagogue which belong to a very ancient period. There are pieces of Corinthian capitals, architraves, elaborate friezes and pedestals.

people, that have set *themselves* against me round about.

7 Arise,[1] O LORD; save me, O my God: for thou hast [n]smitten all mine enemies *upon* the cheek-bone; thou hast broken the teeth of the ungodly.

8 Salvation[o] *belongeth* unto the LORD: [p]thy blessing *is* upon thy people. Selah.

PSALM IV.

1 David prayeth God to hear him. 2 He reproveth and exhorteth his enemies. 6 Man's happiness consisteth in God's favour.

To the chief[1] musician on [a]Neginoth, A psalm of David.

HEAR me when I call, O [b]God of my righteousness:[2] thou [c]hast enlarged me *when I was* in distress;[3] have mercy upon me,[4] and hear my prayer.

2 O ye [d]sons of men, how long *will ye turn* my[e] glory[5] into shame? *how long* [g]will ye love vanity, *and* seek after leasing? Selah.

3 But know that the LORD [h]hath set apart him that is godly for himself: the LORD [i]will hear when I call unto him.

4 Stand[j] in awe, and sin not: [k]commune with your own heart upon your bed, and be still. Selah.

5 Offer [l]the sacrifices of righteousness; and put[n] your trust in the LORD.

6 *There be* [o]many that say, Who will show us *any* good? LORD, [p]lift thou up the light of thy countenance upon us.

7 Thou [q]hast put gladness in my heart, more than in the time *that* their corn and their wine increased.

8 I [r]will both lay me down in peace, and sleep: for thou, LORD, only makest me dwell in safety.

A.M. cir. 2983.
B.C. cir. 1021.

l Is.51.9. De. 32. 36. Ps.40.17;43.1;44.26.
n Job 16.10. Ps.58.6. 1 Ki.22.24. Mi.5.1. La. 3.30.
o Is.43.11. Jonah 2.9. Pr.21.31. Ho.13.4. Re. 7.10;19.1,7,9. Ac.4.12.
p Ps.115.13;72.17;28. 9. Ep.1.3. He.6.14, 17, 18.

PSALM IV.

1 Or, *overseer.*
a Is.38.20. Ps. vi. lv. lvi.lxi. Hab.3.19.
b Jn.1.29. 2 Co. 5.21. Ps.26.1,2. Is.45.24.
2 None but Christ hath righteousness (comp. Ro. 3. 10, with 5. 17), therefore he who can call upon the 'God of his righteousness' is Christ.—*C.*
c Job 36.16. Ps.18.19; 40.1-3;116.16.
3 The psalmist has had experience of divine mercy and power exercised on his behalf. Past experience begets present confidence, and in the sequel he predicts his triumph.—*P.*
4 Or, *be gracious unto me.* Ps.57.1-3;56. 1;106.4,5.
d Ps.58.1;82.1,6.
e Ps. 3. 3; 30. 12. Job 29.20.
5 The glory of Christ was his Godhead manifested in the flesh (Jn.17.5), with the ministration of the Spirit promised to his church, 2 Co. 3. 7. The shame was the cross to which he was condemned, and which is still an object of reproach to Jew and Gentile, 1 Co. 1. 23. He. 12. 2,13, 14.—*C.*
g Jonah 2.8. Ps.2.1,2.
h 2 Ti.2.19. 2Sa.7.16. Ex. 33. 16. 2 Ch. 16. 9. Ep.1.4.
i Ps.3.4;34.4,6,15.
j Ep.4.26. Je.5.22.
k Ps.77.6;63. 6. 2 Co. 13.5.
l Ps.50.14;51.19. De. 33. 19. Mal.1.11,14. Is. 61.8.
n Ps. 2. 12; 115. 9-15. Is.26.4. Job 13.15.
o Phi. 3.18, 19; 2. 21. Ps.17.14.
p Ps. 80. 3, 7, 19; 119. 135;121.6;44.3;67.1. Nu. 6.25,26. Job 29.3.
q 1 Pe.1. 8. Is. 61.10. Ps. 43. 4, with Ju.9.27. Is.9.3. Je.48.33.
r Job 11. 18. Ps. 3. 5. Le.25.18; 26. 5. De. 12. 10;33.27-29. Eze.34.25. Ho.2.18. Fr. 3. 24.

A.M. cir. 2983.
B.C. cir. 1021.

PSALM V.

a Ps. 3. 4; 4. 1; 19. 14; 54.2.
b Ex. 14. 15. 1 Sa. 1. 13. Is.38.9-20. Ro.8.26.
c Ps.18.1-3;91. 2; 44. 4;74.12;31.14.
d Ps.130.1, 6; 55. 17; 59.16;88.13;119.147; 85. 8. Is. 26. 9. Mar. 1. 35. Mi.7.7. Hab.2.1.
1 *Arrange, set in order*, that is, the sacrifice of the altar—the true sacrifice, He. 10.16.—*C.*
2 It is implied in this verse that the author of the psalm would on each morning conduct a regular service of praise and prayer. Whether in public or private is not indicated; but the probability is that he refers to worship in his household, as in a subsequent verse there is allusion to public worship in the temple.—*P.*
e Je.44.4. Hab.1.13. Ex.15.11.
g Ps.94.20. Re.22.15.
h Ps.1.5;14.1-5. Ec. 5.4. Zec.11.8.
3 Heb. *before thine eyes.*
i Re.21.8;22.15.
4 Lies. ['Leasing' is an old and very expressive Saxon word, signifying 'falsehood.'—*P.*
j Ps. 55. 23. Pr. 6.16-18.
5 Heb. *the man of bloods and deceits.*
k Jos.24.15. He.4.16; 12.28,29. Ro.5.20, 21. 1 Ki.8.30. Ps.138.2;65.2.
6 Heb. *the temple of thy holiness.*
l Ps. 25. 5; 143. 8, 10; 86.11.
n Heb. *those which observe me,* 2 Sa. 12. 14.
o Ps.25.4;27.11.
p Ps. 36. 1-4; 12. 2, 3; 14. 1-4. Mat. 15. 18, 19. Ro.1.28-32; 3.10-18; 8. 7,8.
7 Or, *steadfastness.*
8 Heb. *in his mouth*, that is, *in the mouth of any of them.*
9 Heb. *wickednesses.*
q Ps. 140. 9, 10; 59. 5, 12, 13.
1 Or, *Make them guilty*, Ro.3.19,20;7.9.
r 1 Ki.12.28. Ps.9.15, 16;7.14-16.
2 Or, *from their counsels.*
s Is. 65. 13-16. Hab. 3.17, 18. Ps.7.16; 35. 27, 28;40.16.

PSALM V.

1 David prayeth, and professeth to be constant in prayer. 4 God favoureth not the wicked. 7 David, professing his faith, prayeth unto God to guide him, 10 to destroy his enemies, 11 and to preserve the godly.

To the chief musician upon Nehiloth, A psalm of David.

GIVE [a]ear to my words, O LORD; consider my [b]meditation.

2 Hearken unto the voice of my cry, [c]my King, and my God: for unto thee will I pray.

3 My [d]voice shalt thou hear in the morning, O LORD; in the morning will I direct[1] *my prayer* unto thee, and will look up.[2]

4 For thou *art* not a God [e]that hath pleasure in wickedness; neither [g]shall evil dwell with thee.

5 The [h]foolish shall not stand in thy [s]sight: thou hatest all workers of iniquity.

6 Thou [i]shalt destroy them that speak leasing:[4] the LORD [j]will abhor the bloody and deceitful man.[5]

7 But [k]as for me, I will come *into* thy house in the multitude of thy mercy; *and* in thy fear will I worship toward thy holy temple.[6]

8 Lead [l]me, O LORD, in thy righteousness, because of [n]mine enemies; [o]make thy way straight before my face.

9 For[p] *there is* no faithfulness[7] in their mouth;[8] their inward part *is* very [9]wickedness; their throat *is* an open sepulchre; they flatter with their tongue.

10 Destroy [q]thou them,[1] O God; [r]let them fall by their own counsels;[2] cast them out in the multitude of their transgressions; for they have rebelled against thee.

11 But [s]let all those that put their trust in

Ver. 7. This was never true of David the son of Jesse, hence it must be interpreted of the final victory of David's Lord. The parallelism of this with the second Psalm clearly refers it to Christ. *C.*——Allusion is probably made to wild beasts, to which David compares his enemies. God disarms them as one would disarm a lion or tiger, by breaking its jaw, or dashing out its teeth. *P.*

REFLECTIONS.—Whilst I here behold Jesus conflicting, crying, and conquering, and entering into his glory, let me think how often the greatest trials spring from whence we least expected them! from our own house, our near relations! How numerous the seed of the serpent; and how furious their opposition to Christ and his people! But if troubles drive us to our God and our duty, we shall be effectually protected and honourably exalted. Our cries of faith shall be speedily answered from his temple, his heaven, his Christ. Confederacies of foes unnumbered, and savage as wild beasts, shall but enhance and sweeten our salvation and blessings, and shall bring upon themselves fearful and lasting ruin.

PSALM IV. Ver. 6. *Who will show us.* The word *us* here discovers the believing church offering the only 'sacrifices of righteousness,' a confident reliance upon the finished work and gracious countenance of her Lord, 2 Co. 4.6; He. 9. 23; 1 Pe. 2. 5. *C.*

REFLECTIONS.—In every distress God is a safe refuge to flee to: and the more of his kindness we have experienced, the more bold ought to be our prayers and the stronger our faith. But base is the work, contemptible the character, and vile the desires of the wicked, when compared with those of the godly. What fear of God and his judgments, what serious self-examination, what cordial dedication to God through Christ, are necessary in them that are saved! The wishes of the unregenerate are senseless and sensual: but exalted are the desires, readily granted the felicity, and unmoved the rest of them who firmly believe.

PSALM V. Ver. 1. Who speaks these words, David or some other? whosoever he be, it appears from ver. 12 that his confidence lies in his being *righteous.* Now there is none righteous but Christ (comp. Ro. 3. 10; 1 Jn. 2. 1), the conclusion is therefore inevitable: this is a prayer of Christ, the Holy Spirit speaking by the prophet, foreshowing to the church how he *would* pray, as the same Spirit speaking in the evangelists has recorded for the church how he *did* pray. See especially Jn. xvii. *C.*

Ver. 7. The Hebrew word here translated 'temple' was applied to the *sanctuary* before Solomon's temple was built. Thus it is said Eli sat 'by a post of the temple of the Lord' at Shiloh, 1 Sa. 1. 9. Consequently the use of this word cannot be adduced as a proof that David was not the author of the psalm. *P.*

Ver. 10. Such petitions against enemies frequently occurring in the psalm have afforded occasion for infidels to object, and even for believers to plead a difference between the spirit of the Jewish and Christian dispensations. With those who sit in the 'seat of the scorner' we may not here plead, but with believers we must. 1. To them we say, By whom spake the prophets of old? by the Holy Ghost (2 Pe. 1. 22), never by their own spirit. 2. Does not God punish rebellious sinners according to this word? Certainly. Then does God ever *do* what the holiest may not entreat him to do? 3. Do not men, the very objectors, appeal to courts of law for redress of injuries? And may not Christ then appeal to his Father for the destruction of the works of the devil? 1 Jn. 3. 8. *C.*

REFLECTIONS.—Meditation is the director, fervour the life, faith the presenter, and a reconciled God in Christ, as our own, the object, the morning a principal season, and patient expectation the attendant of every true prayer. And while the holiness, justice, and mercy of God in Christ demand our sincerity, and encourage our boldness in approaching to his throne of grace, the wickedness and danger of sinners, the number and mischievous intentions of our enemies, the difficulty of our duty, and our need of immediate blessings, should keep us firmly in the exercise. Never should our brethren of mankind, and especially our fellow-saints, lack our warm remembrance in it: and from the prayer of faith we may confidently expect the answer of peace. But, alas! miserable are the sinners, the rebels, against God and his Christ! How universal their corruption of heart—of tongue—of practice! How fearful the ruin that awaits them! But their contrivances to dishonour Jesus Christ, and afflict his people, or to deliver themselves, shall be made the means of their aggravated woe.

PSALM VI. Ver. 1. *Rebuke me.* There is here but one speaker, and that he is Christ will appear from the quotation of ver. 8 in Mat. 7. 23. Let the candid and pious student of Scripture also consult He. 5. 7. *C.*

Ver. 5. These words are literal facts; God is not remembered by the *dead*—the dead bodies that lie in the *grave*, which very *death* and *grave* Christ came to conquer and destroy, He. 13. 14; 1 Co. 15. 57. *C.*

Ver. 7. There is great graphic power, and at the same time deep pathos, in this verse. The eye wasted away—its fire, and brightness, and beauty extinguished by continuous weeping. Dimness as of age creeping over it. All this arising from the unceasing persecutions of his enemies. *P.*

REFLECTIONS.—Not even kings are exempted from the common miseries of life! But it is hard to support under sore sickness and a wounded spirit at once: and yet God's dearest saints have often the largest shares of them. There is no relief under such a burden but to cast it on God. And when our sins have been great so must be our sorrow. The removal of the sense of God's displeasure must be more earnestly desired, than abatement of or relief from our sufferings. And if God ever regard us, it is neither for our righteousness, nor for our sorrows or sufferings, but for his mercy in Christ. However desirable it is to be with Christ in heaven, saints are to wish for life, while it is for the glory of God and the good of his church. But quickly they who sow in tears shall reap in joy. And if God answer one prayer, he will answer all that follow in faith. He is the same Hearer of prayer yesterday, today, and for ever. But close fellowship with God really draws the saints from delight in or intimacy with the wicked: and quick and inevitable ruin awaits their impenitent injurers.

thee rejoice: let them ever shout for joy, because thou defendest them:[3] let them also that love thy name be joyful in thee.

12 For thou, LORD, [t]wilt bless the righteous; with favour wilt thou compass him[4] as *with* a shield.

PSALM VI.

1 *David's complaint in his sickness.* 8 *By faith he triumpheth over his enemies.*

To the chief musician on Neginoth upon Sheminith, A psalm of David.

O LORD,[b] rebuke me not in thine anger, neither chasten me in thy [c]hot displeasure.

2 Have mercy upon me, O LORD; for I *am* weak:[d] O LORD, [e]heal me; for [f]my bones are vexed.[1]

3 My [g]soul is also sore vexed: but thou, O LORD, how long?

4 Return, O LORD, [h]deliver my soul: oh save me 'for thy mercies' sake.

5 For[i] in death *there is* no remembrance of thee: in the grave who shall give thee thanks?

6 I[k] am weary with my groaning; all the [l]night[2] make I my bed to swim; I water my couch with my tears.

7 Mine[m] eye is consumed because of grief; it waxeth old because of all mine enemies.

8 Depart[o] from me, all ye workers of iniquity; for the LORD hath [p]heard the voice of my weeping.

9 The[q] LORD hath heard my supplication; the LORD will receive my prayer.[3]

10 Let[r] all mine enemies be ashamed and sore vexed:[4] let them return *and* be ashamed suddenly.

PSALM VII.

1 *David prayeth against the malice of his enemies, professing his innocence.* 10 *By faith he seeth his defence, and the destruction of his enemies.*

[a]Shiggaion of David, which he sang unto the LORD, concerning the words[1] of [b]Cush the Benjamite.

O LORD[c] my God, in thee do I put my trust: save me from all them that persecute me, and deliver me:

2 Lest he [d]tear my soul like a lion, rending *it* in pieces, while *there is* none to deliver.[2]

3 O LORD my God, [e]if I have done this; if there be iniquity in my hands;

4 If I have rewarded evil unto him that was at peace with me; (yea, [g]I have delivered him that without cause is mine enemy;)[3]

A.M. cir. 2983.
B.C. cir. 1021.

3 Heb. *thou covered est over* or *protectest them.*
t Ps.112.1; 128. 1; 29. 11; 115. 12–15.
4 Heb. *crown him,* Ps.32.10. Zec.2.5.

PSALM VI.

a Or, *upon the eighth,* 1 Ch.15.21. Ps. 12. title.
b Ps. 38. 1. Je.10.24. He. 12. 6. Re.3. 19. Is. 54.8,9; 27.8,9. 2 Sa.7.14.
c Ps.2.5.
d Ps.38.8; 88.4.
e Ho.6.1. Job5.18,19. Ex.15.26.
f Job 33.19. Ps.38.2–8; 51.8.
1 The writer was in deep distress. There was sorrow on his heart, and his body was wasted with disease or suffering. His very bones were pained. The word 'vexed' is now applied almost exclusively to mental distress; in former times it had a wider range of meaning, and was applied to any kind of suffering, mental or bodily.—*P.*
g Ps.22.14; 42.4, 5; 77. 2–9. Mat.26.38.
h Is.38.17. Ps. 40. 1–3; 116.1–7; 86.13, 15.
i Ep.2.7, 8.
j Ps.30.9; 88. 11; 115. 17. Is.38.18.
k Ps.77.2–9; 88.1–18. La.1.16; 2.11, 18, 19; 3. 48–50.
l Job 7.3.
2 Or, *every night.*
m Ps.31.9; 38.10. Job 17.7. La.2.11; 5.17.
o Ps.4. 2, 4; 119. 115; 139.19. Lu.13.27.
p Ps.145.18; 31.22; 40. 1, 2. Da.9.21–23.
q Ps.66.19; 116.1; 55. 16; 56.13; 118. 5; 120. 1; 34.4, 6.
3 If not with the eye of sense, yet with the ever-brightening eye of faith and hope, the psalmist sees his ultimate triumph. 'The Lord *hath* heard,' and in his own time he will answer.—*P.*
r Ps.7.6; 9. 3; 28.4; 35. 26; 40. 14, 15; 109. 29; 56. 9; 57. 13.
4 See note on Ps. 5. 10.—*C.*

PSALM VII.

B.C. cir. 1058.
a 2 Sa.xvi.
1 Or, *business.*
b Hab.3.1.
c Ps.13.5; 42.11; 56.1; 57. 1; 54. 1. 2 Co. 1. 10. Job13.15. Is. 50.10.
d Pr.19.12. Is. 38.13. Ps.35.15, 16; 50.22.
2 Heb. *not a deliverer.*
e Job xxxi.; 16. 17–19. Ac.23.1; 24.16. Ps. 59.3. 2 Co.1.12. 2 Sa.16. 7, 8.
g 1 Sa.24.7; 26.10, 17; 23. 5, 12. Ro. 12. 17, 19–21.
3 David may here perhaps refer to one of those romantic incidents recorded of him when a fugitive. He saved Saul's life when he had him completely in his power. This was a sufficient refutation of the calumnious charge which, it appears, had now been brought against him. —*P.*

A.M. cir. 2946.
B.C. cir. 1058.

h Is.10.6. Mal.4.1, 3.
i Job 10.9; 31. 21, 22. Ho.9.11. Pr.10.7.
4 See note on Ps. 3. 2.—*C.*
j Ps.94.1, 2; 35. 1; 44. 23, 26; 12.5; 73.20. Is. 3. 13, 14; 13.10; 26.21; 51.9. Ex. 3. 7, 8.
5 See note on Ps. 5. 10.—*C.*
k Ps.48.11; 58.10, 11. Re.16.5; 18. 20; 19.1–8; 11.17, 18.
l Is. 30. 28. Ps. 48. 1, 75.7, 8.
6 Resume the judgment-seat, a prayer equivalent to that of the church (Re. 22. 20), 'Even so, come, Lord Jesus!'—*C.*
n Ps.26.1; 35. 24; 43.1; 18.20, 24; 37.2, 3. 1 Sa.24. 11.
7 There is no presumption here. The psalmist makes no allusion to his personal religion, or his righteousness in the sight of God. A specific charge had been brought against him. He was conscious of his innocence and perfect integrity in so far as it was concerned.—*P.*
o Ps. 58. 6; 50. 16–22; 63.11.
p 2 Sa.7.16. 1 Pe.5.10; 1.5. Jude 1.
q 1 Sa.16.7. 1 Ch.28. 9. Ps.139.1. Je.11.20; 17. 10; 20.12. Re.2.23.
r Ge.15.1. Ps. 89.18; 91.1–4; 84.11. Pr.11.20.
8 Heb. *My buckler is upon God.*
s Ps. 35. 1; 43. 1; 140. 12, 13. De.32.36.
9 Or, *God is a righteous judge.*
t Ps.5.4, 5; 50. 16–22. Zec.12.8. Is.48.22.
u Mat.3.10.
v De.32.41. Eze. 21. 9–11. Is.34.6; 59.17, 18; 13.5.
x De.32.23, 24. Ps.45. 5. Job xviii. xx. xxii.
y Job 15.35. Is. 59.4. Ja.1.15.
1 Heb. *He hath digged a pit.*
z Ps.9.15, 16; 140. 9–11; 10.2; 109.17, 18. Pr.5. 22; 26. 27. Ec.10.8. Es. vii. ix. 1 Sa.26.10.
a Ps. 58. 10; 35. 28. Re.16.5; 19.1, 2. Ex. xv.

PSALM VIII.

B.C. cir. 1060.
a Ps. lxxxi.; 84. title, with 1 Sa.xvii.
b Ex. 34.6, 7. De. 28. 58. Is.12.4, 5. Ps.72.17–19; 113.4–6; 148.13. Phi. 2.9–11.
c Mat. 21. 16; 11. 25; 19.14. 1 Co.1.26, 27.
1 Heb. *founded.*
d Ps.44.16; 46.10. Re. 6.12–17; 19.11–21.
e Ps. 111. 2; 19. 1–6. Job 36.24. Ge.2.1.
2 The pure air and cloudless sky of Palestine make the starry heaven a scene of wondrous beauty and glory. We cannot in this country form any just conception of the brilliancy of the stars and the soft mellow radiance of the moon. David was a shepherd. During the mild nights of summer he watched his flocks in the wilderness of Judah. How natural then that he, in these noble odes, should celebrate the splendour of the starry skies!—*P.*

5 Let the enemy persecute my soul, and take *it;* yea, let him [h]tread down my life upon the earth, and lay [i]mine honour in the dust. [4]Selah.

6 Arise,[j] O LORD, in thine anger; lift up thyself because of the rage of mine enemies: and awake for me *to* the judgment *that* thou hast commanded.[5]

7 So [k]shall the congregation of the people compass thee about: for their sakes therefore [l]return thou on high.[6]

8 The LORD shall judge the people: [m]judge me, O LORD, according to my righteousness, and according to mine integrity *that is* in me.[7]

9 Oh[o] let the wickedness of the wicked come to an end; but [p]establish the just: [q]for the righteous God trieth the hearts and reins.

10 My [r]defence *is* of God,[8] which saveth the upright in heart.

11 God [s]judgeth the righteous,[9] and [t]God is angry *with the wicked* every day.

12 If[u] he turn not, he will [v]whet his sword; he hath bent his bow, and made it ready.

13 He hath also prepared for him the instruments of death; he [x]ordaineth his arrows against the persecutors.

14 Behold,[y] he travaileth with iniquity, and hath conceived mischief, and brought forth falsehood.

15 He made a pit,[1] and digged it, [z]and is fallen into the ditch *which* he made.

16 His mischief shall return upon his own head, and his violent dealing shall come down upon his own pate.

17 I[a] will praise the LORD according to his righteousness; and will sing praise to the name of the LORD most high.

PSALM VIII.

God's glory is magnified by his works, and by his love to man.

To the chief musician upon [a]Gittith, A psalm of David.

O LORD our Lord, [b]how excellent *is* thy name in all the earth! who hast set thy glory above the heavens.

2 Out[c] of the mouth of babes and sucklings hast thou ordained[1] strength because of thine enemies, that thou mightest [d]still the enemy and the avenger.

3 When I [e]consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained;[2]

PSALM VII. *Title.* It ought not to be forgotten that the superscriptions or titles prefixed to many of the Psalms are not inspired. They are generally of late date, and of questionable authenticity. Nothing is known of Cush the Benjamite. He is not mentioned elsewhere; but he may possibly have been one of the followers of Saul when he was in pursuit of David amid the wilds and strongholds of the desert. *P.*

Ver. 1. The denial of all iniquity, ver. 3, and the appeal to judgment on the ground of righteousness and integrity (ver. 8–11), could never have proceeded from David the son of Jesse. He confessed his sin, and the Holy Spirit hath recorded that sin for our warning, and his repentance and pardon for our encouragement. But the denial of iniquity, and the appeal to judgment on the ground of righteousness, are most becoming in David's Lord (Mat. 22. 43), who knew no sin. These verses, therefore, being absolutely untrue of David, but perfectly true of Christ, we have the utmost evidence that this psalm is a prayer of Christ. *C.*

Ver. 13. This and the following verses point to an individual. But who is he? Read Ac. 1. 16, 20; Ps. 69. 25, and then say, is not this also a description of the arch-traitor, the prototype of all the subsequent persecutors of Christ and his church—in principle, covetousness; in practice, cruelty; and in the end, self-destruction. *C.*

Ver. 16. These verses contain a graphic description of the career of the wicked man. Sin of every form and character is recklessly indulged in. One is reminded by it of Paul's statements in the epistle to the Romans. *P.*

REFLECTIONS.—While I here behold the much persecuted and reproached Jesus, in his perfect righteousness, justified by his Father, and avenged of all his enemies, Jewish, heathen, &c., let me think how complete and commodious a refuge God is in every time of trouble! In him we can never be moved. However brutish and cruel our enemies be, while we are weak we are strong. No false accusation need dismay us while we are conscious of our innocence, and have a gracious God to appeal to as our witness and judge. There is no kindness which he will not grant for the benefit of his people and the glory of his own perfections. Out of his favour there is no safety, and in it there is no danger. If he justify us none dare accuse or condemn us. And though our faith is truly a condition of our eternal happiness, dreadful and unavoidable is the ruin of impenitent sinners. Their contrivances and attempts against the godly shall prove means of their own destruction; when they who trusted in the Lord, and kept his way, triumph in notes of endless praise.

PSALM VIII. Ver. 1. The excellence of the *name* of God

4 What[g] *is* man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him?

5 For[h] thou hast made him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honour.

6 Thou[i] madest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands; thou hast put all *things* under his feet:

7 All sheep and oxen,[3] yea, and the beasts of the field;[4]

8 The fowl of the air, and the fish of the sea, *and whatsoever* passeth through the paths of the seas.

9 O LORD our Lord, [j]how excellent *is* thy name in all the earth!

PSALM IX.

1 *David praiseth God for executing of judgment.* 11 *He inciteth others to praise him.* 13 *He prayeth that he may have cause to praise him.*

To the chief musician upon Muth-labben, A psalm of David.

I WILL[a] praise *thee*, O LORD, with [b]my whole heart: I will show forth all thy marvellous works.

2 I will be glad and rejoice in thee: I will sing praise to thy name, [c]O thou most High.

3 When mine enemies are turned back, [d]they shall fall and perish at thy presence.

4 For thou hast [e]maintained my right[1] and my cause; thou satest in the throne judging right.[2]

5 Thou hast [f]rebuked the heathen, thou hast destroyed the wicked, thou hast put out their name for ever and ever.

6 O thou enemy, [h]destructions are come to a perpetual end:[3] and [i]thou hast destroyed cities; their memorial is perished with them.[4]

7 But[j] the LORD shall endure for ever: [k]he hath prepared his throne for judgment;

8 And[l] he shall judge the world in righteousness, he shall minister judgment to the people in uprightness.

9 The[m] LORD also will be a refuge[5] for the oppressed, a refuge in times of trouble.

10 And they that [o]know thy name will put their trust in thee: for thou, LORD, [p]hast not forsaken them that seek thee.

11 Sing praises to the LORD, which [q]dwelleth in Zion: declare among the people his doings.

12 When[r] he maketh inquisition for blood, he remembereth them: he [s]forgetteth not the cry of the humble.[6]

13 Have mercy upon me, O LORD: [t]consider my trouble *which I suffer* of them that hate me, thou that [u]liftest me up from the gates of death;

14 That[v] I may show forth all thy praise in the gates of the daughter of Zion: I will rejoice in thy salvation.

15 The[x] heathen are sunk down in the pit *that* they made: in the net which they hid is their own foot taken.

16 The [y]LORD is known *by* the judgment *which* he executeth: [z]the wicked is snared in the work of his own hands. [a]Haggaion.[7] Selah.

17 The [b]wicked shall be turned into [8]hell, *and* all the nations that forget God.

18 For[c] the needy shall not alway be forgotten: the expectation of the poor shall *not* perish for ever.

19 Arise,[d] O LORD; let not man prevail: let the heathen be judged in thy sight.

20 Put[e] them in fear, O LORD; *that* the nations may know themselves *to be but* men. Selah.

PSALM X.

1 *David complaineth to God of the outrages of the wicked.* 12 *He prayeth for redress.* 16 *He professeth his confidence.*

WHY standest[a] thou afar off, O LORD? *why* hidest thou *thyself* in times of trouble?

A.M. cir. 2044.
B.C. cir. 1010.

g Job 7.17. Ps.144.3; 80.17. He.2.6–9. Is. 40. 17;64.6. Da.7.13.

h Ge.1.26–29;2.7–25. He.2.7–9.1 Pe.1.20,21. Phi.2.6–11.

i Ge. 1. 28. Mat. 11. 27; 28. 18. 1 Co. 15. 27. Ep.1.20–22. 1 Pe. 3.22. He.1.2. Jn.3.35;17.2.

3 Heb. *Flocks and oxen all of them.* All animals, wild and tame.

4 Here again the reminiscences of shepherd life show themselves. The sheep and the oxen of the flocks and herds were subject to man; and even the wild beasts which preyed upon the flocks, but which the shepherd by his watchfulness and courage was able to drive away.—*P.*

j Ps.35.10; 36.7; 86.8; 104.24;72.17–19. Ex.15. 10. De.32.31;33.26. Job 11.7. Zec.9.17.

PSALM IX.

B.C. cir. 1060 or 1020.

a Ps.139.14;7.17; 13. 5, 6; 27.6; 30. 11; 34. 1–4; 61. –cvii.72.18,19. Re. 15.3,4;19.1–9. Col.3.16.

b Ps.86.11,12; 111. 1; 138.1,2.

c 1 Ti.1. 17; 6. 15, 16. Is.57.15. Ps.56.2; 83.18. Ro.9.5.

d Ps.68.1,2. Re.6.12–17;19.11–21.2 Th.2.8,9.

e 1 Sa. xvi.–xviii. 2 Sa.ii.v.viii.x. xviii. xx. xxi.

1 Heb. *thou hast made my judgment.*

2 Heb. *in righteousness.*

f 2 Sa. v. viii. x. Ps. 110.5–7;68.30. Pr.10.7.

h Ex. 14. 13. Je. 51. 64. Na. 1. 9. Re. 14. 8. Eze.7.2–15.

3 Or, *The destructions of the enemy are come to a perpetual end: and* their *cities hast thou destroyed,* &c.

i 2 Ki. 19. 25. Is. 10. 13;14.4–6. Je.25.9,11.

4 Sodom and Gomorrah, Nineveh, Babylon, Tyre, and many other places, afford examples of cities, of which sin has left scarce any memorial beyond a name.—*C.*

j Ps.90.2; 102. 24, 46. He.13.8.

k Ps. 7. 6; 75.7; 76. 9; 89.14.

l Re.20.12,13. Ps.96. 13;98.9;50.6. Ac.17.31.

A.M. cir. 2944 or 2984.
B.C. cir. 1060 or 1020.

m Ps.37.29;46.1;91.2. Is.4.6;25.4; 32.2. He.6. 18;4.16.

5 Heb. *an high place.*

o Pr.18.10. Jn.17.3;1. 14.1 Jn.5.20. Ps. 42. 11; 43.5.2 Co.4.6.2 Ti.1.12.

p 2 Co.1.10. Is. 46.3, 4;49.14,15;54.8–10. He. 13.5. Je.32.40.

q Ps.78.68,69;132.13, 14. Re.14.1;21.3.

r Ge.9.5. Je.2.34. Re. 16.6,19;18.24.

s Ps.10.17;22.24;102. 17. Is.44.21.

6 Or, *afflicted.*

t La.1.11;3.50. Ex.2. 23–25;3.7. Ps.25.20;119. 132,153.

u 2 Co.1.10. Ps.70.5; 107.18. Is.38.16,17.

v Ps.ciii.–cviii. cxlv. –cl. cxvi.; 138.1; 22. 22, 25;35.18;57.9;109.30.

x Ps.7.15,16;57.6;94. 23. Pr.5.22;22.8;26.27.

y Ps.58.10,11; 83.13–18; 46.10; 48.10,11. Ex. 9.16.

z Ps.7.15, 16; 37. 15; 140.9. Es.iii. vii. ix.

a A most serious meditation, Ps. 19. 14; 92.3.

7 Eminent authorities understand by this word a musical pause. Its location in the text, where it stands under all the authority of the Holy Spirit, renders such an interpretation very improbable, as directed but to one class of persons. It may be translated *solemn meditation*, a sense applicable to all.—*C.*

b Is. 3. 11. Ps. 50. 22. Ro. 2. 8, 9. 2 Th.1.7–9. Mat.24.11–46.

8 The Hebrew word rendered 'hell' is *sheól*; it is equivalent to the Greek *hades*, and signifies simply 'the state of death.' It is not a *place* but a *state*. Consequently the statement here made that 'the wicked shall be turned into hell,' is merely an execution of the divine curse against sin.—*P.*

c Is. 41. 17. Ps. 12. 5; 72.4, 12–14; 102. 17, 20; 109.31.

d Is. 51. 9; 42. 13, 14. Ps.44.23–26;7.6,8. Zep. 3.8.

e Ps. 83. 13–18. Eze. 28.2,9. Is.31.3. Re.6.12 –17;18.10,15,17.

PSALM X.

B.C. cir. 1058.

a Ps.44.24;13.1–3;22. 1;27.9;30.7; 102.2. Is. 8.17;45.15;64.1,2.

always appears in its full development of such grace as the believer requires under his peculiar circumstances. Thus to Abraham (Ge. 17. 1) it was 'the Almighty God,' when his defenceless state constantly suggested the need of protection. Again to Moses in the solitudes of Horeb (Ex. 3. 14) it was 'I AM,' when the changes of years suggested the excellence of an unchanging God. But to that same Moses, in the midst of the 'thousands of Israel,' the name is expanded, as it were, to embrace all the necessities of the time, and assure the faith of Moses in discharge of his arduous duties, Ex. 34. 6, 7. And when, in the fulness of the time, God hath sent forth his Son (Ga. 4. 4), and the Spirit of his Son (Ga. 4. 6), the excellence of his name is still further manifested in the baptismal title and the apostolical benediction, revealing and glorifying Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, Mat. 28. 19; 2 Co. 13. 14. *C.*

Ver. 5. *A little lower than the angels.* The quotation of ver. 2 by our Lord, Mat. 11. 25; He. 2. 6, 7, evidences, beyond all doubt, that it is a description of Christ. *C.*

REFLECTIONS.—How glorious is the name of our exalted IMMANUEL, and of God in him! Quickly shall his kingdom fill both heaven and earth, however despicable its oracles, ordinances, and professors now appear to a carnal world. By the weakest instruments he accomplishes his greatest purposes, displays his power and grace, and treads and triumphs over Satan and his votaries. The glories of nature, but especially the graces of redemption, should continually lead our hearts to the contemplation of their glorious Author. How astonishing is it to see so many creatures subjected to miserable man; and especially to behold them all subjected to the once lowly Christ!

PSALM IX. Ver. 1. Of whom the Spirit here speaks, will be evident from considering first, that Ro. 15. 9 ascribes Ps. 18. 2 to Christ. This is the key of the interpretation. Next, with Ps. 18. 49, compare Ps. 57. 9; 35. 13, then all with this opening verse ascribing praise to Jehovah with the *whole heart*, and with ver. 14, proposing to show forth 'all his praise,' and it will be impossible to deny that the psalm is prophetically spoken in the person of Christ. *C.*

REFLECTIONS.—All success granted by God to us ought to animate us to the most hearty praises and thanksgiving for that and all other deliverances. And while prosperity renders us thankful, our chief joy must be in the God of our mercies. It is himself, as the most High in Christ, that is our infallible security against fear or danger. And though the wicked prosper for a time, they are marked for lasting destruction. And when God begins he will make an end. Thrice happy are they, however poor and oppressed, who have this God of Jacob, this high Sovereign, this righteous Judge for the object of their knowledge and trust! The more they know of him the more they will trust in him. Sweet shall be their songs of deliverance in the church in the ordinances below, but especially in the heavenly Zion above. But while God remembers them in mercy, and grants their long waited for requests, fearfully will he manifest his holiness, equity, and power in the temporal and eternal ruin of his and their wicked enemies. But ought we not here chiefly to contemplate, with joy and thankfulness, the blessings of redemption, and the victories of our Redeemer over sin, death, and hell, Jews, heathens, and antichristians, and all other incorrigible opposers; and to believe that we through him shall be more than conquerors!

PSALM X. Ver. 1. Read Ps. 22. 1, 18, which the Holy Spirit expressly applies to Christ, then compare the whole of Ps. xxii. with Ps. x., and their perfect parallelism will clearly show that this psalm is a description of Christ cruelly persecuted by Herod, ungratefully betrayed by Judas, impiously denounced by Caiaphas, and unjustly condemned by Pilate. *C.*

Ver. 9. *The poor*, that is, the poor in spirit, whose hearts have been emptied of all vanity and self-righteousness, Mat. 5. 3. *C.*

Ver. 10. The true meaning of this verse seems to be 'crushed, he sinks down; the poor *yuan* falleth under (the power of) the mighty.' The reference is not to oppressor, but to the oppressed; not to the tyrant, but the victim. *P.*——*Strong ones.* Literally exemplified in that affected humility with which the Inquisition was wont to deliver the martyrs of truth to the secular arm, and hypocritically to commend her victims to mercy. *C.*

Ver. 12. Seing the tyranny and power of the wicked, and the helplessness of the oppressed, the psalmist appeals to God. He alone, infinite in wisdom and power, can succour and save the poor and needy. *P.*

Ver. 15. The appeal is here made to God as a righteous ruler. It is *justice* and not *vengeance* that the writer asks. There is nothing either harsh or cruel in justice. *P.*

Ver. 16. *Heathen are perished out of his land.* This expression refers the fulfilment of the psalm to that time when the kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ, Re. 11. 15, and which shall eventuate in that glorious day, when 'Babylon shall be thrown down, and shall be found no more at all,' Re. 19. 21. *C.*

REFLECTIONS.—What a heavy burden to an exercised saint are the hidings and frowns of his God! and the greatest saints undergo the severest trials of their faith. Men's persecutions, or Satan's temptations, often unite with God's absence to distress the soul. Behold into what dreadful monsters sin has transformed men—proud—persecutors—boasters—covetous—prayerless—careless of God and religion—disobedient—impenitent—insolent—secure—profane—treacherous—heretical—murderous—hypocritical—blasphemous! But their wickedness is all before the Lord. And to revenge their affronting of himself, to

2 The [b]wicked in *his* pride doth persecute[1] the poor: [c]let them[2] be taken in the devices that they have imagined.[3]

3 For the wicked [d]boasteth of his heart's[4] desire, and [e]blesseth the covetous, *whom* the LORD [5]abhorreth.[6]

4 The wicked, [g]through the pride of his countenance, will not seek *after God:* [h]God *is* not in all his thoughts.

5 His[i] ways are always grievous; thy judgments *are* [j]far above out of his sight: *as for* all his enemies, he [k]puffeth at them.

6 He hath said in his heart, [l]I shall not be moved: for *I shall* never[7] *be* in adversity.

7 His[m] mouth is full of cursing, and deceit,[8] and fraud: under his tongue[9] *is* mischief[1] and vanity.[2]

8 He [o]sitteth in the lurking places of the villages; in the secret places doth he murder the innocent: his eyes are privily set[3] against the poor.

9 He lieth in wait secretly[4] as a lion in his den: he lieth in wait to catch the poor: he doth catch the poor, when he draweth him into his net.

10 He croucheth,[5] *and* humbleth himself, that the poor may fall by his strong ones.[6]

11 He [p]hath said in his heart, [q]God hath forgotten: he hideth his face; he will never see *it.*

12 Arise, O LORD; O God, [r]lift up thine hand: forget not the humble.[7]

13 Wherefore[s] doth the wicked contemn God? he hath said in his heart, Thou wilt not require[t] *it.*

14 Thou [u]hast seen *it;* for thou beholdest mischief and spite, to requite *it* with thy hand: the poor committeth[8] himself unto thee; thou art the [v]helper of the fatherless.

15 Break[w] thou the arm of the wicked and the evil *man:* [y]seek out his wickedness *till* thou find none.

16 The[z] LORD *is* King for ever and ever: the heathen [a]are perished out of his land.

17 LORD, [b]thou hast heard the desire of the humble: thou wilt prepare[9] their heart, [c]thou wilt cause thine ear to hear;

18 To [d]judge the fatherless and the oppressed, that the [e]man of the earth may no more oppress.[1]

PSALM XI.

1 *David encourageth himself in God against his enemies.* 4 *The providence and justice of God.*

To the chief musician, *A psalm* of David.

IN the [a]LORD put I my trust: [b]how say ye to my soul, Flee *as* a bird to your mountain?

A.M. cir. 2946. B.C. cir. 1058.

b Ex.18.11.De.32.27. Is.10.12,13.

1 Heb. *In the pride of the wicked he doth persecute.*

c Ps.7.16; 9.16. Pr.5. 22.

2 That is, the wicked and covetous, ver. 3.—*C.*

3 They attempt to wrong and defraud those who, from mental affliction, bodily suffering, or helpless social condition, are at the mercy of others. 'Let them be taken (exposed and entrapped) in the very schemes which they had devised.'—*P.*

d Ps. 35.21,25; 36.2,3; 52.7; 73.8,9.

4 Heb. *soul's.*

e Pr. 28. 4, with Col. 3.5.

5 Or, *the covetous blesseth* himself, *he abhorreth the LORD.*

6 The wicked man boasts in the gratification of his own lusts and passions. When he prospers in business he blesses or congratulates himself—his own plans, energy, and success; and he despises God.—*P.*

g Ex. 5. 2. Je. 2. 31. Zep.3.2.

h Or, *all his thoughts are,* There is *no God,* Ps.14.1; 53. 1.1Jo.2.12.

i Ps.36.1–4.Ro.3.14–17.

j Is.5.19; 1. 5; 22. 12, 13; 28.15; 26. 11; 42. 25. 1Io.4.6;7.9.

k Ps.12. 5. Pr. 29. 8. Mal.1.13.

l Is.47.8. Re. 18.7. 1 Th.5.3.

7 Heb. *unto generation and generation.*

m Ro.3.14.Ps.5.9;36. 3.Job 20.13.

8 Heb. *deceits.*

9 *Under his tongue,* that is, under the keeping of his tongue, and ready, on occasion, to be brought forth.—*C.*

1 Or, *iniquity.*

2 In allusion, no doubt, to the serpent, whose deadly poison lies under the fang by which it inflicts the wound.—*P.*

n Pr.1.11,12. Hab.3. 14.Ps.17.11.Mi.7.2.

3 Heb. *hide themselves.*

4 Heb. *in the secret places.*

5 Heb. *he breaketh himself.*

6 Or, *into his strong parts.*

p Ps. 94.7; 64. 5. Job 22.13.Ez.8.12;9.9.

q Ec.8.11.

r Ps.3.7;7.6; 9.12,19. Ex.7.5.Is.5.25;9.12;33. 10.Mi.5.9.

7 Or, *afflicted.*

s Ps.74.10,18; 73.8,9. Ex.5.2.

t Ps. 9. 12. Ec.12. 14. Pr.11.21.Ga.6.7.

u He.4.13. Pr.11.31. Je.16.17,18;25.14. Eze. 7.3.8

8 Heb. *leaveth.*

v Ps.68.5; 146.9. Ho. 14.3.

w Ps.37.17. Job 38.15. Eze.30.21;31.17.

y 2 Ki.21. 12–15. Ps. 7.9. Job 20.27.Ro.1.18.

z Ps. 29. 10; 145. 13; 146.10. Je.10.10. La. 5. 19.Da.4.34; 6.26. 1 Ti. 1.17;6.15,16.

a Ex.23.27. Ps. 44.2, 3;78.55.

b ver. 12,14. Ps. 9.12, 18. Lu. 26.41. 2 Ch. 34. 27. Ja.4.10.1 Pe.5.5.

9 Or, *establish.*

c Ps.102.17. Is.65.24.

d Is.11.4.ver.14; Ps. 94.1,2. Lu.18.1–7.

e Ps.17.14. Phi. 3.18, 19. Re.1.7. Lu.17.8;12. 16–21.

1 Or, *terrify.*

PSALM XI.

a 2 Ti.1.12. Is.26.3,4. Ps.31.14.Job13.15.No. 4.18.

b 1 Sa. 26. 19; 23. 14; 27.1;21.11;22.1.

A.M. cir. 2946. B.C. cir. 1058.

c Ps.64.2–4;57.4,6;59. 3;10.2–10.

1 Heb. *in darkness.*

2 If it be true, as the word of God testifies, that 'the heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked' (Je. 17. 9; see also Ro. 3. 10, 11, 19), then must this be a description of Christ, 'the upright in heart,' in the days of his flesh: none else can claim that character.—*C.*

d 2 Ti.2.19. Ps. 75.3; 82.5;83.1,2.

e Hab.2.20. Is. 66.1. Zec.2.13.Ps.115.3.

g He.4.13. Je. 23.24; 17.10. Ps.34. 15, 16; 66. 7;7.9;17.2.

h Ps.17.3; 26. 1; 139. 23.1 Pe.1.7.Ja.1.12.

i Ps.5.4,5;10.3.Ro.1. 30.Pr.6.16–19.

j Ge.19.24. Job 18.5–21;20.5–29;27.13–23;22. 10. Is. 8. 14; 24. 17, 18. Eze.38.22.

3 Or, *hot burning coals.*

4 Or, *a burning tempest.*

k Ps.75.8.Eze.23.33, 34, with Ge.43.34. 1 Sa. 1.4;9.24.

l Ge.18.25. De. 32.4. Ps.45.7.

m Ps.5.12;34. 15. Is. 62.5. Zep.3.17.2 Ch.16. 9.

PSALM XII.

a Or, *upon the eighth,* Ps. 6. title. 1 Ch.15.21.

1 Or, *save.*

b Is.57.1. Mi. 7. 1, 2. Ge.6.12. Ps.14.1–4;4.2.

c Ps.10.7; 5.9;36.1–4; 28.3. Je.9.3–6.

2 Heb. *an heart and an heart.*

d 1 Sa.2.3. Job 32.22. Da.8.25;7 8,25. Pr.6.10 –19. Is. xxxvi.–xxvii.; 54.17. Jude 15,16.

3 Heb. *great things.*

e Ex.15.2;5.2. Ps.73. 8,9. Je.2.31.

4 Heb. *are with us.*

g Ex.2.23–25; 3. 7, 8. Ps. 7.9; 9. 12; 10.12;25.4. Lu.18.7,8.Mi.7.9,10.

5 Or, *would ensnare him.*

h 2 Sa.22.31. Ps.19.9; 18.30;119.140. Pr.30.5.

i Ps.16.1;12.7,8. Is. 27.3.1 Pe.1.5. Jude 1.

6 Heb. *him,* that is, *every one of them.*

j Ho.5.11. Mi. 6. 16. Pr.29.2, 12. Mal. 3. 15, 16.

7 Heb. *the vilest of the sons of men are exalted.*

PSALM XIII.

1 Or, *overseer.*

a Ps.44.23;89.46;6.3; 22.1,2; 9.18. De.31. 17. Job 13.24. Is.8.17;54.7–8.

b Ps.88.14.

2 This psalm is a record of the victory of faith over weakness of body and anguish of soul. 'Like Job, the psalmist is afflicted with sickness, which has prostrated his energies, and threatens to cut short his career of service in God's cause by an untimely death, and is at the same time assailed by persecutors, who, as birds of prey over the sinking traveller, exult over the progress of his malady, and long for his death, as a crowning triumph in their war of persecution against the godly.'—*P.*

c Ps.77.2–9;94.18,19; 88.1–18.

d Ps.17.9;22.7–21;31. 11, 13, 18; 38.12; 43.1,2; 44.24–26.

e Ps. 25. 18, 19; 119. 153; 143.7, 8. Ezr. 9. 8. Jn.1.4. Pr.29.13. Ep.1. 18.Je.51.39.

2 For, lo, [c]the wicked bend *their* bow, they make ready their arrow upon the string, that they may privily[1] shoot at the upright in heart.[2]

3 If [d]the foundations be destroyed, what can the righteous do?

4 The[e] LORD *is* in his holy temple, the LORD's throne *is* in heaven: [g]his eyes behold, his eyelids try, the children of men.

5 The[h] LORD trieth the righteous: [i]but the wicked, and him that loveth violence, his soul hateth.

6 Upon[j] the wicked he shall rain snares,[3] fire and brimstone, and an horrible tempest:[4] *this shall be* the [k]portion of their cup.

7 For[l] the righteous LORD loveth righteousness; [m]his countenance doth behold the upright.

PSALM XII.

1 *David, destitute of human comfort, craveth help of God.* 3 *He comforteth himself in the assurance of God's judgments on the wicked,* 6 *and in the faithfulness of his promises.*

To the chief musician [a]upon Sheminith, A psalm of David.

HELP,[1] LORD; for [b]the godly man ceaseth; for the faithful fail from among the children of men.

2 They[c] speak vanity every one with his neighbour: *with* flattering lips *and* with a double heart[2] do they speak.

3 The[d] LORD shall cut off all flattering lips, *and* the tongue that speaketh proud things:[3]

4 Who[e] have said, With our tongue will we prevail; our lips *are* our own:[4] who *is* lord over us?

5 For[g] the oppression of the poor, for the sighing of the needy, now will I arise, saith the LORD; I will set *him* in safety *from him that* puffeth at him.[5]

6 The[h] words of the LORD *are* pure words; *as* silver tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven times.

7 Thou[i] shalt keep them, O LORD, thou shalt preserve them[6] from this generation for ever.

8 The[j] wicked walk on every side, when the vilest men are exalted.[7]

PSALM XIII.

1 *David complaineth of God's delay to help him.* 3 *He prayeth for preventing grace.* 5 *He trusteth in the divine mercy.*

To the chief musician,[1] A psalm of David.

HOW[a] long wilt thou forget me, O LORD? for ever? how long wilt thou [b]hide thy face from me?[2]

2 How[c] long shall I take counsel in my soul, *having* sorrow in my heart daily? [d]how long shall mine enemy be exalted over me?

3 Consider[e] *and* hear me, O LORD my God: lighten mine eyes, lest I sleep the *sleep of* death;

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honour his people's relation to, dependence on, and expectations from him, and to manifest his wonted readiness to appear in their behalf, he will quickly arise to punish them. And when God breaks the power, and in awful judgment manifests the wickedness, of their enemies, he deals kindly with his people. When the wicked are cast down, they are lifted up to safety, holiness, and honour. And he usually pours out upon them a remarkable spirit of humility, and of earnest supplication, as the mean of ushering in their deliverance.

PSALM XI. Ver. 3. If the foundations be destroyed, *i.e.* if all regard to the laws of God, all regard to order and justice, be gone, what safety can the most innocent or virtuous expect?

Ver. 6. Snares, fire, and brimstone, &c., signify all the terrible and unavoidable judgments which God executes upon the wicked in time and eternity; such as he executed upon Saul and his agents.

Ver. 1. 'This psalm must be referred to the early times of David's life, when he had to maintain an unequal struggle against the unrelenting jealousy of Saul. Well might his friends despair: they were already imperilled on every side

4 Lest[g] mine enemy say, I have prevailed against him; *and* those that trouble me rejoice when I am moved.

5 But[h] I have trusted in thy mercy; my heart shall rejoice in thy salvation.

6 I[i] will sing unto the LORD, because he hath dealt bountifully with me.[3]

PSALM XIV.

1 David describeth the corruption of a natural man. 4 He convinceth the wicked by the light of their conscience. 7 He glorieth in the salvation of God.

To the chief musician, *A psalm* of David.

THE fool [a]hath said in his heart, *There is* no God. [b]They are corrupt; they have done abominable works; *there is* none that doeth good.

2 The [c]LORD looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that did understand, *and* seek God.

3 They are all [d]gone aside; they are *all* together become [1]filthy: [e]*there is* none that doeth good, no, not one.

4 Have[g] all the workers of iniquity no knowledge? who [h]eat up my people *as* they eat bread, and call not upon the LORD.

5 There[i] were they in great fear:[2] for [j]God *is* in the generation of the righteous.[3]

6 Ye have [k]shamed the counsel of the poor, because the LORD *is* his refuge.

7 Oh that[4] the [l]salvation of Israel *were come* out of Zion! when the LORD [m]bringeth back the captivity of his people, Jacob shall rejoice, *and* Israel shall be glad.

k Ps.22.7,8;9.9.Is.37.10;25.4.Eze.35.10. 4 Heb. *who will give*, &c. *l* Ps.25.22;130.8. Is.45.17.Zec.9.9.Lu.2.10,11.Ro.11.26. *m* Job 42.10,11. Ps.126.1,2.

A.M. cir. 2046.
B.C. cir. 1058.

g De.32.27. Ps. 25.2. Eze.35.10–15.
h 2 Ch.20.12. 2 Ti.1. 12. Ps.42.11;43.5;130.4–8.Is.12.1–6.
i Ps. ciii. cxvi. cxviii.; 40.1–5.
3 The psalm closes with expressions of joy, thankfulness, and triumph. Though it begins with depression and sadness, it ends with joy. This is often observable in the Psalms. In the commencement it often occurs that the mind is overwhelmed with sorrow, and there is earnest pleading with God. Light, under the influence of prayer, breaks in gradually upon the soul. The clouds disperse, the darkness disappears; new views of the goodness and mercy of God are imparted; an assurance of his favour is brought to the soul; confidence in his mercy springs up in the heart; and the psalm that began with sorrowful complaining, ends with the language of praise and joy' (*Barnes*).—*P.*

PSALM XIV.

a Ps.10.4;53.1.
b Ps.53.1–5;cvi.36.1 –4.Tit.1.16.Mat.12.34; 15.19. Je.17. 9. Ge.6.5. Job 14. 4. Ro. 1. 21–31. Ep.2.1–3.
c Ps.11.4;33.13.Ge.6. 12.Ro.3.10–19.
d Ec. 7. 29. Je. 2. 13. Ro. 3.12.
1 Heb. *stinking*, Is. 1.6;64.6.Ps.38.5.
e Ro.3.10. Ep.2.1–3. Tit.3.3.2 Pe.2.13–15.
f Is.27.11. 2 Co. 4.3, 4.Ep.4.17,18. Ro.10.2, 3.
g Am.8.4. Mi.3.1–3. Eze.34.2.Je.10.25.
i Ps.53.5.
2 Heb. *they feared a fear*.
j Is.41.10;43.1,2. Ps. 24.6;73.15;112.2;22.30.
3 *Righteous*, that is, believers 'justified by faith,' Ro.5. 1, and so, 'by the obedience of one made righteous,' Ro. 5. 19. There is no other 'generation of the righteous,' but those who are thus 'the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus,' Ga.3.26.—*C.*

A.M. cir. 2984.
B.C. cir. 1020.

PSALM XV.

a Ps.24.3,4;1. 5; 2.6. Re.14.1,4. Ju. 3. 3-5. 2 Co.1.5.
1 Heb. *sojourn*.
b Is.33.15,16. Zec.8. 16.2 Co.1.12. Ac.24.16. Lu.1.6.
c Le.19.16. Ps.34.13. Ex.23.1. Ja.4.11.
2 Or *receiveth*, or *endureth*.
d 2 Ki.3.14. Es. 3. 2. Ps.101.4;119.63,115;16. 3.Lu.23.9.Ro.12.11.
e Ex.20.7.Mat.5.33.
3 He who having made a promise, or entered into an engagement, which, through miscalculation or unforeseen circumstances, will entail upon him serious loss; and yet nobly resolves to fulfil his engagement and bear the loss.—*P.*
g Ex.22.25.Le.25.36. De.23.19. Eze.18.8,17; 22.12.
h Ex.23.8.De.16.19.
i 2 Pe. 1.4–11. Je.32. 39,40. Ps.125.1,2. Mat. 7.25.Pr.10.25.

PSALM XVI.

B.C. cir. 1058.

1 Or, *A golden* psalm *of David*, Ps. lvi.–lx. title.
a Ps.17.5,8; 22.8. Is. 42.1;50.6–9.Ac.2.25;13. 35.
2 The quotation of this psalm (Ac. 2. 25–28), and its application to Christ, leave neither question nor difficulty in determining that Christ is the speaker.—*C.*
b Zec.13.9. Ps.31.14; 91.2;89.26;22.1.
3 *Thou hast said.* Many valuable MSS., and all the early translations, except the Chaldee, read, *I have said*.—*C.*
4 *My Lord*—'Adonai, my support.'—*C.*
c Job 22.2;35.7,8. Ps. 50.9,10.Ro.11.35.
5 *My goodness*—'No good thing I expect but from thee.'—*Boothroyd.*
d Mal.3.17. Ep. 1.1. Col.1.2. Pr.12.26;13.20; 8.31.Is.60.4.Ps.119 63.
6 *Excellent*, 'my glorified ones,' my saints in heaven.—*Horsley.*
e Ps.32.10; 97. 7. Re. 14.9–11.
7 Or, *give gifts to another*.
g Ex.23.13.Jos.23.7. Ho.2.17.

PSALM XV.

The proper character of a citizen of Zion.

A psalm of David.

LORD, who[a] shall abide[1] in thy tabernacle? who shall dwell in thy holy hill?

2 He that [b]walketh uprightly, and worketh righteousness, and speaketh the truth in his heart.

3 *He that* [c]backbiteth not with his tongue, nor doeth evil to his neighbour, nor taketh [2]up a reproach against his neighbour.

4 In whose eyes [d]a vile person is contemned; but he honoureth them that fear the LORD. *He that* sweareth to *his own* hurt, and [e]changeth not.[3]

5 *He* [g]*that* putteth not out his money to usury, nor [h]taketh reward against the innocent. [i]He that doeth these *things* shall never be moved.

PSALM XVI.

1 David, in distrust of merits, and hatred of idolatry, fleeth to God for preservation. 5 He showeth the hope of his calling, of a future resurrection, and life everlasting.

Michtam[1] of David.

PRESERVE me,[a] O God: for in thee do I put my trust.[2]

2 *O my soul*, thou [b]hast said[3] unto the LORD, Thou *art* my [4]LORD: [c]my goodness[5] *extendeth* not to thee;

3 *But*[d] to the saints that *are* in the earth, and *to* the excellent,[6] in whom *is* all my delight.

4 Their sorrows shall be multiplied *that* [e]hasten *after* another *god*:[7] their drink-offerings of blood will I not offer, nor [g]take up their names into my lips.

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by the treachery of an unscrupulous foe, and now they saw opening before them an interminable vista of dangers, which would be the lot of the righteous in a time of anarchy and misrule. But the cowardly fears of his friends, so far from shaking David's trust in God, only gave him an occasion for pouring forth in song the firm and simple faith with which his heart was full.' The psalm divides itself into two parts;—the first part (ver. 1–3) contains the questions put to David by timid followers, suggesting flight. The second part contains David's reply, expressing unshaken confidence in God. *P.*

Ver. 6. So he rained upon Sodom and Gomorrah, which are 'set forth for an example,' Jude 7, and so will he punish the finally impenitent in 'the lake of fire,' Re. 20. 15. *C.*

REFLECTIONS.—The saints' sorest temptations come as often from carnal friends as from their inveterate enemies; and often the most upright and blameless meet with the greatest malignity on earth. When wicked rulers have once unhinged the fundamental laws of equity, the greatest virtue often exposes men to the greatest danger. But while God is in Christ, in the church, and in heaven, they who trust in him need never despair. Nothing escapes his notice, and nothing shall escape without a due reward. While in his afflicting the righteous he but tries them for their purification and honour, the holiness and equity of his nature demand that his unavoidable judgments should in a terrible manner reward the wicked.

PSALM XII. Ver. 1. The speaker here is 'poor and needy,' ver. 5. Now to find who he is, consult, first, Ps. 40. 17, then ver. 6–8, and compare He. 10. 7, 9; and thus finding that 'the poor and needy' is Christ, there will be no difficulty in discovering that this psalm is a prayer of Christ. *C.*

Ver. 6. *Seven* being the amount of a perfect week, is the emblem of anything perfected by successive acts or exhibitions; so silver is refined from the alloy of baser metals by successive exposures to the fire; and so is the word of God separated from all the alloy of human misconceptions and errors, till it stands forth unadulterated truth—'the truth as it is in Jesus.' *C.*

REFLECTIONS.—It is fearfully ominous when those distinguished saints, who support nations or churches, are removed by death, while none are raised up to fill their room. Perilous are the times when piety towards God and integrity towards men cease—when all men seek their own, not the things of Jesus Christ—when hypocrites by fair speeches deceive the simple! But pride must have a fall, either before the throne of grace, or into the depths of hell! And though God for a time may seemingly overlook his people, he will never forget, disregard, or cast them off. He best knows when to deliver; and if we have but faith he will never fail. When the saints' night of trouble is at the darkest, and their prayer fervent, their deliverance is near. While God's pure and precious promises stand fast in Christ, no increase, activity, or malice of wicked men shall ever be able utterly to destroy or deceive his people.

PSALM XIII. Ver. 2. The 'Man of sorrows,' who knew no joy but 'the joy set before him,' here speaks while he 'endures the cross,' and bears 'the contradiction of sinners.' *C.*

REFLECTIONS.—How painful to an exercised believer is the sense of God's absence and frowns! An hour is an age without his love! But the most precious saints are often exercised with long and constant sorrows: and their anxiety and vain contrivances to help themselves will but add to their burden, entangle them more and more, and bring them to the brink of despair. But though God hide, and frown, and smite, his love for all men cannot be broken. Let Satan and his agents triumph as they may in their fall, there is full hope of their recovery; nay, it is at hand. Trust in God's mercy and prayers poured into his bosom will quickly issue in great deliverance and joy.

PSALM XIV. REFLECTIONS.—How desperately wicked are human hearts! If all their thoughts were manifested, how horrible and shameful the sight! Atheism in heart is the source of all our corruption in life! Men are very similar in sin, particularly in inward corruption. And there is great reason to bless God for the riches of his grace, if anything good is implanted in us by his Spirit. How absurdly, and against conscience, must men act when they *eat up* with pleasure, hate, reproach, persecute, and oppress the people of God, or neglect prayer to him! Or when they attempt to *shame* and banter poor saints out of their religion and dependence on him! But if God be for us, who can be against us? Secret terrors shall apprehend our most jovial persecutors. How fervent are right desires for salvation through Christ; and how ravishing our enjoyment of it! For now is come Jesus, and his salvation and strength! Let Jews and Gentiles magnify the Lord, and rejoice in God their Saviour.

PSALM XV. Ver. 2. Let him that would *search* the Scriptures, not to *give* them a meaning, but to *find* it, read Je. 17. 9; Ro. 3. 10, 11, 19, and compare them with the character described in this verse, and then say, Is not this certainly the Christ? *C.*

Ver. 4. *He that sweareth to his own hurt, and changeth not.* Beareth true testimony, even when he knows it will be turned to his hurt. This Christ did when adjured by the high-priest, and, on his own testimony, perverted by the high-priest and council, the righteous was condemned, Mat. 26. 63–66. *C.*

REFLECTIONS.—Professors of religion have great need to examine themselves. Many have a place in God's church below who will never be admitted into his holy heaven. And if we would know our true state, God's word must be the sole standard, and his Spirit the great director and manager of our trial. It is not fair words, nor high pretences, but uniform obedience in heart and life to God's law, that will prove the reality of our grace. We must exercise ourselves to keep a conscience void of offence towards God and man; to keep good company; and to have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather to reprove them. Though our holiness and virtue be not the foundation of our unchangeable happiness, they are the marks of our being rooted and grounded in Christ, our infallible establisher.

5 The[h] LORD *is* the portion of mine inheritance[8] and of my cup: [i]thou maintainest my lot.

6 The [j]lines are fallen unto me in pleasant *places;* yea, [k]I have a goodly heritage.

7 I will [l]bless the LORD, who hath given me counsel; my reins also instruct me in the night-seasons.

8 I[m] have set the LORD always before me: because *he is* [o]at my right hand, I shall not be moved.

9 Therefore my heart is glad, and my [p]glory rejoiceth;[9] my flesh also shall rest in hope:[1]

10 For [q]thou wilt not leave my soul in hell;[2] neither wilt thou suffer [r]thine Holy One to see corruption.

11 Thou[s] wilt show me the path of life: [t]in thy presence *is* fulness of joy; at thy right hand *there are* [u]pleasures for evermore.

PSALM XVII.

1 David, in confidence of his integrity, craveth defence of God against his enemies. 10 He showeth their pride and eagerness to ruin him. 13 He prayeth against them in confidence of his hope.

A prayer of David.

HEAR [a]the right,[1] O LORD, [b]attend unto my cry, give ear unto my prayer, *that goeth* not out of feigned lips.[2]

2 Let[c] my sentence come forth from thy presence; let thine eyes behold the things that are equal.

3 Thou[d] hast proved mine heart; thou hast visited *me* in the night; thou hast tried me, *and* shalt find nothing:[3] I [e]am purposed *that* my mouth shall not transgress.

4 Concerning the works of men, [g]by the word of thy lips I have kept *me from* the paths of the destroyer.[4]

5 Hold[h] up my goings in thy paths, *that* my footsteps slip not.[5]

6 I [i]have called upon thee; for thou wilt hear me, O God: incline thine ear unto me, *and* hear my speech.

7 Show thy [j]marvellous loving-kindness, O

h Ps.119.5;121.3,7,8;94.18.Je.10.23. 5Heb. *be not moved.* *i* Ps.50.15;116.2;55.16.Is.65.24;58.9. *j* Ps.31.21;36.7.Is.63.7,9.Ro.5.20,21.Ep.2.4,7.

A.M. cir. 2946. B.C. cir. 1058.

h Ps.73.26;142.5; 23.5;119.57. La. 3.24. Ro. 8.17.
8 Heb. *of my part.*
i Ps.94.18;89.1-4,21-28.Is.42.1;53.10-12.
j Pr. 3. 17. Is. 53. 11. He.12.2.
k Je. 3.19. 1 Pe. 1. 4. Ep.3.18, 19. Jn. 20. 17. Ro.8.17.
l Ps. 72. 17–19. Mat. 11.25, 26. Is. 11.2–4; 48. 17.
m Ac.2. 25. 1 Co. 10. 31. Ps. 73. 23–26; 119. 168;139.18.
o Ps.109.31. Is. 42,1; 50.6–9.
p Ge.49.6. Ac. 2. 26. Job 14.14.He.11.35.
9 *Glory* As light is the glory of fire (Ex. 24. 17), so speech is the glory, the bright shining of the intellect.—*C.*
1 Heb. *dwell confidently.*
q Ac.3.15;2.27,31;13. 35.
2 The Hebrew word *sheôl*, here rendered 'hell,' does not signify the place of the damned, but simply 'the state of the dead.' The same fundamental idea is embodied in both members of this verse, namely, that the Messiah's submission to death would be only temporary: — his soul would not remain in the state of death separate from the body; and his body would not experience corruption.—*P.*
r Da.9.24. Lu. 1.35; 4.34. Mat. 1.24. Ac. 3. 14.
s Mat.7.14. Ac.2.28. Ps.21.4. 1 Pe.1.21. Ro. 8.11.
t Jude 24. Ps. 21.5,6; 110.1,5.He.12.2. Is.53. 10–12. Mat. 25. 33,34. 1 Pe.1.4.
u Ps.36.8.

PSALM XVII.

a Ps.7.8; 18.20; 43.1. Is.38.3.
1 Heb. *justice.*
b Ps.61. 1;142.6;66.19. 2 Ch.7.15. Ne.1. 6. Da. 9.19.
2 Heb. *without lips of deceit.*
c Ps.7.8; 43.1; 18. 20, 24.
d Job 23.10. Ps. 139. 23;7.9;11 5;26.2 Mal. 3. 2,3.Zec.13.9. 1 Pe. 1.7. Ja.1.12.1 Co.4.4.
3 That is, nothing for which I am unable and unprepared to answer. A declaration that in the lips of David had been Pharisaic ignorance and self-righteousness, but truth and soberness in the lips of David's Lord.—*C.*
e Ps.39.1,2. Pr. 13.3. Ja.3.2.Ac.11 23
g Pr.2.10–15. Ps.119. 9,11.Ro.12.2.2 Pe.3.8.
4 This fact was triumphantly verified in our Lord's victory over Satan, gained by the one 'sword of the Spirit,' 'It is written,' Mat.4.4,7,10. —*C.*

A.M. cir. 2946. B.C. cir. 1058.

6 Or, *that savest them which trust* in thee *from those that rise up against thy right hand,* i. e. *mighty power.*
k De.32.10. Zec.2.8. 1 Pe.1.5.
l Ps. 17. 1;91.1,4. Mat. 23.37. Ru.2.12.
7 Heb. *that waste me.*
8 Heb. *my enemies against the soul.*
n Job 15.27. Ps.73.7; 119.70. De.32.15.
o Ps.10.3,6; 38.12;73. 8,9;123.4.
p 1 Sa.23.26; 24. 2, 3; 26.2.
q Ps.7.2; 10.8–10; 56. 5,6. Pr.28.15.
9 Heb. *the likeness of him* (that is, *of every one of them*) *is as a lion* that *desireth to raven.*
1 Heb. *sitting.*
r Ps.7.6; 44.23; 54. 5; 55.15;140.6–12.
2 Heb. *prevent his face.*
s Is.10.5.
3 Or, *by thy sword.*
t Is.10.5,6. Lu.16.8.
4 Or, *from men by thine hand.*
u Lu.16. 25. Ja. 5. 5. Job21.7–13;12.6.Ps.73. 3–7,12.
5 Or, *their children are full.*
v Job 19.26,27. 1 Co. 13.12. 2 Co.3.18;4.17. 1 Jn. 3.2.
x Ps.16.11;49.4; 36.8, 9. 1 Co. 2. 9. Re. xxi. xxii.
y Col.1.15. Phi.2.6, or Ge.1. 26, 27. 1 Jn. 3. 2. Ep.5.27. Jude 14.

PSALM XVIII.

B.C. cir. 1020 or 1048.
a 2 Sa.22. 1–52, with Ex. 15. 1-22. Ju. v. 1s. xii.xxv.xxvi. 1 Sa.2.1–10.
b Ps.36.title; 116. 16. Ac.13.36.
c 2 Sa.xxii.
d Ps.34.19.2 Ti.4.18.
e 1 Jn.4.19. Ps.116.1.
1 This noble psalm, one of the most sublime in this book, was composed by David toward the close of his long and eventful life. It is the fervent expression of his gratitude to God for all past mercies and deliverances. His bodily strength, his mental vigour, his relief in suffering, his deliverance from danger, his success in life, his triumph over his foes, he attributes to the love, wisdom, and power of God. —*P.*
g De.32.4. Ps.91.2. 1 Co.10.4. Is.22.2.
h 2 Co.1.10. Ps.3.8.
i Ps.91.2;18.3.
2 Heb. *my rock.*
j Ge.15.1. Ps.91.4.
k Lu.1.69. 1 Sa.2.10. Ps.132.18.
l Pr.18.10. Ps.61.2;62. 6,7.
n Ps.50.15; 55.16;65. 2; 119.94; 91. 15. Re.4. 11.
o Re.5.11–13.
p 1 Sa.20.3.2 Co.1.9. Ps.116.3.
3 Heb. *Belial.*
4 Or, *cords.*
q Pr.13.14. Ec.9.12.

thou that savest by thy right hand them which put their trust *in thee* from those that rise up *against them.*[6]

8 Keep[k] me as the apple of the eye, hide me under [l]the shadow of thy wings,

9 From the wicked that oppress me,[7] *from* my deadly enemies,[8] *who* compass me about.

10 They[n] are enclosed in their own fat: [o]with their mouth they speak proudly.

11 They[p] have now compassed us in our steps: they have [q]set their eyes bowing down to the earth;

12 Like as a lion *that* is greedy of his [s]prey, and as it were a young lion lurking[1] in secret places.

13 Arise,[r] O LORD; disappoint him,[2] cast him down: deliver my soul from the wicked, [s]*which is* thy sword;[3]

14 From men *which are* thy [t]hand,[4] O LORD, from men of the world, *which have* [u]their portion in *this* life, and whose belly thou fillest with thy hid *treasure:* they are full of children,[5] and leave the rest of their *substance* to their babes.

15 As for me, [v]I will behold thy face in righteousness: I shall be [x]satisfied, when I awake, with thy [y]likeness.

PSALM XVIII.

David's psalm of thanksgiving for God's mighty deliverances and manifold blessings.

To the chief musician, [a]*A psalm* of David [b]the servant of the LORD, who spake unto the LORD [c]the words of this song, in the day *that* [d]the LORD delivered him from the hand of all his enemies, and from the hand of Saul: And he said,

I WILL[e] love thee, O LORD, my strength.[1]

2 The LORD *is* my [g]rock, and my fortress, and my [h]deliverer; [i]my God, my strength,[2] in whom I will trust; my [j]buckler, and [k]the horn of my salvation, *and* my [l]high tower.

3 I[n] will call upon the LORD, [o]*who is* worthy to be praised: so shall I be saved from mine enemies.

4 The[p] sorrows of death compassed me, and the floods of ungodly[3] men made me afraid.

5 The sorrows[4] of hell compassed me about; the [q]snares of death prevented me.

PSALM XVI. Ver. 5. The Lord and his fulness, answerable to every need, every desire, is represented as a lot or portion, in allusion to the shares of Canaan, which were divided by lot, Nu. xxiv.; and to the shares of liquor in cups at feasts; importing how permanent, unalterable, refreshing, and strengthening he is to the enjoyers.

Ver. 10. Hell, with respect to David or Christ, cannot signify the place of the damned; for thither they never went: but it may include great distress of spirit, the grave, and the state of the dead.

Ver. 4. *Another—god* is not in the original, and the word supplied should rather be *Messiah.* The Jews have sought another, and have been in sorrow for upwards of 1800 years. *C.*

Ver. 5. *Lot.* The resolution in ver. 3 is spoken by Messiah as a priest. The tribe of Levi had no inheritance but JEHOVAH: Messiah has the same, and besides is 'heir of all things.' *C.*

Ver. 9. 'My glory rejoiceth;' *i.e.* my soul rejoiceth. The *soul* being the most dignified—the noblest part of man, is termed in poetic imagery his *glory. P.*

REFLECTIONS.—Trust in God does not merit but it secures divine preservation, as God cannot disappoint one who believes his word or rests on his new-covenant characters. Our holiness cannot profit God, but it marks us his, and tends to our advantage; and next to fellowship with God that with ourselves is the most excellent and useful. But the more a believer advances in holiness, the more humble thoughts he will have of himself, in view of the pure and all-sufficient JEHOVAH. They who delight in God will delight in those who bear his image as the most excellent on earth. Such as have Jesus Christ as their atonement, and God in him, need no idols or other sacrifices. And if we want to banish idolatry, the most distant appearances of it ought to be avoided and abhorred. But happy are they who have God as their portion, their wealth and comfort by his own gospel grant! This secures against want as well as against ruin. This secures direction in time, comfort in death, and glory through eternity. And O how pleasant death and eternity appear, when Christ is considered as our *way,* as our *forerunner,* and God in him as our everlasting ALL in ALL.

PSALM XVII. Ver. 1. Prayer is called *meditation,* because our requests ought to be seriously considered before we present them to God. It is called a *lifting up of our souls,* and *pouring out of our hearts,* because our requests must be the earnest desires of our soul. It is called *supplication, seeking, knocking, inquiring,* to denote the humility and earnestness of our petitions. It is represented as a *crying, sighing, groaning,* and *breathing,* to signify our great pressures and necessities, and the great earnestness of our desires after relief. It is represented as a *looking* to, *talking* with, and *taking hold* of God, to denote the humble familiarity, importunate earnestness, and patient resignation necessary therein. From the gestures used in it, it is represented as a *bowing, kneeling, falling* down, or *standing* before God; and, from its acceptableness to God, it is represented as *odours* or *incense.*

Ver. 1. *Hear the right.* A prayer for God to hear *the right,* the absolutely right, can never be the prayer of a *sinner,* who must ever cry, 'God be merciful.' It is the prayer of 'Jesus Christ the righteous,' 'who knew no sin,' and who ever liveth to make intercession for us on the ground of his perfect righteousness. *C.*

Ver. 3. It is manifest from the scope of this whole psalm that the enemies to whom the author refers had, like Job's friends, charged him with some secret crimes. He repudiates the charge. He calls upon God, the searcher of hearts, to examine and try him, so as to testify to his innocence. The psalmist does not presume to declare his purity before God; he does not speak of personal holiness. He refers simply to the charges brought against him by reckless persecutors. *P.*

Ver. 13. *Disappoint him, cast him down.* Disappoint the

A.M. cir. 2984 or 2956.
B.C. cir. 1020 or 1048.

6 In[r] my distress I called upon the LORD, and cried unto my God: [s]he heard my voice out of his temple, and my cry came before him, *even* into his ears.

7 Then [t]the earth shook and trembled; the foundations also of the hills moved and were shaken, because he was wroth.[5]

8 There went up a [u]smoke out of his[6] nostrils,[7] and fire out of his mouth devoured: coals were kindled by it.

9 He [v]bowed the heavens also, and came down: and darkness[8] *was* under his feet.

10 And [w]he rode upon a cherub, and did fly; yea, he did fly upon the wings of the wind.

11 He[x] made darkness his secret place; his pavilion round about him *were* dark waters *and* thick clouds of the skies.

12 At [y]the brightness *that was* before him his thick clouds passed, hail-*stones* and coals of fire.

13 The[z] LORD also thundered in the heavens, and the Highest gave his voice; hail-*stones* and coals of fire.

14 Yea, [a]he sent out his arrows, and scattered them; and he shot out lightnings, and discomfited them.

15 Then[b] the channels of waters were seen, and the foundations of the world were discovered at thy rebuke, O LORD, at the blast of the breath of thy nostrils.[9]

16 He[c] sent from above, he took me, he drew me out of [d]many waters.

17 He [e]delivered me from my strong enemy,[1] and from them which hated me: for they were too [g]strong for me.

18 They[h] prevented me in the day of my calamity: but the LORD was my stay.

19 He[i] brought me forth also into a large place; he delivered me, because he delighted in me.

20 The LORD [j]rewarded me according to my righteousness; according to the cleanness of my hands hath he recompensed me.

21 For [k]I have kept the ways of the LORD, and have not wickedly departed from my God.

22 For[l] all his judgments *were* before me, and I did not put away his statutes from me.

23 I was also [m]upright before[2] him; and I kept myself from [o]mine iniquity.[3]

24 Therefore[p] hath the LORD recompensed me according to my righteousness, according to the cleanness of my hands in his [4]eyesight.[5]

25 With[q] the merciful thou wilt show thyself merciful; with an upright man thou wilt show thyself upright;

26 With the pure thou wilt show thyself pure; [r]and with the froward thou wilt show thyself froward.[6]

27 For[s] thou wilt save the afflicted[7] people; [t]but wilt bring down high looks.

28 For[u] thou wilt light my candle:[8] the LORD my God will enlighten my darkness.

29 For[v] by thee I have run through a troop; and by my God have I leaped over a wall.

30 *As for* God, [w]his way *is* perfect: [y]the word of the LORD *is* [9]tried: [z]he *is* a buckler to all those that trust in him.

31 For[4] who *is* God save the LORD? or who *is* a rock save our God?

32 *It*[b] *is* God that girdeth me with strength, and maketh my way perfect.

33 He[c] maketh my feet like hinds' *feet*, and setteth me upon my high places.[1]

34 He[d] teacheth my hands to war, so that a bow of steel is broken by mine arms.

35 Thou hast also given me [e]the shield of thy salvation: and thy right hand hath holden me up, and thy gentleness [g]hath made me great.[2]

36 Thou hast [h]enlarged my steps under me, that my feet[3] did not slip.

37 I[i] have pursued mine enemies, and overtaken them; neither did I turn again till they were consumed.

38 I have wounded them, that they were not able to rise: they are fallen under my feet.

39 For thou [j]hast girded me with strength unto the battle: thou hast subdued[4] under me those that rose up against me.

40 Thou hast also given me [k]the necks of mine enemies; that I might destroy them that hate me.[5]

41 They[l] cried, but *there was* none to save *them; even* unto the LORD, but he answered them not.[6]

42 Then did I [m]beat them small as the dust before the wind: I did cast them out as the dirt in the streets.

43 Thou hast delivered me from [o]the strivings of the people; [p]*and* thou hast made me the

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A.M. cir. 2984 or 2956.
B.C. cir. 1020 or 1048.

r Ac.12.5. Ps. 130.1, 2;50.15;91.15;34.4,6,15, 17;116.3,4. Ex.2.23-25. Jonah 2.2.

s 2 Ch.30.27.

t Ex.19.16,18. Ps.114. 4,6. Hab.3.6,10. Job 26. 11. Je.4.24. Eze. 38.19, 20.

5 These words describe the great earthquake at the crucifixion, Mat. 27. 51-53. —*C.*

u De.32.22,24. 1 Sa. 7.10. Job 1. 16. Nu. 16. 35. He.12.29.

6 Heb. *by his.*

v 'Smoke ascended in his anger.'—*Ainsworth.*

w Ps.144.5;97. 2; 77. 19. Is.64.1,2. Re.10.1.

8 These words and ver. 11 describe the miraculous three hours of darkness at the crucifixion, Mat. 27.45.—*C.*

w Ps.68.17;104. 3, 4. He.1.14. Hab.3.8. Mi. 1.3,4. Na.1.3.

x Ps.27.5;97.2;77.19. Re.10.1. Jn.13.7.

y Hab.3.4, 5. Ps. 97. 3,4. Jos.10.10. Ex.9.23; 24.17.

z Ex. 19. 18. 1 Sa. 2. 10;7.10;12.18. Ps. 29. 3; 77.18. Hab.3.5.

a Jos.10.10,11. 1 Sa. 7.10. Hab.3.11. Ps.144. 6. Is.30.30.

b Ex.14.21; 15.8. Ps. 106.9; 114. 3, 7; 74. 15. Jos.3.13,16.

9 At the breath of the wind of thine anger.—*Ainsworth.*

c Ps. 144. 7; 69. 1, 2; 130.1;40.1-3.

d Or, *great waters*, ver.43. Re.17.15.

e Title. 2 Co. 1. 10. He.11.20.

1 Saul.

g Ps.38.19;69.4;59.3. Ep.6.11,12. 2 Co.12.7.

h 1 Sa.30.6. Ps. 3. 1-5. 2 Sa. 22. 6, 19. Ps.22. 12,16; 118.10-15. Is.50. 10;42.5,6,11.

i Ps. 31.8;118.5;40.1-3; 116.1-7, 16. 2 Sa. 15. 25. Job 36.16.

j 1 Sa.24.17-20. Ps.7. 8; 19. 11. Is. 3. 10; 1. 16 -19. 1 Co.15.58.

k Ps.119.5,10,11. 1 Ki. 1.6. 2 Co.1.12;5.9,14,15; 7.1. Ac.24.16.

l Ps.119.6,15,16, &c. Lu.1.6. Is.38.3.

m Ge.6.9. Job 1.1,8. 2 Ki.20.3. Tit.2.12. 2 Co. 1.12.

2 Heb. *with.*

o Ps.37.27. He. 12. 1. Mat.5.29,30;18.8,9.

3 There appears to be an acknowledgment here on the part of the psalmist that he had a corrupt nature, that he had a tendency to sin, which, had he not restrained, would have led him into open and grievous violations of God's law. He curbed his evil propensities, and governed his passions; and now he shows that the Lord who had endowed him with restraining grace, had also showered down upon him temporal favours. *P.*——*Mine iniquity* may seem to identify the psalm with David, and disallow its applicability to Christ. But it is said by Isaiah (53.6) that the 'Lord laid on him the iniquity of us all.' Iniquity therefore he calls *mine* as a burden, though *ours* as a production. —*C.*

p Pr. 11. 31. 1 Co. 15. 58. Ga.6.7,8. 1 Ti.4.8.

4 Heb. *before his eyes.*

5 See note on ver.3. —*C.*

q 1 Ki.8.32. Mat.5.7, 8. Ps.25.8.

r Pr.3.34. Ro. 2. 4,5, 8,9. Ja.2.13. Lu. 26. 23, 24. Ps.109.17-19;125.5.

6 Or, *wrestle.*

s Lu.1.52,53. Ps. 12. 5;22.24;34.19.

7 *Afflicted*, not necessarily a promise for all afflicted persons, some of whom may be under divine wrath, but to those who spiritually 'mourn,' unto whom our Lord has promised that 'they shall be comforted,' Mat.5.4.—*C.*

t Pr. 6. 16,17. Ps.37. 35,36;73.17-19. Is.2.11. Job 40.11,12.

u Job 29.3,4. Ps.37.6; 119.105. Mi.7.8,9. Pr.6. 23; 20. 27. Ep.3. 17-19. Is.60.19.

8 Or, *lamp.*

v Phi. 4. 13; 2. 12,13. Ps. 118. 10-12. Zec.10. 12. Is.40.31.

x De.32.4. Da. 4. 37. Re.15.3.

y Ps.12.6;119.140. Pr. 30.5.

9 Or, *refined.*

z Ge.15.1. Ps.91.4;17. 7.

a De.32.30. 1 Sa.2.2. Ps.86.8. Is.45.5,22.

b 2 Co. 3.5. Ps. 92.10, 12;99.4; 28. 7; 138.8. Is. 45.1-5. Phi.1.6.

c Hab.3.19. Is.33.16; 58.14. De.32 13;33.29.

1 The ancient cities and villages of Palestine were almost universally built on eminences, so as to be secure from attack, and easily fortified. 'High places' were places of safety. God had in his infinite mercy placed the psalmist out of the reach of his enemies. —*P.*

d Ps.144.1. Is.45.1-5, 13;46.11.

e Ge.15.1. Ps. 84. 11; 94.17-19;5.12. Ep.6.16.

g Ps.113.6-8;21.3-6.

2 Or, *with thy meekness thou hast multiplied me.*

h Job 18.7;36.16. Pr. 4.12. Ps.94.18.

3 Heb. *mine ankles.*

i 2 Sa. v. viii. x. xviii. xx. Ps. 110. 1-7. 1 Sa. xvii. xviii. xxiii. xxvii. xxx. Ge.49.8-10. Is. 53. 10,12. Re.17.14; 19.12-20;6.17.

j Ex.30.24. ver. 32. Is.54.17.

4 Heb. *caused to bow.*

k Ge.49.8. Jos.10.24. Ex.23.27.

5 Every carnal mind is enmity against God, and therefore every believer had first to be subdued as an enemy. The verse also includes those impenitent nations whom the Father will cast down for their rebellion against the Son.—*C.*

l 1 Sa.28.6. Job 27.9; 35.12. Pr. 1. 28. Ez.8. 18. Is.1.15. Je.11.11;14. 12. Mi.3.4. Zec.7.13.

6 See the reason of this refusal of God to answer and save, Mat.7.21-23. Lu.13.24 -27.—*C.*

m Da. 2. 34, 35, 44. Zec.10.5. Is.10.6. Mi.7. 10. Mal.4.1,3.

o 2 Sa.3.1;xviii.xx.

p 2 Sa.v.viii.x. Ps.60. 8;108.9,12,27-31; lxxii. cx. Is.55.5.

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malice of Satan and his agents, cast down their power, a prayer to which it is not easy to discover how either infidelity or sentimental Pharisaism can object. *C.*

Ver. 25. The psalmist here contrasts his hopes and aspirations with those of the mere worldling. He does not rest his happiness on temporal things. He looks beyond earth to a heavenly inheritance and home. The presence and favour of God can alone satisfy him. He hopes for and believes in a participation in the divine nature and graces. The doctrine of a future state and of a resurrection is here clearly shadowed forth. *P.*

REFLECTIONS.—Happy are they who, when traduced by men, have the testimony of a good conscience to their uprightness before God: his providence will manifest injured innocence at last! And happy are they who in all their trials improve God's word as their preservative from evil; and who, assisted by his gracious influence, watch over their heart, their tongue, their feet, cleaving to that which is good, and abhorring that which is evil! But not the strongest saint hath a fund of grace to support himself, without constant supplies from Jesus Christ our living fountain. And a deep sense of our own weakness and insufficiency is the surest way to be strong in the Lord and in the power of his might. Every saint walks in a slippery path, where many watch for his halting. He ought therefore always to watch and pray that he faint not. Our salvation is by faith, and is of infinite love from first to last. In vain Satan rages against those who put all their trust in God. No luxurious, proud, active, crafty, or cruel devourers shall ever pluck them out of his hand. Trials are God's sword and hand, by which he corrects his people, or manages, in his providence, as is best. And how wretched are the wicked in all affluence and wealth, as these things without God become their everlasting misery! But happy are they who through their much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God! Happy they whose transient views of God, and imperfect likeness to him, issue at last in endless and immediate vision of him, and in perfect conformity to his image!

PSALM XVIII. Ver. 3. *Mine enemies.* Whose enemies? A somewhat similar psalm is said to have been spoken by David on his deliverance from all his enemies and from Saul; and the day was most appropriate for celebrating, not typically, but prophetically, the glorious deliverance of Messiah. For that David does not speak in his own person is obvious from comparing Ro. 15. 8 with

head of the heathen: a people *whom* I have not known shall serve me.

44 As soon as they hear[7] of me, they shall obey me: the strangers[8] shall submit[9] themselves unto me.

45 The strangers shall fade away, and [q]be afraid out of their close places.[1]

46 The [r]LORD liveth; and [s]blessed *be* my rock; and let the God of my salvation be exalted.

47 *It is* God that avengeth me,[2] and [t]subdueth the people under me.

48 He delivereth me from mine enemies; yea,[u] thou liftest me up above those that rise up against me: thou hast delivered me from the violent man.[3]

49 Therefore[v] will I give thanks unto thee, O LORD, among the heathen, and sing praises unto thy name.

50 Great[w] deliverance giveth he to his [y]king; and showeth mercy to his [z]anointed, to David, and to his seed[4] for evermore.

PSALM XIX.

1 *The creatures show God's glory.* 7 *The excellency of the divine law.* 12 *David prayeth for God's grace.*

To the chief musician, A psalm of David.

THE heavens [a]declare the glory of God; and the firmament[1] showeth his handy-work.

2 Day[b] unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night showeth knowledge.

3 *There is* [c]no speech nor language[2] *where* their voice is not heard.[3]

4 Their[d] line[4] is gone out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world. In them hath he set a tabernacle for the sun;

5 Which *is* [e]as a bridegroom coming out of his chamber, *and* rejoiceth as a strong man to run a race.

6 His[g] going forth *is* from the end of the heaven, and his circuit unto the ends of it: and there is nothing hid from the heat thereof.

7 The [h]law[5] of the LORD *is* perfect, [6]converting the soul: [i]the testimony of the LORD *is* sure, making wise the simple.

8 The [j]statutes of the LORD *are* right, rejoicing the heart: the commandment of the LORD *is* [k]pure, enlightening the eyes.

9 The fear of the LORD [l]*is* clean, enduring for ever:[7] the judgments of the LORD *are* [m]true[8] *and* righteous altogether.

10 More[o] to be desired *are they* than gold, yea, than much fine gold; [p]sweeter also than honey, and the honey-comb.[9]

11 Moreover by them is thy servant [q]warned: *and* in keeping of them *there is* [r]great reward.

12 Who[s] can understand *his* errors? [1]cleanse thou me from secret[2] *faults*.

13 Keep[t] back thy servant also from presumptuous *sins;* let them not have dominion over me: then shall I be upright, and I shall be innocent from the great[3] transgression.

14 Let[x] the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight, O LORD, my strength,[4] and my [y]redeemer.

A.M. cir. 2984 or 2956.
B.C. cir. 1020 or 1048.

7 Heb. *At the hearing of the ear.*
8 Heb. *the sons of the stranger.*
9 Or, *yield feigned obedience*, Ps.66.3; 59. 11,12.De.33.29.
q Mi.7.17. Re.6.16.
1 Their fortified cities and strongholds. No matter how remote and how strong their places of abode, the fame and prowess of David would cause them to tremble. David's victories extended from the borders of Egypt to the banks of the Euphrates.—*P.*
r Je.10.10. Re.1.18. Jn.14.19.
s Ps. 91.2;89.26.Is.12. 1–3.Ex.15.1–20.
2 Heb. *giveth avengements for me*, Ps.94.1,2.
t Or, *destroyeth*, Ps. 47. 3; 89.23; lxxii. cx.; 22.27–30.
u Ps.27.6;59.1;110.1. Phi.2.9.
3 Heb. *man of violence*, i.e. *Saul.*
v Ro.15.9.Ex.xv.Ju. v.Ps.7.17; 13. 6; xl. xxx. xxxiii xlvii. xcvi.–c. ciii.–cviii. cxv. cxviii. cxxxiv.–cxxxvi.; cliv.–cl.1 Sa.2.1–10.2 Ch.20. 26.Is.xii.xxv.xxvi.
w Ps.144.10.He.2.3.
y 1 Sa.2. 10. Ps. 2. 6; 89.3,4.
z 2 Sa.7.13. Ro. 1.3; 11.29.Ga.3.16. Je.30.9. Ps.89.1–4,28–36.
4 That is, to the children born of the Spirit, whom the Lord hath given him, He.2.13.—*C.*

PSALM XIX.

B.C. cir. 1040.
a Ge.1.1,6. Ro.1.19, 20.Is.40.22. Ps.150.1,2; 145 10 12.
1 The expanse—the whole outspreading of the heavens.—*C.*
b Ps.74.16;136 8,9.
c De. 4.19.Da.3.4,29; 6.24 Mat.24.14.
2 Or, *without those their voice is heard.*
3 Heb. *without their voice heard.*
d Ro.10.18. Is. 49. 6. Job 25.3.
4 Or, *Their rule* or *direction.*

A.M. cir. 2964.
B.C. cir. 1040.

e Ec.1.5. Ps.104.24.27. Job 25.3.
f Ec.1.5.Mat.24.27. Job 25.3.
h 2 Ti.3.15–17 2 Co. 5.17,18 1 Pe.1.23. Ja.1. 21,25 Jn.6.63.
5 Or, *doctrine.*
6 Or, *restoring.*
i Jn.5.39. Ac. 10. 43. 1 Jn. 5.7–12. Ps. xxx. 7; 119.98–105.
j Ne.9.13. Ps.119.57, 128, 49, 50, 54, 92, xxx, &c.194.19.
k Ps.12.6; 18.30; 119. 105,140.2 Pe.1.19.2 Co. 2.17. 1 Pe.2.2.
l Jn.17.17;15.3. 1 Pe. 1.23. Ps.119.9,11. Mat. 5.18.
7 The word rendered 'fear' signifies literally 'dread' or 'terror,' and then that holy reverence which dread inspires. In this place, however, the signification must be different. It is employed figuratively to denote those *divine precepts* which embody the will of God, and which instruct man how he is to fear and reverence him. Resolving the metaphor, the clause may be translated thus:—'The precepts of Jehovah are pure and eternal.'—*P.*
m Ps. 119. 142, 160, 138.144.172.
8 Heb. *truth.*
o Ps. 119, 72, 111, 127, 162. Pr.8. 1,19.
p Ps.119. 30, 103. Je. 15.16. Job 23.12.
9 Heb. *the dropping of honey-comb.*
q Pr.6.22,23. Ps.19. 9,11,24.2 Pe.1.19.
r Pr.3.16, 17. 1 Ti.6. 6;4.8.1 Co.15.58.
s Ps.40.12 13;25. 11; 65.3;51.5,6,10.Is.64.6.
1 *Cleanse.* 'Make me innocent, free, guiltless.'—*Answ.*
2 *Secret.* Disguises, dissimulation, hypocrisy.—*Horsley.*
t Ge.20.6.Ps.119.133. Ex.x.28. Ro.6.12–14.2 Co.1.12.Ac.24.16.
3 Or, *much.*
u Ps.4.1;5.1,2;6.9.Is. 65.24; 60.7. 1 Pe.2.5. 1 Jn.3.22; 5.14,15. Jn.16. 23.
4 Heb. *my rock.*
v Mat.1.21. 1 Th. 1. 10. Is.43.14; 44.6; 47.4. Tit.2.14.He.9.12–15.

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ver. 49, and from considering the character the speaker gives of himself, ver. 20, 23, 24, a character that David could never appropriate to himself, but which in every feature so perfectly accords with the character of the Christ. *C.*

Ver. 31. *Who is God save the* LORD? From these words it follows that whosoever is called LORD (JEHOVAH) is God. But Christ is so called, Jn. 12. 41, compare with Is. 6. 1. See also He. 1. 10, compare with Ps. 102. 25. Therefore being called JEHOVAH he is God. *C.*

REFLECTIONS.—How close and marvellous is the connection between Christ and his people, that the same relations of God, the same words and works of God, and exercises towards God, will apply to both! Let Jesus then be at once my Saviour, my Forerunner, and my Pattern. Pleasant and profitable is God to the souls that find him. He is their ALL and IN ALL! Sure is their help in time of need who trust in and love him! though God may take the most awful manner to answer the prayers of his people in delivering them out of their distress, and exalting them to safety and joy. Those deliverances demand the most solemn and hearty thanksgivings, which are from great and imminent danger, and in exact answer to earnest prayers, and which are granted by wonderful appearances, in the midst of great difficulties, and have great and lasting good fruits. Happy are they who, interested in Jesus' righteousness, have their corruptions subdued by his grace, and are by his Spirit enabled to conquer every spiritual foe! God fights for them! who can be against them! What knowledge and skill—what strength—what activity—what courage—what protection—what success and victory—what a high throne—is allotted them by the living, the faithful, the powerful, and unparalleled God of their salvation! By firm faith may such expect the Lord's perfecting all that grace and glory which concerns them.

PSALM XIX. Ver. 1. In this beautiful psalm natural and revealed religion are sketched in outline. It is shown that in each God, as a God of wisdom, power, and holiness, is placed before the mind of man. The works of nature as seen during the day, the glories of the starry skies in the night season, proclaim to men of every nation and language the being and attributes of the Creator. The law of the Lord, recorded in his Word—perfect, pure, holy, sanctifying in its influence, affords a still clearer and deeper insight into the character and government of Jehovah than the contemplation of his works. *P.*

Ver. 2. As the spiritual eye 'seeth him that is invisible,' Mat. 11. 27, so the spiritual ear heareth that which is inaudible. So says the dying believer,

'I see a hand you cannot see, that beckons me away;
I hear a voice you cannot hear, that says, I must not stay.'—*C.*

Ver. 4. *Their line*, &c. These words are applied to the preaching of the apostles (Ro. 10. 18), whose silent writings are now speaking with the power of the Spirit to all ends of the earth. *C.*

Ver. 6. This is literally fulfilled in the natural heavens, as the light and heat of the sun alternately reach the poles.—*Note*, So grace visits the darkest and the coldest heart. Even so, Lord, visit ours! *C.*

Ver. 13. *Upright . . . innocent.* To none can the character of *upright* and *innocent* truly apply but to Christ, all others have reason to be ashamed and repent in dust and ashes.—*Great transgression.* From all our sins which he bore in his own body on the tree, 1 Pe. 2. 24. One sin of his own would have invalidated his sacrifice. But he knew no sin—therefore sinners were saved, He. 9. 14. *C.*

REFLECTIONS.—How inexcusable are atheists and idolaters, when the ever-obvious heavens, the regular succession of nights and days, and the enlightening and warming sun, teach men so much of God! But much more they who enjoy the heavens, the firmament of the gospel-church, all illuminated by Jesus Christ the Sun of Righteousness, and his oracles, ordinances, and ministers, if they offend! Happy those hearts in which his word, so pure, so perfect, so true, so righteous, so precious, and pleasant, is hid: and in which its enlightening, instructing, converting, comforting, nourishing, and healing influence is felt! The more we look into this blessed glass, the more cause we shall see of deep humiliation before God, on account of the number and strength of our secret corruptions. But terrible are presumptuous sins—sins done against light and love! and yet the best need to watch and pray against them. Great then is the mercy that all our salvation from sin, and all the acceptance of our holy services, is in Christ the beloved and his infinitely valuable righteousness.

PSALM XX. Ver. 1. *God of Jacob.* This title implies: 1. The God of him that values his birthright. 2. Of the exile trusting in God. 3. Of the industrious servant. 4. Kind husband and parent. 5. The wrestler in prayer. All which meet conspicuously in Jacob. *C.*

Ver. 9. Evidently a prayer to Christ the King and Head of his church, and whom men are bound to honour even as they honour the Father, Jn. 5. 23. *C.*

REFLECTIONS.—Neither piety nor power can exempt men from sore troubles. All then have need for prayer; and even the greatest need this assistance from the meanest. But what an almighty helper, a kind accepter, and a liberal bestower is God in Christ, as the God of his people! Such as make him the object of their trust shall soon have reason to make him the ground of their praise. An assured trust in him is the best way to preferment and establishment. They who renounce all their confidences, and persevere in prayer to him, shall abide in his love, and be assured of his protection.

PSALM XXI. Ver. 3. *Pure gold*, the emblem of kingly power over the world, and in the church, that 'crown of righteousness' which Jesus won, and which through his grace believers receive, 2 Ti. 4. 8. *C.*

Ver. 8. At this point the address of the church is generally represented as turning directly to Messiah the Son of God. But there appears no good reason for this supposed change, which neither the grammar of the passage nor parallel scriptures require. Does it not rather appear an address to the Father who has seated, at his right hand, his beloved Son until he shall have put all things under his feet, and destroyed even the last of his enemies? 1 Co. 15. 24–28. *C.*

Ver. 11. *Mischievous device.* The mischievous devices both of Jews and Gentiles against the 'mystery of God, and of the Father, and of Christ,' Col. 2. 2. *C.*

REFLECTIONS.—Chiefly, my soul, behold here the everlasting honours, joys, happiness, and blissful influences of thy Redeemer! Behold how fixed is his kingdom and dignity in the infinite, everlasting, and unchangeable wisdom, power, mercy, equity, goodness, and truth of the Most High! Behold the inexpressible judgment which kindles upon and destroys his Jewish—his heathen—his antichristian—and other incorrigible enemies! But rejoice, my soul, in this God thy Saviour. Rejoice at the glory with which he is crowned—at the life granted to and lodged in him; and in his

PSALM XX.

1 The church blesseth the king in his exploits. 7 Her confidence in God's succour.

To the chief musician, A psalm of David.

THE LORD[a] hear thee in the day of trouble;[1] the [b]name of the God of Jacob defend thee.[2]

2 Send thee help[3] from [c]the sanctuary, and strengthen thee[4] out of Zion.

3 Remember all thy offerings, and [d]accept thy burnt-sacrifice. Selah.[5]

4 Grant[e] thee according to thine own heart, and fulfil all thy counsel.

5 We will [f]rejoice in thy salvation, and [h]in the name of our God we will set up *our* banners: the LORD fulfil all thy petitions.

6 Now know I that [i]the LORD saveth his anointed: he will hear him from his holy heaven[6] with the saving strength of his right hand.[7]

7 Some[j] *trust* in chariots, and some in horses: but we will [k]remember the name[8] of the LORD our God.

8 They [l]are brought down and fallen: but we are risen, and stand upright.

9 Save,[n] LORD: let the king hear us when we call.

PSALM XXI.

1 A thanksgiving for victory. 7 Confidence of further success.

To the chief musician, A psalm of David.

THE king[a] shall joy in thy strength,[1] O LORD; and [b]in thy salvation how greatly shall he rejoice![2]

2 Thou[c] hast given him his heart's desire, and hast not withholden the request of his lips. Selah.[3]

3 For[d] thou preventest him with the blessings of goodness: thou settest a crown of pure gold on his head.[4]

4 He[e] asked life of thee, *and* thou gavest *it* him, *even* length of days for ever and ever.[f]

5 His[g] glory *is* great in thy salvation: honour and majesty hast thou laid upon him.

6 For[h] thou hast made him most blessed[i] for ever: thou hast [j]made him exceeding glad with thy countenance.

7 For[k] the king trusteth in the LORD; and through the mercy of the most High he shall not be moved.

8 Thine[l] hand shall find out all thine enemies; thy right hand shall find out those that hate thee.

9 Thou[m] shalt make them as a fiery oven in the time of thine anger: the LORD shall swallow them up in his wrath, and the fire shall devour them.

10 Their[n] fruit shalt thou destroy from the earth, and their seed from among the children of men.

11 For they intended evil against thee: they imagined a mischievous device, [o]*which* they are not able *to perform*.

12 Therefore[5] shalt thou make them turn their back,[6] *when* thou [p]shalt make ready *thine arrows* upon thy strings against the face of them.

13 Be[q] thou exalted, LORD, in thine own strength: *so* will we sing and [r]praise thy power.

PSALM XXII.

1 David complaineth in great discouragement. 9 He prayeth in great distress. 22 He praiseth God for mercy shown him.

To the chief musician upon Aijeleth Shahar,[1] A psalm of David.

MY God,[a] my God, why hast thou forsaken me? *why art thou so* far from helping[2] me, *and from* the words of my roaring?

2 O my God, [b]I cry in the day-time, but thou hearest not; and in the night-season, and am not silent.[3]

3 But[c] thou *art* holy, *O thou* that [d]inhabitest the praises of Israel.[4]

4 Our [e]fathers trusted in thee: they trusted, and thou didst deliver them.

5 They cried unto thee, and were delivered: they trusted in thee, and were [g]not confounded.

6 But I [h]*am* a worm,[5] and no man; [i]a reproach of men, and despised of the people.

7 All[j] they that see me laugh me to scorn: they shoot out the lip, they shake the head, *saying*,

8 He trusted on the LORD[6] *that* he would deliver him: [k]let him deliver him, [7]seeing he delighted in him.[8]

9 But thou *art* he that [l]took me out of the womb: [n]thou didst make me hope[9] *when I was* upon my mother's breasts.

10 I[o] was cast upon thee from the womb: thou *art* my God from my mother's belly.

11 Be[p] not far from me; for trouble *is* near; for *there is* none to help.[1]

12 Many[q] bulls have compassed me: strong *bulls* of Bashan have beset me round.

13 They[r] gaped upon me *with* their [2]mouths, *as* a ravening and a roaring lion.

14 I[s] am poured out like water, and all my bones are out of joint:[3] my heart is like wax; it is melted in the midst of my bowels.

15 My[t] strength is dried up like a potsherd; and my tongue cleaveth to my jaws;[4] and [u]thou hast brought me into the dust of death.

16 For [v]dogs have compassed me: the assembly of the wicked have inclosed me: [z]they pierced my hands and my feet.

17 I[y] may tell all my bones: [z]they look and stare upon me.

x Mat.27.35. Mar.15.24. Lu.23.33. Jn.19.23,37; 20.25–27. *y* Is.52.14. Mar.15.25. *z* Mat.27.36,39. Lu.23.35. Ps.35.21.

A.M. cir. 2968.
B.C. cir. 1036.

PSALM XX.

a Ps.50.15; 91.15. Is. 49.8; 65.24; 58.9.

1 This is a hymn designed to be used before battle. It was customary on such occasions to offer up special sacrifices at the national sanctuary, and to make special supplications. David composed this beautiful and appropriate psalm as part of the special liturgy. It breathes forth a spirit of earnest piety, of confiding faith, and of hope in ultimate victory, even in the face of a powerful foe.—*F.*

b Ps.118.10–12. Pr.18.10, ver.5–7. Is.50.10; 25.4.

2 Heb. *set thee on an high place.*

3 Heb. *thy help.*

c 1 Ki.8.44,45.

4 Heb. *support thee.*

d Heb. *turn to ashes* or *make fat.* Le.9.24. 1 Ki. 18.38. 2 Ch.7.1. Is.60.7. 1 Pe.2.5.

5 See note on Ps. 3.2.—*C.*

e Jb.5.14,15. Ps.21.2. Jn.16.23, ver.5.

f Ps.13.5; 21.1. Is.12.1,2; 61.10.

h 1 Sa.17.45. Mi.4.5. Ex.17.15. Je. 50.2, 34. Ps. 60.4, 12; 118.5–16.

i Ps.18.50; 28.8. Is.49 8. He.5.7; 13.20.

6 Heb. *from the heaven of his holiness.*

7 Heb. *by the strength of the salvation of his right hand.*

j Is.31.1. Ps.31.16. Pr. 21.31. Je.17.5.

k 2 Ch. 14. 11; 20. 12, 20; 32.8. Is. 50.10.

8 Note on Ps.8.1.—*C.*

l Ju.5. 31. Ps. 146. 9; 34.21,22.

n Ps.118.25; 72.4.

PSALM XXI.

a Ps.72.1; 20.6; 28.7; 99.4,7,8. Is.50.7,9.

1 This was fulfilled, when he that was crucified in *weakness* was raised in *power*, Ep.1.19,20. 2 Co. 13.4.—*C.*

2 Ps. 13. 5, 6; 118.14. He.12.2. Is.53.10–12.

2 Ps. xx. was intended to be sung by a devoted and faithful people before battle; this psalm was designed to give expression to their feelings of gratitude and joy for victory achieved. The Lord had heard the prayers offered up; he had overthrown their foes; and now they unite in a song of thanksgiving.—*F.*

c Ps.20.4,5; 66.19,20. Jn.11.42. He.7.25.

3 See note on Ps. 3.2.—*C.*

d 1 Sa.16.13. 2 Sa.2.4; 5.3. Ps. 45. 3. Ac. 2.28. He.2.9. Ca.3.11.

e 2 Sa.7.19. Ps.91.16; 61. 6; 16. 10, 11; 72. 15. He.7.25. Re.1.18.

f No one can read these words and then apply the psalm to any but Christ and his church.—*C.*

g 2 Sa.7.8,9,16. Phi. 2.7–11. Ep. 1. 20–22. 1 Pe.3.22. Mat.28.18. Ps. 110.1.

h Ps.32.1; 119. 1; 45. 7; 72.17. Ac.2.28; 3.26.

i Heb. *set him* to be *blessings.* Ge.12.2.

j Heb. *gladdened him with joy.* Ac. 2. 28. Ps.4.6,7; 16.11.

k 1 Sa 30.6. Ps. 26.1; 31.14; 91.2; 97.2. 1 S: 50. 7, 9; 91.2–10; 110.1.

l Am. 9.2, 3. 2 Sa. 3. 1; v. viii. x. xviii. xx. xxi. Ps. 89.23; 72.9; 110. 5, 6; 2.9.

m De.32.22. Mal.4.1. Mat.21.41,44; 22.7; 23. 33–36; 24.2–51; 25. 30, 41, 46. Lu.19.27, 42–44; 21.6–20; 23.28–30. 1 Th.2.16. Re. vi. viii. ix. xiv. xvi.–xx. 2 Th. 2.8, 9. Ps. 2.1–5, 9. Pr. 1. 25–29. Job xviii. xx. xxii. Is. 3. 11; 26.11.

n Ps.37.28.

4 This may be intended to set forth figuratively the victory obtained by the

A.M. cir. 2968.
B.C. cir. 1036.

monarch; he was crowned with triumph; or it may have originally indicated some such real event as is recorded in 2 Sa. 12. 30, when David, having conquered Rabbah, 'took their king's crown from off his head, and it was set on David's head.'—*F.*

o Ps.2.1,4.

5 Or, *thou shalt set them as a butt,* Job 7. 20; 16. 12. La. 3. 12.

6 Heb. *shoulder.*

p Ps.7.11–16; 64.6–10.

q Job 9.19. Ps.57.11; 72.19.

r Re.11.15–17; 19.1–6; 18.20; 16. 5–7. Ps. 58. 10, 11; 48.11.

PSALM XXII.

B.C. cir. 1021.

1 Or, *The hind of the morning.*

a Mat.27.46. Lu.24. 44. Mar.15.34. He.5.7. Ps. 31.14–16; 40.17.

2 Heb. *from my salvation.*

b La.1.8,12, with He. 5.7. Jn.11. 42. Mat. 26. 38–42.

3 Heb. there is *no silence to me.*

c Ex.15.11. Jos.24.19. De. 32.4. Da.9.7.

d De.10.21. Ps.65.1.

4 'Thou inhabitest the sanctuary amid the praises of Israel.'—*Bootheyd.* 'He that dwelleth in love, dwelleth in God, and God in him,' 1 Jn. 4. 16; and God dwells, in the utterance of his name, amid the praises of his people—spiritual Israel.—*C.*

e Ro.4.18–20. He.11. 13, xi. xii. xiv. xix. xxvi. xxxi. xxxiii. Ex. vii.–xiv.; 2.23. Ps.107.6, 13. Ju. iii. iv. vii. x. 1 Sa. vii.

g Ro.9.33. Is. 28.16. Ps.25.2,3; 69.6,7.

h Job 25.6. Is.41.14; 53.2–4. Phl.2.7,8.

5 That is, I am counted and treated as a *worm*, trampled upon by the foot of the despiser.—*C.*

i Ps.31.11; 35. 15; 41. 6; 55.12,13; 69.7,9,10,19, 20; 89.50,51. Mat.12.24; 11.19; 9. 11. Lu.23.2,5, &c.

j Mar.15.29. Mat. 9. 24; 27.29,39,43. Is. 57.4; 37.22. Ps.44.14; 109.25. Job 16.4,10.

6 Heb. *He rolled* himself *on the LORD.*

k Ps.91.14.

7 Or, *if he delight in him.*

8 These things were fulfilled in the cruel scoffing of the chief priests, scribes, and others during our Lord's crucifixion, Mat.27.39–43.—*C.*

l Ps.139.15,16; 71. 6. Je.31.20. Is.7.14; 49.6.

n Ps.71.5,17. Is.49.1, 2. Lu.2.40–52.

9 Or, *keep me in safety.*

o Is.46. 3; 49.1,2. Ps. 71.6; 89.26. Jn.20.17.

p Ps.6.5; 10.1; 13.1–3; 88.14; 40.13, 17; 69. 1, 2, 18; 109.3. He.5.7.

1 Heb. *not a helper,* De.32.36.

q Ps. 68. 30. Is. 34. 7. Je. 46. 21. Eze. 39. 18. Am.4.1,3.

r Job 16.10. La.2.16; 3.46. Jn.14.30. Mat. 26. 3, 4, 46–68; 27.1–66.

2 Heb. *opened their mouths against me.*

s 2 Sa. 14. 14. Jos. 7. 5. Mat.26.38. Jn.12.27. Ps.69.1,2.

3 Or, *sundered.*

t La. 4. 4. Ps. 69.21. Mat.27.34. Jn.19.28,29.

4 Literally fulfilled when our Lord said, 'I thirst,' Jn. 19. 28, the natural consequence of the agony he endured for us, and the fulfilment of what the prophets had foretold concerning his sufferings.—*C.*

u Is. 53. 9, 10. Mat. 27.50. 1 Co.15.3.

v Mat.7.6. Ps. 2.1,2. Re. 22.15. Phi.3.2. Jn. xviii. xix.

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being made blessings for evermore to MEN—blessings for evermore to ME! And let the ruinous overthrow of his Jewish or other enemies, make me to stand in awe of provoking him, by presumptuous refusals of him, or by rebellion against him. Rich is that salvation secured by him—honourable and lasting in its benefits! God gives exceedingly above what we can ask or think! Crowns, and all other enjoyments, are God's gifts to men! All affliction or destruction of persons or nations

STONE CARVED WORK IN THE SYNAGOGUE, CAPERNAUM — WHERE CHRIST HEALED PETER'S MOTHER-IN-LAW AND MANY OTHERS. [PSALMS, xxi : 1.]— "The king shall joy in thy strength, O Lord; and in thy salvation how greatly shall he rejoice!" This first verse of the twenty-first Psalm is accepted as a prophecy relating to the mission of Christ. We give to illustrate this portion of Scripture a piece of stone work in the synagogue at Capernaum. This view was photographed on Wednesday, May 9, 1894. It was with difficulty that we reached the site of this synagogue that originally stood in Capernaum, because of the deep tangled mass of weeds and thorn bushes. The relic we see is supposed to have formed part of the synagogue which was found in Capernaum at the time of our Savior, and in which he delivered many of his discourses. Christ performed more miracles in Capernaum than in any other place. We are, as we stand in the presence of this stone, at least upon ground made sacred by the words and deeds of our Lord.

18 They[a] part my garments among them, and cast lots upon my vesture.

19 But[b] be not thou far from me, O LORD: O my strength, haste thee to help me.

20 Deliver my soul from [c]the sword; my darling[5] from the power[6] of [d]the dog.

21 Save me from the [e]lion's mouth: for thou hast heard me [g]from the horns of the unicorns.

22 I[h] will declare thy name unto my brethren: in the midst of the congregation will I praise thee.[7]

23 Ye[i] that fear the LORD, praise him; all ye the seed of Jacob, glorify him; and fear him, all ye the seed of Israel.

24 For[j] he hath not despised nor abhorred the affliction of the afflicted, neither hath he hid his face from him; but when he cried unto him, he heard.

25 My[k] praise *shall be* of thee in the great congregation: I will pay my vows before them that fear him.

26 The[l] meek shall eat and be satisfied: they shall praise the LORD that seek him: your heart shall live for ever.

27 All[n] the ends of the world shall [o]remember and [p]turn unto the LORD: and all the kindreds of the nations shall worship before thee.

28 For[q] the kingdom *is* the LORD's: and he *is* the governor among the nations.

29 All *they that be* [r]fat upon earth [s]shall eat and worship: all they that [t]go down to the dust shall bow before him: and [u]none can keep alive his own soul.[8]

30 A[v] seed shall serve him; [x]it shall be accounted to the LORD for a generation.[y]

31 They[y] shall come, and shall declare [z]his righteousness unto a people that shall be born, that he hath done *this*.

v Is.53.10.He.2.13. *x* Ps.78.6;14.5;24.6;73.15. *y* Is.44.3–5;38.19.Ps.145.4–7;78.6. *z* Ro.1.16,17;3.21–26;5.19,21.Is.45.24,25;61.10,11.2 Co.5.21.

A.M. cir. 2983.
B.C. cir. 1021.

a I.u.23.34.Jn.19.23, 24.Mat.27.35.
b ver.11.Ps.40.13,17; 69.1,2,13–18, 29; 109. 1, 21,26.
c Is.53.10.Zec.13.7.
5 Heb. *my onlyone*, Ps. 35.17. [*Darling*—'My dear life.' *Boothroyd.*—' My united one,' the humanity in union with Godhead. *Lowth.*—' My forsaken spirit.' *Brown Patterson.*—We prefer this last, as congenial to the translation of the same word, Ps. 25. 16, as well as to the opening clause of this psalm itself.—*C.*]
6 Heb. *from the hand.*
d I.u.22,53.Jn.14.30. Ps. 37.17.
e 1 Pe.5.8 2 Ti.4.17.
g Ac. 7. 30. 32. Jn. 308.59.Is.34.7.
h Ps. 40. 9, 10. Mar. 16.15.He.2.11–16.Mat. 12.40,50; 25. 40; 28. 10. Jn.20.17.Ro. 8. 29.
7 He prayed for help and deliverance. Now he returns grateful thanks that his prayers have been heard. In the fulness of his joy he praises God publicly, and calls upon others to join in his song of triumph.—*P.*
i Ps.115.11,13; 107.1, 2.1 Co.6.19,20;10.31.
j Ex.2.23–25;3.7. Is 50.7,9.He.5.7. Ps 34 (. 15;116.4,6;118.5,10,18. 6. *k* Ps. 66. 13, 10; 40.10, 10;59.14;116.14–19. Ec. 5.4,5.
l Mat. 5.5. Is.25.6. Ps. 69. 32. Jn.6.51–57;14. 14.
n Ps.2.8;72.11; 00.9. Is.42.22;49.6,12.
o Ec.12.1. Ezc.16.61, 63;20.43.
p De. 4. 30; 30. 10. 2 Ch. 15. 4. Ho. 14. 1, 2. Joel 2.12,13. Ac.20.21.
q Zec. 14. 9. Ob. 21. Ps.110.2,5.Re.11.15.
r Ps.78.31; 17.10; 73. 7.Is.10.16.
s Ps.45.12; 72. 10,11. Is.60.3,5,10. Re.21.24.
t Job 30.19.Ps.44.25; 113.7;145.10,11. Is.29.4; 47.1. Phi.2.10.
u Ps.49.6,7.Ho.13.9.
8 Three distinct classes are here represented as submitting to and serving the Lord:—1. Those who are 'fat upon the earth;' *i.e.* the strong, prosperous, and self-sufficient. 2. 'Those who go down to the dust;' *i.e.* the lowly, the poor, the weak, and the oppressed. 3. 'Those who cannot keep alive their soul;' for such is the sense of the last clause:—those who are near to death; the aged, the infirm, the dying. —*P.*

A.M. cir. 2983.
B.C. cir. 1021.

PSALM XXIII.

a Ps.80. 1. Is. 40. 11. Je. 23. 4, 5. Eze. 34.23, 24. Jn.10.11,14. 1 Pe.2. 25.
1 *My shepherd*, rather 'my feeder,' though it does not exclude the idea of leading and protection.—*C.*
b Ps. 34. 10; 84. 11. Mat.6.33,Phi.4.19.
c Eze.34. 14. Joh 34. 29. Re. 7.15–17. Is. 40. 11.
2 Heb. *pastures of tender grass.*
3 Heb. *waters of quietness.*
d Ps.119.176;5.8; 31. 3.Pr.8.20.Ho.14.9.
e Job 3. 5; 10. 21, 22; 24.17, Ps.44 19.
f Ps.3.0;118.6.Is.41. 10;43.1,2.
4 *Rod*, afflictions, Mi. 6. 9. *Staff*, support, Eze.29.6. These equally comforted Christ, and so do they equally comfort his disciples, Joh 1. 21. He.12.2,6,11.—*C.*
h Is.25.6. Joh 36.16. Ep.2.19. Jn.10.9,10.
5 Heb. *maketh fat*, Am.6.6. Mat.6.17.
6 Acknowledging and constituting him prophet, priest, and king, by the anointing of the Holy Spirit. —*C.*
i Ps.16.5;43.4. Ep.3. 10,20. 1 Co.4.17;5.1.
j Ps. 103. 17; 89. 28; 136.1. Is.54.10.
k 2 Co.5. 1–7 Phi. 1. 23.1 Th.4.17.
7 Heb. *to length of days.*

PSALM XXIV.

B.C. cir. 1045.

a Ex.9.29; 19.5. De. 10.14. Job 41.11. Ps.50. 10 12.1 Co.10.26,28.
1 David seems to have written this psalm as a part of that public and solemn service of praise rendered to the Lord on the occasion of the ark being carried into the new tabernacle which he had prepared for it on Mount Zion, 2 Sa.6.12 –17. The latter part of the psalm is arranged for being chanted by two choirs, the one carrying the ark, the other standing at the gates of Zion. The conception is sublime, and the language corresponds.—*P.*
b Job 26.7; 38. 6. Ps. 104.5; 136. 6. 2 Pe. 3. 5. Col.1.16,17.
c Ps.xv. Mi. 6.6.
d Is. 33. 15–17. 1 Ti. 2. 8. Ps. 25.1; 143.8; xv. Mat.5.8. Ac. 15.9. De. 4.14–16.Re.14.1,4.
2 Heb. *The clean of hands.*

PSALM XXIII.

David's confidence in God's care and goodness.

A psalm of David.

THE LORD *is* my [a]shepherd;[1] I [b]shall not want.

2 He[c] maketh me to lie down in green pastures:[2] he leadeth me beside the still waters.[3]

3 He[d] restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake.

4 Yea, though I walk through the [e]valley of the shadow of death, [g]I will fear no evil: for thou *art* with me; thy rod[4] and thy staff they comfort me.

5 Thou [h]preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest[5] my head with oil;[6] my cup [i]runneth over.

6 Surely [j]goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: [k]and I will dwell in the house of the LORD for ever.[7]

PSALM XXIV.

1 *God's sovereignty over the whole world.* 3 *The citizens of his spiritual kingdom.* 7 *The solemn entrance of the Lord into his sanctuary.*

A psalm of David.

THE earth[a] *is* the LORD's, and the fulness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein.[1]

2 For[b] he hath founded it upon the seas, and established it upon the floods.

3 Who[c] shall ascend into the hill of the LORD? and who shall stand in his holy place?

4 He[d] that hath clean hands,[2] and a pure heart; who hath not lifted up his soul unto vanity, nor sworn deceitfully.

5 He shall receive [e]the blessing from the LORD, and [g]righteousness from the God of his salvation.

6 This *is* [h]the generation of them that seek him, that seek thy face, O Jacob.[3] Selah.

e 1 Pe.3.9.Ps.72.17.Ga.3.13,14.Ep.1.3. *g* Is.46.13;54.17;61.10.2 Co.5.21.Ro.5.21.2 Ti.4.8. *h* Ps.22.30;73.15.Is.53.10.Jn.1.47.Ga.6.16. 3 Or, O God of *Jacob* or *Jesus*.

is generally, as history proves, the reward of their sin. And the ruin of the wicked, or those who reject Jesus Christ, is but the reward of their own sin.

PSALM XXII. Ver. 1. *Forsaken me.* These words, adopted by our Lord in the dark hour of his crucifixion, sufficiently demonstrate that the whole psalm is a prayer of Christ. *Forsaken* is interpreted by *far from helping*. God cannot forsake in presence, but he may as to immediate forth-putting of power to deliver. Compare ver.16,18, 22, with Jn. 20. 25, 27; Mat. 27. 35; He. 2.12. *C.*

Ver. 12. *Many bulls.* Prophetic language, that it may suit all generations, must be emblematical; for words change, but emblems abide. These bulls, accordingly, are the emblems of aggressive power—the ecclesiastical rulers of the Jews, and the imperial rulers of the Roman empire, by whom Christ was persecuted to the death. *C.*

Ver. 13. *Gaped . . . mouths.* The marginal reading is better, and describes the bellowing of the bulls against their victim, well exemplified in the cry of the multitude, 'Away with him, away with him: crucify him, crucify him!' *C.*

Ver. 16. *They pierced my hands and my feet.* The translation of this clause has been much disputed. The Hebrew words in our received text will scarcely bear out the present rendering. The word rendered 'they pierced' almost any Hebrew scholar would translate 'as a lion,' and thus Gesenius and Hengstenberg translate it. It is worthy of note that some ancient MSS. have a different reading, slightly changing the final letter of the word, and thus making it signify 'they pierced,' with this reading agree all the ancient versions, and I therefore conclude that it is the true reading. It is possible that some fanatical Jew, finding that this passage was applied by Christians to our Lord, changed the original form of the word, and thus attempted to corrupt the text and obscure the meaning. *P.*

Ver. 21. *Unicorns.* There is no real unicorn known in nature, except the rhinoceros: the unicorn of heraldry is a creature of imagination. The meaning is well explained in a beautiful and consolatory proverb, 'Man's extremity is God's opportunity.' *C.*

Ver. 26. *Your heart*, &c. Your heart, your affections, being 'set upon things which are above,' Col. 3. 3. Christ, who is eternal life with the Father, 1 Jn. 1. 2, will be your life, Col. 3. 4, and give you eternal life, Jn. 10. 28. *C.*

Ver. 29. *Fat upon earth*, &c. Abundance of food produces forgetfulness of God, Is. 5. 12. To remedy this evil tendency, the Father, even by the example of the Son, always united *worship* with eating. So likewise does the apostolic injunction, 1 Co. 10. 31. The same principle is still more specially developed in the holy feast of the Lord's supper, 1 Co. 10. 16; 11. 28. *C.*

Ver. 30. *A seed.* Not seeds, as of many, but a seed; the one seed, they that are born of water, even of the Spirit, Jn. 3. 5; 1 Pe. 1. 23. *C.*

REFLECTIONS.—How fearful is the nature of sin, which drew such tremendous desertion and pain upon God's only begotten Son, when he came to the world! With the most holy resignation ought God's hidings and frowns to be endured, when they are sanctified by Jesus Christ's bearing them as our forerunner; and should be attended with kind thoughts of God, trust in him, and fervent prayers for deliverance. What earnest supplications are occasioned by a deep sense of need! But it is happy, in great distress, to have our blessed relation to God, and our own and others' experience of former deliverances, to encourage us to hope and wait for what we now need. What sinners before the Lord exceedingly were these dogs, these bulls, these wicked men, who with devils thus raged against the great God our Saviour! But, oh! what a debt of love and of praise the redeemed owe to their Lord, who so bare their sins, their griefs! And what ought they not cheerfully to suffer for his sake! What tidings—what supplies—what conquests—what continuance—what glories of grace—issue from the sufferings of our great IMMANUEL! Himself opens the triumphant song, and exhibits his experience for the comfort of his distressed brethren; and with joy declares his adherence to all his covenant engagements. Sweet is the entertainment of his flesh and blood—yea, of all the fulness of God which he has prepared for the poor, the afflicted, and meek! Precious and lasting is their life who by faith feed upon him! He goes forth persuading the nations high and low, to the obedience of faith. Let then his cause be oppressed as it may, in every age it will prove triumphant.

PSALM XXIII. Ver. 1. This is an exquisite spiritual pastoral, and is a characteristic ode of the shepherd-king. The imagery, taken from shepherd life, is graphic and appropriate. The Good Shepherd *leading* his flock to the best pastures, to the brink of the quiet waters, along safe paths. His watchful care dispels all idea of fear; and permanent peace is finally secured. *P.*

Ver. 3. There are no paths of *righteousness* but those trodden by Christ, Ro. 3. 10; 5. 17, 19; therefore the speaker is Christ, for he *walked in righteousness*. *C.*

REFLECTIONS.—O the advantages, the pleasures, of experimental godliness! God, whose knowledge and care are infinite—God, who is ALL and giveth all—is his people's Shepherd! What can they then want when all the fulness of God is opened for their supply! He makes them to rest and feed in the pastures of his ordinances and promises; and leads them, for their refreshment, to the still waters of his gospel truth, gracious influence, redeeming blood, and everlasting love. He restores their souls when under

7 Lift[t] up your heads, O ye gates; and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors; and the [u]King of glory shall come in.

8 Who *is* this King of glory? [v]The LORD strong and mighty, the LORD mighty in battle.

9 Lift[w] up your heads, O ye gates; even lift *them* up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in.

10 Who[x] *is* this King of glory? The LORD of hosts, he *is* the King of glory. Selah.

PSALM XXV.

1 *David's confidence in prayer.* 7 *He prayeth for remission of sins,* 16 *and for help in affliction.*

A psalm of David.[1]

UNTO thee,[a] O LORD, do I lift up my soul.

2 O my God, I [b]trust in thee: let me not be ashamed; let not mine enemies [c]triumph over me.

3 Yea, [d]let none that wait on thee be ashamed: let them be ashamed which transgress without cause.

4 Show[e] me thy ways, O LORD; teach me thy paths.

5 Lead[g] me in thy truth, and teach me: for thou *art* the God of my salvation;[2] on thee do I wait all the day.[3]

6 Remember,[h] O LORD, thy tender mercies[4] and thy loving-kindnesses; for they *have been* ever of old.

7 Remember[i] not the [j]sins of my youth, nor my transgressions:[5] according[k] to thy mercy remember thou me for thy goodness' sake, O LORD.

8 Good[l] and upright *is* the LORD: therefore will he teach sinners in the way.[6]

9 The[m] meek will he [o]guide in judgment; and the meek will he teach his way.

10 All[p] the paths of the LORD *are* mercy and truth unto such as keep his covenant and his testimonies.

11 For[q] thy name's sake, O LORD, pardon mine iniquity;[7] for [r]it *is* great.[8]

12 What man *is* he that feareth the LORD? him shall he [s]teach in the way *that* he shall choose:

13 His soul shall dwell at ease;[9] and his seed shall [t]inherit the earth.

A.M. cir. 2959.
B.C. cir. 1045.

t Ps.118.19. Mar.16. 19. Re.3.20. Ca.5.2. Pr. 23.26.
u Hag.2.7. 1 Co. 2.8. Ja.2.1. Ac.7.2.
v Is.9.6;63.1–4;49.24 –26. Ps. 45. 3–5. Re.18. 8. Col.2.15. Mat. 12.29. 1 Jn.3.8.
w Ver.7.
x Ca.5.9. Mat.21.10.

PSALM XXV.

B.C. cir. 1056.

1 This psalm, like Ps. xxxiv, cxix, and several others, is *acrostic* in its plan. Each letter of the Hebrew alphabet consecutively begins a verse. The sixth letter is omitted, but the eighteenth is repeated, and thus the number of verses corresponds exactly with the number of the alphabet.—*P.*
a Ps.31.5;86.4;143.8; 1 Pe.4.19.
b Ps.22.4,5;31. 1; 34. 8. Is.28.16;49.23;50. 10. Ro. 9.33;10.11. 1 Ch.5.20. *c* Is.30.19. *d* Ps. 41. 11;35.4,26.
e Ps.27.11;119.26,33. 64,66,68,102,108,124, 135. Is.2.3.
g Ps.43.3;119.35. Is. 42.16. Ex.13.21.
h Ps.40.11;51.1. Is. 63.7. Ge.19.19.
i Job 13.26;20.11. Je. 3.25.
j See note on ver.2.
k Ps.51. 1;106. 4. Is. 63.7. Ro 5.20,21.
l Ps.119.68;11.7. Ga. 1.16. Ep.1.17,18. Jn. 6. 44,45. Mat.9.13.
m *In the way*—that is, lead them to Jesus, who is the only *way* to the Father, Jn. 14. 6.—*C.*
n Mat.5.5. Ps.22.26; 76.9;149.4. Is.11.4;61.1. Zep.2.3.
o Ps.32.8;73.24; 37.5. Pr.3.6.23.
p Ho.14.9. Ge.24.27; 32. 10. Ps. 89. 1, 2; 33.4; 103.17,18. Is.63.7.
q Is. 43. 25. Ps. 79.9; 31.3. Eze.20.9;36.22,32. 1 Jn.2.12.
7 See note on ver.2.
r Ex.34. 9. Ps. 65. 3. Nu.14.17–19. Ro.5.15–21.
8 The leading thought of the psalmist here is the magnitude of his offence. He has no claim to mercy. He has forfeited all right to pardon. Yet he pleads for the pardon of his iniquity '*though* it is great.' This is probably the true signification of the clause.—*C.*
s Ps. 32. 8; 37. 23; 48. 14; 73. 24. 2 Th. 3. 5.
9 Heb. *shall lodge in goodness.*
t Ps.37.11,22,29. Mat. 5.5. 2 Pe. 3.13.

A.M. cir. 2948.
B.C. cir. 1056.

u Pr.3.32. Ge.18. 17. Mat. 13. 11. Am. 3. 7. 1 Co.2.10. Jn.7.17; 15.15. Ep.1.9,18.
1 Or, *and his covenant to make them know it.*
v Ps.124.7,8;121.1,2; 123.1,2.
2 Heb. *bring forth.*
x Ps.69.16;86.16; 60. 1;70.5. Mi.7.19. Lu. 18. 13.
y Hab. 3. 17–19. Ps. 42.7,8; 34.19; 138.7,8. 2 Co.1.5,10.
z Ex. 3. 7, 8. Ps. 119. 153. La.5.1.
a Ps.89.50; 3. 1, 2; 38. 18;55. 3. Ex.14.24.
3 Heb. *hatred of violence.*
b Ps.16. 1;25. 2. Is. 41. 4. Ro.11.29. 1 Pe.1.5.
c ver.2. Joel 2.26,27. Ps.31.1,17.
d Ps.7.8;26.1;141.12. Pr.13.6. Mat.6.22. 2 Co 1.12.
e Ps.130.8; 14. 7; 122. 6;137.5,6;34.19;51.18.

PSALM XXVI.

a 1 Co.4.3–5. Ps.7.8 2 Ki.20.3. Pr.20.7.
b 2 Ti.1.12. Ps. 16.1; 25.2;31.6;34.18;121.3,7,8.
c Ps.139.23; 17. 3; 66. 10. Zec.13.9.
d 2 Co.5.14. Is.63.7. 1 Jn.4.19. Ps.119.32.
e Jn.14.6. 2 Co. 1.12. Ps. 5.8.
f Ps. 1.1;12.2;31.6; 119. 1 Jo.1.7. 2 Jo. 2 Jn. 2.
g Ps. 15.4,5. 5,11. 2 Ki. 22.15; 107.3–8. Ge.49.6. 1 Co.5.9–11.
h Is. 1. 16, 18. Ex. 30. 19–21. He.10.19–22. Ps. 73.13.
1 Surely no mere man since the fall could, or did, ever say in truth, I will wash mine hands in *innocency*? Is not he who so affirms undoubtedly the Christ?—*C.*
i Ps.66.13–15;116.12–18;43.4.
k Ps.71.14–24;145.2–21.
l Ps.27.4;42.1,2;63.1, 2;84.1,2,10.
2 Heb. *of the tabernacle of thy honour.*
3 The *tabernacle* was the habitation and house of God before the erection of the temple by Solomon. Consequently the use of these terms here has no bearing on the date of the psalm. The word rendered 'honour' probably signifies the Shekinah glory.—*P.*
4 Or, *take not away.* Ps.28.3;55.23. 1 Sa. 25. 29. Ge.18.23. Is.3.11.
5 Heb. *men of bloods.*
n Pr.1.16,18;4.16. Is. 33.15.
6 Heb. *filled with.*
o Job 1. 1. Tit. 2. 12. Ge.6.9. Is.38.3.
7 See note on ver. 1.
p Ps.130.8;25.22.
8 Deliver me from the power of mine enemies, and from the burden of sin.—*C.*

14 The [u]secret of the LORD *is* with them that fear him; and he will show them his [l]covenant.

15 Mine[v] eyes *are* ever toward the LORD; for he shall pluck[2] my feet out of the net.

16 Turn[x] thee unto me, and have mercy upon me; for I *am* desolate and afflicted.

17 The[y] troubles of my heart are enlarged: *O* bring thou me out of my distresses.

18 Look[z] upon mine affliction and my pain; and forgive all my sins.

19 Consider[a] mine enemies; for they are many; and they hate me with cruel hatred.[3]

20 O[b] keep my soul, and deliver me: [c]let me not be ashamed; for I put my trust in thee.

21 Let[d] integrity and uprightness preserve me; for I wait on thee.

22 Redeem[e] Israel, O God, out of all his troubles.

PSALM XXVI.

David resorteth unto God in confidence of his integrity.

A psalm of David.

JUDGE me,[a] O LORD; for I have walked in mine integrity: I have [b]trusted also in the LORD; *therefore* I shall not slide.

2 Examine[c] me, O LORD, and prove me; try my reins and my heart.

3 For[d] thy loving-kindness *is* before mine eyes; and [e]I have walked in thy truth.

4 I[g] have not sat with vain persons, neither will I go in with dissemblers.

5 I[h] have hated the congregation of evil-doers; and will not sit with the wicked.

6 I[i] will wash mine hands in [l]innocency: [j]so will I compass thine altar, O LORD;

7 That[k] I may publish with the voice of thanksgiving, and tell of all thy wondrous works.

8 LORD,[l] I have loved the habitation of thy house, and the place [2]where thine honour dwelleth.[3]

9 Gather not[4] my soul with sinners, nor my life with bloody men;[5]

10 In[n] whose hands *is* mischief, and their right hand is full of[6] bribes.

11 But as for me, [o]I will walk in mine integrity:[7] redeem[p] me,[8] and be merciful unto me.

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disease or decay, and, moved by his own blessed grace, leads them in Jesus and his word as their way, and enables them to perfect holiness in his fear. Amidst all the pains and the fears of death, his gracious presence, his drawing and sealing influence, and his supporting promises, are their sufficient encouragement. Amidst their unnumbered enemies of lusts, of devils, and of men, not only necessaries, but even abundant comforts, are allowed them. The mercy and goodness of God, in streams of spiritual and temporal blessings, attend the faithful, till at last they are for ever filled with all the fulness of God in his heavenly temple.

PSALM XXIV. Ver. 1. *Earth is the Lord's.* It is his by right of *creation*, Jn. 1. 3; it is his by right of *redemption*, Ep. 1. 14; it is his by right of final *victory*, 1 Co. 15. 26, of which this psalm is a prophetic celebration. *C.*

Ver. 3. This is an inquiry after him who has been described, Ps. 23. 6, an abiding priest to make intercession in the holy place. *C.*

Ver. 4. Here are two positive and two negative characteristics that never belonged to any son of man but Christ. This psalm is therefore a prophetic description of Christ. *C.*

Ver. 6. *This is the generation*, that is, they who appear at his right hand to inherit the blessing, and receive the gift of righteousness, when the earth becomes the Lord's by final victory, 1 Co. 15. 26, and by a new creation, 2 Pe. 3. 13.—*O Jacob.* Jacob, being interpreted, signifies *supplanter*; and he supplanted profane Esau by purchasing the blessing. As such, the name is an appropriate title of Christ, who purchased the heirship of all things at the cost of his own blood, 1 Co. 6. 20; 7. 23.—*Selah.* See note on Ps. 3. 2. *C.*

Ver. 7. *Everlasting doors.* This can be no allusion to either tabernacle or temple; for David never imagined their gates or doors to be *everlasting*. The everlasting gates and doors are those of righteousness, Ps. 118. 19, by which Christ has entered into the heavens, He. 4. 14; 9. 11, 12, 24. *C.*

Ver. 9. The gates and doors are twice summoned, because Christ has two entrances into glory; one after his resurrection, when he entered alone, 'mighty in battle,' ver. 8; the other after the resurrection of his saints, when he enters with them and his angels, 'Lord of hosts,' Mat. 16. 27. *C.*

REFLECTIONS.—How great is Christ, who is Lord of all! Surely it is proper that all persons should praise and serve him; and that all things should be received as from his hand and used to his honour. But what change of state and nature—what holiness in heart and life—is necessary to constitute us true members of his church on earth, or inhabitants of his heaven above! There is great need of serious self-examination, lest he at last reject us; for without holiness no man shall see the Lord. But however sincere our hearts, blameless our lives, or fervent our prayers, not these, but a living faith in the Lord Jesus, must found our title to eternal felicity. O how transcendently glorious is Jesus' entrance into manhood—his exaltation to heaven—and his entrance into men's hearts and assemblies on earth! And, in fine, his solemn return to his celestial mansions, attended by all the ransomed millions, after the last judgment!

PSALM XXV. Ver. 2. *Let not mine enemies triumph over me.* He that would discover the speaker in this psalm requires, as in other cases, to search the Scriptures, and compare spiritual

12 My[q] foot standeth in an even place: [r]in the congregations will I bless the LORD.

PSALM XXVII.

1 David sustaineth his faith by the power of God, 4 by his love to the service of God, 9 and by prayer.

A psalm of David.

THE LORD *is* [a]my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear?[1] the [b]LORD *is* the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?

2 When the wicked, *even* mine enemies and my foes, came upon[2] me [c]to eat up my flesh, they [d]stumbled and fell.

3 Though[e] an host should encamp against me, my heart shall not fear: though war should rise against me, in this *will* I *be* confident.

4 One[g] *thing* have I desired of the LORD, that will I [h]seek after; [i]that I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life, to behold the beauty[3] of the LORD, and to inquire in his temple.[4]

5 For[j] in the time of trouble he shall hide me in his pavilion: in the secret of his tabernacle shall he hide me; he shall set me up [k]upon a rock.

6 And[l] now shall mine head be lifted up above mine enemies round about me: [m]therefore will I offer in his tabernacle sacrifices of joy;[5] I will sing, yea, I will sing praises unto the LORD.[6]

n Ps.26.12;66.17–15;122.2,2;134.1,2,5,21;142.4.

5 Heb. *of shouting.* 6 Literally fulfilled, as in Mat.26.30.—*C.*

A.M. cir. 2948.
B.C. cir. 1056.

q Ps.27.11;40.2. Pr. 10.9.
r Ps.22.22,25;116.14, 17–19;142.4;55.14;122.4.

PSALM XXVII.

B.C. cir. 1020.

a Mi.7.7, 8. 2 Sa. 22. 29. Is 60.19,20. Jn.8.12.

1 He who *most fears* God, will *least fear* man; yet he who can truly say, 'I am fearless,' must be more than man. And that the speaker is Christ, must appear from comparing this with Ps. 3.6, and considering the evidence by which that psalm is ascribed to Christ.—*C.*

b Ps.118.6;28.8;99.4; 84. 11. Is. 12. 2; 41. 10. Ro.8.31–39.

2 Heb. *approached against me.*

c Job 19.22;31.31. Ps. 14.4;53.4.
d Is.8.9,15. Ps.18.38, 42.
e Ps.3.6;56.4,11; 118. 6–14. 1 Pe.3.14,15. Phi. 1.28.
g Ps.38.9;42.1–4;43. 3,4;84.1,2, 10;122. 1, 2; 23.6. Phi.3.8. 1 Ti.3.15, 16. 2 Co.3.18.
h Lu. 11. 8, 9; 18. 1. Ja.5.16,17.
i Ps.65.4;63.2.

3 Or, *the delight.*

4 The word is applied to both tabernacle and temple. It may mean either. If the psalm was composed by David, then the tabernacle must be referred to; probably that tabernacle which David erected for the reception of the ark on Mount Zion.—*P.*

j Ps.83.3;91.1;32.7; 119.114;31.20. Is.26.20. Je.2.27,28.
k Ps.40.2; 26. 12. Pr. 18.10. Jn.10.27–29.
l 2 Sa. iii. v. viii. x. xviii.xx.–xxii.Ps.3.3.

A.M. cir. 2984.
B.C. cir. 1020.

o Ps.4.3,5–1,2,6,2;31. 2;130.1,2. Is.58.9.
p Ps.24.6;42.1, 2; 63. 1,2,8.

7 Or, *my heart said unto thee, Let my face seek thy face.*

q Ps.13. 1; 44. 24; 69. 17; 88.14; 102. 2; 143. 7. Is.8.17;45.15;59.2.
r He.13.5. Jn.10.27–29. Je.32.40.
s Is.49.15,16; 46. 3,4. 2 Ti.4.16,17.

8 Heb. *will gather me,* Is.40.11.

t Ps. 25. 4, 5; 86. 11; cxix.15,8;143.10;143.3,4.

9 Heb. *a way of plainness,* Ps.26.12.

1 Heb. *observers of me.*

u Ps.35. 11. Mat. 26. 59. Ac.6.11, 13; 9.1; 26. 11.

2 See this literally fulfilled, Mar. 14. 56. —*Note,* The character of the devil is 'a liar from the beginning,' 'an accuser of the brethren;' and false witness, either by insinuation, evil report, or solemn testimony, has ever been the principal weapon with which they have assailed his servants and church.—*C.*

v Ep.2. 8. Ps. 112. 7, 8; 118.17,18; 116.9; 143. 5.2Ch.20.20. Jn.11.40.

x Ps.31.24;62.1,5;33. 20,21. Is.25.9; 8. 17; 30. 18; 40. 31; 26. 8; 50. 10. Mi.7.7–9. 2ep.3.8. 1Co. 16.13. Mat.13.12.

3 This is an answer from the father to the petition of the Son, ver.7.—*C.*

PSALM XXVIII.

a Ps.3.4;5.2, 3; 77. 1; 142.1.
b De.32.4,31. Ps. 18. 2. 1 Co.10.4.

1 Heb. *from me.*

c La.3.8. Ps. 83. 1–4; 143.7,8.

7 Hear,[o] O LORD, *when* I cry with my voice: have mercy also upon me, and answer me.

8 *When thou saidst,* Seek ye my face; my heart said unto thee, Thy [p]face, LORD, will I seek.[7]

9 Hide[q] not thy face *far* from me; put not thy servant away in anger: thou hast been my help; [r]leave me not, neither forsake me, O God of my salvation.

10 When[s] my father and my mother forsake me, then the LORD will take me up.[8]

11 Teach[t] me thy way, O LORD, and lead me in a plain path,[9] because of mine enemies.[1]

12 Deliver me not over unto the will of mine enemies: [u]for false witnesses are risen up against me,[2] and such as breathe out cruelty.

13 *I had fainted,* [v]unless I had believed to see the goodness of the LORD in the land of the living.

14 Wait[x] on the LORD: be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thine heart: wait, I say, on the LORD.[3]

PSALM XXVIII.

1 David prayeth earnestly against his enemies. 6 He blesseth God. 9 He prayeth for the people.

A psalm of David.

UNTO thee[a] will I cry, O LORD [b]my rock, be not silent to [1]me: [c]lest, *if* thou be silent

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with spiritual. Accordingly let him prayerfully and candidly consult Ps. 40. 11, and compare the same with Ps. 25. 7–11, and it must be confessed they are alike. Then let him turn to He. 10. 5, and compare the same with Ps. 40. 6–8, and he will find that he who confesses his *iniquities* is no other than Christ; no other than he who, though he 'knew no sin,' yet 'bore all our sins in his own body;' yea, upon whom 'the Lord laid the iniquities of us all.' *C.*

Ver. 6. Rather 'for they are eternal.' The psalmist's knowledge of God's nature and attributes, and the experience of his wondrous mercy, prompt him to this grateful acknowledgment. *M.*

Ver. 14. *Secret*—'the mystery hid from ages and generations, but now made manifest to the saints; Christ in (them) the hope of glory,' Col. 1. 26, 27. *Covenant*—that new covenant promised, He. 8. 6–13; 10. 16, 17, and sealed by the mediation of Christ, He. 9. 15–17. *C.*

Ver. 21. *Integrity and uprightness.* No sinner could compose, adopt, or utter this prayer; for the fact of being a sinner implies the want of both these qualities. The sinner rests his plea upon the mercy of God, and not upon his own merits; but Christ addresses the Father as one who magnified the law and made it honourable. *C.*

REFLECTIONS.—An interest in God and his love is the surest protection from shame and danger; and the more our hearts and desires are weaned from earthly vanities, and set upon God and things above, we are the more sure that our hopes shall not be disappointed. He that believeth shall not be ashamed. God never fails them that seek him. But the short-lived triumphs of obstinate transgressors shall issue in everlasting misery and confusion. When we pray for ourselves we must never forget our brethren. Being by nature blind and impotent, our whole direction in, and strength for, duty must come from God. And none who wait on him as the God of their salvation shall ever wait in vain. Hopes fixed on his everlasting love can never be disappointed: and what others have found an infallible support we may boldly depend upon. Sins of youth, though pardoned by God, ought to be remembered by us for our humiliation. And our only hope of God's favour must be founded on a living faith in Jesus' blood. All true knowledge of God and his ways, and wisdom to walk therein, spring from his own mercy and faithfulness. Sense of sin must drive us to implore the forgiveness and destruction of it: but no sin, however great, ought to render us desperate. God, by his infinite power and grace, can pardon the greatest as well as the least. And the more sin God forgives to us, the more we are obliged to love, fear, and serve him: and the more we serve him, the greater shall be our happiness in life and intimacy with him. Whatever God does, however afflicting, shall work together for our good. Though God and men should concur to entangle us in nets of trouble, and Satan distress our minds with his accusations, the fruit of all is not to destroy us but to purge away our sin. But our kindliest resignation to afflictions must be attended with prayer for the removal of them. Though we must love our enemies, we must pray against their wickedness. And while we earnestly study the utmost uprightness in our practice, the church in general, and every member thereof, ought to share in our fervent requests.

PSALM XXVI. Ver. 1. *Mine integrity.* No conscious sinner ever called for judgment, but for mercy; none ever asserted *integrity*, being guilty of sin. This is therefore a prayer of Christ, who, though he *bore* our sins, *knew* no sin; and who, on behalf of his redeemed members, pleads his perfect righteousness. *C.*

Ver. 3. Who can boldly say unto God, I have walked in *thy truth*—not merely man's truth, but God's truth? Adam did not so walk; Eve did not so walk; Aaron did not so walk; David did not so walk; the apostles did not so walk. All these, as their histories testify, came short of the glory of God. Christ alone so walked, he alone could so affirm.—*Note,* How blessed are believers, to whom the promises of mercy, pardon, and salvation are all confirmed by Him who is *the truth. C.*

REFLECTIONS.—While here we behold Jesus Christ in a figure, as holy, harmless, undefiled, and separated from sinners, and wash our heart and hands in his blood and grace, let us observe how comfortable under calumny it is to possess conscious innocence. They who trust in God are kept by his mighty power through faith unto salvation; and the faith or sense of Jesus' love, and a due regard to his word, will tend to restrain from sin. But nothing is more dangerous to souls than fellowship with the ungodly. To sit long amidst light, vain, and unprofitable discourse, perhaps more deadens the heart than that which is notoriously profane. No man appears really gracious who does not study to avoid the company of the wicked. No man rightly approaches God's ordinances but in the way of washing his heart and life in the sin expiating and subduing fountain of Jesus' blood and Spirit. None can love God without loving his ordinances, and counting his service perfect freedom, and his works of grace inexpressibly marvellous. However joyous the assemblies of sinners may be now, it will be infinitely dreadful to be gathered with them in death or in the last judgment. And even those who walk in their uprightness, must before God stand on the foundation of Jesus' redeeming blood and infinite mercy; and all their steadfastness in Christ or his way must be thankfully ascribed to their faith.

PSALM XXVII. Ver. 2. *My foes came upon me to eat up my flesh.* When Satan, who has the power of death, He. 2. 14, and the high-priest, who had the power of indictment, and Pilate, who had the power of condemnation, came against me, to deliver me up to the *devouring* grave. *C.*

Ver. 5. David never escaped from trouble; but Christ is gone into the heavens, waiting till all his enemies be made his footstool. *C.*

Ver. 10. It is not to be overlooked that, after the commencement of our Lord's ministry, Joseph, his reputed father, is not mentioned, being most probably dead; and when his mother and brethren endeavoured to approach him, Mat. 12. 46; Mar. 3. 32–35; Lu. 8. 19–21, he defines his nearest and dearest relatives to be 'those who hear the word of God, and do it.' Now that literally, and also in this spiritual sense, Christ was forsaken of all earthly relations, is evident from the history of his malicious trial and barbarous crucifixion, Mat. 26. 56; Jn. 16. 32. *C.*

REFLECTIONS.—Happy are they to whom Jesus Christ is a blessed instructor, saviour, strengthener, and quickener! He is at once the source, the price, the means, the matter, and the bestower of all our spiritual and eternal blessings. Where faith in him, through his word, keeps strong and steady, no enemies or dangers can make us either to fear or faint. To live near him, and to behold his and his Father's glory in ordinances here, and in heaven above, is the pleasure, the protection, the honour of a saint, and the matter of his thankful praise. Nothing can be dearer to his heart than divine encouragements to intimate and gracious fellowship with God. A sense of his favour is the greatest help and comfort under manifold troubles and wants. His instructions direct to safe and honourable walking amidst the most malignant enemies. And though all men should forsake us, or even hate us, it is enough if he love and support us. Faith in his promises and characters will keep us from fainting amidst raging lusts, powerful temptations and distresses, and enemies unnumbered. And the more of his goodness we experience in waiting for him, the more we should encourage others to patient expectations of his grace.

PSALM XXVIII. Ver. 2. The construction of these prayers, which are all in the speaker's own name, sufficiently testify to him who knows the Scriptures, Job 14. 13–16; 16. 23, 26, that this is a psalm, not of a sinner asking in Christ's name, but of Christ asking in his own right. *C.*

Ver. 4. Such prayers throughout the Psalms have often afforded matter of scorn or reproach to the infidel, and called forth timid and ignorant apologies from believers. The answer to all such

to me, I become like them that go down into the pit.[2]

2 Hear[d] the voice of my supplications, when I cry unto thee, when I [e]lift up my hands toward thy holy oracle.[3]

3 Draw[g] me not away with the wicked, and with the workers of iniquity, [h]which speak peace to their neighbours, but mischief *is* in their hearts.

4 Give[i] them according to their deeds, and according to the wickedness of their endeavours: give them after the work of their hands; render to them their desert.

5 Because[j] they regard not the works of the LORD, nor the operation of his hands,[4] he shall destroy them, and not build them up.

6 Blessed[k] *be* the LORD, because he hath heard the voice of my supplications.

7 The[l] LORD *is* my strength and my shield; my heart trusted in him, and I am helped: therefore my heart greatly rejoiceth; and with my song will I praise him.

8 The LORD *is* their[5] strength,[6] and he *is* the saving strength[7] of his [m]anointed.

9 Save[o] thy people, and bless thine inheritance: feed[8] them also, and lift them up for ever.

PSALM XXIX.

1 *David exhorteth princes to give glory to God,* 3 *by reason of his power,* 11 *and protection of his people.*

A psalm of David.

GIVE unto[a] the LORD, O ye mighty,[1] give unto the LORD glory and strength.

2 Give unto the LORD the glory due unto his name:[2] worship [b]the LORD in the beauty[3] of holiness.

3 The [c]voice of the LORD *is* upon the waters: the God of glory thundereth: the LORD *is* upon many[4] waters.[5]

4 The voice of the LORD *is* powerful;[6] the voice of the LORD *is* full of majesty.[7]

5 The voice of the LORD breaketh the cedars; yea, the LORD breaketh the cedars of Lebanon.

6 He maketh them also to skip like a calf; Lebanon[d] and [e]Sirion like a young unicorn.

7 The voice of the LORD divideth[8] the [g]flames of fire.

d Ps.114.4;18.7–15.Hab.3.6,7. *e* De.3.9;4.48.Ps.133.3. 8 Heb. *cutteth out.*
g Ex.9.23;19.18.Job 37.3,4;38.35.Ps.18.14;144.6;77.18.

A.M. cir. 2984.
B.C. cir. 1020.

2 Barnes truly remarks that this 'psalm is peculiarly appropriate to those who are in danger of being led away by the acts of the ungodly,—or who are under strong temptations to be associated with the gay, the sensual, and the worldly,—or to whom strong inducements are offered to mingle in their pleasures, their vices, and their follies.'—*P.*

d Ps.4.1;27.7; 130.2; 142.1,2.
e Ps.63.4; 134.2; 138. 2.1 Ki. 8. 22,30,38. Da. 6.10. La.3.41. 1Ti.2.8.
3 Or, *towards the oracle of thy sanctuary.*
g Ps.125.5; 26.9; 1. 1; 6.8;119.115.
h Ps.12.2; 55. 21; 62. 4.Je.9.8.
i 2 Ti.4.14. Re. 18.6. Is.3.11. Ro.2.8,9. Eze. xvii xxviii
j Job 34.26, 27. Is.5. 12; 42. 24, 25. La. 1.9. Zec.1. 4–6. Mal. 2. 2. 2 Th.1.8,9.
4 Because they regard neither the judgments nor the mercies of God, but rebel against the one, and abuse the other; therefore the despisers shall wonder and perish, Ac.13.41.—*C.*
k Ps.103.1–5;116.1.
l Ps.18.2; 91.2; 54. 4; 69.30,31; 118.5–19; 116. 1–9. Ex.15.1–20. 1Sa.2. 1–10. Ju. v. 1S.xii. xxv.
5 Or, *his strength.*
6 '*Their strength.*' Whose strength? his people's. Ver.9.—*C.*
7 Heb. *strength of salvations.*
m 1Sa.16.13;2.10. Ps. 2.6.1S.61.1.
o 1 Ki.8.51,53. Ps.25. 22; 51.18; 69. 36; 90. 13–17;80.14–19; 102. 13–22. Is.4.2. Re.5.10;7.17.
8 Or, *rule,* Mi.7.14.

PSALM XXIX.

a 1 Ch. 16. 28,29. Ps. 96.7–9;115.1. Ac.12.23. Re.5.11–14.
1 Heb. *ye sons of the mighty.* Ps.89.6.
2 Heb. *the honour of his name.* Ps.96.8; 89. 7. [See note on Ps.8.1.—*C.*]
b 2 Ch.20. 21. Ps. 90. 17;27.4;110.3.
3 Or, *in* his *glorious sanctuary.*
c Job 37. 4, 5. Ps. 18. 13, 15; 77. 17,18. Ex. 9. 28.
4 Or, *great.*
5 It appears that on this occasion the psalmist's religious fervour was awakened by one of those terrible storms which sometimes visit the shores of Palestine. His description of it is most graphic. It first appears upon the sea, where its roar is heard as it sweeps along from the west. It approaches the land. The thunder-clouds ascend the lofty sides of Lebanon, and the lightning and tempest rend the great cedar forests. It passes on eastward to the wilderness of Kadesh, where its fury is at length exhausted.—*P.*
6 Heb. *in power.*
7 Heb. *in majesty.* Ps.102.3.

A.M. cir. 2984.
B.C. cir. 1020.

h Ne.9.19,21. Ps.78. 40,52;107.4.Je.2.2. De. 1.10;32.10.
9 Or, *to be in pain, and so bring forth,* Job 39.1–3.
1 'The voice of the Lord maketh the oaks to tremble, and layeth bare the forests.'—*Lowth,* &c.
f Ps.63.2;48.9; 134.1, 2; 15.1,2.
2 Or, *every whit of it uttereth,* &c.
k Ge.8.1,2. Ps. 93. 4; 10. 16. Da.2.44. 1 Ti.1. 17.
l Ps.2.6–9.
m Ps.28.8, 9; 72. 2, 7; 37. 11. Je. 33. 6; 29. 11. Zec.10.12. Pr. 3. 17. Is. 9.7;26.12;40.29–31. Ro. 5.1;14.17. Phi.4.7.
o Ps.85.8,10.

PSALM XXX.

B.C. cir. 1046 or 1020.

a De.20.5.2 Sa.5.11, or 20.3.
b Ps. 34. 1–7; 75. 1, 2; 116. 1–7; 27. 6; 25.2; 41. 11;28 9.
1 'The psalmist passes now from the almost despairing elegy to the joyful thanksgiving. In the calm after the storm he sees in quiet retrospect the working of God's ways in all that before had been perplexing to his faith, and in his gratitude he feels his heart warmed towards others who are still in suffering, and pours forth his experience as a lesson of trust to them, and an indication of God's mode of dealing with mankind.'—*P.*
c Ps.6.2,3;51.8;55.16; 103.3;116.3,8.
d Ps.18.16–18;40.1,2; 71. 20; 86. 13. Is. 38.17. Jonah 2.4,6.
2 Who is this? Let the inquirer compare Ps. 16. 10 with Ac. 2. 27, and then read this verse, and the question is answered. Christ alone could say, 'Thou hast brought up my soul from the grave.'—*C.*
e Ps.33.1; 32.11; 107. 2;97.12. Phi.4.4. Ex.15. 11. Hab. 1.12,13.
3 Or, *to the memorial.*
g Ps.103.9; 126. 5. Is. 57.16;26.20; 54.7,8; 12.1 -3. 2 Co.4.17.
4 Heb. there is but *a moment in his anger.*
5 Heb. *in the evening.*
6 Heb. *singing.*
h Job 29. 18–20. Lu. 12.19.
i Ps.18.35,36;5.12;44. 3;89.17.
7 Heb. *settled strength for my mountain.*
j Ps.104.29;6.2,3; 10. 1; 13.1–3; 42. 9; 102. 10; 143.7.
k Ps.34.6;6.2,3;5.2,3; 130.1,2;77.1,2.
l Is. 38.18. Ps.6.5; 88. 11;115.17. Ec.9.5.
m Ps.4.1;5.1;51.1;56. 1;57.1;40.17;143.1,7–9.
o 2 Sa. 6. 14. Ps. 126. 1,2,5. Is.61.3. Es.9.22.
8 That is, my *tongue* or my *soul,* Ps.16.9.
p Ps.7.17;9.1,2; 13.6; 50.16,17; 71.14–24; ciii. cxvi.cxviii.cxlv. &c.

8 The voice of the LORD [h]shaketh the wilderness; the LORD shaketh the wilderness of Kadesh.

9 The voice of the LORD maketh the [9]hinds to calve, and discovereth the forests;[1] and [j]in his temple doth every one speak of *his* glory.[2]

10 The LORD [k]sitteth upon the flood; [l]yea, the LORD sitteth King for ever.

11 The[n] LORD will give strength unto his people; [o]the LORD will bless his people with peace.

PSALM XXX.

1 *David praiseth God for his deliverance.* 4 *He exhorteth others to praise him by the example of God's dealing with him.*

A psalm *and* song *at* the [a]dedication of the house of David.

I WILL[b] extol thee, O LORD; for thou hast lifted me up, and hast not made my foes to rejoice over me.[1]

2 O[c] LORD my God, I cried unto thee, and thou hast healed me.

3 O[d] LORD, thou hast brought up my soul from the grave;[2] thou hast kept me alive, that I should not go down to the pit.

4 Sing[e] unto the LORD, O ye saints of his, and give thanks at the remembrance[3] of his holiness.

5 For[g] his anger *endureth but* a moment;[4] in his favour *is* life: weeping may endure for a night,[5] but joy[6] *cometh* in the morning.

6 And[h] in my prosperity I said, I shall never be moved.

7 LORD,[i] by thy favour thou hast made my mountain to stand strong:[7] thou [j]didst hide thy face, *and* I was troubled.

8 I[k] cried to thee, O LORD; and unto the LORD I made supplication.

9 What[l] profit *is there* in my blood, when I go down to the pit? shall the dust praise thee? shall it declare thy truth?

10 Hear,[n] O LORD, and have mercy upon me: LORD, be thou my helper.

11 Thou hast turned for me my mourning into dancing: thou hast put off my sackcloth, and girded me with gladness;

12 To the end that [o]*my* glory[8] may sing praise to thee, and not be silent. [p]O LORD my God, I will give thanks unto thee for ever.

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cavils is easy—this is that very thing which God will do—and which therefore the believer, even Christ in the days of his flesh, might justly pray him to do. *C.*——This is a prayer for *justice.* It is surely right to seek it and to pray for it. The psalmist desires that by the execution of a righteous judgment the wicked may be restrained from evil, and God's people saved from persecution. There is no evidence here of malice or vindictiveness. *P.*

REFLECTIONS.—Deep distress should awaken strong cries to God. Not the Jewish holy of holies, but Christ, is our oracle, in which dwells all the fulness of the Godhead bodily; and through him our prayers are sure to speed. What a burden to exercised saints are sin and sinners while they live in this world! Seducing sinners are always busy; and they who would avoid their ruin must shun their ways. But great are the thankful praises which saints owe to their God for the mercies which have been granted in answer to their prayer, and which faith assures them he will grant. And what almighty power and grace Jesus Christ, and every one of his true members, have engaged on their side to prevent their miscarriage! Clusters of well-connected and everlasting blessings are secured by God for his people. And great should be the joy they have in, and care for, one another's spiritual and eternal welfare.

PSALM XXIX. Ver. 2. *Beauty of holiness.* A call to worship either in the beauty conferred by holiness, that is, by separation from worldly defilement, Ja. 1. 27; Ro. 12. 2, and dedication of body and spirit to God, Ro. 12. 1; or to worship him amidst the emblematic beauties of the holy place, in a ritual every jot of which was of divine appointment. *C.*

Ver. 3. *Voice.* Any voice in nature that God employs to manifest his power, may truly be called his, because all creation and its laws are his—a mere emanation of his will, sustained by the energies of eternal power. *C.*

Ver. 9. The worship and temple here are the same as in ver. 2; and the reference seems to be to the influence of storms, irresistibly to lead man to the only refuge of a weak creature—the bended knee, the earnest cry, the throne of grace, the arm of the Almighty. *C.*——By the 'temple' is here probably meant *the world,* which is God's habitation. Everything in it declares the glory of his wisdom and power. *P.*

Ver. 11. *The Lord will bless his people with peace.* Life at best is a variable climate, and visited by many storms. Still the man justified by faith enjoys peace of conscience; and when the storms of life are over, all will be calm in heaven. *C.*

REFLECTIONS.—Alas! how shameful it is that we should need repeated calls to the solemn worship and service of God; and that great men are but seldom shining examples of devotion! Formal ceremony of words is too often the whole of our worship, which is neither performed in Jesus' holy name, nor in beautiful holiness of heart. But infinitely great is the glory of JEHOVAH! His voice in thunder, in stormy tempests, is not more awful and effective than his voice in his word is on my heart, and hath been, or shall be, in the gospel church. There he speaks to multitudes numerous as the waters; he awakens and seeks to convert the sinner, humble the proud, and draw the obstin-

PSALM XXXI.

1 David showing his confidence in God craveth his help. 7 He rejoiceth in God's mercy. 9 He prayeth in his calamity. 19 He praiseth God for his goodness.

To the chief musician, A psalm of David.

IN thee,[a] O LORD, do I put my trust; let me never be ashamed: [b]deliver me in thy righteousness.[1]

2 Bow[c] down thine ear to me; deliver me speedily: be thou my strong rock,[2] for an house of defence to save me.

3 For thou *art* my rock and my fortress; therefore[d] for thy name's sake, lead me, and guide me.

4 Pull me [e]out of the net that they have laid privily for me: for thou *art* my strength.

5 Into[f] thine hand I commit my spirit:[3] thou hast redeemed[4] me, O LORD [h]God of truth.

6 I[i] have hated them that regard lying vanities: but I trust in the LORD.

7 I[j] will be glad and rejoice in thy mercy: for thou hast [k]considered my trouble; [l]thou hast known my soul in adversities;

8 And[m] hast not shut me up into the hand of the enemy: thou hast set my feet in a large room.

9 Have[o] mercy upon me, O LORD, for I am in trouble: mine eye is consumed with grief, *yea,* my soul and my belly.

10 For my life is spent with grief, and my years with sighing:[5] my strength faileth because of mine iniquity,[6] and my bones are consumed.

11 I[p] was a reproach among all mine enemies, but especially among my neighbours, and a fear to mine acquaintance: they that did see me without fled from me.[7]

12 I[q] am forgotten as a dead man out of mind; I am like a broken vessel.[8]

A.M. cir. 2946
B.C. cir. 1058

PSALM XXXI.

a Ps.13.5; 2. 12; 22.4, 5; 25.2; 71.1-4. Is.40.29-31.

b Ps.143. 17.8, 9; 17. 2; 5.8; 43.1. Da.9.16.

1 The tenderness and deep pathos breathed forth in the beautiful language of this psalm have led some to attribute it to Jeremiah. But David was also sorely tried; and his touching lamentation on the death of Absalom proves that he also, when his affections were deeply moved, could thrill the soul by words of unsurpassed pathos. *C.*

c Ps.70.2; 30.1, 2; 86. 1; 40. 17; 143.7; 91. 15. Ro.4.18, 19.

2 Heb. *to me for a rock of strength.*

d Ps. 23.3; 5.11. Jos. 7. 9. Lze.2. 14, 22; 36. 22, 32.

e Ps. 25. 15, 17; 35. 7; 57.6; 140.5.

f Lu.23.46. Ac.7.59.

3 Our Lord's adoption of these words (and he alone could adopt them, for he alone had power over his spirit, to lay down his life or take it up again, Ec. 8. 8. Jn. 10. 18) clearly proves that the whole psalm is to be interpreted as one of his supplications and strong cryings in the days of his flesh. He.5.7. *C.*

4 *Redeemed,* delivered me by thy mighty power, Ep.1.19. *C.*

h He.1.2; 3.7, 13. Tit. 1.2. 2 Ti.2.13. De.32.4.

i Ps.119.31, 50, 153, 4; 24.4, 5. Jonah 2.8. Ro.1. 21.

j Ps.12.5; 22.6; 25.16; 31.5; 86.5, 17; 89.1, 2.

k Ps.25.18; 119. 153. Ex. 3. 7. La. 3. 32, 50; 5.1. 1 Sa.1.7, 37. 2 Sa. 4.9. 1 Ki.9.13.

l Ps.142.3.

m Ps.4.1; 18. 19; 119. 32; 40.1–3, with De. 32. 30.

o Ps.6.2–7; 22. 11–19; 38.2–10; 41.8; 78. 33; 90. 7, 9; 56.3; 73.14; 77.2–10; 88.3–10, 15, 16; 32. 3, 4; 39.10, 11; 102. 3–5. Job 33.19–22. Is.53.4, 5.

3 See note on Ps. 30.7.—*C.*

4 See note on Ps. 25.2.—*C.*

p Ps.22.6; 69.8–12, 19, 20; 35.15, 16. 1 Co. 4. 13. Job 19.13–19.

q Ps.88.4, 5; 2. 9; 119. 83. Je.19.11. Is.38.12.

5 Heb. *a vessel that perisheth*

6 This was literally

A.M. cir. 2946
B.C. cir. 1058

fulfilled in the history of our Lord, when all his disciples forsook him and fled, Mat.26. 56. Lord Jesus, grant us grace that we may never betray thee, that we may never forsake thee!—*C.*

r ver.11. Je.20.10. 1 Sa.22.8; 24.9.

s Je.6.25, 26; 20.3. La. 2.22. Ps.56.1, 2, 5.

t Ps.13.5; 56. 3, 4, 11; 59.9, 10; 142.4, 5; 61.2.

u Jn.7.30; 19.10, 11.

v Ps.7.1, 2; 13.1–4; 17. 13; 54.1, 2.

x Nu.6.25, 26. Da. 9. 17. Ps.4.6; 80.3, 7, 19; 67. 1.

y Ps.51.1; 54.1; 56. 1; 57.1; 79.8, 9; 106.4.

z ver.1. Ps.25.2, 3; 69. 6.

9 See the prayer literally realized, He. 12. 2; and see how it cannot be realized in any one that has ever committed sin, Ro.6.21.—*C.*

a Ps.6.10; 25.3; 35.4, 26; 40.14; 70.3; 83.13–18. 1 Sa.2.9.

1 Or, *let them be cut off for the grave.*

b Ps. 12, 3; 63.11; 59. 12. Jude 15. 1 Sa.2.3.

2 Heb. *a hard thing.*

c Is.19.3; 123.3, 4; 64. 3, 4; 44. 13–17. Is. 36. 4–20; 37. 10–13.

d Is.64.4; 35.10. 1 Co. 2.9. 1 Pe.2.4. 1 Jn. 3. 2. Ps.16. 11; 17.15; 73. 24–26. Ro. 7. 14–17; xxi. xxii.2 Ti.4.8.

e Ps.83.3; 27. 5; 64.2; 91.1, 2, 4; 37. 32, 33. Job 5.21, 22.

g Ps.17.7; 36.7; 86.13, 15. Is.63.7, 9. Zec. 9.17. 1 Sa.xxiii.

3 Or, *fenced city.*

4 The emblem of *salvation,* as it is written (Is.26.1), 'We have a strong city: salvation will God appoint for walls and bulwarks.'—*C.*

h Job 35.14. Ps. 116. 11. Is. 38. 10–12; 49.14. Jonah 2. 4. La. 3. 54. Ez.26.17, 18.

5 In my haste to do God's will and escape from enemies. See Ps.119.60.—*C.*

i Ps.106.8; 6.9; 55.16; 28.6.

j De.6.5; 30. 6. Mat. 22. 37. 1 Jn.4.19.

k 1 Pe. 1. 5. Jude 1. Col. 3. 3. Jn.10. 27–29. Ro. 2.8–10. 2 Th.1. 6–10.

l Mar.5.36. Ps. 42.5, 11; 43.5; 27.14. Is.40.29–31.

13 For I have heard the [r]slander of many: [s]fear *was* on every side: while they took counsel together against me, they devised to take away my life.

14 But[t] I trusted in thee, O LORD: I said, Thou *art* my God.

15 My[u] times *are* in thy hand: [v]deliver me from the hand of mine enemies, and from them that persecute me.

16 Make[x] thy face to shine upon thy servant: [y]save me for thy mercies' sake.

17 Let[z] me not be ashamed,[9] O LORD; for I have called upon thee: [a]let the wicked be ashamed, *and* let them be silent in the grave.[1]

18 Let[b] the lying lips be put to silence; which speak grievous things[2] proudly[c] and contemptuously against the righteous.

19 *Oh*[d] how great *is* thy goodness, which thou hast laid up for them that fear thee; *which* thou hast wrought for them that trust in thee before the sons of men!

20 Thou[e] shalt hide them in the secret of thy presence from the pride of man: thou shalt keep them secretly in a pavilion from the strife of tongues.

21 Blessed *be* the LORD; [g]for he hath showed me his marvellous kindness in a strong[3] city.[4]

22 For I said [h]in my haste,[5] I am cut off from before thine eyes: [i]nevertheless thou heardest the voice of my supplications when I cried unto thee.

23 O[j] love the LORD, all ye his saints: *for* the LORD [k]preserveth the faithful, and plentifully rewardeth the proud doer.

24 Be[l] of good courage, and he shall strengthen your heart, all ye that hope in the LORD.

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ate, fast rooted as the mountains, dart light and love into their heart, and bring forth many sons and daughters to glory, for the advancement of his own honour. He strengthens them against every danger and enemy, and blesses them with that peace which passeth all understanding.

PSALM XXX. Ver. 5. It was early in the *morning* 'as it began to dawn,' that the resurrection of Jesus was discovered, Mat. 28. 1; and then did the late weepers of the night run 'with fear and great joy,' Mat. 28. 8, to communicate the blessed news. *C.*

Ver. 7. *Didst hide thy face,* &c. Jesus, the Man of Sorrows, realized this sad description: 'Now is my soul troubled; and what shall I say?' See also Mat. 26. 38. And hear of the hidings of his Father's face, when he exclaims, 'My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?' Mat. 27. 46. *C.*

Ver. 9. The meaning of this verse is:—'What advantage would it be to God's kingdom on earth if I should die? Could my lifeless body—my mouldering remains—advance his cause? Could the dust of the tomb declare the truth of God to mankind?' It is in this bold form that the psalmist pleads with his God. *P.*

REFLECTIONS.—To what plagues and sickness the best of saints are by sin obnoxious in this world! But the prayer of faith is always availing under every trouble. And there is great ground of praise and thanksgiving in every deliverance which comes through Jesus Christ. How delightful to saints is God's infinite and sanctifying holiness! His favours are greatly beneficial: and short-lived, but preciously fruitful, are his frowns and his people's griefs. Fellowship with him on earth, and chiefly in heaven, turns their mourning into joys unspeakable and full of glory. Outward prosperity, or even ravishing frames of spiritual joy, quickly occasion security and pride; and become means of casting us down into the depths of desertion and trouble. There is great need then to be always humble and watchful amidst smiles of Providence, and to believe and pray amidst depths of distress. And it is not our own advantages, but the services we can render to God on earth, that should make us desire to live! Quickly God changes the lot and frame of his people, and fills their lips with his praise. And it is delightful when high songs of redeeming love are remarkably begun on earth.

PSALM XXXI. Ver. 6. *I have hated,* &c. Could Christ hate? Does God hate? See, for answer, Ps. lv. But, as amongst men, there is a most unholy love, so likewise is there a most unholy hatred: but this cannot gainsay there being in God and his Christ a holy love to what is good, and as holy a hatred of what is evil. *C.*

Ver. 13. There is not upon record such a remarkable illustration of the deep depravity of the human heart, as the continuous stream of slander that it poured out upon the spotless Lamb of God—'Friend of publicans and sinners,' wine-bibber, glutton, madman, devil-possessed, devil-aided, Sabbath-breaker, seditious rebel against Cæsar, impious blasphemer against God, formed the staple of those calumnies that pursued him through life—and finally succeeded in conducting him to the cross. *C.*

Ver. 15. *My times are in thy hand.* Everything relating to the manifestation of the Son lies in the hand of the Father. He sends him forth in the 'fulness of the times,' Ga. 4. 4; and the 'times and the seasons' of his glorious coming 'the second time without sin unto salvation'—it is not for us to know, for 'the Father hath put them in his own power,' Ac. 1. 7. *C.*

REFLECTIONS.—Trust in God never issues in confounding disappointments. Both Jesus and JEHOVAH's righteousness secures to believing supplicants a speedy deliverance out of every trouble and snare; and fervent prayers in Jesus' name insure a quick and comfortable answer. The more we commit ourselves to God, the more we shall experience of his faithfulness in performing his promises: and the more we know of his redeeming power and grace and of his faithfulness, the more fully we shall commit ourselves to his care in life or in death. When God is our portion we may renounce everything else as lying vanities. And his unceasing mercies, his sympathy under trouble, his protection from evils, and his increase of blessings, deserve our constant returns of praise. But though the sins of saints may not damn them, yet they often severely distress them on earth. And through much conformity to Christ, in the enduring of hatred, reproach, and persecution, they must enter into the celestial kingdom of God. The wicked often abandon themselves to the most false and virulent reproach against Jesus Christ and his people: but distress, death, and judgment will quickly silence them. Meanwhile, God's present protection of his people, and the unbounded happiness of heaven, are comforts more than sufficient for the saints to balance all their troubles on earth. Often his great and unexpected mercies shame their unbelief and rebuke their carnal fear. And O what reason the best have to bewail their repeated and deep despondencies under trouble, and to encourage others to avoid them! For when we consider our God and his mercies, alas! how cold is our love, how weak our faith, and languid our hopes.

PSALM XXXII. Ver. 2. The apostle applies this and the foregoing verse (Ro. 4. 6) to explain the blessedness of the man to whom the Lord imputes righteousness without works, even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe. Ro. 3. 22. *C.*

Ver. 3. *When I kept silence.* Upon two remarkable occasions Christ kept silence. Before the treacherous and guilty accusers of the woman, Jn. 8. 6–8; and again, before Caiaphas and Pilate, Mat. 26. 63; 27. 14, as it had been prophesied, Is. 53. 7. While he thus kept *silence* for a little from reproving hypocrites, or instructing and comforting penitents, or from defending himself against false accusations, his *bones waxed old*—premature old age came on—through the previous and subsequent *roaring* which, with this brief interval, his sorrows wrung from him *all the day long. C.*

Ver. 5. That the speaker is Christ will not be readily acknow-

PSALM XXXII.

1 Blessedness consisteth in remission of sins. 3 Confession of sins giveth ease to the conscience. 8 God's promises bring joy.

A psalm of David, Maschil.[1]

BLESSED *is he whose* [a]transgression *is* forgiven, *whose* sin *is* covered.[2]

2 Blessed *is* the man unto whom the LORD imputeth not iniquity, and [b]in whose spirit *there is* no guile.

3 When[c] I kept silence, my bones waxed old through my roaring all the day long.

4 For[d] day and night thy hand was heavy upon me: my moisture is turned into the drought of summer. Selah.

5 I[e] acknowledged my sin unto thee, and mine iniquity have I not hid. [g]I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the LORD; and thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin. Selah.

6 For[h] this shall every one that is godly pray unto thee in a time when thou mayest be found:[3] surely in the [i]floods of great waters they shall not come nigh unto him.

7 Thou[j] *art* my hiding-place; thou shalt preserve me from trouble; [k]thou shalt compass me about with songs of deliverance. Selah.

8 I[l] will instruct thee,[4] and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go: I will guide thee with mine eye.[5]

9 Be[m] ye not as the horse, *or* as the mule, *which* have no understanding; whose mouth must be held in with bit and bridle, lest they come near unto thee.[6]

10 Many[o] sorrows *shall be* to the wicked: but[p] he that trusteth in the LORD, mercy shall compass him about.

11 Be[q] glad in the LORD, and rejoice, ye righteous: and shout for joy, all *ye that are* upright[r] in heart.

PSALM XXXIII.

1 God is to be praised for his goodness, 6 for his power, 12 and for his providence. 20 Confidence is therefore to be placed in God.

REJOICE in[a] the LORD, O ye righteous;[1] *for* praise [b]is comely for the upright.[2]

2 Praise[c] the LORD with harp: sing unto him with the psaltery *and* an instrument of ten strings.

3 Sing[d] unto him a new song; play skilfully with a loud noise.

4 For[e] the word of the LORD *is* right; and all his works *are done* in truth.

5 He[g] loveth righteousness and judgment: the earth is [h]full of the goodness[3] of the LORD.

6 By[i] the word of the LORD were the heavens made; and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth.[4]

7 He[j] gathereth the waters of the sea together as an heap:[5] he layeth up the depth in storehouses.

8 Let[k] all the earth fear the LORD: let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of him.

9 For[l] he spake, and it was *done;* he commanded, and it stood fast.

10 The[n] LORD bringeth[6] the counsel of the heathen to nought: he maketh the devices of the people of none effect.

11 The[o] counsel of the LORD standeth for ever, the thoughts of his heart to all generations.[7]

12 Blessed[p] *is* the nation whose God *is* the LORD; *and* the people *whom* he hath chosen for his own inheritance.

13 The[q] LORD looketh from heaven; he beholdeth all the sons of men.

14 From[r] the place of his habitation he looketh upon all the inhabitants of the earth.

15 He[s] fashioneth their hearts alike;[8] he [t]considereth all their works.

16 There[u] is no king saved by the multitude of an host: a mighty man is not delivered by much strength.

17 An[v] horse *is* a vain thing for safety: neither shall he deliver *any* by his great strength.

18 Behold,[x] the eye of the LORD *is* upon them that fear him, upon them that hope in his mercy;

19 To[y] deliver their soul from death, [z]and to keep them alive in famine.

20 [a]Our[9] soul waiteth for the LORD: he *is* our help and our shield.

A.M. cir. 2959. B.C. cir. 1045.

PSALM XXXII.

1 Or, *giving instruction*, Ps. xlv. liii. lxxiv. lxxviii. lxxxix. cxlii.

a Ro.4.6-8;3.22,24,25. 1:8.1,33,34. Ps.85.2.Is. 1.18;40. 1, 2;43. 25; 44. 22.2 Co.5.19,21. Ac.13. 39.Ep.1.7.

2 There can be little doubt that this penitential psalm was written after David's grievous sin and shame, as recorded in 2 Sa. 22. 12. All is past; and with grateful heart he celebrates the praises of that God of infinite mercy, who had spared and pardoned, and received him once more into favour.—*C.*

b Jn.1.47. Re.14.5. 2 Co.1.12. Tit.2.12.

c Pr.28.13. Ps. 77.1-10;31.9,10. 38.2-8; 22.15.

d Ps.31.9,10; 38.2-8; 22.15.

e Jos.7.19. Job 33.27. Je.3.13. Da.ix. Ezr.ix.

g Pr.28.13. Is. 65.24; 1.18;44.22. 1 Jn.1.9. Job 31.24,28.

h 1 Ti.1.16. Ps.69.13. Is.49.8;55.6.

i Heb. *a time of finding.*

j Ps. 27. 5. 31. 20; 119. 114; 91. 1-10.

k Ps. 40. 1-3; xviii. cii. cxvi. cxviii. Ex. xv. Is. xii. xxv. xxvi. xxxviii. Ju. v. Re. 15.

l Ps.51.13; 48.14. Is. 48.17.

4 The Father thus addresses the Son, agreeably to Jn. 3. 32; 8.17. He.5.8.—*C.*

5 Heb. *I will counsel* thee, *mine eye* shall be *upon thee.*

m NotPr.26.3. Ja.3.3, but Pr.2.1-10;4. 1, 5,7. De. 32.29. 1 Co.14.20.

6 Held in and guided by their driver, lest they injure the traveller by coming too near.—*C.*

o Ps.16.4. Ti. 6.10. Pr.13.21. Ro.2.8,9. Is. 3.11;57. 21.

p Je.17.7,8. Ps. 2.12; 5.12. Is. 63.7,9. Ro. 5. 20,21. Tit.3.3-7. Ep. 2. 4-7,8.

q Ps.33. 1; 64. 10; 68. 33; 149. 1-6. Phi. 4. 4. 1 Th.5. 16. Ro. 5. 1-11. 2 Co.1.12.

r Ge.6.9. Job 1.1. Jn. 1.47. Ac.24.16. 2 Co. 1. 12.

PSALM XXXIII.

a Phi. 4. 4. Ps. 32.11. Is. 45. 17, 24, 25; 61. 10. Ro.5.2,11.

1 Those who have received the *righteousness* of God through faith. Ro. 3. 20-22;4.3-5.—*C.*

b Is. 57. 1. 147. 1; 135. 3; 92. 1, 2; 119. 2.

2 A title taken from attitude—those who *stand up* without shame before Christ at his appearing, 1 Jn.2.28.—*C.*

c Ex.15.20. Ps. 92. 3; 98.4,5;150. 3-6. Re.14.2.

d Ps.96.1;98.1;144.9; 149.1. Is.42.10. Re.5.9; 14.3. Ep.5.19. Col. 3.16.

e Pr. 30. 5. Ps. 19. 8. Ge.24.27 Mi.7.20.

g Ps.11. 7; 45. 7; 119. 137. Re.16.5,6;15.3.

h Ps.119.64. Mat. 5. 45. Ac.14.17.

3 Or, *mercy.*

i Ge.1.1,6,7;2.1. He. 11. 3. Jn. 1. 3. Ep. 3. 9. Job 26.13;33.4.

4 All things were made by the eternal Word and Spirit, Jn. 1.3. Job 26. 13. Ps. 104. 30.—*C.*

j Ge. 1. 9. 2 Pe. 3. 5. Job 38.8-11; 26. 10. Pr. 8.29. Je.5.22.

5 The waters of the sea are always taking the form of 'an heap' in some part of the ocean, and never standing on a level. This fact is manifest in the tides, which are a literal *heaping* up of the waters successively in different places.—*C.*

k Ex. 14. 31. De. 28.58, 59. Ps.89.7. Is. 8.14. Je. 5.22. Re 14.7;15. 4.1.

l Ge. 1. 3, 4. He. 11. 3. Ps. 148. 5. Is. 48. 13. Ro. 4. 17. Col. 1. 16. Ps. 33. 6, 9. Ge. 1. 3, 6, 9, 11, 14, 20, 24, 26. Ps. 148. 5. Is. xviii. 4. xxxvii. 26. Ro. 4. 17.

6 Heb. *maketh to cease, frustrate.*

m Job 5. 12. Da. 4. 35. Ep. 1. 11. Pr. 21. 30. Is. 4. 13.

7 Heb. *to generation and generation.*

n Ps. 10. 16. Ps. 65. 4; 144. 12. Pr. 19. 21. Is. 5. 19. 46. 10. Ep. 1. 11. Ps. 33. 11. Pr. 19. 21. Is. 46. 10.

o Ge. 10. 6. Job 34. 21. Ps. 11. 4. Pr. 15. 3. He. 4. 13.

p Ps. 115. 3; 2. 4; 123. 1; 103. 19; 139. 2; 102. 19, 20. Is. 66. 1. 1 Ki. 8. 27.

q Pr. 22. 2. Is. 64. 8.

8 Gives them all originally similar capacities which they pervert, and alone creates any anew to love and good works, Ac. 17. 26. Ep. 2. 10.—*C.*

t Job 34. 21. Je. 32. 19.

u Ex. xiv. Ps. 44. 3-7. Jos. x. xi. Ju. iii. iv. vii. 1 Sa. vii. xiv. xvii. 2 Sa. v. viii. x. 2 Ch. xiii. xiv. xx. xxxii.

v Ps. 20. 7; 147. 10. Pr. 21. 31. Ho. 14. 3.

x 2 Ch. 16. 9. Job 36. 7. Ps. 34. 15; 147. 11; 16. 1; 21. 1. 1 Pe. 3. 12.

y Job 5. 19-22. Ps. 34. 17, 19. Pr. 10. 3.

z Ps. 37. 19.

a Ps. 62. 1, 5; 130. 5, 6; 115. 9-12. Is. 40. 31.

9 The grammar, by adopting the *plural* form, shows that the speaker is not one; not Christ alone, but the church. And the *hope* expressed in ver. 22, compared with Rom. 8. 24, 25, shows that the psalm is provided for a glorious state of the church on earth, when faith, and not mere profession, will be completely nationalized. Lord, hasten the time!—*C.*

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lodged by those who will not agree patiently to search the Scriptures. But let those who determine by the grace of God to examine, see Ps. 40. 12, compare Ps. 32. 3, 5, and then ask, who speaks? Ps. 40. 12. To find the answer, compare ver. 6-8 with He. 10. 5-7, and the speaker is found to be Christ. But how could Christ confess sin, seeing he knew no sin? He confessed the sins of his mystical body the church, Ep. 1. 22, 23; 5. 30. Those sins which he bore in his own body on the tree, 1 Pe. 2. 24. Those 'iniquities of us all,' which the Lord laid upon him, Is. 53. 6, 11, 12. Sins and iniquities that were *his* by undergoing and bearing, as his righteousness is *ours* by gift and imputation. *C.*

REFLECTIONS.—Dreadful is the nature of sin! It, and nothing else, renders us miserable. But rich is the grace of God, and efficacious the merit of Jesus' blood, which freely removes it. And justification through faith in Christ constantly promotes integrity and holiness of heart and life! But the remains of sin must be purged out by sore troubles and wounding convictions. For there is a close connection between gospel repentance and pardon of sin. It is not, however, our repentance, but God's mercy in Christ and our faith, that is the cause of our pardon. Hopeful is a sinner's case when he is once brought to humble applications to a gracious God, who is more ready to pardon than we are to pray for it. They who seek him, even in trouble, shall surely find him; the more imminently terrible their danger, the more shall his grace and love be magnified in their salvation. And it is no small encouragement to their seeking of God in their distress, that others, like themselves, have found mercy in like cases. But great is the protection, preservation, deliverance, instruction, and direction which believers in Christ constantly find, while the impenitent are loaded with sorrows everlasting and unnumbered. It is necessary then to receive his instructions, and to bend before his warnings, that we may rejoice in his mercy and triumph in his praise.

PSALM XXXIII. Ver. 12. This is a national psalm, an expression of faith by an entire people. And though it be descriptive of a state never yet fully realized, the divine counsel will not be frustrated; and not merely individuals, but nations and peoples, shall yet be born of the Spirit to national salvation. Ro. 11. 7-26. *C.*

REFLECTIONS.—How great, glorious, and good is our God! and as extensive is the matter and reasonable the exercise of our praise. All that God is in himself, all that he hath declared in his word, all that he hath done in his works, is the matter of his gift and subject of our songs. Thrice happy are his faithful people, to whom he is their Portion, their kind Observer, their powerful Protector, their almighty Deliverer, their gracious Provider, and constant Preserver! The thoughts of his universal power, influence, and operations, and the vanity of all things beside, him, should effectually engage us to contented resignation of ourselves and all that we have into his hand.

PSALM XXXIV. Ver. 5. *They looked*—Who? the humble. ver. 2. Boothroyd, however, and most versions, render the verse —'Look to him (the Lord), and be enlightened, and your faces shall not be ashamed;' and then ver. 6 introduces 'this *poor* (rather this *afflicted*) man' (Christ) as an encouraging specimen of the power of faith and prayer. *C.*

Ver. 12. To this general question every auditor seems to respond, 'I am that man;' and then ver. 13 commences the lesson, addressed like the commandments, not to a collective body, but to each individual. *C.*

Ver. 18. *The Lord is nigh*, &c. How near is the Lord to the broken heart—the heart broken off from the love of the world and the service of sin (1 Jn. 2. 15; Ro. 6. 6)—even in that heart. For 'if any man love me,' saith Christ, 'my Father will love him; and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him,' Jn. 14. 23. *C.*

Ver. 22. *Desolate.* They will not want friends, for God is their *Father*, and all believers are *brethren.* They will not want

21 For[b] our heart shall rejoice in him; [c]because we have trusted in his holy name.

22 Let[d] thy mercy, O LORD, be upon us, according as we hope in thee.

PSALM XXXIV.

1 *David praiseth God, and exhorteth others thereto by his experience.* 8 *They are blessed that trust in God.* 11 *He exhorteth to the fear of God.* 15 *The privileges of the righteous.*

A psalm of David, when [a]he changed his behaviour before Abimelech;[1] who drove him away, and he departed.

I WILL[b] bless the LORD at all times: his praise *shall* continually *be* in my mouth.[2]

2 My[c] soul shall make her boast in the LORD: the[d] humble shall hear *thereof*, and be glad.

3 O[e] magnify the LORD with me, and let us exalt his name together.[3]

4 I[g] sought the LORD, and he heard me, and delivered me from all my fears.

5 They[h] looked[4] unto him, and were lightened; and their faces were not ashamed.[5]

6 This[i] poor man cried, and the LORD heard *him*, and saved him out of all his troubles.

7 The[j] angel of the LORD encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them.

8 O[k] taste and see that the LORD *is* good: blessed[l] *is* the man *that* trusteth in him.

9 O[n] fear the LORD, ye his saints: [o]for *there is* no want to them that fear him.

10 The[p] young lions do lack, and suffer hunger: but they that seek the LORD shall not want any good *thing*.

11 Come, [q]ye children, hearken unto me; I will[r] teach you the fear of the LORD.

12 What[s] man *is he that* desireth life, *and* loveth *many* days, that he may see good?

13 Keep[t] thy tongue from evil, and thy lips from speaking guile.

14 Depart[u] from evil, and do good; [v]seek peace, and pursue it.

15 The[w] eyes of the LORD *are* upon the righteous, and his ears *are open* unto their cry.

16 The[y] face of the LORD *is* against them that do evil, to cut off the remembrance of them from the earth.

17 *The*[z] *righteous* cry, and the LORD heareth, and delivereth them out of all their troubles.

18 The[a] LORD *is* nigh unto them that are of a broken heart;[6] and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit.[7]

19 Many[b] *are* the afflictions of the righteous: but the LORD delivereth him out of them all.

20 He[c] keepeth all his bones: not one of them is broken.

21 Evil[d] shall slay the wicked: and they that hate the righteous shall be desolate.[8]

22 The[e] LORD redeemeth the soul of his servants: [g]and none of them that trust in him shall be desolate.[9]

A.M. cir. 2959.
B.C. cir. 1045.

b Zec.10.7. Jn.16.22. Ps.13.5;28.7;118.5–14.1 Ch.5.20. 1 Sa.30.6.
c Is.25.9.
d Ps.5.12; 32.10; 119. 41,49,76,77. 2 Sa. 7. 25. Mat.9.29.

PSALM XXXIV.

A.M. cir. 2959.
B.C. cir. 1058.

a 1 Sa. 21. 13. Pr. 29. 25. Ps.8.4.
1 Or, *Achish*.
b Ep.5.20. 1 Th.5.18. Ps.71.8,14,15. Col.3.17. 2 Th.1.3. Ac.16.25.
2 An uninterrupted continuity of praise that sufficiently indicates the speaker to be Christ, even were the fact undiscovered by the quotation-evidence of the Spirit, ver.20. Jn.19.36.—*C.*
c 1 Co. 1. 31. 2 Co. 2. 14. Je.9.24. Lu.1.46,47. Ps.105.3. Is. 45. 25; 41. 16.
d Ps.119.74;132.7;22, 23,26.
e Lu. 1. 46, &c. Ps. xcv.–c.cv.–cvii. cxvi.–cxviii. cxlv.–cl.
3 Christ here calls believers to join with him in glorifying the Father.—*C.*
g Lu.11.9. Ps.6.9; 18. 6,16; 22.24;118.5. He.5. 7.
h Is.45.22. Ps.121.1, 2. Sa.22.29.
4 Or, *they flowed*.
5 The change of person from the first singular in ver. 4 to the third plural in ver. 5 may be explained by a consideration of ver. 3. David is the writer. He calls upon his companions to praise the Lord with him. He then tells what he did himself, and what was the result:—'I sought the Lord, and he delivered me.' He next speaks of his companions, and tells what they did:—'they looked to him and were lightened;' *i.e.* their fears were removed. In ver. 6 the psalmist returns to himself, but speaks now in the third person, evidently for the purpose of bringing out more emphatically his distressed and almost hopeless state.—*P.*
i ver.4,5. Ps.3.4; 40. 17; 102.17. Ge.32.10. 2 Sa.22.1.
j He. 1. 14. Is. 37.36. Da.6.22. Ge.32.1,2. Ps. 91. 11. 2 Ki. 6. 17. Zec. 9.8.
k 1 Pe.2.3. Ps. 35.10; 36,7;16.11;119.68. Jn.6. 33,51–57. 1 Jn.1.3,2 Co. 13.14. Ex.34.6,7.
l Ps.2.12;84.12;33.12. Je.17.7.
n Ps. 89. 7. Mat. 10. 28. Ho.3.5. He.12.28.
o Ps. 23.1. Phi. 4. 19. Ep. 3. 19. Jn. 1. 14, 16. Col.2.3,9,10. 1 Co.3.22, 23.
p Job 4.11. Ps.84.11. Ro.8.28.2 Co.4.17.
q 2 Ki.2. 3. Ga. 4. 19. Pr.4.1. Jn.13.33.
r Pr.1.7,8; 2.1–9;3.1–12.
s 1 Pe. 3.10–12. De.6. 2;30.15–20. Is.1.16–19.
t Ja.1.19,26. Ps. 39.1.
u 2 Ti.2.19. 3 Jn. 11. Ps. 37. 3,27. Is. 1. 16–19.
v Mat. 5.9. Ro.12.18. He.12.14.
w Job 36.7. Ps.33.18. 1 Pe. 3.12. 2 Ch.16.9. Is. 58.9;65.24.
y 1 Ki.2.27,10. Je. 24.6; 44.11. Am.9.4. Eze.14. 7,8. Pr.10.7.
z ver. 4–9. 15. Ps. 50. 15;91.15;95.2;3,4; 6,8,9. Is. 58.9;65.24.
a Ps.145.8; 51.17. Is. 27,3;57.15;66.2.
6 Heb. *to the broken of heart*.
7 Heb. *contrite of spirit*.
b 2 Ti. 3. 11, 12. Ac. 14. 22. 2 Co.4.17. Re.7.14–17. Jn.16.33. Job 5. 15. Is.35.10.
c Pr. 12.21. Jn.19.36.
d Is. 3. 11. Ro.2.8,9. Ps.94.23. Lu.12.20.
8 Or, *shall be guilty*.
e 2 Sa. 4. 9. Ps.71.23; 130.8. Is.44.22;59.21.
g Ps.84.11,12. Ro.8. 1, 31–39. Jn. 10. 27–29; 14. 19. 1 Pe.1.5. Col.3.3.
9 The great lesson

A.M. cir. 2946.
B.C. cir. 1058.

of the psalm is, that a life of faith, holiness, and devotion to God can alone secure prosperity, peace, and joy.—*P.*

PSALM XXXV.

B.C. cir. 1056.

a Ps.9.4; 7.6,8; 43.1; 119.154. Lu.1.68. Je.51. 36. Mi.7.9,10.
1 In this psalm the writer evidently records the result of a painful experience in regard to the treatment he had received from men. They had professed great friendship and devoted attachment in time of prosperity, but when adversity, suffering, and sorrow came upon him, they not only deserted him, but they rejoiced in his very calamities. So is it often in the world. The faithlessness and ingratitude of men led the psalmist to a faithful and loving God, in whom he found a true friend and an omnipotent defender and benefactor.—*P.*
2 Exert thy power and wisdom in protecting me and destroying mine enemies.
b Ps.33.9; 143. 8. Jn. 6.63. Is.50.4;45.17.
c Ps.40.14,15; 71. 13, 24;70.2,3; 109.28,29; 25. 3;31.17. Je.46.5.
d Job 21. 18. Ps. 1.4. Is.17,13;29.5. Ho.13.3.
e Ex.12.29. Is.37.36. Ac.12.23.
3 Heb. *darkness and slipperiness*.
g Ps. 7. 4, 15; 140. 5; 64.2–5;119.85.
h 1 Th.5.3. Ps.73.18, 19,23;64.7;58.7–9.
4 Heb. which *he knoweth not of*.
i Ps.7.15,16; 9.15,16. Pr.5.22.
j Ps.32.11; 48.11; 58. 10;13.5; 118.5–14. Hab. 3.18.
k Ps.34.20;36.7;86.8; 89.6,8; 73.25. Ex.15.11. Zec.9.17.
5 That is, his bones preserved from being broken, as those of Jn. 19.36, wherein Christ was typified by the passover, Nu. 9. 12. 1 Co.5.7.—*C.*
l Ps. 22. 20, 23. Ps. 9. 18; 22.24; 69. 33;34.6;68. 10; 72. 4,12–14; 102. 17, 20;109.31.
n Ps.27.12. Mat. 26. 59–61. Lu. 23.2, 5. Ac. 24.5,6.
6 Heb. *Witnesses of wrong*.
7 Heb. *they asked me*.
o Jn.10.32. Ps.38.20; 109.4,5. Je.18.20.
8 Heb. *depriving*.
p Je.18.20. Job 30.25. Mat.5.44. Ro.12.14,15. He.13.3.
9 Or, *afflicted*.
q Mat.10.13. 2 Co.1. 12. He.6.10.
1 *Returned*, 'rested, settled.'—*Houbigant*. It was not a prayer of the *lip* but of the *bosom*—not an occasional utterance, but a constant feeling.—*C.*
2 Heb. *walked*.
3 Heb. *as a friend, as a brother to me*.
4 A special reference to Judas the betrayer as a type and representative of others. See Ac. 1. 16. —*C.*
r Heb. *halting*, Ps. 38.17. Je.20.10.
s Job 30. 1, 8, 12. Ps. 3.2; 41.5–9; 50.5,6; 57.4; 64.2–6; 109.2,3; 140.2,3; 102.8. Eze.25.3,15.
5 *Abjects*—smiters, vilifiers.—*C.*
6 *Knew it not*—I took no notice of it. There is an occasional use of the expression, Is. 42. 19,20; 55.5. Mat.7.23.—*C.*
t Ps. 109. 3, 4. 69. 20–12. Pr. 28.21. Phi. 3.19.
u Ps. 37. 12. Job 16.9. La.2.16. Ac.7.54.
w Ps. 14. 1–3; 74. 10–12. Hab.1.13.
x Ps.22.20,21;57.4.
7 Heb. *my only one*.
8 See note on Ps.22. 20.—*C.*

PSALM XXXV.

1 *David prayeth for his own safety, and his enemies' confusion.* 11 *He complaineth of their wrongful dealing.* 22 *Thereby he inciteth God against them.*

A psalm of David.

PLEAD [a]*my cause*, O LORD, with them that strive with me; fight against them that fight against me.[1]

2 Take hold of shield and buckler, and stand up for mine help.[2]

3 Draw out also the spear, and stop *the way* against them that persecute me: [b]say unto my soul, I *am* thy salvation.

4 Let [c]them be confounded and put to shame that seek after my soul: let them be turned back and brought to confusion that devise my hurt.

5 Let[d] them be as chaff before the wind: [e]and let the angel of the LORD chase *them*.

6 Let their way be dark and slippery:[3] and let the angel of the LORD persecute them.

7 For[g] without cause have they hid for me their net *in* a pit, *which* without cause they have digged for my soul.

8 Let[h] destruction come upon him at unawares;[4] and [i]let his net that he hath hid catch himself: into that very destruction let him fall.

9 And[j] my soul shall be joyful in the LORD: it shall rejoice in his salvation.

10 All[k] my bones[5] shall say, LORD, who *is* like unto thee, which [l]deliverest the poor from him that is too strong for him, yea, the poor and the needy from him that spoileth him?

11 False[n] witnesses[6] did rise up; they laid to my charge[7] *things* that I knew not.

12 They[o] rewarded me evil for good, *to* the spoiling[8] of my soul.

13 But[p] as for me, when they were sick, my clothing *was* sackcloth: I humbled[9] my soul with fasting; and my prayer [q]returned[1] into mine own bosom.

14 I behaved[2] myself as though *he had been* my friend[3] *or* brother:[4] I bowed down heavily, as one that mourneth *for*[r] *his* mother.

15 But in mine [r]adversity [s]they rejoiced, and gathered themselves together: *yea*, the [5]abjects gathered themselves together against me, and I knew *it* not;[6] they did tear *me*, and ceased not:

16 With[t] hypocritical mockers in feasts, [u]they gnashed upon me with their teeth.

17 LORD,[v] how long wilt thou look on? [x]rescue my soul from their destructions, my [7]darling[8] from the lions.

18 I[y] will give thee thanks in the great congregation: I will praise thee among [9]much people.

19 Let not them that are mine enemies wrongfully[1] rejoice over me: *neither* let [z]them

y Ps.22.22,25; 40.9,10; 116.14,16–19; 109.30. Is.xii.xxv.
1 Heb. *falsely*.
9 Heb. *strong*.
z Pr.6.13; 10.10.

a home, for they 'have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens,' 2 Co. 5. 1. *C.*

REFLECTIONS.—Great is the tenderness of God in smiling upon all people, when their folly richly deserves his fearful frowns! He can wonderfully change their heaviest loads of fear into shouts of praise: and certain and speedy are his gracious returns to the prayers of faith. None wait on him. None cry to him and are disappointed. What angelic guards pro-

VIA DOLOROSA—OVER WHICH CHRIST WALKED TO THE CROSS OF CALVARY. [PSALMS, XXXV : 7.]—"For without cause have they hid for me their net in a pit, which without cause they have digged for my soul." The Via Dolorosa is known as the mournful way over which our Savior passed from the judgment hall to Calvary. This is a gloomy street where are arched passages, and an honored stone that has been so often pressed by the lips of pious pilgrims. It is very interesting, however, from the standpoint of the historian and the artist, for from this neighborhood the original ideas have been secured which take form in some of the most celebrated works of European art. The way begins with the palace of Pilate and ends in the church of the Holy Sepulcher. At the commencement of the Via Dolorosa there once stood the Scala Santa or staircase which was removed by Constantine to the Basilica of Saint John Lateran in Rome.

wink with the eye that hate [a]me without a cause.

20 For[b] they speak not peace: [c]but they devise deceitful matters against *them that are* quiet in the land.

21 Yea,[d] they opened their mouth wide against me, *and* said, Aha, aha! our eye hath seen *it*.

22 *This* thou hast seen, O LORD: [e]keep not silence. O LORD, be not far from me.

23 Stir[g] up thyself, and awake to my judgment, *even* unto my cause, [h]my God and my LORD.

24 Judge[i] me, O LORD my God, according to thy righteousness; and [j]let them not rejoice over me.

25 Let them not say in their hearts, Ah, so would we have it:[2] let them not say, We have swallowed him up.

26 Let[k] them be ashamed and brought to confusion together that rejoice at mine hurt: let them be clothed with shame and dishonour that [l]magnify *themselves* against me.

27 Let[n] them shout for joy, and be glad, that favour my righteous cause:[3] yea, [o]let them say continually, Let the LORD be magnified, [p]which hath pleasure in the prosperity of his servant.

28 And [q]my tongue shall speak of thy righteousness *and* of thy praise all the day long.

PSALM XXXVI.

1 *The grievous state of the wicked.* 5 *The excellency of God's mercy.* 10 *David prayeth for favour to God's children.*

To the chief musician, *A psalm* of David the servant of the LORD.

THE transgression of the wicked saith within my [1]heart, [a]*that there is* no fear of God before his eyes.

2 For [b]he flattereth himself in his own eyes, until his iniquity be found[2] to be hateful.[3]

3 The[c] words of his mouth *are* iniquity and deceit: he [d]hath left off to be wise, *and* to do good.

4 He[e] deviseth mischief[4] upon his bed; he setteth himself [g]in a way *that is* not good; [h]he abhorreth not evil.

5 Thy[i] mercy, O LORD, *is* in the heavens; *and* thy faithfulness *reacheth* unto the clouds.[5]

A.M. cir. 2948.
B.C. cir. 1056.

a La. 3. 52. Ps. 69.4; 109.3-5. Jn. 15.25.
b Ps. 120. 6, 7; 57. 4. Pr. 1. 16.
c Mat. 12. 24.
d Ps. 10. 2-10; 36. 3, 4; 38. 12; 56. 5, 6; 64. 5; 109. 2, 3; 140. 2, 5; 22. 7, 8; 40. 15. Da. 5. 7.
e Ps. 50. 21; 28. 1; 39. 12; 83. 1; 22. 19; 102. 2; 10. 14. Is. 65. 6.
g Ps. 44. 23, 26; 7. 6.
h Ps. 80. 4; 119. 94; 18. 1-3; 89. 26; 142. 4, 5; 31. 14.
i 1 Pe. 2. 23. Ps. 7. 8; 18. 20, 24. 2 Th. 1. 6. Is. 3. 10, 11.
j Job 20. 5. Ps. 38. 16; 13. 4; 69. 4, 9-11; 27. 12. ver. 15, 19.
[2] Heb. *Ah, ah, our soul*. Ps. 3. 2; 44. 8.
k ver. 4. Ps. 6. 10; 25. 3; 31. 17; 40. 14, 15; 109. 28, 29; 129. 5; 132. 18. Is. 65. 13-15.
l Ps. 38. 16. Je. 48. 26. Ob. 12.
n Ps. 40. 16; 142. 7; 34. 1, 2. 1 Co. 12. 26.
[3] Heb. *my righteousness*.
o Ps. 70. 4.
p Ps. 149. 4. Je. 32. 40, 41. Zep. 3. 17. Is. 62. 4, 5.
q Ps. 34. 1; 50. 14; 57. 7-9; 71. 8, 14-24; 109. 30; 104. 33, 34; 145. 1, 2, 5, 21.

PSALM XXXVI.

B.C. cir. 1058.

1 'The devil saith to the wicked within his heart, No fear, God is not before his eyes.'—*Horsley*. 'The oracle of transgression to the wicked is within, even his own heart; there is no fear of God before his eyes.'—*Boothroyd*.

a Ge. 20. 11. Ro. 3. 18. Pr. 8. 13. Ec. 12. 13.
b De. 29. 19. Je. 2. 35. Is. 47. 7, 8. Ps. 10. 11-13; 52. 1-7.
[2] Heb. *to find his iniquity to hate*.
[3] 'Yea, in his own eyes he flattereth himself, instead of finding out his iniquity to detest it.'—*Boothroyd*.
c Ps. 5. 9; 12. 2, 3; 10. 7; 55. 21; 58. 3; 64. 3-5; 83. 2-4; 109. 2, 3; 140. 3.
d Ps. 14. 1-5; 53. 1-5. Ro. 3. 10-19. Je. 4. 22; 13. 23.
e Ps. 10. 2; 21. 11; 38. 12; 64. 6; 140. 2-4. Mi. 2. 1. Pr. 4. 16.
[4] Or, *vanity*.
g Is. 65. 2. Pr. 20. 23; 24. 23.
h Ps. 97. 10. Job 15. 16. Pr. 4. 16. Ro. 1. 28-32. Ep. 4. 18, 19. Tit. 3. 3. 2 Pe. 1. 5-15.
i Ps. 57. 10; 108. 4; 103 11; 89. 1, 2.
[5] The suddenness of the transition from the delineation of the grossest form of human wickedness to the celebration of the infinite mercy, faithfulness, and purity of God, is striking and startling. The contrast is strong; but its very strength makes it all the more powerful to awaken and sanctify. Fear and gratitude are alike roused to action, and the thoughtful is constrained to contemplate the folly and danger of sin.—*P.*

A.M. cir. 2946.
B.C. cir. 1058.

f Ge. 18. 25. Ex. 34. 7. De. 32. 4. Je. 12. 1. Ps. 145. 17.
[6] Heb. *the mountains of God*.
k Ro. 11. 33. Job 11. 7, 9. Ps. 77. 19.
l Job 7. 20. Ac. 17. 28. Ro. 11. 36.
n Heb. *precious*, 1 Pe. 2. 7. Jn. 3. 16.
o Ru. 2. 12. Ps. 17. 8; 91. 2, 4, 9; 31. 19. 1 Jn. 3. 1; 4. 9, 10. Is. 63. 7. Zec. 9. 17.
[7] The wings of the cherubim shadowing the mercy-seat, He. 9. 5.—*C*.
p Ps. 25. 6. Ps. 65. 4; 17. 15; 46. 4; 16. 11. Re. 22. 1, 17.
[8] Heb. *watered*, Is. 44. 3.
q Je. 2. 13. Zec. 13. 1. Ca. 4. 15. Jn. 4. 10, 14. Re. 22. 1, 17.
r 2 Co. 4. 6. Jn. 8. 12; 1. 4, 9. Mat. 16. 17. Ja. 1. 17. Ps. 4. 6, 7. Is. 60. 19. Re. 21. 23.
[9] Heb. *draw out at length*, Ps. 103. 17. Je. 31. 3. Is. 51. 6, 8. 2 Ti. 4. 7, 8.
s Da. 4. 37. Eze. 30. 6. Ps. 119. 21, 51, 69, 78, 85, 122.
t Ps. 17. 8-14; 16. 1.
[1] Thus Christ, for his church's sake, prays for an unchanging priesthood.—*C*.
[2] *There*. In what place? Even wheresoever the wicked plotted and warred against the Lord and his Christ, Ps. 2. 2, 9, 12.—*C*.
u Ps. 7. 15, 16; 9. 15, 16; 55. 15, 23; 56. 7; 58. 6-9; 59. 12; 64. 7, 8. 2 Th. 1. 8, 9.

PSALM XXXVII.

B.C. cir. 1015.

a 1 Sa. 1. 6. Pr. 23. 17; 24. 19; 3. 31. Ps. 73. 3. Je. 12. 1. ver. 7. Job 5. 2.
[1] This is one of the alphabetical psalms; the successive letters of the Hebrew alphabet being found at the commencement of the alternate verses. The main object of the psalm is to meet the argument often urged against the universality of the government of a just God, from the observed fact that the openly wicked are tolerated, and even permitted to enjoy a large amount of temporal prosperity.—*P*.
b Job 20. 5. Ps. 90. 5, 6; 129. 6, 7. Je. 17. 5, 6.
c Je. 17. 7, 8. Ps. 34. 8-22; 33. 18-21. Is. 1. 16-19.
[2] Heb. *in truth*, or *stableness*.
d Job 22. 26. Ps. 104. 34; 43. 4. Ca. 2. 3. Is. 58. 14. 1 Pe. 1. 8. Hab. 3. 17, 18. Mat. 7. 7.
e Pr. 16. 3; 3. 6. Mat. 6. 25. Phi. 4. 6. 1 Pe. 5. 7. Ps. 55. 22.
[3] Heb. *Roll thy way upon the LORD*, Ps. 22. 8.
g Is. 54. 17. Mi. 7. 8, 9. Mat. 13. 43. Job 35. 14.
[4] Heb. *Be silent to the LORD*, Pr. 20. 22. Ps. 40. 1; 62. 1, 5. 1 Jn. 3. 24 -32. Is. 8. 17; 30. 18.
h Job 21. 7-15. Ps 73. 3-12. Je. 12. 1, 2.
i Job 5. 2; 18. 4. Ps. 73. 13, 14. Pr. 19. 3. Jonah 4. 9. Ep. 4. 26.
j Job 20. 23-29; 27. 13 -23. Ps. 55. 23. Pr. 2. 22. Is. 57. 13. Mat. 5. 5. Re. 5. 10.

6 Thy[j] righteousness *is* like the great mountains;[6] thy [k]judgments *are* a great deep: O LORD, thou [l]preservest man and beast.

7 How [n]excellent *is* thy loving-kindness, O God! therefore the children of men [o]put their trust under the shadow of thy wings.[7]

8 They[p] shall be abundantly satisfied[8] with the fatness of thy house; and thou shalt make them drink of the river of thy pleasures.

9 For[q] with thee *is* the fountain of life: [r]in thy light shall we see light.

10 O continue[9] thy loving-kindness unto them that know thee; and thy righteousness to the upright in heart.

11 Let[s] not the foot of pride come against me, and [t]let not the hand of the wicked remove me.[1]

12 There[2] are [u]the workers of iniquity fallen: they are cast down, and shall not be able to rise.

PSALM XXXVII.

David exhorteth to patience and confidence in God, by the different states of the godly and the wicked.

A psalm of David.

FRET not[a] thyself because of evil-doers, neither be thou envious against the workers of iniquity.[1]

2 For[b] they shall soon be cut down like the grass, and wither as the green herb.

3 Trust[c] in the LORD, and do good; *so* shalt thou dwell in the land, and verily[2] thou shalt be fed.

4 Delight [d]thyself also in the LORD; and he shall give thee the desires of thine heart.

5 Commit[e] thy way unto the LORD:[3] trust also in him; and he shall bring *it* to pass:

6 And [g]he shall bring forth thy righteousness as the light, and thy judgment as the noonday.

7 Rest in the LORD,[4] and wait patiently for him: fret not thyself because of him who prospereth in his way, because of the man [h]who bringeth wicked devices to pass.

8 Cease[i] from anger, and forsake wrath: fret not thyself in any wise to do evil.

9 For[j] evil-doers shall be cut off: but those

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tect, what unceasing provision is made for them that fear him! Though the most ravenous beasts and covetous men should be pinched and starved, none that fear him shall ever want, either for soul or body, what is for their good. It is a great mercy when children are from their infancy carefully instructed in the word and ways of God, And negligent parents and masters will have a heavy charge to answer in the day of God, if for lack of knowledge their children and servants eternally perish. How strictly are holiness and happiness connected! But marvellous is God's love to his people, in dwelling with them, delighting in them, hearing their requests, and in delivering, preserving, and redeeming them. And who can support under his indignation against the wicked! But let me not here forget his kindness to us in Christ, and the justice which he did and will measure to Jewish, heathen, antichristian, and other opposers.

PSALM XXXV. Ver. 1. The speaker in this psalm is *one;* and the interpretation must depend upon discovering who he is. Compare therefore ver. 19 with Jn. 15. 25, and the speaker is found to be Christ. And never lived there another who could say, 'They hated me without a cause.' See also ver. 7. *C*.

Ver. 8. But if the speaker be Christ, how can he thus pray against his enemies, seeing that he teaches us to love and to pray *for* them? This is a question originating in great inattention to 'things that differ,' Phi. 1. 10. For (1) does not this prayer detail what God in judgment *will do*? And can there be any reason against praying him to do his *own will*? But (2) can any one neglect to pray that Satan's kingdom may be destroyed? And what is there in these words but a prayer for God's righteous judgment upon Satan's causeless enmity? *C*.

Ver. 13. *Sick*. Sin is a sickness of the soul, a sickness unto death, against which no physician but the Conqueror of death can prevail. But such a physician is Jesus, Mat. 9. 12. *C*.

Ver. 22. *O Lord, be not far from me*. Distant in space, God can never be; but distant in time his help frequently is. For thus he tries the faith and increases the glory of his servants, and finally magnifies his own grace and salvation. *C*.

Ver. 24. Here is another evidence that the speaker who prays to be judged in *righteousness* is no other than Christ the righteous; for every conscious sinner must rather cry for mercy. See also ver. 27. *C*.

REFLECTIONS.—The best of men are often most cruelly persecuted. But a good God to plead their cause, and a good conscience to witness their integrity, are enough to comfort them. And a time is at hand when God will sufficiently recompense all the injuries done to them. However little persecutors see it, their feet stand on a slippery place, and a dreadful pit of ruin is just before them. And though we may not wish evil to our worst enemies, yet we may safely wish confusion to the implacable enemies of Christ and his church. Base ingratitude grievously wounds a generous spirit, when the greatest services meet with an ill requital. But let men use us as they will, it is our duty to pray for them. Though our kindness may be lost upon them, and our prayers slighted by them, they shall not return without a blessing to ourselves. And if we are made the reproach of the meanest, we but fill up what is behind of the sufferings of Christ. But short-lived is the triumphing, fearful and lasting the misery, of those who are enemies to Christ and his people; while ravishing and lasting are the prosperity

that wait upon the LORD, they shall inherit the earth.[5]

10 For[k] yet a little while,[6] and the wicked *shall* not *be:* yea, thou shalt diligently consider his place, and it *shall* not *be*.

11 But[l] the meek shall inherit the earth; and shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace.

12 The[m] wicked plotteth[7] against the just, and gnasheth upon him with his teeth.

13 The[n] LORD shall laugh at him: for he seeth that [o]his day is coming.

14 The[p] wicked have drawn out the sword, and have bent their bow, to cast down the poor and needy, *and* to slay such as be of upright conversation.[8]

15 Their[q] sword shall enter into their own heart, and their bows shall be broken.

16 A[r] little[9] that a righteous man hath *is* better than the riches of many wicked.

17 For[s] the arms of the wicked shall be broken: but the LORD upholdeth the righteous.

18 The[t] LORD knoweth the days of the upright, and their inheritance shall be [u]for ever.[1]

19 They shall not be ashamed in the evil time: and [v]in the days of famine they shall be satisfied.

20 But[x] the wicked shall perish, and the enemies of the LORD *shall be* as the [2]fat of lambs:[3] they shall consume; into smoke shall they consume away.

21 The[y] wicked borroweth, and payeth not again: but the righteous showeth mercy, and giveth.

22 For[z] *such as be* blessed of him shall inherit the earth; and *they that be* cursed of him shall be cut off.

23 The[a] steps of a *good* man are ordered by the LORD; and he delighteth in his way.

24 Though[b] he fall, he shall not be utterly cast down: for the LORD upholdeth *him with* his hand.

25 I have been young, and *now* am old; yet [c]have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread.

26 *He*[d] *is* ever[4] merciful, and lendeth; and his seed *is* blessed.

27 Depart[e] from evil, and do good; and dwell for evermore.[5]

28 For[g] the LORD loveth judgment, and forsaketh not his saints; they are preserved for ever: [h]but the seed of the wicked shall be cut off.

29 The[i] righteous shall inherit the land, and dwell therein for ever.

30 The[j] mouth of the righteous speaketh wisdom, and his tongue talketh of judgment.

31 The[k] law of his God *is* in his heart; [l]none of his steps[6] shall slide.[7]

32 The wicked [m]watcheth the righteous, and seeketh to slay him.

33 The[o] LORD will not leave him in his hand, nor condemn him when he is judged.

34 Wait[p] on the LORD, and keep his way, and he shall exalt thee to inherit the land: [q]when the wicked are cut off, thou shalt see *it*.

35 I have seen the wicked [r]in great power, and spreading himself like a green bay-tree.[8]

36 Yet[s] he passed away, and, lo, he *was* not; yea, I sought him, but he could not be found.

37 Mark[t] the perfect *man*, and behold the upright: for the end of *that* man *is* peace.

38 But [u]the transgressors shall be destroyed together: the end of the wicked shall be cut off.

39 But[v] the salvation of the righteous *is* of the LORD: *he is* their strength in the time of trouble.

40 And[x] the LORD shall help them, and deliver them: he shall deliver them from the wicked, and save them, because they trust in him.

A.M. cir. 2989. B.C. cir. 1015.

5 The land of Canaan to the Jew—the land of his appointment to the Gentile (Ac. 17, 26); that better, that heavenly country to every believer; of which country the blessings of earth are but temporary shadows. See also ver. 3, 11.—*C.*

6 It is so called in relation to God, with whom 'a thousand years are but as one day;' and describes not merely the speedy removal of wicked individuals, but of kingdoms and empires, of whose destruction history affords so many instructive examples.—*C.*

7 Or, *practiseth.*

8 Heb. *the upright of way.*

9 Because, being joined with godliness, it brings contentment, which is great gain, and hath the blessing that maketh rich, and addeth no sorrow, 1 Ti. 6. 6 Pr. 10. 22.—*C.*

10 Or, *general.*

7 This is a direct description of Christ, and never was verified in any other, for 'all (others) have sinned, and come short of the glory of God,' Ro. 3. 23.—*C.*

8 Or, *a green tree that groweth in his own soil.*

9 Heb. *the preciousness of lambs.*

1 The fat was totally consumed in the morning, evening, and other sacrifices: so continuously shall the riches of the wicked (ver. 16) be consumed, by their own luxury and extravagance, a sacrifice to the very vices to pamper which they were always so eagerly sought, and often so unjustly acquired.—*C.*

2 Or, *green.*

3 Or, *growing.*

4 Heb. *all the day.*

5 This is the grand lesson of the psalm. Righteousness alone can secure for man true and lasting prosperity and peace. The meaning of the last clause is that, as a general rule, the prosperity of the righteous will be permanent; it will descend from parent to child, and from generation to generation. In this respect it contrasts strongly with the comet-like career of the successful worlding.—*P.*

6 Heb. *steps.*

7 Ver. 23: Ps. 40. 2; 119. 9; 121. 3, 7; 89. 4. 18.

8 Or, *spreading.*

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and joys of the godly in the kind delight and favour of their God! All our comforts come from his hand, through active faith in his Son; and therefore he ought to be praised on their account.

PSALM XXXVI. Ver. 1. The form of this sentence is involved. It is dramatic, and may be explained in this way:—The writer introduces himself as scrutinizing the character and conduct of the wicked. His heart pronounces judgment upon them: and the substance of his judgment is, that they are not influenced by the fear of God. Pleasure, passion, and worldly aggrandizement are the great mainsprings of their actions. *P.*

Ver. 4. The whole description well applies to Judas, into whom Satan entered, and taught to betray his Lord, Lu. 22. 3. *C.*

Ver. 6. *Great mountains.* Conspicuous from afar, elevated above the clouds, the battlements of kingdoms, the storehouses of inexhaustible wealth, the immovable monuments of almighty power. *C.*

Ver. 9. *In thy light,* &c. God dwells in light, 1 Ti. 6. 16. God is light, 1 Jn. 1. 5. In Christ was light, Jn. 1. 9. In Christ, therefore, God's light, the believer sees light—the light of doctrine in ignorance, 2 Pe. 1. 19, and of immortality in death, 2 Ti. 1. 10. *C.*

REFLECTIONS.—Living in open sin is a certain mark of an unregenerate heart. And how deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked, are the hearts of men by nature! What self-flattery—what abominable thoughts and devices—what false and mischievous words—what horrid deeds proceed from them! Night and day they perpetrate crimes. And none are worse than apostate professors: their deliberate wickedness shows the power of the devil uncontrolled within them! And they who, when awake on their beds, have their thoughts unoccupied in God's words, will find the devil at hand to suggest evil to them. But how high—how fixed—how unsearchable are the excellencies of God! Unbounded is his mercy—unchangeable his veracity—conspicuous his justice—unsearchable his words—and awful his works! Benevolent and extensive is his providential care. Precious and engaging his love. And powerfully considerate and delightful are the provision, the comfort, the life, the light, the love, the righteousness, which he bestows upon all people. But inevitable is the ruin and intolerable the everlasting misery of all who reject them.

PSALM XXXVII. Ver. 1. The preceptive parts of this psalm select an individual as the object of instruction—the Spirit speaking forth the observation and experience of an aged prophet. That the Spirit directly addresses Christ, will be evident from ver. 6, for there never was any other who had *righteousness* to bring forth. See Ro. 3. 10; 1 Jn. 2. 1. And through the perfect instructions addressed to him his members learn the nature and obligations of universal holiness. *C.*

Ver. 23. *Good man.* 'Good' is not in the original, and the Hebrew signifies 'a mighty man,' even the mighty Lord, the King of glory, described Ps. 24. 8, the man Christ Jesus, who with 'clean hands and a pure heart,' ascends into the 'hill of God,' and abides in the 'holy place' a Priest for ever, He. 6. 20; 7. 24–28. *C.*

Ver. 25. Many have stumbled at this unlimited statement, for they have seen the children of believers reduced to want. But children are not mentioned, but seed—which signifies an entire race—a stream of life from the fountain of the righteous. Now, in this sense, the true sense, all experience verifies the statement. The *lazzaroni* of Naples are a race of beggars; their birth, their heirship, their education, their inheritance, is begging. So are many of the hapless people called *gipsies.* But, during all their dispersion and calamities, the Jews have never become a seed, a race of beggars: their employments, alas! are often low and ignoble, but still they are a race of workers, and as a seed they beg not. The same important fact is ever verified in the history of true Christians. There is not, there never was, there cannot be, a seed, a race of Christian beggars. *C.*

Ver. 38. 'Keep in innocence, and regard uprightness: for the perfect man hath a posterity, but the rebellious shall be destroyed together: the posterity of the wicked shall be cut off' (*Horsley*). This amendment seems necessary, for that 'the end of the wicked shall be cut off,' is scarcely intelligible. *C.*

REFLECTIONS.—Even eminent saints are apt to fret at the prosperity of the wicked—and yet how little reason is there for it! Be the apparent happiness of the wicked what it will in this world, it is mingled with the poisoning curse of God: it gives no solid satisfaction while it lasts, and it is quickly at an end. And never is their ruin nearer than when their prosperity spreads and flourishes like a green bay-tree. It brings them to everlasting wrath, and hastens them rapidly to the suffering of endless woe. But godliness hath great gain, having the promise of this life and of that which is to come. If rooted and grounded in Christ, we trust and delight in the Lord, and wait on him in the faith of his promises and obedience to his laws,

a Pr. 16. 9. 1 Sa. 2. 9. Ps. 121. 3, 7, 8; 11. 7; 1. 6. 1 Th. 4. 1. He. 13. 16. *b* Pr. 24. 16. Mi. 7. 8. 2 Co. 4. 9. Ps. 94. 18; 145. 14. Is. 41. 10; 46. 4; 49. 15, 16.

PSALM XXXVIII.

David moveth God to take compassion of his sad condition, confessing his sins to have been the cause of it.

A psalm of David, [a]to bring to remembrance.

O LORD, [b]rebuke me not in thy wrath; neither chasten me in thy hot displeasure.

2 For [c]thine arrows stick fast in me, and thy hand presseth me sore.

3 *There is* [d]no soundness in my flesh because of thine anger; neither *is there any* rest[1] in my bones because of my sin.

4 For[e] mine iniquities[2] are gone over mine head: as an heavy burden they are too heavy for me.

5 My[g] wounds stink, *and* are corrupt, because of my foolishness.

6 I[h] am troubled; I am bowed down greatly; I go mourning all the day long.

7 For [i]my loins are filled with a loathsome *disease;* and *there is* no soundness in my flesh.

8 I[j] am feeble and sore broken: [k]I have roared by reason of the disquietness of my heart.[3]

9 LORD, [l]all my desire *is* before thee; and my groaning is not hid from thee.

10 My[n] heart panteth, my strength faileth me: as for the light of mine eyes, it also is gone from me.[4]

11 My[o] lovers and my friends stand aloof from my sore;[5] and my kinsmen[6] stand afar off.

12 They[p] also that seek after my life lay snares *for me:* and they that seek my hurt

5 Heb. *stroke.* 6 Or, *neighbours.*

[p] Ps.64.5;119.110;140.5;141.9;142.3;35.20;62.3,4.Pr.4.16.

A.M. cir. 2983 or 2946. B.C. cir. 1021 or 1058.

PSALM XXXVIII.

[a] Ps.70. title.

[b] Ps.6.1.Je.10.24;30.11.Is.27.8; 54. 8. La. 3. 32,33. Hab.3.2. He.12. 5–12.

[c] Job 6.4.Ps.6.2;39 10, 11; 32. 4; 88.3,15,16; 91.5,6.

[d] Is.1.5,6. Ps.6.2; 51. 8.

1 Heb. *peace,* or *health.*

[e] Ezr.9.6. Ps. 40. 12; 69.1,2. La.1.14. Is. 1.4. Joh 7.20,21. Mat.11.28.

2 Here it is seen in what sense Christ confesses sin and iniquities, and calls them his own; they were his as a burden laid upon him, for 'the Lord laid upon him the iniquities of us all.' 'He hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows,' Is. 53. 4. He 'bare our sins in his own body on the tree.' 1 Pe.2 24. See notes on Ps.25.2;32.5.—*C.*

[g] Ps.73.14.Is. 1. 5,6. Mar.7.21,22.

[h] 2 Sa.24.10. Job 30. 28. Ps.69.1,2;42.7,9,10; 43.2.

[i] ver.3, 5. Job 30. 18; 40.4;42.6. Is.64.6. Lu. 16.20.

[j] Ps.62.4;51.8,17. Is. 38.13,14.

[k] Ps. 32.3; 22.1; 77.1–9; 88.1–18. Job 3.24; 30. 28. Is.59.11.

3 The psalmist manifestly speaks of bodily disease, which he traces to his own sin and folly. Divine chastisement was thus the means of bringing him as a humble suppliant to the throne of grace. Before he was afflicted he went astray; his afflictions were blessings, leading him to God and duty. —*C.*

[l] Jn. 1.48. Ps. 6. 3, 6. Is.26.8,9. La.3.56. Ro. 8.26,27.

[n] Ps.42.1;73.26;77.2–4;6.7;69.3;143.6,7.La. 5.16,17.

4 Heb. *is not with me.*

[o] Mat.25. 56. Ps. 31. 11;88.18. Joh 19.13–19. Lu.10.31,32;23.49.

A.M. cir. 2983 or 2946. B.C. cir. 1021 or 1058.

[q] 2 Sa. 16. 10–12. Ps. 39. 2, 9. Is.53.7. 1 Pe. 2. 23.

7 This description of the sufferer's silence exactly corresponds with the prophetic description of Christ, and constitutes a remarkable feature of that righteousness by which he magnified the law, and made it honourable, Is.42.19–21.—*C.*

[r] Ps.16. 1; 31. 14; 25. 15;119.81;123. 1–4; 138. 6,7;102.17.

8 Or, *thee do I wait for.*

9 Or, *answer.*

[s] Ps.130.1,2;31.2;143. 7;35.15,23–26.

[t] ver.6; Ps. 94.18; 69. 1,2; 77.2,3; 43.2; 102. 6–10.

1 Heb. *for halting.*

2 The humanity shrunk from the bitter cup, Mat. 26. 39, but the Spirit sustained him in drinking it.—*C.*

[u] Ps. 32.5. Pr. 28. 13. Jos.7. 19. Je. 3. 13. Job 33.27; 34.31,32. 2 Co. 7. 9–11.

3 See note on ver. 4.—*C.*

[v] Je. 12. 1. Ps. 59. 3; 142.6;3.143.1,2.

4 Heb. being *living are strong.*

[x] Ps 35. 12; 109. 4, 5. Je.20.10. Jn. 10. 32; 15. 19. 1 Jn.3.12. 1 Pe.3.13, 16.

5 This is an assertion that none but Christ could truly make; every other must plead, 'God be merciful to me a sinner.'—*C.*

[y] Ps.22.1,11,19;44.23–26;27.9–12.

[z] Ps.22.19; 40. 13,17; 70.1;71.12;141.1;143.7.

6 Heb. *for my help.*

PSALM XXXIX.

[a] 1Ch.25.1;16.41.Ps. 77. title.

[b] Pr.21.23. Ja. 3.2–8; 1.19, 26. Ps.141.3. Am. 5.13.Col.4.5.

speak mischievous things and imagine deceits all the day long.

13 But[q] I, as a deaf *man,* heard not; and *I was* as a dumb man *that* openeth not his mouth.

14 Thus I was as a man that heareth not, and in whose mouth *are* no reproofs.[7]

15 For[r] in thee, O LORD, do I hope:[8] thou wilt hear,[9] O LORD my God.

16 For[s] I said, *Hear me,* lest *otherwise* they should rejoice over me: when my foot slippeth, they magnify *themselves* against me.

17 For[t] I *am* ready to[1] halt,[2] and my sorrow *is* continually before me.

18 For [u]I will declare mine iniquity; I will be sorry for my sin.[3]

19 But[v] mine enemies *are* lively, *and* they are strong;[4] and they that hate me wrongfully are multiplied.

20 They[x] also that render evil for good are mine adversaries; because I follow *the thing that* good *is.*[5]

21 Forsake[y] me not, O LORD: O my God, be not far from me.

22 Make[z] haste to help me,[6] O LORD my salvation.

PSALM XXXIX.

1 David's care not to offend with his tongue. 4 His reflections upon the shortness and vanity of human life, which led him to hope in God. 8 He prayeth for pardon and comfort before his death.

To the chief musician, *even* to [a]Jeduthun, A psalm of David.

I SAID, [b]I will take heed to my ways, that I sin not with my tongue: I will keep my

extensive and glorious shall be our inheritance—pleasure, support, honour, safety, plenty, protection, peace, happy death, and everlasting salvation.

PSALM XXXVIII. Ver. 1. There is not on record such another memorial of affliction as we find presented in this psalm. The wrath and arrows of the Almighty—a body racked with disease and pain—an agonized spirit, the desertion of friends—the plottings and assaults of inveterate enemies—all concentrate upon one sufferer. And who is he that can sustain the assault? Surely this can be none but the 'Man of Sorrows,' whom 'it pleased the Lord to bruise.' *C.*

Ver. 12. *Lay snares.* This was fulfilled when the Pharisees and Herodians combined to entangle him in his speech, Mat. 22. 15–22; and when, as in Jn. 8. 6, they thought to ensnare him into a decision in favour of immorality, or into pronouncing a sentence of death, which they might construe into usurpation of the executive power. See also Lu. 6. 7. *C.*

REFLECTIONS.—How tremendous is even God's fatherly wrath! But how much more his awful judgment against the ungodly! Sin makes fearful work even in saints. But much more terrible is its effects in sinners! Yea, where real grace is, sin will be more painful and bitter than all the arrows, strokes, and wounds of trouble. And however painful the wounds and groans of the soul are, they are symptoms of life. It is hopeful when outward distempers make men to search out and bewail their sinful causes. But nothing is a more fatal sign than insensibility. No human strength can withstand God's afflicting hand. No sinews of brass, nor bones of iron, can resist the strokes of fierce disease. And often our worldly friends, who flutter around us in our prosperity, treacherously forsake us in our adversity. But what a comfort it is that we have a compassionate God to trust to, who knows and can cure our maladies! How many, how malicious and active, are the enemies of Christ and his saints! Their enmity at God himself and his image is the cause of their quarrel. So fixed is their hatred at godliness, that they abhor it though benefited by it. It is hard, but wise, to imitate Jesus Christ in calm composure under severe provocation;—in silently suffering and in overlooking manifold unkindness done to us. But to take notice of malicious and clamorous enemies is ordinarily to make evil worse. Hope in God will sufficiently support us against every oppression and injury. They who contentedly leave their cause with him shall never be disappointed nor want an advocate to plead for them; and the more sense we have of our offences against him, the greater will be our penitential grief and our patience under the provocation of men. Our blessed relation to him as our Friend, Saviour, and God, improved by the prayer of faith, will quickly bring him to our relief.

PSALM XXXIX. Ver. 1. *I will take heed to my ways, that I sin not with my tongue.* He who could, without vain self-confidence, make and keep this resolution, must be more than man. Man might pray to be so upheld, Christ alone could so resolve. *C.*

Ver. 4. This is a lesson the worldly mind is most unwilling to learn, partly through fear of death, and partly through fear of losing life's vain enjoyments. Our Lord learned it in answer to prayer, leaving us here also 'an example that we should follow his steps.' *C.*

Ver. 12. Jesus wept at the tomb of Lazarus; over impenitent Jerusalem; and in the days of his flesh 'made supplication with strong crying and tears;' of these, because they must often have been by night and in secret, the Spirit, that searcheth the deep things both of God and man, here and elsewhere in the Psalms, makes discovery and gives the record. *C.*

REFLECTIONS.—Great watchfulness and circumspection are necessary to our walking aright in this wicked and ensnaring world. For careless hearts will make crooked ways; and next to the heart nothing is harder to guide than the tongue: but the stronger the temptation is, the stronger ought to be our resolution against it. We are very apt to run from one extreme to another. If we restrain our lips from evil, we are ready to neglect that speech which is with grace seasoned with salt. And when our mind, long in silence, ruminates upon sorrows and the instrumental causes of them, it galls its sores and aggravates its discontent. But there is great need to consider what death is, and how near it is; and that it is continually working in us: for vain and transient are men, with all their joys and honours, their griefs and fears, their toils and cares. And the more we see death and vanity stamped upon all things here, the more we ought to be weaned from them in our affections, and the more solicitous should we be in securing the ever-living, the substantial, and eternal GOOD. The more our lying refuges are swept away, the more reason we have to trust in and call on God, who never disappoints any. With holy resignation to his strokes, we must earnestly beg the forgiveness of the cause and the removal of the rod. We cannot impeach the equity of his judgments, nor withstand their force. But if they set us a weeping and praying, and render us weaned from this world, God, our friend and companion, will quickly give us relief. And by his grace he will ripen us for heaven before he give the mortal stroke.

PSALM XL. Ver. 1. *I waited patiently for the Lord.* It is here to be remarked, as in several other psalms, that the speaker is *one;* and that the Holy Spirit, speaking by Paul, He. 10. 5–9, declares this *one* to be Christ. But when Christ is found to be the speaker in one part, he must, if there be any confidence in the grammar of any language, be the speaker in the whole psalm. *C.*

Ver. 6. *Mine ears hast thou opened.* From Ex. 21. 6 it will appear that this expression signifies 'thou hast made me a servant for ever,' an expression perfectly equivalent to that wondrous mystery revealed 1 Co. 15. 28. Paul, He. 10. 5, quotes from the Septuagint translation, which gives an expository not a literal translation. *C.*

Ver. 12. *Mine iniquities,* &c. Instead of labouring to evade the inevitable conclusion that these words were, in the Spirit, spoken by Christ—an attempt made by supposing the psalm should end at ver. 10, or by inserting *afflictions* instead of *iniquities*—the peace of the believer rests in the very fact that Christ, by sacrifice, and in virtue of his union of headship, made the believers' sins *his own,* and *felt* them, and *confessed* them, and *died for them.* See notes on Ps. 32. 5; 25. 2. *C.*

Ver. 15. See notes on Ps. 5. 10; 35. 8. Several high authorities endeavour to elude the apparent objection that lies against such prayers by translating them prophetically and not as imprecatory. The Greek translation, however, employed by the Spirit of truth, Ac. 1. 20, sets the point at rest in favour of the authorized version. *C.*

REFLECTIONS.—Alas! what fearful and lasting troubles of body and mind Jesus and his people have allotted them on earth! What patience is necessary under them! But God is their deliverer. And greatly exalting, establishing, joyous, and encouraging is their deliverance at last. Happy are those who, renouncing all other confidences, trust in God alone. Great is the number, the marvellous grace of his thoughts and acts towards Jesus Christ and his children in the work of redemption. But how insignificant were Jewish sacrifices in respect of holy obedience: and infinitely more

mouth with a bridle,[1] while the wicked is before me.[2]

2 I[c] was dumb with silence;[3] I held my peace, *even* from good; and my sorrow was stirred.[4]

3 My[d] heart was hot within me; while I was musing[5] the fire burned: *then* spake I with my tongue.

4 LORD,[e] make me to know mine end, and the measure of my days, what it *is; that* I may know how frail I *am*.[6]

5 Behold,[g] thou hast made my days *as* an hand-breadth, and mine age *is* as nothing before thee: [h]verily every man at his best state[7] *is* altogether vanity. Selah.[8]

6 Surely every man walketh in a vain show:[9] surely they are disquieted in vain: [i]he heapeth up *riches*, and knoweth not who shall gather them.

7 And now, LORD, what wait I for? [j]my hope *is* in thee.

8 Deliver[k] me from all my transgressions:[1] make[l] me not the reproach of the foolish.

9 I[n] was dumb, I opened not my mouth; because thou didst *it*.

10 Remove[o] thy stroke away from me: I am consumed by the blow[2] of thine hand.

11 When [p]thou with rebukes dost correct man for iniquity,[3] thou makest his beauty to consume[q] away[4] like a moth: surely every man *is* vanity. Selah.

12 Hear[r] my prayer, O LORD, and give ear unto my cry; hold not thy peace at my tears: for[s] I *am* a stranger with thee, *and* a sojourner, as all my fathers *were*.

13 O [t]spare me, that I may recover strength, before I go hence, and be no more.

PSALM XL.

1 *The benefit of confidence in God.* 6 *Obedience is the best sacrifice.* 11 *He prayeth for salvation to himself, and confusion to his enemies.*

To the chief musician, A psalm of David.

I WAITED[a] patiently[1] for the LORD; and he[b] inclined unto me, and heard my cry.

2 He brought me up also out of [c]an horrible pit,[2] out of the miry clay, and [d]set my feet upon a rock, *and* established my goings.

3 And he hath [e]put a new song in my mouth, *even* praise unto our God: [g]many shall see *it*, and fear, and shall trust in the LORD.

A.M. cir. 2983 or 2946.
B.C. cir. 1021 or 1058.

1 Heb. *a bridle* or *muzzle for my mouth.*

2 It has been truly said that this is 'the most beautiful of all the elegies in the Psalter. The struggle depicted here is not a struggle with wicked men, but with the terrors of a mortal sickness, which to the men of those early times were so great, that even the bravest, who felt no fear before the attacks of the enemy, quailed before the fear of death.' But even the fear of death could not shake the psalmist's trust in God. Faith was triumphant. The psalmist by his divinely enlightened mind was made to see that his very chastisements were blessings, that all things tended to promote his spiritual and eternal welfare.—*P.*

c Ps.38.13,14. Je.20.9.

3 This is the silence described, Ps. 38. 13; 32.3. Is.42.19,21.—*C.*

4 Heb. *troubled.*

d Ps. 32. 3, 4. Job 32. 19.3.16,17; 7.15,16. Je. 20.9,14. Jonah 4.8.

5 As is exemplified, Jn.8.6.—*C.*

e De.32.29. Ps.90.12; 119.84;89.47,48.

6 Or, *what time I have here.*

g Job 7.1,6,7,9; 9.25, 26;14.2,5;20.8. Ps.90.4, 5,9;102. 11; 103. 15. Ec. 8.13 Ja.4.14. 1 Pe. 1.8.

h Ps.62. 9; 144. 4. Is. 40.17. Job 14.2.

7 Heb. *settled.*

8 See note on Ps.3. 2.—*C.*

9 Heb. *an image,* 1 Ch.29.15. Ep.4.17.

i Job 27.17. Ec.2.18, 19,21,26;5.13–16. Hab. 2.6–13. Lu.12.16–21.

j Ps.119.81, 114, 166; 130.5,7.

k Ps.25.11;65.3;32.1, 2; 130.8. Tit.2.14. 1 Jn. 3.8.

1 See notes on Ps. 32.5;25.2.—*C.*

l Ps.57.3; 89. 50; 119. 22. Joel 2.19.

n Le.10.3. Job 40.4, 5. 1 Sa. 3.18. 2Sa.16.10. 1 Ki.4.4. ver.2.

o Job 9.34;13.21. Ps. 25,16–18.

2 Heb. *conflict.*

p Is.17.13; 51. 20; 66. 15.

3 See notes on Ps.32. 5;25.2.—*C.*

q Job 4.19; 13.28. Is. 50.9;51.8. Ho.5.12.

4 Heb. *that which is to be desired in him to melt away.*

r Ps.4.1;5.1, 2; 83. 1; 130.1,2;56.8.

s Le.25.23. 1 Ch. 29. 15. Ge.47.9. Ps. 119.19. He.11.13. 1 Pe.2.11; 1. 17.

t Job 10.20, 21; 14. 6. Ge.5.24;37. 3;42.30.

PSALM XL.

B.C. cir. 1020.

a Ps.27. 13;37. 7. Is. 50.7-9.

1 Heb. *in waiting I waited.*

b Ps.18.6;130.2; 20.4, 5. He.5.7. Is.49.8.

c Ps. 18.16,17; 69.1,2; 71.20. Is.43.1,2. 2Sa.4. 9.

2 Heb. *a pit of noise.*

d Ps. 61. 2; 18.19; 26. 12.2 Th.3.5.

e Ps. 22.22,23;33.2;86. 12,13;103.1–5.

g Ps. 64. 9, 10; 142.7; 35.27.

A.M. cir. 2984.
B.C. cir. 1020.

h Ps.2.12. Je.17.7,8.

i Ps.15.4; 146.3; 119. 21;125.5. Je.2.13. Jonah 2.8.

j Job 5.9,9.10. Ps.71. 15;92.5;139.6,17,18. Je. 29.11. Is.55.8,9.

3 The Father's thoughts and wonders are not for the Son alone, but for the Son and the church, and therefore the church is here joined collectively with her glorious head, Ep.1.22.—*C.*

4 Or, *none can order them unto thee.*

k 1 Sa.15.22. Ps. 51. 16. Is.1.11; 66.3;50.5,6. Ho.6.6. Mat.12.7. He. 10.4–10.

5 Heb. *digged* or *prepared,* Ex.21.6.

l Lu.24.27, 44. Jn. 5. 39. Ac.10.43. 1 Co.15.3, 4. 2 Co.1.20.

n Ps. 119. 16, 24, 47, 92. Ro.7.22. Lu. 12.50. Jn.10.18;4.34;14.31.

6 Heb. *in the midst of my bowels,* Je. 31. 33. Ps.37.31. 2 Co.3.3.

7 This passage is quoted by Paul in He.10.5–7; but in that quotation there is a remarkable variation from the original text. Instead of the words, 'mine ears hast thou opened,' the apostle has 'a body didst thou prepare for me.' The original language is metaphorical, and its plain meaning is:—'Thou hast formed in me a willing and obedient spirit, so that I preserve an open ear to all thy commands.' In substance the apostle's quotation is the same:—'A body hast thou prepared for me;' *i.e.* a body formed and fitted for the service of God, ready to render the fullest obedience. The contrast is drawn between the sacrifices of slain victims and the free-will offerings of a living body.—*P.*

o Lu.4.16–22. Ps. 35. 18;22.22,25. Mat. 11.5; 28. 19, 20. Mar. 16. 15. Jn.18.20.

p Ac. 20. 20, 27. Ro. 10.3;1.16,17;3.22–26.

q Ac. 13. 23. Lu. 24. 27,44. Ro.15.8.

r Mat.18.11. Lu.19. 9,10.

s Jn. 3. 16; 10. 10,18. Is.53.7.

t Ps. 69.13,16; 89.1,2, 28;23.6;43.3; 57.3; 61.7.

u Ps.85.10.

v He.4.15. Lu.18.13, 14. Ps. 10.12;38.4; xxii. lxix. Is.53.6. 2 Co.5.21. 1 Pe.2.24;3.18. Jn. xviii. xix.

8 Heb. *forsaketh.*

x Ps.70.1–5;25.17,18; 38.22;22.20,21. He.5.7. Mat.26.36–44.

y Ps.31.1;35.4,26;71. 13;119.28,29.

z Jn.18.6. Ps.41.5.

a Ps.35.21,25; 69. 24, 25. Lu.19.43, 44; 21. 23, 24. Mat 27. 39–44.

b Ps 22.26;35.27. Ro. 5.2,11. Phi.4.4;3.3.

c Is.45.17. Hab.3.18. Mat. 1. 21. Lu. 2. 30; 1. 46,47.

d Ps.34.6;68.10;69.33. Is.42.1. Mat.8.20;3.17. 2 Co.8.9.

e ver.5. 1 Pe.5.7.

g Ps.70.5;143.7,8. Is. 50.7,9. He.5.7;13.6.

4 Blessed[h] *is* that man that maketh the LORD his trust, and [i]respecteth not the proud, nor such as turn aside to lies.

5 Many,[j] O LORD my God, *are* thy wonderful works *which* thou hast done, and thy thoughts *which are* to us-ward;[3] they cannot be reckoned up in order unto thee:[4] *if* I would declare and speak *of them*, they are more than can be numbered.

6 Sacrifice[k] and offering thou didst not desire; mine ears hast thou opened:[5] burnt-offering and sin-offering hast thou not required.

7 Then said I, Lo, I come: [l]in the volume of the book *it is* written of me,

8 I [n]delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, thy law *is* within my [6]heart.[7]

9 I[o] have preached righteousness in the great congregation: lo, I have not refrained my lips, O LORD, thou knowest.

10 I have not hid [p]thy righteousness within my heart; I have declared thy [q]faithfulness and thy [r]salvation: I have not concealed thy [s]loving-kindness and thy truth from the great congregation.

11 Withhold[t] not thou thy tender mercies from me, O LORD: [u]let thy loving-kindness and thy truth continually preserve me.

12 For[v] innumerable evils have compassed me about: mine iniquities have taken hold upon me, so that I am not able to look up: they are more than the hairs of mine head; therefore my heart faileth[8] me.

13 Be[x] pleased, O LORD, to deliver me: O LORD, make haste to help me.

14 Let[y] them be ashamed and confounded together that seek after my soul to destroy it; [z]let them be driven backward, and put to shame that wish me evil.

15 Let[a] them be desolate for a reward of their shame that say unto me, Aha, aha!

16 Let[b] all those that seek thee rejoice and be glad in thee: let such as love thy [c]salvation say continually, The LORD be magnified.

17 But[d] I *am* poor and needy; [e]*yet* the LORD thinketh upon me: thou [g]*art* my help and my deliverer; make no tarrying, O my God.

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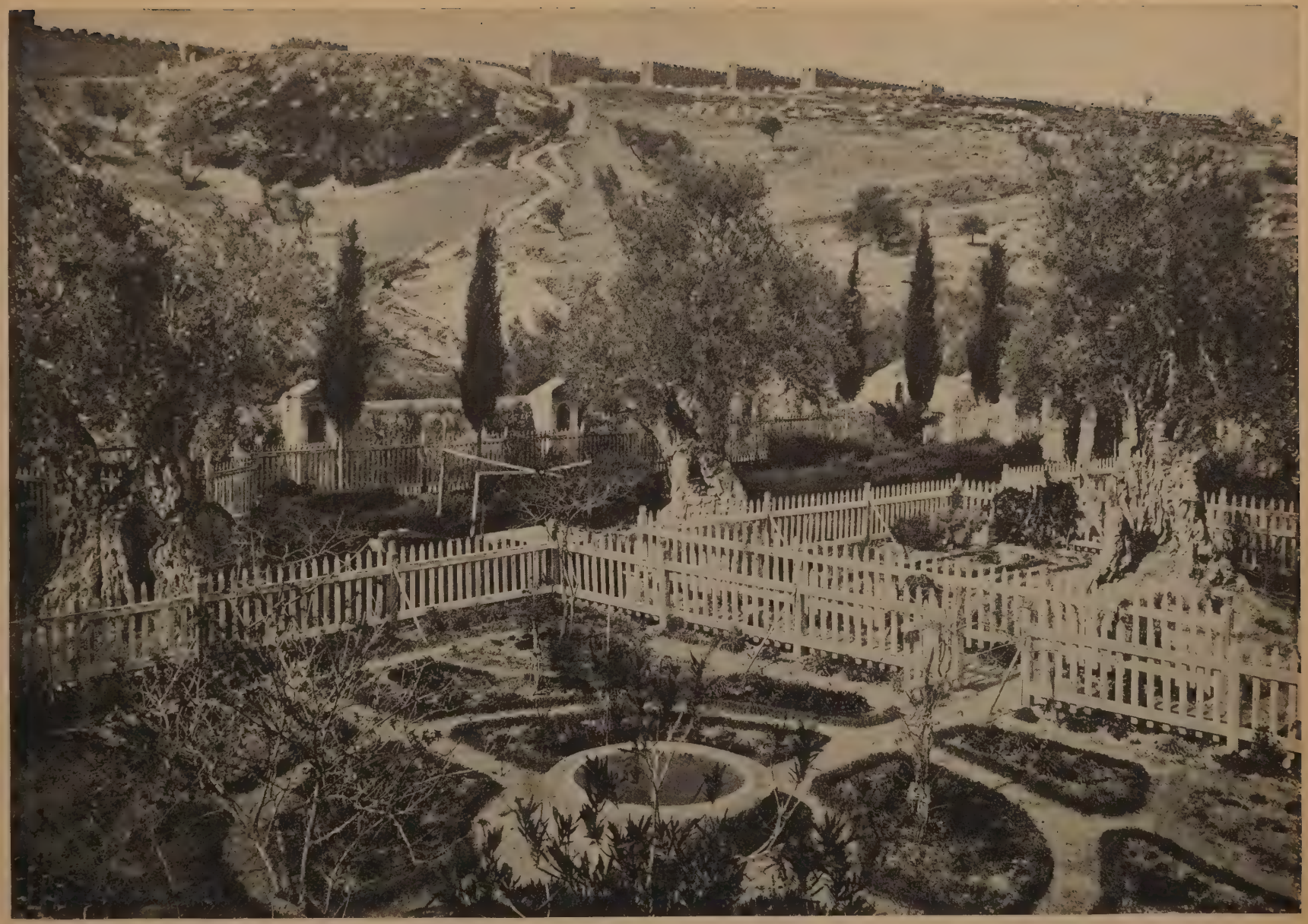
so in comparison of Jesus the Son of God, and his complete holiness of nature, obedience of life, and remedial sufferings! With great cheerfulness he sought for us the blessed rewards of peace. And with a steady purpose of love he fulfilled his work, in executing every saving office for our good. Dreadful was the load of our iniquities laid upon him. But he finished transgression, and made an end of sin, and publishes to men the declarations and offers of gospel-grace. Let us then embrace every promise as ratified by his blood: and in the faith of his suffering death for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him, let us cheerfully and gratefully devote ourselves, by the most solemn ties, to his service. In his name let us fight the good fight of faith and finish our course. Behold how the prayers of saints, but chiefly the intercession of Jesus Christ, issued in the downfall of evil and the prosperity and deliverance of believers. It is infinitely dangerous to mock gracious mercy. But no griefs, no poverty, can render them miserable who fear him. There is a throne of grace to which they have the boldest access. Their God, and all that he hath or doth, is the ground of their joy. His inexhaustible fulness, adapted to their wants, the prayers of faith can unlock. The promises are sure; and the moment of fulfilment hastens forward.

PSALM XLI. Ver. 1. 'This psalm, like Ps. xxxviii., which it so much resembles, is one that will be always eminently useful to those who are visited with sickness, and who, at the same time, are deprived of the sympathy in their sufferings which the afflicted so much need and desire, and who, instead of sympathy, are subjected to detraction and calumny—their enemies taking advantage of their condition to circulate unfavourable reports in regard to them, and their heretofore professed friends withdrawing from them and uniting with their calumniators and detractors.' From man's cruelty the psalmist teaches us to turn to divine mercy. As a friend and helper God never fails. *P.*

Ver. 4. Our Lord (Jn. 13. 18, compare with ver. 9) declares this scripture fulfilled by the treachery of Judas; our Lord is therefore the speaker. To set aside this evidence, he is said to have quoted by *accommodation*, a principle totally unsupported by divine authority, a principle which, if once adopted, puts an end to interpretation; for no man could determine where accommodation ends and reality begins. *C.*

REFLECTIONS.—Whilst here also we behold Jesus Christ through poverty, affliction, malicious and treacherous enemies, entering into his glory, to the endless honour of his Father, and the joy of his heart, let us observe, that kindness to God's poor and afflicted is as much our interest as our duty, and God's blessing is the only comfort of every estate. It can give rest in trouble, and make even grief to smile. And pleasant under trouble are penitent confessions and fervent requests founded on the promise and mercy of God. Sin



GENERAL VIEW OF THE GARDEN OF GETHSEMANE—WHERE CHRIST PRAYED THE LAST PRAYER. [PSALMS, xl:7, 8.]—"Then said I, Lo, I come; in the volume of the book it is written of me, I delight to do thy will, O, my God: yea, the law is within my heart." Alphonse de Lamartine, member of the French Academy, after losing in Palestine his only daughter, Julia, wrote in the Garden of Gethsemane one of the saddest poems, part of which we quote:

"At the dry, dusty base of Olive's Mount
Under the shade of Zion's ruined walls,
Is quite shut out. There Cedron slowly rolls
His scanty waves between his arid banks;
There in the hillside lies Jehoshaphat entombed.
Instead of grass the barren soil bears only ruins,
And the ancient trees cleave with their straggling roots the stony tombs.
There between two high rocks is dimly seen
The lonely grot to which the Man of Grief
Went to experience death before it came."

PSALM XLI.

1 The recompense of the charitable man. 4 David prayeth for mercy, complaining of the treachery of his enemies and apostate friends: 11 He acknowledgeth God's favour, and blesseth him.

To the chief musician, A psalm of David.

BLESSED *is*[a] he that considereth the [1]poor:[2] the LORD will deliver him[3] in time of trouble.[4]

2 The[b] LORD will preserve him, and keep him alive; *and* [c]he shall be blessed upon the earth: and thou wilt not deliver[5] him unto the will of his enemies.

3 The LORD [d]will strengthen him upon the bed of languishing: thou wilt make[6] all his bed in his sickness.

4 I said, LORD, [e]be merciful unto me: heal my soul; for I have sinned against thee.

5 Mine[g] enemies speak evil of me, When shall he die, and his name perish?

6 And [h]if he come to see *me*, he speaketh vanity: his heart gathereth iniquity to itself; *when* he goeth abroad, he telleth *it*.

7 All[i] that hate me whisper together against me: against me do they devise my hurt.[7]

8 •An evil disease,[8] *say they*, cleaveth fast unto him: [j]and *now* that he lieth, he shall rise up no more.

9 Yea,[k] mine own familiar friend,[9] in whom I trusted, which did eat of my bread, hath lifted up[1] *his* heel against me.

10 But thou, [l]O LORD, be merciful unto me, and raise me up, that I may requite them.

11 By[n] this I know that thou favourest me, because mine enemy doth not triumph over me.

12 And as for me, [o]thou upholdest me in mine integrity,[2] and [p]settest me before thy face for ever.

13 Blessed[q] *be* the LORD God of Israel from everlasting, and to everlasting. Amen, and Amen.

PSALM XLII.

1 David's zeal to serve God in the temple. 5 He encourageth his dejected soul to trust in God.

To the chief musician, Maschil,[1] for the sons of Korah.

AS the hart panteth[2] after the water-brooks, so [c]panteth my soul after thee, O God.[3]

2 My soul thirsteth for God, for the [b]living God: when shall I come and appear before God?

3 My[c] tears have been my meat day and night, while they continually say unto me, Where *is* thy God?

4 When[d] I remember these *things*, I pour out my soul in me: for I had gone with the multitude; I went with them to the house of God,[e] with the voice of joy and praise, with a multitude that kept holy-day.

5 Why[g] art thou cast down,[4] O my soul? and *why* art thou disquieted in me? hope thou in God; for I shall yet praise[5] him *for* the help of his countenance.[6]

6 O[h] my God, my soul is cast down within me: [i]therefore will I remember thee from [j]the land of Jordan, and of the Hermonites,[7] from [k]the hill Mizar.[8]

7 Deep[l] calleth unto deep at the noise of thy water-spouts: all thy waves and thy billows are gone over me.

8 *Yet* the LORD [n]will command his loving-kindness in the day-time, and [o]in the night his song *shall be* with me, *and* my prayer unto the God of my life.

9 I will say unto God my rock, [p]Why hast thou forgotten me? why go I mourning because of the oppression of the enemy?

10 *As*[q] with a [9]sword[1] in my bones, mine enemies reproach me; while they say daily unto me, Where *is* thy God?

11 Why[r] art thou cast down, O my soul? and why art thou disquieted within me? hope thou in God; for I shall yet praise him, *who is* the health of my countenance, and my God.

PSALM XLIII.[1]

1 The psalmist, praying to be restored to the temple, promiseth to serve God joyfully. 5 He encourageth his soul to trust in God.

JUDGE[2] me,[a] O God, and plead my cause against an ungodly[3] nation: O deliver me from the deceitful and unjust man.[4]

2 For thou *art* [b]the God of my strength: [c]why dost thou cast me off? why go I mourning because of the oppression of the enemy?

3 O send out thy [d]light and thy truth: let them lead me; let them bring me unto thy [e]holy hill, and to thy tabernacles.

4 Then[g] will I go unto the altar of God, unto God my exceeding joy:[5] yea, [h]upon the harp will I praise thee, O God, my God.

5 Why[i] art thou cast down, O my soul? and

A.M. cir. 2983.
B.C. cir. 1021.

PSALM XLI.

B.C. cir. 1021.

a Pr.14.21;19.17.He. 6.10;13.16.

1 Or, *the weak* or *sick*.

2 That is, him who is poor in every sense, 'exhausted' of health, riches, and friends. Who is he that considereth the poor? man or the Lord? The words are generally interpreted of a charitable sympathizing man; but do they not rather describe the considerate compassion of the Lord himself?—*C.*

3 *Deliver him*—Whom? a man that considers the poor, or the poor himself who *is* in trouble; for if the words applied to a considerate man, that man might never come into the trouble described in ver. 1–3, and so never attain the promise.—*C.*

4 Heb. *in the day of evil.*

b Ps.16.7;91.3–11. Is. 38.21.2 Co.1.10.

c Ps.37.32,33; 128. 1–6.1 Ti.4.8. Mat.6.33; 5. 5.

5 Or, *do not thou deliver.*

d De.33.25. Is.41.10; 43.1,2;63.9. Ps.91. 15. 2 Co.4.17.

6 Heb. *turn.*

e Ps. 30.5; 147.3; 6.2–4;40.11,12;69.13,16; 51. 1–3;103.3. Ho.6.1.

g Ps.22.6–8; 69. 7, 12, 19,20;109.2–5;102.8.

h Pr.26.24–26. Ps.35. 15,16;12.2. Mat. 22.16–18. Lu.21 2.

i Ps.1.0,2;31.13; 56. 5, 6;64.5,6. Mat.22.15; 26. 3,4. Jn.11.53.

7 Heb. *evil to me.*

8 Heb. *a thing of Belial.*

j Job 32.13. Ps.71.11; 3.2;31.11,13. Ac.28.4.

k Job 19.19. Ps.55.13, 20. Je.20.10. Jn.13.18.

9 Heb. *the man of my peace.*

1 Heb. *magnified.*

l Ps.4.1; 56. 1; 57. 1; 106.4;21.7–12. Pr.1.24–33.

n Ps.86.17;13.4;69.22 –29;109.6–14. Col.2.15.

o Ps. 25.12; 94. 18; 16. 10. Is.50.7,9. 1 Ti.3.16.

2 None but Christ was ever so upheld: all other believers are guilty, though pardoned, sinners.—*C.*

p Ps. 31. 18; 34. 15. 2 Ch.16.9. Ac 2.28.

q Ps. 72.18,19; 89.52; 106.48. Re. 5. 12, 13; 7. 12;11.17;19. 1. Ep.3.21. 1 Pe.4.11. Jude 25.

PSALM XLII.

1 Or, *A psalm giving instruction of the sons of Korah*, 1 Ch. 6.33,37;25.5.

2 Heb. *brayeth.*

a Ps.63.1, 2; 84. 2, 7; 107.2;27, 4; 143. 6, 7. Is. 26.8,9. Job 23.3. Jn. 7. 37.

b 1 Th.1.9. Ps. 36. 9. Je.2.13. Jn.5.26.

c ver.10; Ps. 80.5;79. 10;102.9;115.2;22.8;3.2; 71 11.1 s.49.14.

3 Let these words be taken, not as a figure but a reality, and there will be little difficulty in admitting that they describe the soul of the Son of God in the days of his flesh. But if any darkness remain, let the sincere inquirer read ver. 3, 7, and then say, can this be true of any but of him upon whom 'the Lord laid the iniquities of us all.'—*C.*

d La.3.19,20. Job 30. 16.

e Is.30. 29. Ps. 122 1; 81.1–3. Ne.8.9,10. Ex. 23.14,17. Le.xxiii.

g 1 Sa. 30.6. Ps.43.5; 27.13. Job 35.14. Is. 30. 18; 50.10. Ro. 4. 18–20. He.10.36,37. La. 3. 26, 32.

4 Heb. *bowed down.*

5 Or, *give thanks.*

6 Or, *his presence* is *salvation.*

h Ps.17. 3–10; 143. 6, 7; 102. 1–11; 88.2; 84. 2. Mat.26.38.

i Ps.61.2.1 Sa.30.6.

j 2 Sa. 17,22,24. De.3. 8,9;4.47–49.

7 *Hermonites.* Rather the Hermons. Hermon signifies curse, destruction, the curse pronounced, wrath executed. Just emblems of the dwelling-place of our Lord, Ga.3.10, 13. He. 12. 2. Zec.13.7.—*C.*

k Ps.133.3.

8 *Mizar.* This name does not elsewhere occur in Scripture. It signifies *little*, and may describe the holy hill of Zion, for which he longs, Ps. 43.3.—*C.*

l Job 1. 12–19; 2. 7, 9. Ps.88.3,7, 15–17; 69.1, 2. Je. 4. 20. Eze. 7. 26. Jonah 2.3.

n Le.25.21. De.28.8. Ps.44.4;133.3. Mat.8.8.

o Job 35.10. Ps. 32.7; 149. 5. Is. 12. 2; 30. 29. Hab.3.17,18. Ac.16.25.

p Ps.10.1; 13.1–4; 22. 1,2;43.2;88.14–17; 89.46 –51;144.3,24; 38. 6. Job 30.26–31.

q ver.3; Ps.115.2;3.2; 71.11. Joel 2.17. Mi. 7. 10.

9 Or, *killing.*

1 *Sword.* [r] To the *bruising* of my bones, not the piercing of a sword.—*C.*

r ver.5; Ps.43.5.

PSALM XLIII.

1 Lowth and a large number of valuable MSS. join this to the preceding psalm. —*C.*

2 *Judge.* Who but the Christ would venture to call for judgment?—*C.*

a Ps.7.8;35.1; 75.7. 1 Pe.4.19.

3 Or, *unmerciful.*

4 Heb. *from a man of deceit and iniquity.* 1 Sa. xviii. xxiv. 2 Sa. 15.31;16.23.

b Ex.15.2. Is.26.4;12. 45.40. 31. Zec.10.12.

c Ps.42.9.

d Ps.119.49,50. 2 Sa. 7.25. Mi.7.20.

e Ps.2.6;78.68.

g Ps. 66. 13–15; 116. 14,17–19.

5 Heb. *the gladness of my joy*, Is. 61. 10;12.1–6. Hab.3.17,18.

h Ex.15.1–19. Ju.v. 1 Sa.2.1–10. Is.xii. xxv. xxvi. Lu. i. Ps. xviii. cxviii &c. Re.xiv.xv. xix:5.8.

i Ps.42.5,11.

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fills men's hearts and tongues with enmity against Christ and his people: yet vile are their efforts and as vain their hopes. But happy trials are those which excite our prayers, animate our faith, increase our dependence on God, and tune our hearts to his praise; and which make JEHOVAH'S love to our souls more evident and precious.

PSALM XLII. Ver. 6. The general idea is—'Wherever, to whatever region I am led or driven in thy providence, I will remember and praise thee.' The psalmist was probably in exile when the psalm was penned. If David wrote it, as is probable, then the general scope would seem to indicate that he had sought a refuge from his enemies somewhere in the northern valley of the Jordan. We know he fled thither on the rebellion of Absalom, and this psalm may refer to that period. *P.*——*Jordan.* The word signifies 'the river of judgment.' There John baptized, Mat. 3. 6; there was our Lord himself baptized, ver. 13; and there did the Father from heaven acknowledge him for his *beloved*, that is, the true David his son, ver. 17. *C.*

REFLECTIONS.—Nothing but God himself can satisfy believing souls. If the sense of his love be withdrawn, every enjoyment is tasteless. No cisterns of earthly comforts can quench their thirst, their earnest desire for the LIVING FOUNTAIN. Constrained absence from the public means of fellowship with God is a heavy and tormenting burden to a faithful soul, and quickens his longings after them. No wonder then that he groans earnestly to be clothed upon with his house which is from heaven. O what terrible afflictions and sorrows are in the lot of God's favourite saints! When outward distress lies heavy, inward temptations are often violent. And the joys which we have tasted in God make the withdrawment of his presence and comforts the more grievous. But we often cause our own dejections under trouble, by poring on our corruptions or distress, and forgetting the promises, grace, and faithfulness of our Redeemer. We had need therefore to call our souls to account for their conduct. And if we cannot get relief by pleading with our burdened spirits, we should commit our case to our gracious God. And the more furious and manifold the storms of trouble are, the more earnest ought to be our believing applications to and dependence on God. Let providence cast us where it will, our God and our prayers should still attend us. Our faith may be enfeebled and sore shaken, but should never fail. Remembrance of what God is to us, and hath done for us, should suppress our unbelieving fears. If by faith we accept salvation, neither earth nor hell can hinder us from the benefit of it. In our darkest nights of trouble, desertion, and temptation, we have always

why art thou disquieted within me? hope in God; for I shall yet praise him, *who is* the health of my countenance, and my God.

PSALM XLIV.

1 *The church, calling to mind former favours,* 9 *complaineth of present evils.* 17 *Professing her integrity,* 23 *she fervently prayeth for succour.*

To the chief musician for the sons of Korah, Maschil.

WE have[c] heard with our ears, O God, our fathers have told us, *what* work thou didst in their days, in the times of old:

2 *How*[b] thou didst drive out the heathen with thy hand, and plantedst them; *how* thou didst afflict the people, and cast them out.

3 For[c] they got not the land in possession by their own sword, neither did their own arm save them; but thy right hand, and thine arm, and the light of thy countenance, because thou hadst a favour unto them.

4 Thou[d] art my King, O God: command deliverances for Jacob.

5 Through[e] thee will we push down our enemies: through thy name will we tread them under that rise up against us.[1]

6 For[g] I will not trust in my bow, neither shall my sword save me.

7 But[h] thou hast saved us from our enemies, and hast put them to shame that hated us.

8 In[i] God we boast all the day long, and praise thy name for ever. Selah.[2]

9 But[j] thou hast cast off, and put us to shame; and goest not forth with our armies.

10 Thou[k] makest us to turn back from the enemy; and they which hate us spoil for themselves.

11 Thou[l] hast given us like sheep *appointed* for meat;[3] and hast scattered us among the heathen.[4]

12 Thou[m] sellest thy people for nought,[5] and dost not increase *thy wealth* by their price.

13 Thou[o] makest us a reproach to our neighbours, a scorn and a derision to them that are round about us.

14 Thou[p] makest us a by-word among the heathen, a shaking of the head among the people.

15 My[q] confusion *is* continually before me, and the shame of my face hath covered me,

16 For the voice of him that reproacheth and blasphemeth; [r]by reason of the enemy and avenger.

17 All[s] this is come upon us; yet have we not [t]forgotten thee, neither have we dealt falsely in thy covenant.[6]

18 Our[u] heart is not turned back, neither have our steps[7] declined from thy way,

19 Though[v] thou hast sore broken us in [w]the place of dragons, and covered us with [y]the shadow of death.[8]

20 If[z] we have [a]forgotten the name of our God, or stretched out our hands to a strange god;

21 Shall[b] not God search this out? for he knoweth the secrets of the heart.

22 Yea,[c] for thy sake[9] are we killed all the day long; we are counted as sheep for the slaughter.

23 Awake,[d] why sleepest thou, O LORD? arise, cast *us* not off for ever.

24 Wherefore[e] hidest thou thy face, *and* forgettest our affliction and our oppression?

25 For[g] our soul is bowed down to the dust; our belly cleaveth unto the earth.

26 Arise[h] for our help,[1] and redeem us, for thy mercies' sake.

PSALM XLV.

1 *The majesty and grace of Christ's kingdom.* 10 *The duty of the church, and the benefits thereof.*

To the chief musician upon [a]Shoshannim, for the sons of Korah, Maschil,[1] A song of [b]loves.

MY heart is [2]inditing[3] a [c]good matter: I speak of the things which I have made touching [d]the King; my tongue *is* the pen of a ready writer.

A.M. cir. 2968 or 2949. B.C. cir. 1036 or 1055.

PSALM XLIV.

a Ex.12.26, 27; 13.8, 14, 15. Ps.78.3, 6. De.6. 7. Is.38.19. Joel 1.3.

b Ex.15.17. Ps.78.55; 80.8–11; 105.44; 135.10–12. Jos.vi.–xxi. Je.2.21. Ne.9.22–25.

c De.8.17; 9.3–6; 7.7, 8; 4.37, 38. Jos.24.12. Ho.1.7. Zec.4.6. Ex.23. 27–31; 34.11.

d Ps.74.12; 10.16; 29. 10; 89.18; 149.2.

e Ps.18.32–45; 118.5–14; 144.1, 2. Ro.8.31; 16. 20. Phi.4.13. Is.41.14–16. De.33.17, 27. Mal.4. 3.

1 Observe what faith is here manifested. No calamities or sufferings, national or personal, can shake the psalmist's trust in God's love and mercy. If evils are prolonged, the fault is man's. If deliverance is delayed, it is because of sin. God's cause and true people must and will eventually triumph.—*P.*

g Ps.33.16; 20.7. Ho. 14.3; 1.7.

h Ju. iii.–xi. xv. xvi. Jos. vi.–xii. 1 Sa. vii. xiv. xvii. 2 Sa. iii. v. viii. x. &c. Ps.132.18.

i Ps.3.3; 20.7; 34.2; 71. 5; 115.1, 2. Co.1.31. Je.9. 23.

2 See note on Ps. 3. 2.—*C.*

j Ps. 60. 1, 10; 74. 1; 89. 38–45. La. 3. 31, 32. Le. 26. 15–17. Is. 59. 2.

k De.28.25, 64. 1 Sa. xxxi. 2 Ki. x.–xvii. xxiv. xxv.

l Ro.8.36. Zec.11.4, 7.

3 Heb. *as sheep of meat.*

4 This would seem to indicate that the psalm must have been written at a comparatively late period. Such a statement could scarcely have been made previous to the captivity of a portion of the tribes by Pul and Tiglath-pileser (cir. B.C. 760). Consequently the psalm could not have been written by David.—*P.*

m De.32.30. Ju.2.14; 3.8; 4.2. Je.15.13. Is.52. 3; 4.

5 Heb. *without riches.*

o Ps.79.4. De.28.37.

* Of course *national* defection must be meant. The sense seems to be that the writer was not aware of anything so exceptionally wicked and rebellious in the conduct of the nation, as to call down the dire calamities that then afflicted them.—*P.*

A.M. cir. 2968 or 2949. B.C. cir. 1036 or 1055.

p Je. 24. 9. Ps. 22. 7; 109. 25.

q Jos.7.7–9. 2 Ki. 19. 2–4, 14–20. Je. 3. 25; 51. 51.

r Job 16.4. Ps.8.2; 74. 18.

s Da.9.13.

t Ju.2. 11–20. Ps. 78. 37, 56, 57.

6 See note * in first column.

u Job 23. 11, 12. Ps. 119. 157. 2 Ti.1.12. Nu. 14.24. 1 Ki.15.5.

7 Or, *goings.*

v Ps. 60. 1–3. 1 Sa. xxxi.

x Is.34.13; 35.7.

y Ps. 23. 4. Job 3. 5. ver. 25.

8 The general sense of the passage is, that the people had been conquered by their enemies, their cities had been destroyed, their country made desolate, so that wild beasts found in it a fitting abode. The word rendered 'dragons' signifies primarily a sea monster or serpent, then any savage beast. 'The place of dragons' would thus denote a place where wild beasts had their lairs.—*P.*

z Job xxxi. Ps. 7. 3–5.

a Ju. 2. 11–13. Je. 2. 13, 32. Job 31. 26–28, with Ex. 9. 20. 1 Ki. 8. 22. Job 11. 13. Ps. 68. 31.

b Je.17.10. He. 4.13. Re.2.23.

c Ro. 8. 36. Phi.2.17, 30. Ac. 21. 13; 20.24. 1 Co.15.31; 4.13. 2 Co. 4. 10–12.

9 'For thy sake,' *i.e.* because we are thy people, we are worshippers of the true God, therefore the heathen persecute us. The psalmist pleads that national religion, and not national infidelity, is the secret cause of all their present calamities.—*P.*

d Ps.7.6; 35.23; 59.4; 57.8, 65. Is.51.9, ver.9.

e Ps.10.1; 13.1–4; 74. 1. Is.49.14.

g Ps.119.25; 56.11, 12; 22.16. Is.51.23. Eze.37. 11.

h Ps. 7. 6, 7, 9; 78. 65, 66; 40. 17.

1 Heb. *a help for us.*

PSALM XLV.

B.C. cir. 1055 or 1036.

a Ps.60; 69; 80. titles.

1 Or, *of instruction.*

b 2 Co. 5.14. 1 Jn. 4.19. Ca. 1. vii.

2 Heb. *boileth* or *bubbleth up.*

3 *Inditing.* 'Overflowing with a glorious theme.'—*C.*

c Ps.49.2.

d Ps.2.6; 24.7–10.

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much mercy to thank God for. Whatever repeated encouragement our feeble minds may need, if God be our God, our life, and the health of our countenance, neither earth, nor death, nor hell is able to hurt us.

PSALM XLIII. Ver. 1. The meaning is, not that the writer desired the Lord to try and judge him as a culprit; but rather to interfere in his behalf—to save him from the unjust accusations of the wicked. The psalmist was conscious that he was guiltless in regard to the charges brought against him, and therefore he made his appeal from unjust men to a just and righteous God. He does not represent himself as absolutely pure, or perfectly holy before God; but simply as innocent of the crimes laid against him by men. *P.*

Ver. 2. *Why dost thou cast me off?* This expostulation was exemplified in the crucifixion, Mat. 27. 46, when our Lord cried with a loud voice, as if it were a special thing that all should hear, 'My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?' *C.*

REFLECTIONS.—When men wrong us and God deserts us, our only refuge is still in God himself. He may frown, but he cannot cease to love his people, however hard they find it to believe so amidst deep convictions and raging lusts. It may be for a time difficult to reconcile God's providences with his promises; but with a little patience the mystery will be unveiled. Such as love Christ's appearance shall have their cause judged far sooner than their enemies wish, and far better than themselves conceive. Next to God himself, the saints love nothing more dearly than the ordinances of his grace. But none can approach ordinances aright unless they exercise faith in their hearts; and it is for his sake the saints delight to be there. Men never attend ordinances aright but when they have fellowship with Christ as their altar, their atonement, their food, their God, their joy. Intimate fellowship with God cannot but tune our hearts and tongues to his praise. And the more we deal with God by faith, we shall see the more sin and evil in inward despondency.

PSALM XLIV. Ver. 1. The grammar here presents a plurality of speakers, and their statements and complaints indicate a faithful but a persecuted church, ver. 11, 17–22. Occasionally (ver. 4, 6, 15) a single speaker interferes, who, it appears from ver. 15, can be no other than Christ; for no man who knows the *versatility* of frail human nature can imagine any but Christ *truly* to utter that verse. *C.*

Ver. 3. Infidels have frequently objected against JEHOVAH for expelling the nations of Canaan. There are two answers—1. God has a sovereign right over his own world. 2. The Canaanites were righteously expelled on account of their wickedness, Le. 19. 23, 24. *C.*

Ver. 9. The true followers of Jesus are all soldiers of the cross, and must follow the Lamb, and like him be often put to shame, and like him despise it for the joy set before them, 1 Ti. 6. 12; 2 Ti. 2. 3, 4; 4. 7; He. 12. 2. *C.*

Ver. 12. This has often in times of persecution been literally fulfilled, when the mere sentence of the judge, deciding that the accused, under some opprobrious name, was a true Christian, was sufficient to deliver him over as a slave to the galleys, or transport him to distant penal colonies. *C.*

Ver. 15. This is true only of the Son of God, and there is an awful sense in which it is ever true, seeing there are those in the professing church who ever 'crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame,' He. 6. 6. *C.*

Ver. 19. *The place of dragons.* The persecution of the church the Spirit of God attributes to the malice of Satan under the emblem of a *dragon*, Re. 12. 3–9; and the scenes of persecution may well be termed the 'place of dragons,' where his servants rule, Ep. 6. 12. *C.*

REFLECTIONS.—Memorials of past mercies ought to be carefully recorded and transmitted from age to age, as an encouragement in time of need as well as a ground of thankfulness. It is never outward force, but Jesus Christ's Word and Spirit, that build up the church and triumph over the powers of darkness. If we want help in trouble, we must renounce all other confidences, and take God alone to be our kind deliverer and boast; so shall our troubles and griefs be quickly turned into everlasting praise.—It is common, but sinful, for them whom God casts down to think themselves utterly cast off, and to shrink under reproach and suffering, as if they were not our appointed cross. For it is not now but hereafter that God will make us to know and admire the mystery of his providence. It is especially distressing to the faithful when they falsely apprehend that God gets no glory by the afflictions of his people; nay, instead thereof, is dishonoured and reproached.—All God's people, though not called to be proper martyrs, have their particular sufferings allotted to them for his sake. But it is dangerous to comply with sins in order to shun troubles. Highly provoking to God are treachery, apostasy, and idolatry; and fearfully he will search out and punish them. But great is the mercy that nothing can break his promise of grace with the faithful; and that not sins of mere infirmity, but indulged provocations, are held as a violation of their round of duties. And if he appear

2 Thou[e] art fairer[4] than the children of men; grace[g] is poured into thy lips:[5] therefore God hath [h]blessed thee for ever.

3 Gird thy [i]sword[6] upon *thy* thigh, O [j]*most* Mighty, with thy glory and thy majesty.

4 And in thy majesty [k]ride prosperously,[7] because of truth, and meekness, *and* righteousness; and [l]thy right hand shall teach thee terrible things.

5 Thine[m] arrows *are* sharp in the heart of the King's enemies; *whereby* the people fall under thee.

6 Thy[o] throne, O God, *is* for ever and ever: the sceptre of thy kingdom *is* a right sceptre.

7 Thou[p] lovest righteousness, and hatest wickedness: therefore God, [q]thy God, hath anointed[r] thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows.[8]

8 All[s] thy garments *smell* of myrrh, and aloes, *and* cassia, out of the [t]ivory palaces, whereby they[u] have made thee glad.[9]

9 Kings'[v] daughters *were* among thy honourable women: upon thy right hand did stand the[w] queen in gold of Ophir.[1]

10 Hearken,[y] O daughter,[2] and consider, and incline thine ear; [z]forget also thine own people, and thy father's house:

11 So[a] shall the King greatly desire thy beauty: for he *is* thy [b]Lord; and worship thou him.

12 And[c] the daughter of Tyre *shall be there* with a gift; *even* the [d]rich among the people shall entreat thy favour.

A.M. cir. 2949 or 2968.
B.C. cir. 1055 or 1036.

e Ca.5.9-16. Jn 1.14; 3.34. He.7.26.

4 *Fairer* in all spiritual beauties as meekness, wisdom, love, and holiness; 'grace is poured into (rather through) thy lips.'—*C.*

f Is. 50. 4. Lu. 4. 22. Jn.7.26,46.

5 'Kindness and love are embodied in every sentence which flows from thy lips.'—*P.*

g Ps.21. 6; 72. 17–19. Ac.3.26. Ep.1.3.

h Ep.6.17. He. 4. 12. Re.1.16; 19.15,21.

6 The Word of God (Ep.6.17) asserting his title to all dominion, Re.19.16.—*C.*

i Is.9.6. Ps.24.7–10.

k Is.63.1–4. Re.6.2. 1 Th.1.5;3.13. 2 Th. 3. 1. Zec.9.9. Mat.11.29; 12. 10,20.

7 Heb. *prosper thou, ride thou.*

l Ps.65.5. Is.63.3;59. 16–19. Re.11.17.

m Ps.38. 2; 20. 27–31; 21.8–12;68.22–31; 110.1–7. Pr.1.22–33. Ac.2.37. Lu.19.27,42–44.

o He.1.8. Ps. 93. 1,2; 72.1–14;cx. cxiv. Pr.16. 12. Is.9.6,7; 32.1,2. Je. 23.5,6. Re.3.21.

p He.7.26. Mat.3.15, 17. Lu.24.26; 19.15–27, 44,42. Da.9.24. Mat.3. 5.

q Ps.89.26. Jn.20.17. Ep.1 3.

r Is. 61. 1. 1 Ki.1.39, 40. He. 1.9. Phi.2.8–11. Ac.2.28.

8 Thy companions, thy types, in thine offices of prophet, priest, and king.—*C.*

s Ca.1.3. Is.61.1. Jn. 3.14;10.7–11.

t ver.15. Jn.14.2. Ac. 3.21. Ep.4.8,10.

u He.12.2. Is.53. 11, 12. Zep.3.17. Ps.16.11.

9 'All thy garments out of the ivory wardrobes, perfumed with myrrh, aloes, and cassia, delight thee with their fragrance.'—*Green.*

v ver. 13; Ps.22.29; 72. 10. Is.49.7,23; 60.10,11. Re. 21. 24; 1.5, 6; 5. 10. Ca.6.8; 7. 1. 1 Pe. 2.9. 1 Ki.2.19.

x Re.21.2,9; 19.7,8.

1 *Ophir* signifies *ashes.* Ashes are again the emblem of humiliation and penitence, Job 42. 6. Ja. 3. 6. 1 Pe.5.5.—*C.*

y Is. 55. 1–7. De. 32. 29. Re.22.17. Ho.10.12.

2 *Daughter,* so called, because God, as Father of the regenerate church, is the speaker, 2 Co.6.18.—*C.*

z ver. 10. Ca. 7. 1. 2 Co.6.18. Is.53.11. 1 Pe. 1.3,23; 2.9.

a 1 Co.1. 30. 2 Co. 5. 17. Ga.6.15. 1 Pe.3.3,4. Ro.2.29.

b Is.61.10. Re. 19.7, 8. 2 Co.5. 21. Tit. 2. 12. Phi.2.15. Mat.5.16. Ps. 50.23.

3 'She is all glorious!—daughter of a king! Her inner garment is studded with gold, her upper garment is embroidered with the needle.'—*Horsley.*

c Ca.1.4. Jn.6.37; 12. 26;14.3. Re.iii.

d Ca.1.3. 2 Co. 11. 2. Re.14.1–4. ver.9. He.6. 12.

e Ro.5.2.1 Pe.1.8. Is. 35.10;51.11. Jude 24.

f Ps.22.30. Is.54.1–5; 43. 5, 6. Ro.11.12, 15. 1 Pe.2.9. Re.1.6;5.10;20. 6.

g Ps.72.17–19;145.1–3. Mal.1.11.

4 A closing address, not to the queen, but to Messiah, as the nature of the promise makes manifest.—*C.*

PSALM XLVI.

B.C. cir. 1048 or 1038.

1 Or, *of.*

a Ps.xlviii.lxvi.

b 1 Ch.15.20.

c ver. 5,7,11; Ps. 3. 3; 18.1–18;91.1–16;145.18. De.4. 7. Ge. 19. 25–28; 22.14.

d Ps.23. 4. Is. 41. 10, 14; 43. 1,2, 5. 1 Pe. 3.14. Phi.1.28.

2 Heb. *the heart of the seas.*

e Ps.93.3,4; 18. 4. Je. 5.22. Mat. 7. 25. Is. 57. 20;17.12,13;5.29,30.

3 See note on Ps. 3. 2.—*C.*

f Eze. 47. 1–12. ver. 5. Is.33.21;12.3. Je.2.13. Ps.36.9,10;23.2. Re.22. 1.

h 2 Ch.6.6. Re. 21.2, 3.

i Eze.48. 35. Re. 21. 11,23. Mat.16.18.

4 Heb. *when the morning appeareth.* Ex.14. 21, 27. 2 Ch. 20. 20. Ps.143.8; 30. 5. Lu. 18.8.

j Ps. 2.1–5. Is.17.12–14. Jos.x. xi.2 Ch. xiv. xx. xxxii. Re. 6.12–17; 11.18.

13 The[e] King's daughter *is* [g]all glorious within: [h]her clothing *is* of wrought gold.[3]

14 She [i]shall be brought unto the King in raiment of needle-work: the [j]virgins her companions that follow her shall be brought unto thee.

15 With[k] gladness and rejoicing *shall* they *be* brought: they shall enter into the King's palace.

16 Instead[l] of thy fathers shall be thy children, whom thou mayest make princes in all the earth.

17 I[m] will make thy name to be remembered in all generations: therefore shall the people praise thee for ever and ever.[4]

PSALM XLVI.

1 The confidence of the church in God's protection. 8 An exhortation to contemplate his works.

To the chief musician for[1] the sons of Korah, [a]A song upon [b]Alamoth.

GOD *is* [c]our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble:

2 Therefore[d] will not we fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea;[2]

3 *Though*[e] the waters thereof roar *and* be troubled, *though* the mountains shake with the swelling thereof. Selah.[3]

4 *There*[g] *is* a river, the streams whereof shall make glad [h]the city of God, the holy *place* of the tabernacles of the most High.

5 God[i] *is* in the midst of her; she shall not be moved: God shall help her, *and that* right early.[4]

6 The[j] heathen raged; the kingdoms were moved: he uttered his voice; the earth melted.

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asleep amidst our troubles, it is to humble us under his mighty hand, to awaken our importunate prayers, and that he may the more magnify his mercy and power in our deliverance.

PSALM XLV. Ver. 1. It was the general opinion of the ancient Jewish rabbins and commentators that this beautiful psalm had direct if not exclusive reference to the Messiah. Its general scope, and some of its more remarkable expressions, prove this. There are passages in it such as cannot, by any fair canon of interpretation, be applied to any man, however pure in character or exalted in rank. Besides Paul, in the epistle to the Hebrews, distinctly applies it to our Lord, ch. 1. 8, 9. When thus interpreted it is clear, consistent, and noble. *P.*——*The King.* This King is Messiah, 'God manifest in the flesh,' exalted to glory; and the words given by the Prophet to the prophet are the words of the Father to his beloved Son. See He. 1. 1, 5, 6, 8–13. *C.*

Ver. 9. *The queen,* not the church universal as 'the bride, the Lamb's wife,' for then could *that queen* have no 'companions,' Re. 21. 9. Is not this queen rather the primitive Christian church, gathered to the Son of God, Ja. 1. 18; Re. 14. 4, and of which all subsequent ages produce but descendants or companions? *C.*

Ver. 12. *Tyre* is particularized as the emblem of all mercantile nations.—*Note,* In the merciful and overruling providence of God the mercantile has been made the great agent of the missionary enterprise; and the desire of acquiring the wealth of this world has led to the diffusion of the unsearchable riches of Christ. *C.*

Ver. 16. These words apply not to the bride but to the Bridegroom—the Messiah. The first clause signifies that great though his glory might be as the descendant (after the flesh) of a long line of kings, it would be far surpassed by the glory of his posterity—his spiritual seed. Their name would be more illustrious, their acts would be more noble, and their dominion would be wider and more enduring. How true is this of King Jesus! *P.*——*Fathers.* Instead of prophets and apostles, whom I will successively remove from thy head (see 2 Ki. 2. 3; Ro. 9. 5; 1 Co. 4. 15; Re. 21. 14), shall be thine own spiritual children, converted to God by means of thy faithful testimony. *C.*

REFLECTIONS.—Discoveries of Jesus' glory powerfully animate our hearts and tune our tongues to commend him. How glorious is his person as God-man! Rich in grace are the qualities of his heart and words of his mouth. In him it pleased the Father that all fulness of blessings for men should dwell. In almighty power, by his word and influences of his Spirit, he persuaded multitudes in the apostolic age to the obedience of faith: and by the strokes of his justice did and shall destroy his Jewish or other implacable opposers. Having by himself purged our sins, he, as our righteous Saviour, sat down at the right hand of God, as the reward of his righteous service; and is, in the most transcendent manner, filled with the Holy Ghost to shed on us abundantly. In a most glorious and heart-engaging manner his manhood, mediatorial offices, and righteousness appear in the heavens above and in his church and ordinances below. And his people, adorned with gifts and graces, are raised up together, and made to sit together with him. Faithful men, both Jews and Gentiles, in the day of his power, are persuaded to accept the gospel, to renounce all others, and devote themselves entirely to him and his service, as the objects of his gracious and everlasting delight. In shining robes of righteousness, grace, and holy conversation, each in their order are adorned; and after serving their generation by the will of God, they shall be brought and admitted into his heavenly palace with exceeding joy. Instead of Jewish fathers shall there be Gentile converts; and instead of glorified saints shall there be another generation, begotten by the power of his grace, all made kings and priests unto God! Thus by the spread and influence of the gospel shall Jesus' renown and honour be perpetuated on earth, while those in heaven above shall praise him for ever and ever.

PSALM XLVI. Ver. 1. This has been called Luther's psalm. 'It was that he was accustomed to sing in trouble. When the times were dark—when the enemies of truth appeared to triumph—when disaster seemed to come over the cause in which he was engaged, and the friends of the Reformation were dispirited and sad—he was accustomed to say to his fellow-labourers, Come, let us sing the 46th psalm.' No other passage in the whole Word of God is more adapted for rousing the drooping faith of the church. The thoughts are noble and the words sublime. God omnipotent—God ever present—God infinite in mercy—God the king, defender, and sustainer of his church, is the grand theme of the psalmist. *P.*——*God is our refuge.* The assembled church here exemplifies the fulfilment of the gracious promise of the foregoing psalm, ver. 17, the highest praise being that which is due for deliverance from trouble and strength for duty. *C.*

Ver. 4. 'The holy place of the tabernacles of the Most High is a stream, the branches whereof gladden the city of God' (*Mudge*). The stream is the truth in Jesus; the branches, reading, hearing, holy converse, prayer, exhortation, reproof, correction, instruction in righteousness, furnishing the man of God to all good works. *C.*

REFLECTIONS.—When dangers appear greatest our faith in God's promise and perfections should be strongest. If we can triumph in God as our own God we may triumph over every trouble and danger. The revolutions on earth can little affect them whose hearts are duly fixed on things above. They need never fear, and they can never fail, who take God for their refuge and their strength. Notwithstanding all her enemies, his church shall in him obtain joy, establishment, and deliverance. If by his word, his Spirit, and his blood, we enjoy communications of grace and comfort, we are amply repaid for all the storms that can be raised by the world that lieth in wickedness. But in what a tremendous and awful manner he from age to age revenges the injuries done to his church, the ruin of the nations around Canaan, and of the Assyrians, Chaldeans, Persians, Syro-Grecians, Romans, Antichristians, Mahometans, and others, have or shall manifest. And it is highly proper to contemplate his infinite perfections, displayed in all his conquests of judgment or grace; that in every age, in every case, we may have faith in him as our Protector, Deliverer, and Strength.

PSALM XLVII. Ver. 1. This noble song of praise and joy was probably composed at the dedication of the temple and was

ARENA OF AMPHITHEATRE, PUTEOLI—NEAR WHERE ST. PAUL LANDED IN ITALY. [PSALMS, xlvii:8.]—"God reigneth over the heathen: God sitteth upon the throne of his holiness." We learn from history that wicked men are no less under law than righteous men. The laws of God which wicked men violate destroy them, while the righteous are preserved by observing them. This arena of the amphitheater at Puteoli is a very good illustration of the wreck and ruin which have come to the fame and the fortunes of the men who built it, and found, as Nero did, upon its arena, a scene for wild and unbridled actions. Puteoli is rich in historic associations. Scipio sailed from this place to Spain. Cicero had a villa here, and here Nero planned the murder of his mother. This was the famous watering place of the rich and luxurious Romans.

7 The LORD of hosts *is* [k]with us; the God of Jacob[5] *is* our refuge.[6] Selah.

8 Come,[l] behold the works of the LORD, what desolations he hath made in the earth.

9 He[m] maketh wars to cease unto the end of the earth; he breaketh the bow, and cutteth the spear in sunder; he burneth the chariot in the fire.

10 Be[o] still,[7] and know that I *am* God: [p]I will be exalted among the heathen, I will be exalted in the earth.

11 The[q] LORD of hosts *is* with us: the God of Jacob *is* our refuge. Selah.

PSALM XLVII.

The nations are exhorted cheerfully to entertain the kingdom of Christ.

To the chief musician, A psalm for[1] the sons of Korah.

O CLAP[a] your hands, all ye people; shout unto God with the voice of triumph.

2 For the LORD most High *is* [b]terrible;[2] *he is* a great King over all the earth.

3 He[c] shall subdue the people under us, and the nations under our feet.

4 He[d] shall choose our inheritance for us, the excellency of Jacob whom he loved. Selah.[3]

5 God[e] is gone up with a shout, the LORD with the sound of a trumpet.

6 Sing praises to God, sing praises: sing praises unto our King, sing praises.

7 For[g] God *is* the King of all the earth: sing ye praises with [4]understanding.[5]

8 God[h] reigneth over the heathen: God sitteth upon the throne of his holiness.

9 The[i] princes of the people are gathered together, *even* the people of the God of Abraham:[6] for [j]the shields[7] of the earth *belong* unto God; he is greatly exalted.

A.M. cir. 2956 or 2966.
B.C. cir. 1048 or 1038.

k 2 Ch. 13. 12. ver. 1, 11. Ro. 8. 31.

5 God of Jacob as an exile, a stranger, a faithful servant, a tender husband and father, an humble supplicator, but courageous wrestler with the angel of the covenant, Ge. 32. 24–28. Ho. 12. 3, 4.—*C.*

6 Heb. *an high place for us.*

l Ge. 7. 21. Ps. 111. 2; 107. 34. Is. 24. 1; 34. 2.

m Is. 2. 4; 11. 9; 25. 4, 5; 60. 18; 9. 5, 7. Mi. 4. 3, 4; 5. 9, 10. Ps. 76. 3. Eze. 39. 3, 9, 10.

o Zec. 2. 13. Is. 5. 16; 33. 10. Ps. 58. 11; 57. 5, 11. Eze. 38. 23. Re. 15. 3, 4.

7 *Be still.* Cease, ye nations, from opposing Christ — be silent ye winds, and calm ye waves of trouble, and hear while your Lord speaks. See Mat. 8. 26. —*C.*

p Is. 2. 11, 17.

q ver. 1, 7.

PSALM XLVII.

B.C. cir. 1054.

1 Or, *of.*

a Ps. 96. 11–13; 98. 4–9. Is. 55. 12. Rc. 18. 20; 19. 1–3.

b De. 28. 58. Ps. 65. 5; 66. 3, 5; 68. 35; 145. 6; 76. 12; ver. 7. Mal. 1. 14. Mat. 28. 18. Phi. 2. 9–11.

2 *Terrible.* To be feared.—*Boothroyd.*

c 2 Sa. v. viii. x. 1 Ki. 4. 21. Ps. 18. 47; 22. 27–29. Is. 49. 23. Da. 7. 27.

d Ps. 60. 6–8; 108. 7–9. Je. 3. 19. 1 Pe. 1. 4. 1 Co. 3. 22, 23. Phi. 4. 19. Ep. 3. 18, 19.

3 See note on Ps. 3. 2.—*C.*

e 2 Sa. 6. 15. 1 Ch. 15. 16–28; 16. 4–42. Ps. 68. 18–20, 24, 25, 33. Ac. 1. 5–11. Da. 7. 10–14. Lu. 24. 51–53. Col. 3. 3, 16. 1 Co. 14. 15.

g Zec. 14. 9. Col. 3. 16.

4 Or, every one *that hath understanding.*

5 Knowing God as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—speaking in a known tongue, and keeping the affections subordinate to the intellect.—*C.*

h Ps. 93. 1; 99. 1; 22. 27–29; 110. 1–7. He. 1. 3; 8. 1; 12. 2.

i Ps. 110. 2, 3; 22. 27–31; 72. 8–11. Is. 60. 4. Ga. 3. 28, 29.

6 Or, *The voluntary of the people are gathered* unto *the people of the God of Abraham.* 2 Co. 8. 5.

j Pr. 30. 5. Ho. 2. 18. 1 Co. 12. 28. Ep. 4. 11–13.

7 The defence of nations lies neither in the numbers, discipline, nor even courage of armies; their shield in battle is the arm of God.—*C.*

A.M. cir. 2950.
B.C. cir. 1054.

PSALM XLVIII.

a Ps. xxx. xlii titles.

1 Or, *of.*

b Job 11. 7. Ps. 145. 5; 147. 5; 111. 9; 89. 7; 86. 10; 65. 1.

c ver. 2; Ps. 78. 68; cxxii. 2.

2 The government of all countries must be concentrated in *cities;* thence, as from a centre, must go forth civil order and power; and thence have usually emanated the light and influences of religion.—*C.*

3 The temple was built upon a *mountain,* as an emblem of the strength, stability, exaltation, and visibility of all true religion, Ps. 30. 7. Mat. 5. 14.—*C.*

d Ps. 50. 2. Eze. 20. 6. Da. 8. 9; 11. 16. La. 2. 15. Is. 2. 2, 3; 60. 15, 19.

e Is. 14. 13.

4 In high northern latitudes a southern aspect and exposure to the sun are desirable for comfort or fertility; but in countries nearer the equator, a northern aspect, especially in cities, is equally desirable, as a protection against the oppressive heat of the sun. See Is. 4. 6; 25. 4; 32. 2.—*C.*

g Ps. 47. 2, 7, 8. Mat. 5. 35.

h ver. 4–8. Ex. 34. 24. 2 Ch. 12. 7; 14. 9–15; xx.; 32. 1–22.

i 2 Sa. 10. 6–19. 2 Ch. xii. xiv. xx. xxxii. Is. 10. 28–34, 17. 12–14; 29. 5–8; 30. 30–33; 33. 10–12, 23; 37. 7, 33–38.

j Ex. 15. 14–16. Is. 13. 7, 8; 35. 36.

k Eze. 27. 25, 26. Re. 17. 1; 18. 17.

l Ps. 44. 1, 2; 78. 3–6. Is. 38. 19.

n ver. 1, 2. Mat. 5. 35.

o Ps. 46. 5; 87. 5. Is. 2. 2; 33. 20. Mat. 16. 18.

p Ps. 104. 34; 105. 1–6; 135. 1, 2. Is. 30. 25.

q Jos. 7. 9. Ps. 113. 3. ver. 1; Ps. 111. 9; 65. 1, 2; 126. 1. Is. 12. 4–6.

r Ps. 145. 17; 111. 5–7; 45. 7. Re. 19. 2, 11; 15. 3.

s 2 Ki. 19. 21. 2 Ch. 20. 26, 27. Ps. 58. 10; 97. 7, 8. Re. 16. 5–7; 15. 4; 18. 20; 19. 1–7, 11–21.

t Ne. 12. 31.

u Is. 33. 20; 37. 33; 10. 32. Eze. 43. 11.

5 Heb. *set your heart to her bulwarks.*

PSALM XLVIII.

The ornaments and privileges of the church.

[a]A song *and* psalm for[1] the sons of Korah.

GREAT *is* [b]the LORD, and greatly to be praised in the [c]city[2] of our God, *in* the mountain[3] of his holiness.

2 Beautiful[d] for situation, the joy of the whole earth, *is* mount Zion, *on* the [e]sides of the north,[4] the city of the [g]great King.

3 God[h] is known in her palaces for a refuge.

4 For,[i] lo, the kings were assembled, they passed by together.

5 They saw *it, and* so they marvelled; they were troubled, *and* hasted away.

6 Fear[j] took hold upon them there, *and* pain, as of a woman in travail.

7 Thou[k] breakest the ships of Tarshish with an east wind.

8 As[l] we have heard, so have we seen in [m]the city of the LORD of hosts, in the city of our [o]God: God will establish it for ever. Selah.

9 We[p] have thought of thy loving-kindness, O God, in the midst of thy temple.

10 According[q] to thy name, O God, so *is* thy praise unto the ends of the earth: [r]thy right hand is full of righteousness.

11 Let mount Zion rejoice, let the daughters of Judah be glad, [s]because of thy judgments.

12 Walk[t] about Zion, and go round about her: [u]tell the towers thereof.

13 Mark ye well her [5]bulwarks, [6]consider her palaces; that ye may tell *it* to the generation following.

14 For[v] this God *is* our God for ever and ever; he will be our guide *even* unto death.

6 Or, *raise up.*

v Is. 25. 9; 58. 11. Ps. 16. 1, 2; 31. 14; 13. 5; 73. 24, 26; 142. 4, 5; 146. 1, 5, 7, 10.

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intended to be sung during the solemn service. It is in every way adapted for such an event. *P.*——*O clap your hands.* There are feelings and sentiments which words cannot express, and then the aid of action is commanded, and specially the hands as the organs and emblems of all activity. See 2 Ki. 11. 12. *C.*

Ver. 3. *He shall subdue,* &c. Not by any earthly, but by a spiritual conquest; for the 'weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty (nevertheless) to the pulling down of strongholds,' 2 Co. 10. 4. *C.*

Ver. 5. This psalm when written was a prophecy, but is now a record of the ascension of Christ, Ep. 4. 8, and of that joy with which the heavenly powers hailed his triumph over sin and death. *C.*

Ver. 9. *The princes of the people are gathered together, even the people of the God of Abraham.* This verse carries us beyond the ascension, to a period when Jew and Gentile shall be 'both one in Christ'—not merely in *principle,* as they are now, but in *fact,* according to the sure word of prophecy. *C.*

REFLECTIONS.—Behold, my soul, our exalted Lord Jesus, terrible to his enemies because of their rejection of him; but kind to believers in blessing them throughout all the world in himself—in choosing for them, when having faith, their portion in the new-covenant and in the heavenly state! Behold how, amidst surrounding troops of hymning angels, he ascended on high; had all power in heaven and earth given him: and by his gospel, word, and gracious influence, he gathers the nations to himself, that they may be blessed together with faithful Abraham; and even makes the rulers of nations submit to his yoke or helpful to his cause!

PSALM XLVIII. Ver. 6. That these words are not a historic reference or narrative, but a historic prophecy, will be evident from considering that they introduce to faith the perpetual establishment of Zion, ver. 8, whereas it yet presents to sense nothing but the feature of 'perpetual desolations.' *C.*

Ver. 8. *In the city of our God: God will establish it for ever.* How can this be reconciled with the destruction of all things foretold, 2 Pe. 3. 7? Most easily: God will establish Zion for ever in the person of her King, in the happiness of her subjects, in the fulfilment of her prophecies, the realization of her types, the demonstration of her faith, the beauty of her holiness, and the brightness of her glory. *C.*

Ver. 11. *The daughters of Judah.* Not the inferior cities, but literally, the daughters of Judah: as Miriam and her attendants rejoiced at passing the Red Sea, Ex. 15. 20, 21; or the women out of all the cities of Israel, to hail and celebrate the victory of David over Goliath, 1 Sa. 18. 6, 7. *C.*

REFLECTIONS.—Great, and greatly to be praised, is our exalted Redeemer. Glorious is his gospel-church in which his presence dwells. And in a marvellous manner hath he, in instances unnumbered, been known for her refuge. When ravaging invaders and furious persecutors have concurred in attempts to destroy her, their plots and fury have often issued in their own ruin, and his people's triumph and praise of his kindness. Quickly shall her remaining enemies be undone; and no gates of hell have, or ever shall, prevail against her. Her bulwarks, palaces of ordinances, and officers, are built on Jesus the Rock of ages, and are protected by his arm of omnipotence. Let us then declare his wondrous works and our relation to him to posterity, as an honour to him, and an encouragement to them to come and cleave to him and triumph in his praise.

PSALM XLIX. Ver. 1. Four things prove the prophetic speaker to be Christ. (1) The confident spirit, and universality of the call, as of one entitled to audience, ver. 1. (2) The theme of wisdom so confidently announced, ver. 2. (3) The direct quotation of ver. 4 by Mat. 13. 35, as fulfilled in the parables of our Lord. (4) The confident trust of the speaker in a glorious resurrection and acceptance with God, ver. 15. *C.*

Ver. 5. The leading idea of the psalm is embodied in this verse. Confident in the power and mercy of God the writer lays aside all fear. Evil days may come; life may not all be sunshine; but in the darkest days of sorrow and suffering God will save him. The word translated 'heels,' means also the impression of the heel, the footprint. Then it came to mean 'a lier in wait,' or one who watches for an advantage. This is its meaning here; and the sense of the clause therefore is: 'When I am exposed to the craft and cunning of those who lie in wait for me, what have I in reality to fear? God is on my side.' *P.*——*Heels.* This word is translated by high authorities *supplanters,* that is, false Christs, seeking to supplant me in name—of the world supplanting me in the hearts, and of worldly rulers supplanting me in my authority over the kingdoms of this world. But does it not rather signify the iniquity of his *followers*—of Judas who betrayed him, of the disciples who forsook him, and of the whole host of believers whose accumulated iniquities he bore in his body on the tree? *C.*

Ver. 10. *Wise men die.* And if even the wise man cannot rescue himself from temporal death, how can any save himself or his brother from death spiritual and eternal? *C.*

Ver. 12. That is, when he so far forgets himself as altogether to neglect salvation, or trusts to his own power to avoid death, or his own merit to meet the judgment. *C.*

Ver. 13. The traditionary or written sayings of men are often called *immortal,* though their authors be dead; and works the least godly are, alas! often the most popular. *C.*

REFLECTIONS.—Alas! how the hearts of men cleave to earthly enjoyments! The poor need as much to be warned against envy and discontentment as the rich against pride and carnal confidence. And the truths of God ought to be inculcated with the greatest seriousness, both by word and by example. Never ought saints (no, not when they suffer the charges and chastisements of their sins of conversation) to abandon themselves to unbelieving fears and doubts of God's all-sufficiency and love.—The day of death is a trying time with respect to true happiness. And then a sense of God's love, and a prospect of eternal glory, are infinitely more precious than thousands of gold and silver. O the dreadful folly of most men, who seek for, hold delight in, and depend on things of this world as if they were their God, their ALL IN ALL! and yet

ZION GATE—ON MT. ZION, WHERE DAVID LIVED. [PSALMS, xlviii: 2.]—"Beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth, is Mount Zion, on the sides of the north, the city of the great King." The Zion Gate is called in Arabic, "The Gate of the Prophet David." It is on the summit of the ridge of Zion between the Armenian convent and the tomb of David. The Zion Gate opens into several footpaths which lead down to the valley of Hinnom. We pass through this gate to go to the tomb of David in the possession of the Mohammedans. A little further north, near the wall, is the Armenian church with the house of Caiaphas, and between the two is the place the monks point out as the spot where the cock crowed and where Peter wept after denying his Master. The Armenian church is almost due southwest of Zion Gate.

PSALM XLIX.

1 The psalmist calleth upon all the earth to join him in his meditations. 5 He showeth the vanity of trusting in worldly wealth.

To the chief musician, A psalm for[1] the sons of Korah.

HEAR this,[a] all *ye* people; give ear, all *ye* inhabitants of the world:

2 Both low and high, rich and poor, together.

3 My[b] mouth shall speak of wisdom; and the meditation of my heart *shall be* of understanding.

4 I[c] will incline mine ear to a parable; I will open my dark saying upon the harp.

5 Wherefore[d] should I fear in the days of evil, *when* the [e]iniquity of my heels shall compass me about?

6 They that [g]trust in their wealth, and boast themselves in the multitude of their riches;

7 None[h] *of them* can by any means redeem his brother, nor give to God a ransom for him;

8 (For[i] the redemption of their soul *is* precious, and it ceaseth for ever;)[2]

9 That[j] he should still live for ever, *and* not see corruption.

10 For he seeth [k]*that* wise men die, likewise the fool and the brutish person perish, and leave their wealth to others.

11 Their[l] inward thought *is*, *that* their houses *shall continue* for ever, *and* their dwelling-places to all generations:[3] they call *their* lands after their own names.

12 Nevertheless [n]man *being* in honour abideth not: he is like the beasts *that* perish.

13 This their way *is* their folly; yet their posterity approve their sayings.[4] Selah.

14 Like[o] sheep they are laid in the grave; death shall feed on them; and [p]the upright shall have dominion over them in the morning; and their [q]beauty shall consume in the grave from their dwelling.[5]

15 But God [r]will redeem my soul from the power[6] of the grave:[7] for he shall receive me. Selah.

16 Be[s] not thou afraid when one is made rich, when the [t]glory of his house is increased:

17 For[u] when he dieth he shall carry nothing away; his glory shall not descend after him.

18 Though while he lived[8] he [v]blessed his soul, (and *men* [x]will praise thee when thou doest well to thyself,)

19 He[y] shall go [y]to the generation of his fathers; they shall never see light.[1]

20 Man[z] *that is* in honour, and understandeth not, is like the beasts *that* perish.[2]

A.M. cir. 2959.
B.C. cir. 1045.

PSALM XLIX.

1 Or, *of*.

a Ps.34.11;78.1,2.Ja.1.19. Is.55.3. Mat.11.15.Re.2.7, &c.

b De.32.9. Pr.22.17–21;4.1,2;8.6–11. Job33.3,23.2 Ti.3.15.

c Ps.78.2.Mat.13.35. Nu.23.7.

d Ro.8.33,34. Is.41.10,14; 43.1,2,5. Pr.24.10.Phi.1.28.Ep.5.16.

e Am.3.2.Ho.7.2.

g Job31.24. Ps.52.7; 62.10. Pr.10.15. Lu.12.19. Mar.10.24. 1 Ti.6.17.Re.18.7.

h ver.9,10; Ps.89.48. Mat.16.26. Pr.11.4; 10.2.Ep.5.2.Re.5.9.

i Job36.18,19. Ec.8.8.1 Pe.1.18,19. Mat.20.28.

2 For so great is the redemption price for his life, that a brother should for ever desist from the attempt.—*Boothroyd.*

j Ac.13.33–37. He.9.27. Job30.23. 2 Sa.14.14. Ps.89.48.

k Ec.2.16–21; 6.6; 9.1,2;12.5,7. Zec.1.5.Ro.5.12–14. Ps.39.6. Lu.12.19,20.

l 1 Sa.15.12. 2 Sa.18.18.

3 Heb. *to generation and generation.*

n ver.20; Ps.39.5;82.7.Ec.3.18,19.

4 Heb. *delight in their mouth.*

o Je.12.3. Job17.13, 14;21.13,26;24.20.

p Da.7.22. Lu.22.30. Re.2.26,27.1 Co.6.2.

q Or, *strength*, Job 4.21.Ps.39.11.

5 Or, *the grave* being *an habitation to every one of them.*

r Ho.13.14. Re.14. 13. Is.57.2. Ps.73.24. Ac.7.59.

6 Heb. *hand.*

7 Or, *hell.*

s ver.5;Ps.37.1,7;73.3.

t Ge.31.1. Re.21.24, 26.

u Lu.12.20.1 Ti.6.7. Job 1.21;13.14–19. Ec.5.15.

8 Heb. *in his life.*

v Lu. 12. 19. De.29.19.

x Ec. 5. 18–20; 2.24; 9.7–9;6.1,2.

9 The soul.

y 1 Ki.14.31; 16.6. 2 Ki.14.16,29. Job 21.32, 33;7.7–10;14.12;20.9.

1 That is, they shall never see 'the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ,' 2Co.4.6. —*C.*

z ver.12. Ec.3.18,19.

2 What a comment is this on human life and glory! The genius of the philosopher, the laurel crown of the conqueror, the wealth of the miser, cannot purchase immortality. All alike are laid in the dust; and except their understandings have been enlightened and their hearts sanctified by the Spirit of God, they have no hope of heaven. They have lived for earth, and they are like the beasts of the earth. —*P.*

A.M. cir. 2959.
B.C. cir. 1045.

PSALM L.

a 1 Ch.15.17; 25.2. 2 Ch.29.30.

1 Or, *for Asaph.*

2 Asaph, the reputed author of this, and of eleven other psalms (73–83), was of the tribe of Levi. He was skilled in music, and was appointed by David leader of the choir in the public services of the sanctuary. The office appears to have been hereditary in his family ever after. He was a prophet as well as a poet and musician, 1 Ch.29.30. Ne. 12.16.—*P.*

b Ps.145.5;82.1,6. Is. 9.6.Ge.17.1;18.14.

3 God has so spoken often in his word, and continually in providence and the consciences of men. *C.*

c De.4.26; 32.1. Ps. 113;49.1,2. Mal.1.11.

d Ps. 48. 2; 78. 68,69; 80.1;68.24.2 Ch.2.5,6.

4 By that light which 'shineth in darkness' (Jn. 1. 5), even Jesus, 'the Sun of righteousness,' Mal 4.2.—*C.*

e Re. 22. 20. He. 12. 29. Ps.97.3. Mal.3.2. 2 Th.1.8,9. Da.7.10. Re. 18.8.

g De.4.26; 30.19; 32. 1. Is.1.2. Mi.6.1,2.

h Is. 11. 3, 4; 42. 1, 4. Jn.5.22,23.2 Co.5.10.

i Ge.49.10. Is.56.8. 2 Th.2.1. Mat.24.31; 13. 30.

j He.12.24. Ex.24.3–8.2 Sa.23.5.Is.55.3.

k Ps.97.6;75.7;ver.4. Re.16.5–7. Ge.18.25.

l Re.20.12.

n Mi.6.1–8. Ps.81.10 –12. Is.1.2,3. De.26.17, 18. Ex.20.2. Je.32.38, 40. Zec.13.9.

o Is.1.11,14;66.3. Je. 7.22. Ho.6.6. Ps.51.16.

p Mi. 6.6,7. Is. 1.11–14;66.3. He.10.1–8. Ac. 17.25. Ps.40.6,7.

q Mat.6.26;10.29.

5 Heb. *with me.*

r Ex.19.5. De.10.14. Job 41.11. Ps.24.1,2. 1 Co.10.26,28.

s De.23.21. Ho.14.2. Ps.69.30,31; 76.11; 116. 17; ver. 23. Ec. 5. 4, 5. He.13.15.

t Job 22.27. Ps.91.15; 107.6,13,28. Ja.5.13.

u ver.23; Ps.34.3. Jn. 15.8. Mat.5.16. 1 Pe.2. 9;4.11.

6 The religion of the heart and mind, as opposed to a cold and dead form, which is set forth in this psalm. The rites and sacrifices of the law were only acceptable when they directed the soul onward and upward by faith to Jesus.—*P.*

v Is.1.11–15. Jn.4.24. Mat.7.3,4,21–23. Lu.6. 46. Ro.2.1–10,21,22.

x Pr.5.12,13; 1.22,29. Ac.13.45,46. Lu.7.30. Jn.3.20.

y Ep.5.11,13. 1 Ti.5. 22. Pr.1.10–18; 5.3–13; 7.21,22.

7 Heb. *thy portion* was *with adulterers*, Mat.12.39.

z Ps.5.9;10.7; 12.2,3; 55.12,21;52.2–4;64.3–5.

a Le.19.16. Ja. 4.11. Je. 9, 3, 4. Ps. 36, 3, 4. Mat. 10. 21.

b Ec.8.11,12. 2 Pe.3. 9. Ps.83.1; 109.1. Is.42. 14;57.11.

c Ec. 11. 9. Is. 26.10, 11. Ro.2.4,5.

PSALM L.

1 The majesty of God in the church. 5 His command to gather his saints. 7 The pleasure of God is not in ceremonies, 14 but in sincerity of obedience.

A psalm [a]of [1]Asaph.[2]

THE mighty[b] God, *even* the LORD, hath spoken,[3] and called [c]the earth, from the rising of the sun unto the going down thereof.

2 Out of Zion, [d]the perfection of beauty, God hath shined.[4]

3 Our[e] God shall come, and shall not keep silence: a fire shall devour before him, and it shall be very tempestuous round about him.

4 He[g] shall call to the heavens from above, and to the earth, that he may [h]judge his people.

5 Gather[i] my saints together unto me; those that [j]have made a covenant with me by sacrifice.

6 And[k] the heavens shall declare his righteousness: [l]for God *is* judge himself. Selah.

7 Hear,[n] O my people, and I will speak; O Israel, and I will testify against thee: I *am* God, *even* thy God.

8 I[o] will not reprove thee for thy sacrifices or thy burnt-offerings, *to have been* continually before me.

9 I[p] will take no bullock out of thy house, *nor* he-goats out of thy folds:

10 For every beast of the forest *is* mine, *and* the cattle upon a thousand hills.

11 I[q] know all the fowls of the mountains; and the wild beasts of the field *are* mine.[5]

12 If I were hungry, I would not tell thee: [r]for the world *is* mine, and the fulness thereof.

13 Will I eat the flesh of bulls, or drink the blood of goats?

14 Offer[s] unto God thanksgiving; and pay thy vows unto the most High:

15 And[t] call upon me in the day of trouble; I will deliver thee, and thou shalt [u]glorify [6]me.

16 But unto the wicked God saith, [v]What hast thou to do to declare my statutes, or *that* thou shouldest take my covenant in thy mouth?

17 Seeing [x]thou hatest instruction, and castest my words behind thee.

18 When thou sawest a thief, then [y]thou consentedst with him, and hast been partaker with adulterers.[7]

19 Thou[z] givest thy mouth to evil, and thy tongue frameth deceit.

20 Thou [a]sittest *and* speakest against thy brother; thou slanderest thine own mother's son.

21 These *things* hast thou done, and I [b]kept silence; thou [c]thoughtest that I was altogether

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how unavailable to ransom the soul, perpetuate the life, or preserve from hell! To judge of things aright we must weigh time with eternity. It is neither wealth nor poverty, but Jesus Christ's righteousness and grace, that can render us respected of God, or really happy, in time or eternity. It is redemption through his blood that gives hope in death. It is not their own vaunts, or the world's admiration, but the word of God, that adjusts men's real character. It is not what we have here, but what we can carry into the other world, that constitutes the true riches. They are only wise who consider their latter end. Nay, in death, the state of the most loathsome animal is infinitely preferable to that of the unregenerate sinner.

PSALM L. Ver. 3. *A fire.* A fire of the Spirit to baptize his children, Mat. 3. 11; a fire of judgment to consume the imperfections of his people, 1 Co. 3. 15, and the strongholds of his enemies, He. 12. 29. *C.*

Ver. 6. *The heavens shall declare his righteousness.* The heavens, into which Christ has entered, as a 'Lamb without spot,' will declare by the fact of his admission and appearance, and glory there, the perfect righteousness, in virtue of which he ascended to glory, and sits upon the throne. He. 9. 14, 24; 10. 12, 20.—*God is judge.* God is judge now by the books written: he will be judge hereafter by the opening of the books—sitting upon the throne—the assembling of all nations, and the pronouncing of his final decision, Mat. 25. 31. *C.*

Ver. 8. Some forms of sacrifice, as the show-bread, were continually, that is, without interruption, before God; others at short intervals, as the morning and evening sacrifice; others at longer intervals, as the passover and sacrifices of atonement. But all were mere pictures, of which Christ was the great original—and those pictures are of no value before God, but as they testify to 'Christ in us, the hope of glory.' *C.*

Ver. 18. This was verified when the high-priest and his friends *consented* with Judas, who was *a thief*, Jn. 12. 6, and were partakers in guilt with an *adulterous generation*, Mar. 18. 38. *C.*

such an one as thyself: *but* I [d]will reprove thee, and set *them* in order before thine eyes.

22 Now consider this, ye that [e]forget God, lest I [g]tear *you* in pieces, and *there be* none to deliver.

23 Whoso[h] offereth praise glorifieth me: and to him[3] that ordereth *his* conversation *aright* will I show the [i]salvation of God.

PSALM LI.

1 *David prayeth for remission of his sins, whereof he maketh a deep confession.* 6 *He prayeth for sanctification.* 16 *God delighteth not in sacrifice, but in sincerity.* 18 *He prayeth for the church.*

To the chief musician, A psalm of David, [a]when Nathan the prophet came unto him, after he had gone in to Bath-sheba.

HAVE mercy[b] upon me, O God, according to thy loving-kindness; according unto the multitude of thy tender mercies [c]blot out my transgressions.[1]

2 Wash[d] me throughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin.

3 For [e]I acknowledge my transgressions, and my sin *is* ever before me.

4 Against[g] thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done *this* evil in thy sight:* that[h] thou mightest be justified when thou speakest, *and* be clear when thou judgest.

5 Behold, I [i]was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive[3] me.

6 Behold, [j]thou desirest truth in the inward parts; and in the hidden *part* thou shalt make me to know wisdom.

7 Purge[k] me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.

8 Make[l] me to hear joy[4] and gladness; *that* the bones *which* thou hast [m]broken may rejoice.

9 Hide[o] thy face from my sins, and blot out all mine iniquities.[5]

10 Create[p] in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit[6] within me.

11 Cast[q] me not away from thy presence; and take not thy [r]Holy Spirit from me.

A.M. cir. 2959.
B.C. cir. 1045.

d Ps.90.8.Re.20.12.
e Ps.9.17; 10.4. Je.2. 32.Ho.4.6.
g Ho. 13.7,8. Is. 42. 22.Re.6.16,17.
h 1 Pe.2.9. Ps.69.30, 31.Ro.10.1.
3 Heb. *that disposeth* his *way*, Phi.1.27; 4.8. 1 Pe.3.1,14; 1. 14–17. Tit.2.11,12;3.8.
i Ps.91.16. Is.45.17. 1 Pe.1.9.

PSALM LI.

B.C. cir. 1034.

a 2 Sa. 11. 2–4; 12. 1–18.
b Ps.69.13,16. Ro. 5. 20,21. Ex.34.6,7. Ep.2. 4. Tit.3.4,5.
c ver. 9. Ne. 4. 5. Ps. 19.13; 32.1,2; 25. 11. Is. 43. 25; 44. 22. Je.18.23. Ac.3.19. Mi.7.18,19.
1 This psalm is a beautiful model for prayer—logical in arrangement; simple, yet earnest in language, comprehensive in scope. It gives utterance to the deepest penitence, it confesses guilt; with intense eagerness it implores pardon and divine favour; it expresses implicit trust in God's pardoning mercy; and it asks sanctifying grace.—*P.*
d He.9.14; 10. 19–22. Re.1.5. 1 Jn. 1. 7. Zec. 13.1.
e Ps.32.5;38.4,18. Pr. 28.13.1 Jn.1.9.
g 2 Sa.12.13. Ge. 20. 6; 39.9. 1 Jn.3.4. Lu.15. 21.
h Ro.3.4. Da. 9. 7,8. Ex.9.27.
i Job 14. 4. Jn. 3. 6. Ro. 5.12. Ge.5.3. Ep.2. 1,3. Ps.58.3.
3 Heb. *warm*.
j Ps.45.13. Pr. 11.20. Jn.4.23. Ro.2. 29. 1 Pe. 3.4.
k Le.14.4–9. Nu.19. 6–19. Is.1.18. He. 9.14, 19. 1 Jn.1.7. Re. 1. 5; 7. 14. Ep.5.25–27.
l Ps.89.15; 119.81,82. Is.40.1,2.
4 Our Lord endured the cross 'for the *joy* set before him' in our salvation, He. 12. 2.—*C.*
m Mat. 5. 4. Ps.6.2,3; 38.3–9. Je.31.25. Is. 57. 15–19.
o Je.16.17. Is. 38. 17. Mi.7.18,19. Ac. 13. 38, 39.
5 See notes on Ps. 25.2;32.5;40.12.—*C.*
p Ac.15.9. Ro. 7. 24, 25. Ep. 2. 10; 4. 22–24. Col. 3. 10–13. Eze. 36. 26.
6 Or, *a constant spirit*.
q Ps.43.2;71.9,18.
r Pr.1.24. Eze.36.27. Jn. 4. 10, 14. Lu. 11.13. Ro.8.9.
* The meaning is, that though the offence was committed in secret, though no

A.M. cir. 2970.
B.C. cir. 1034.

human eye saw it, the eye of an omniscient God was fixed upon the offender. What a lesson ought this to teach! The presence of a fellow-mortal is enough to keep us from violations of God's holy law. Shame and the fear of man restrain passion; but how often do we give full play to passion despite a consciousness that the eye of God is upon us!—*P.*
s Ro.5.2, 11. 2 Co. 1. 12. Ne.8.10.
t Ps.94.18,19. 2 Co.3. 17. Ro.8.15. Ep.4.30.
u Zec. 3. 1–8. Ps.66. 16. Lu.22.32. Is.55.7–9. Ja.5.19,20.
7 Heb. *bloods*, 2 Sa. 11.17;12.9.
v Ps.31. 1; 86. 12, 13; 71. 8, 14–24. Is. 61. 10. Phi.3.9.
x Ex.4.11,12. Ps. 79. 8–13.
y Ps.40.6; 50.8. Is. 1. 11–15. Je.7.22. Ho.6.6. Mi.6.7,8. He. 10. 4–10. Nu.15.30,31;35.31. Le. 20.10.
8 Or, *that I should give it*.
z Is. 57. 15–18; 66. 2. Ps.34.18;102.17.
a Ps.137. 5, 6; 25. 22; 122.6–9. 2 Co.11.28, 29. Is.62.1,6,7. Je.51.50.
b Ps.79.13; 66.13–15; 116. 14, 17–19; 118.27. 1 Ki.8.63. Ep.5.2. He.13. 10,16. Ro.12.1.
c Mal.3.3. Ps.4.5. Is. 61.8. 1 Pe.2.5. Ro.12.1.
9 No sacrifice of *righteousness* was ever offered except the living and the dying sacrifice of Christ. Ro.12.1. He.10. 12.—*C.*

PSALM LII.

B.C. cir. 1058.

a 1 Sa.21.7;22.9.
b Eze.22.9.
c Ps.10.2,3;26.10;120. 2;140.8,9; ver.7.
d Ps.136.1,2. Ex. 34. 6,7. Is. 63. 7. Ro.2.4,5. Mat.5.45.
e Ps.50.19;57.4; 59.7; 64.4;140.3. Je.9.3,4; 18. 18. Pr.30.14.
g Je.4. 22; 9. 3–5. Ps. 36.1–4. Ro.1.28–32.
1 See note on Ps. 3. 2.—*C.*
h 1 Sa.22.19, 20. Je. 11.19. Ja.3.6.
2 Or, and *the deceitful tongue*.
i Pr.19.5,9. Ja. 2. 13. Job xviii.xx. Ps. 9. 15–17; 37. 20, 36; 120. 3, 4; 140.9–11.
3 Heb. *beat thee down*.
j Pr.2.22.
k Ps.58. 10; 64. 9; 71. 24;97.8;119.120. Mal.1. 5. Re.15. 4; 16. 5–7; 18. 20;19.1,2.

12 Restore unto me the [s]joy of thy salvation; and [t]uphold me *with thy* free Spirit.

13 *Then*[u] will I teach transgressors thy ways; and sinners shall be converted unto thee.

14 Deliver me from blood-guiltiness,[7] O God, thou God of my salvation; *and* [v]my tongue shall sing aloud of thy righteousness.

15 O LORD, [x]open thou my lips, and my mouth shall show forth thy praise.

16 For thou [y]desirest not sacrifice, else would I give *it*:[8] thou delightest not in burnt-offering.

17 The[z] sacrifices of God *are* a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise.

18 Do[a] good in thy good pleasure unto Zion; build thou the walls of Jerusalem.

19 Then[b] shalt thou be pleased with the [c]sacrifices of righteousness,[9] with burnt-offering, and whole burnt-offering: then shall they offer bullocks upon thine altar.

PSALM LII.

1 *David, reproving the spiteful malice of Doeg, prophesieth his destruction.* 6 *The righteous shall rejoice at it.* 8 *David, in confidence of God's mercy, giveth him thanks.*

To the chief musician, Maschil, *A psalm* of David, [a]when Doeg the Edomite [b]came and told Saul, and said unto him, David is come to the house of Ahimelech.

WHY boastest[c] thou thyself in mischief, O mighty man? [d]the goodness of God *endureth* continually.

2 Thy[e] tongue deviseth mischiefs; like a sharp razor, working deceitfully.

3 Thou [g]lovest evil more than good, *and* lying rather than to speak righteousness. [1]Selah.

4 Thou lovest [h]all-devouring words, O *thou* deceitful tongue.[2]

5 God[i] shall likewise destroy thee[3] for ever: he shall take thee away, and pluck thee out of *thy* dwelling-place, and [j]root thee out of the land of the living. Selah.

6 The[k] righteous also shall see, and fear, and shall laugh at him:

7 Lo, *this is* the man *that* made not God

Ver. 20. Christ, who 'came unto his own,' was not only 'despised and rejected' by his brethren; but the 'days of his flesh' were spent amidst the 'strife of tongues,' and he sat as a mark for every arrow of slander. *C.*

Ver. 22. *Ye that forget God.* Few are so atheistical as to 'forget God,' as he exists in a mere opinion; but how many forget him as the 'living God,' seeing, knowing, and judging all things! *C.*

REFLECTIONS.—Great is the majesty, extensive the high domain, and terrible the wrath of God! And great is his care of those who have accepted through faith Jesus Christ and have walked in him as they received him. But God hath full power to change the positive institutions of his own worship at his pleasure, and to reject his long professed people for their contempt of his Son. No obedience is acceptable to him but what proceeds from the faith of his being our own God in Christ. To obey was always better than sacrifice; and prayer to and praise of God more than burnt-offerings. And since Jesus' death, and Jerusalem's destruction, Jewish ceremonies are not only vain but hurtful. But never is our gracious God more ready to hear our supplications than in a day of trouble: and what grateful vows and thanksgivings doth he then deserve at our hands! Notwithstanding antecedent gospel declarations, how rarely doth the Son of man, when he cometh, either in remarkable mercy or judgment, find faith in the earth, or indeed aught but empty formalities and gross wickedness. And none are worse than profane clergymen, stained with hypocrisy, covetousness, whoredom, slander of Christ and his saints, blasphemy of God, and everything horrid. But graciously he warns ere he strikes. And to bow before the sceptre of his grace, receive his gospel offers, and practise holiness in his fear, is the way to escape the rod of his judgments and to share his eternal favours.

PSALM LI. Ver. 1. *According unto the multitude of thy tender mercies blot out my transgresssions.* The Hebrew title attributes this psalm to David penitentially bowing to the rebuke of Nathan, 2 Sa. xi. &c. *Horsley*, however, justly observes that this title cannot be correct, as ver. 4 describes the sin of the speaker as solely against God, whereas that of David was also against both Uriah and Bath-sheba. Who then is the speaker? The answer lies (1) In comparing Ps. 40. 6 with He. 10. 6, and these with Ps. 51. 16. (2) From considering that, though Christ is certainly the speaker in Ps. xl., he nevertheless confesses the oppression of the 'iniquities laid upon him,' and in that just sense calls them his own, in correspondence with Ps. 25. 11; 32. 5. (3) That none but Christ could truly utter the perpetual view of sin described (ver. 3), 'My sin is *ever* before me'—even the sin of his people which he bore, the defilement of which he ever saw, and the pressure of which he ever felt. *C.*

Ver. 5. The *iniquity* and *sin* belonged, by ordinary descent, to the mother; but the 'body prepared' for Christ by the power of the Holy Ghost, Mat. 1. 20, was itself holy, and his spirit filled with truth and wisdom, and his life with righteousness, He. 7. 2, 6. *C.*

Ver. 7. *Hyssop* was employed in sprinkling the blood of the sacrifice in the ceremonial cleansing of the leper, Le. 14. 4–6. Christ, by his own blood, 1 Jn. 1. 7, cleansed away our sins, which he 'bore in his own body on the tree,' 1 Pe. 2. 24. *C.*

Ver. 13. Though Christ was always a teacher of righteousness, it was not until the 'joy of salvation,' ver. 12, had been *restored* after his resurrection from the dead, that his full qualifications as a Saviour were developed in the conversion of sinners. See Ac. 2. 41. *C.*

Ver. 14. *Deliver me from blood-guiltiness.* Not from the sin of murder committed, but from any guilt that would arise from neglecting to 'declare all the counsel of God' to sinners. See Ac. 18. 6; 20. 26. *C.*

REFLECTIONS.—Into what grievous iniquities the best of men, if left to themselves, quickly fall!—but never into any from which their gracious God may not recover them. Such as sin publicly ought to take to themselves public shame, for the honour of their God and for a warning to others. Sin is a heavy burden to a penitent soul. It forces from his heart importunate cries for pardoning and purging mercy. And nothing less than promises of mercy can encourage him to pray in faith: and nothing less than merciful pardons and cleansings through Jesus' blood can save him from hell. God's blotting out of sin fixes a penitential remembrance of it, and repeated grief on account of it in the heart of a saint. And a heart truly broken for sin never seeks exculpation, but desires to take all shame and confusion. The exceeding sinfulness of sin

his strength; but [l]trusted in the abundance of his riches, *and* strengthened himself in his [k]wickedness.[5]

8 But I *am*[6] like a green olive-tree in the house of God:[7] I [m]trust in the mercy of God for ever and ever.

9 I [n]will praise thee for ever, because thou hast done *it*:[8] and [o]I will wait on thy name; for *it*[q] *is* good before thy saints.

PSALM LIII.

1 David describeth the corruption of a natural man. 4 He convinceth the wicked by the light of their own conscience. 6 He wisheth to see the salvation of God.

To the chief musician upon Mahalath, Maschil, *A psalm* of David.

THE [a]fool[1] hath said in his heart, *There is* no God. [b]Corrupt are they, and have done abominable iniquity: *there is* none that doeth good.*

2 God[c] looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were *any* that did understand, that did seek God.

3 Every[d] one of them is gone back; they are altogether become filthy: *there is* none that doeth good, no, not one.

4 Have the workers of iniquity [e]no knowledge? who [g]eat up my people *as* they eat bread: they have not called upon God.

5 There were they in great fear,[3] *where* no fear was; for God hath [h]scattered the bones of him that encampeth *against* thee: thou hast put *them* to shame, [i]because God hath despised them.

6 Oh that the salvation[4] of Israel *were come* out of Zion! When [j]God bringeth back the captivity of his people, Jacob shall rejoice, *and* Israel shall be glad.

A.M. cir. 2946.
B.C. cir. 1058.

l 1 Ti.6.17. Je. 2. 13; 17.5,6. Ps. 49.6,6o.10.

4 Or, *substance.*

5 By forming associations with wicked men like himself. See Mat.12.45.—*C.*

6 Shall be. Ps. 1. 3; 92.12–14. Je.11.16. Ho. 14.6.

7 The olive produces a fruit supplying oil for food, light, healing of wounds, and anointing to high office. The emblem of Christ thus described in possession of an unchanging office, an unfading glory.—*C.*

m Ps.23.6; 103.17; 73. 24,26.

o Ps. xviii. ciii. cxvi. cviii.cxlv.

8 Thou hast saved me from the malice of my enemy, and given me peace and joy through faith in thy power and mercy.—*P.*

p La.3.25,26. Ge.49. 18. Ps.130.5, 6; 62. 1, 5; 40.1.

q Ps.73.28; 54.6. Ex. 34.6,7. Ca. 1. 3. Pr.18.10.

PSALM LIII.

B.C. cir. 1021.

a Ps.10.4;14.1-7.

1 *The fool.* The depraved (*Bythner*)—which best accords with the following description.—*C.*

b Ge.6.5, 11, 12. Job 14.4;15.16. Ro.3.10–18. Ep.5.12.

c Ps. 11. 4; 33. 13, 14; 139.1–7. Je.17.10;16.17; 23.24. Ec.4.13.

d Ec.7.29. Je. 8. 5,6. Ro.5.12. 2 Ti.3.13. Job 15.16. Is.64.6.

e Ps.94.8. Is.1. 3; 27. 11. Je.8.7,14.22.

g Je.10. 25. Ps. 27. 2; 10.4;79.7.

3 Heb. *they feared a fear,* Job 15.21. Le. 26. 17, 36. De.28.65–67. Pr.28.1.

h Ps.141.7. Is. 37.36. 2 Sa.v.viii.x.

i Je.6.30.

4 Heb. *Who will give salvations,* &c., Ps. 60. 12. Lu. 2.10,11, 26,30,38. Mat.1.21. Tit. 2.11,13.

j Ps.126.1–3.

There is a close resemblance, not merely in sentiment but in language, between this psalm and Ps. xiv. Both

A.M. cir. 2983.
B.C. cir. 1021.

are ascribed to the same author, David; and each pursues the same line of thought —the folly and wickedness of atheism. They both show that the belief that there is no God is not a harmless idea, or a mere speculation, but that it has important influences upon the life, and is naturally connected with a wicked life.'—*P.*

PSALM LIV.

B.C. cir. 1058.

a Ps. iv. xxxii. xlii. titles.

b 1 Sa.23.19,20; 26.1. Je.9.4,5. Mi.7.5,6. Mat. 10.21.

c Ps.69.1,2;59.1; 71.2 -4.

d Pr.18.10. Ex.23.21. Mat.1.21. Ac.4.12.

e Ps.43. 1; 7. 8; 31. 2. Je.50.34. Pr.23.11.

g Ps.130.2; 77.1; 143. 1,6,7.

h Ps.36.1; 86.14; 18.4 -14; 53.4; 10.4,13. Mat. 27.20–23.

1 *Strangers,* that is, the Roman governor and soldiers under whose oppression all Israel groaned, and whom yet they madly instigated to crucify our Lord.—*C.*

i Ps.118.7. He. 13.6. Ro. 8. 31. Ge.12. 3. Is. 41. 11;50.7,9.

j Ps.92.7,9,11;140.8– 11;21.8–12;37.28,38.

2 Heb. *those that observe me.*

3 For vindication of such petitions, see note on Ps. 5. 10; 35. 8. —*C.*

k Ps.66.13–15;116.14 –19; 7.17; 140. 13; 52. 9; 21.13;35.28.

l 1 Sa. 26. 24. Ps. 86. 12,13;50.10;92.11. 2 Sa. 4.9,2 Co.1.10.

PSALM LV.

B.C. cir. 1021.

a See Ps.54. title.

b Ps.130.1,2;61.1;54. 1;86.1;83.1;4.1;5.1;102. 1,2.

c Ps.6.3,6;13.2; 32.3; 42.9,10;43.2; 22.1; 38.8; 102.9,10.

d Ps.27.12;35.11;109. 2,3;140. 3,9. 1 Sa.22.8. 2 Sa.15.3;16.7,8.

e Ps.32.3,4; 102.3–11; 22.14,15;116.3;6.2,3;18. 4,5. Je.4.19.

PSALM LIV.

1 David, complaining of the Ziphims, prayeth for salvation. 4 Upon his confidence in God's help, he promiseth sacrifice and praise.

To the chief musician on [a]Neginoth, Maschil, *A psalm* of David, [b]when the Ziphims came and said to Saul, Doth not David hide himself with us?

SAVE me,[c] O God, by [d]thy name, and judge me [e]by thy strength.

2 Hear[g] my prayer, O God; give ear to the words of my mouth.

3 For [h]strangers[1] are risen up against me, and oppressors seek after my soul: they have not set God before them. Selah.

4 Behold, [i]God *is* mine helper: the LORD is with them that uphold my soul.

5 He [j]shall reward evil unto mine [2]enemies: cut them off in thy truth.[3]

6 I[k] will freely sacrifice unto thee; I will praise thy name, O LORD, for *it is* good.

7 For he [l]hath delivered me out of all trouble; and mine eye hath seen *his desire* upon mine enemies.

PSALM LV.

1 David in his prayer complaineth of his fearful case. 9 He prayeth against his enemies, of whose wickedness and treachery he complaineth. 16 He comforteth himself in God's preservation of him, and confusion of his enemies.

To the chief musician on [a]Neginoth, Maschil, *A psalm* of David.

GIVE ear[b] to my prayer, O God; and hide not thyself from my supplication.

2 Attend unto me, and hear me: [c]I mourn in my complaint, and make a noise;

3 Because of the voice of the enemy, because of the oppression of the wicked: for [d]they cast iniquity upon me, and in wrath they hate me.

4 My[e] heart is sore pained within me; and the terrors of death are fallen upon me.

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lies in its opposition to God's nature and law. And true penitents justify God in all his judgments, however heavy upon them. No person was ever really humbled for sin till brought to see the inward and natural corruption of his heart. It is not outward forms, but inward reality of grace, that God primarily requires; and it is he alone that offers it to us. He alone must forgive our sins, purging our conscience by the blood of his Son. He alone must sanctify and renew our hearts, pour out his Spirit, restore our joys, and grant us his comfortable presence. What anguish and breaking of soul, loads of guilt, and of sorrow for it, can produce! But God who gives the pardon must also give the comfort of it. Renewed souls count the service of God the most perfect freedom: and the experience of God's remarkable kindness really animates to zeal for his glory, the instruction of others, and the welfare of his church. Broken-hearted penitents, viewing themselves as Achans in the camp, are the most earnest wrestlers with God for the happiness of the church. And all the returns of service and praise to God therein must be founded on his special favours, received or secured in Christ and his blood.

PSALM LII. Ver. 1. The occasion on which this psalm was written is stated in the title; and the affecting narrative may be seen in 1 Sa. xxi. The psalm is divided into three parts. In the first (ver. 1–4), the character of the writer's enemy and calumniator is briefly but graphically depicted. In the second (ver. 5–7), the terrible punishment in store for him is described. In the third, the psalmist shows his own security and trust in God. *P.*

——*Mighty man.* An appeal to man, who, when exalted to power, is so often perverted by pride, that 'the insolence of office' has become a proverb. O ye mighty, humble yourselves before God, and remember ye are but dust! *C.*

Ver. 5. God successively roots out the wicked; and the destruction of the 'great city Babylon,' Re. 18. 21, will complete the work of extirpation. *C.*

Ver. 6. *Thou hast done it*—appointed me to this unchanging office and glory of Prophet, Priest, and King—a Saviour, He. 6. 20. 7. 16; 24. 28. *C.*

REFLECTIONS.—Hardened indeed is the sinner who abuses the goodness of God to glory in his wickedness. Malice, lying, and craft are the abhorrence of God and the image of the devil; and quickly shall they render men miserable in life and lost in hell. Quickly shall those who trust in wealth or wickedness remove into everlasting woe. And the striking judgments of God on the wicked ought to be carefully observed and improved as warnings, while we thank him for sending us his Son so that he is the means of our deliverance. God marvellously founds the prosperity and promised honours of his people on their active faith. And what he has promised we must patiently wait for. None that trust in his mercy shall be disappointed, but ever flourish in grace and triumph in praise.

PSALM LIII. Ver. 4. *My people* was the specific title given to Israel in Egypt, Ex. 3. 7; 5. 1, and he who so names them here can be no other than Christ, 'the Lord that bought them,' the Angel of the covenant 'who redeemed them.' *C.*

Ver. 5. *There*—that is, where the enemy had cruelly attempted to devour God's people.—Who were in 'great fear?' The people of God; and while they trembled, 'no fear was,' for God immediately 'scattered the bones' of all their assailants. *C.*

REFLECTIONS.—What a fountain of atheism is in our hearts! What folly—what filth—what evil—is in every sin? and yet what unnumbered acts and fearful fruits of it everywhere abound in the world! But fear and shame shall at last overwhelm the sinners, particularly those who ate up, persecuted, and oppressed the people of God. Even the marvellous salvation of men through Christ shall contribute to the everlasting undoing of obstinate sinners. We are taught in the Scriptures that Christ is a Saviour of life or a Saviour of death.

PSALM LIV. Ver. 1. *Judge me.* As no sinner would dare to pray for judgment, and as the humble penitent ever cries for mercy, he that utters this petition can be no other than 'the holy One of God,' prophetically described in the days of his flesh. *C.*

Ver. 5. 'In thy truth,' *i.e.* in thy regard for what is just and right. Inflict upon them the punishment which their crimes deserve. There is no sinful enmity or hatred here; there are no vengeful feelings on the part of the psalmist. Justice is what he demands: and he demands it on the grounds of public weal and individual safety. *P.*

Ver. 7. A prophetic vision of that blessed period when 'all trouble' shall cease in the body of Christ the church, Ep. 1. 22, and the 'last enemy' shall be destroyed, which is death, 1 Co. 15. 25, 26. *C.*

REFLECTIONS.—The prayer of faith is a sovereign remedy in every distress: and all salvation is of God, who never fails those that seek him. Nearest neighbours and relations are often the saints' bitterest enemies. And when men leave God out of their sight there is no wickedness too great for them. But if he be our helper he will soon raise us up friends and rid us of our enemies, according to his promise. The soul may rejoice that has the security of God's infallible promise. And past experience is the ground of cordial thanksgiving, and the earnest of continual support and future deliverance.

PSALM LV. Ver. 2. The speaker is to be ascertained, 1. By some parallel psalm already expounded by New Testament quotation. 2. By some internal sentiment, necessarily confined to an individual character. For the first point, see Ps. 69. 5; Ac. 1. 20, then compare Ps. 55. 12–15, 20, 21; and as Christ speaks in Ps. lxix., he also speaks in its perfect parallel, Ps. lv. The second point directs us to ver. 16–18. 22, where the positive character of the speaker's faith demonstrates that speaker to be Christ; see also ver. 4, 5, where the agony can characterize none but our Lord in Gethsemane, Lu. 22. 44. *C.*

Ver. 13. *Mine equal*—in all the natural conditions of humanity —in descent from Abraham—in claim to the promises—in possession of the oracles of God—in access to him through the ordinances of religion—and in all the familiarities of a kind, condescending, and holy intercourse. *C.*

Ver. 15. *Let death seize upon them,* &c. This judgment was exemplified in the case of Korah and his company, Nu. 16. 30, 33; and will be still more awfully inflicted in the destructive judgment of the mystical Babylon, Re. 18. 8. *C.*

5 Fearfulness[g] and trembling are come upon me, and horror hath overwhelmed me.[1]

6 And I said, [h]Oh that I had wings like a dove! *for then* would I fly away, and be at rest.

7 Lo, *then* would I wander far off, *and* remain in the wilderness. Selah.[2]

8 I[i] would hasten my escape from the windy storm *and* tempest.[3]

9 [4]Destroy,[5] O LORD, *and*[j] divide their tongues: for I have seen [k]violence and strife in the city.

10 Day and night they go about it upon the walls thereof; [l]mischief also and sorrow *are* in the midst of it.

11 Wickedness *is* in the midst thereof; deceit and guile depart not from her streets.

12 For [m]*it was* not an enemy *that* reproached me; then I could have borne *it:* neither *was it* he that hated me *that* did magnify *himself* against me; then I would have hid myself from him:

13 But[o] *it was* thou, a man mine equal,[6] my[p] guide, and mine acquaintance.[7]

14 We[q] took sweet counsel[8] together, *and* walked unto the house of God in company.

15 Let death seize upon them, *and* let them go[r] down quick into hell:[9] for wickedness *is* in their dwellings, *and* among them.*

16 As[s] for me, I will call upon God; and the LORD shall save me.

17 Evening,[t] and morning, and at noon, will I pray, and cry aloud; and he shall hear my voice.

18 He[u] hath delivered my soul in peace from the battle *that was* against me: [v]for there were many with me.[2]

19 God shall [w]hear, and afflict them, even he that abideth[3] of old. Selah. Because they have no changes, therefore they fear not God.[4]

20 He [y]hath put forth his hands against such as be at peace with him: he hath broken[5] his covenant.

21 *The*[z] *words* of his mouth were smoother than butter, but war *was* in his heart: his words were softer than oil, yet *were* they drawn swords.

22 Cast[a] thy burden[6] upon the LORD, and he shall sustain thee: [b]he shall never suffer the righteous to be moved.

23 But thou, O God, [c]shalt bring them down into the pit of destruction: bloody and deceitful men[7] shall not live out half their days;[8] but I will trust in thee.

A.M. cir. 2983.
B.C. cir. 1021.

[g] Ps. 22. 1, 2; 69. 1, 2; 88. 3, 14–17. Mat. 26. 38. Jn. 12. 27.

1 Heb. *covered me.*

[h] Ps. 120. 5. Je. 9. 2. Re. 12. 6. 2 Sa. 15. 23, 27, 28; 16. 1, 2. Mi. 7. 1–6.

2 See note on Ps. 3. 2—*C.*

[i] 2 Sa. 15. 14; 17. 21.

3 The persecutions and calamities which like the windy storm bow me down, and like the tempest often overwhelm me. The cave when frightened flies away from the haunts of man to her home and refuge in the clefts of the rocks, and solitudes of the desert.—*P.*

4 Heb. *swallow up,* Nu. 16, 30, 33.

5 *Destroy* — confound.—*Horsley.*

[j] 2 Sa. 15. 31; 17. 7, 14. Jn. 7. 40–43; 10. 19–21. Ac. 23. 7, 8.

[k] Je. 6. 7.

[l] Eze. 9. 4; xxii. Zec. 5. 7, 6. Is. 59. 7–15. Ho. 4. 1, 2. Re. 18. 2. Zep. 3. 1–6.

[m] Ps. 41. 9. Job 19. 13–19. Jn. 13. 18. Mat. 26. 21, 23, 47–49.

[o] Ps. 41. 9.

6 Heb. *a man according to my rank.*

[p] 2 Sa. 15. 12; 16. 23. Je. 9. 4. Mi. 7. 5.

7 'But thou, a man of my own rank, my familiar associate, my companion.' If these words refer, as is generally supposed, to Ahithophel, they are touching and graphic.—*P.*

[q] 2 Sa. 17. 23; 18. 9, 15. Mat. 27. 5.

8 Heb. *Who sweetened counsel,* Ps. 122. 1; 42. 4.

[r] Nu. 16. 30–32.

9 Or, *the grave.*

[s] Ps. 73. 28; 50. 15; 91. 15. 1 Pe. 4. 19. Phi. 4. 6.

[t] Lu. 18. 1–7. 1 Th. 5. 17. Da. 6. 10. Ac. 10. 3, 9, 30; 13. 1. Ep. 6. 18.

[u] 2 Sa. 22. 1. Ps. 27. 1–3; 118. 6–14; 34. 7; 57. 3. 2 Ki. 6. 16. 2 Co. 1. 9, 10. 2 Ti. 4. 17, 18. 2 Pe. 8. 13.

[v] 2 Ch. 32. 7, 8. 1 Jn. 4. 4.

2 Not aiding, but opposing me; even Satan, his angels, and wicked men, Caiaphas, Pilate, and Herod, Jews and Romans.—*C.*

[x] ver. 16, 17; Ps. 55. 5.

3 *Abideth,* that is, in unchangeable being, promises, judgments, and ordinances.—*C.*

4 Or, *with whom* also there are *no changes, yet they fear not God,* Job 10. 17. Ps. 73. 4, 5. Je. 48. 11; 22. 21. Pr. 1. 32.

[y] Ac. 12. 1. Ps. 7. 4. 2 Sa. 17. 1, 2.

5 Heb. *he hath profaned,* Ec. 8. 2. 1 Ki. 2. 43.

[z] Ps. 28. 3; 57. 4; 64. 4; 62. 3. Pr. 5. 3, 4. Je. 9. 8.

[a] Ps. 37. 5. Mat. 6. 25, 30. Lu. 12. 22. 1 Pe. 5. 7.

6 Or, *gift.*

* 'Let destruction come upon them (so that their power for evil may cease); let them sink quickly into the state of death (that their persecution of God's people may come to an end)—let this happen because they are constantly and hopelessly wicked.'—*P.*

[b] Ps. 37. 24; 125. 1, 2; 121. 3. 1 Pe. 1. 5.

[c] Ps. 7. 15, 16; 9. 15, 16; 58. 7; 59. 12, 13.

7 Heb. *men of bloods and deceits,* 2 Sa. 3. 27; 20. 9, 10.

8 Heb. *shall not halve their days,* Pr. 10. 27. Ec. 7. 17.

PSALM LVI.

A.M. cir. 2983.
B.C. cir. 1021.

1 *David, praying to God in confidence of his word, complaineth of his enemies.* 9 *He professeth his confidence in God's word, and promiseth to praise him.*

To the chief musician upon Jonath-elem-rechokim, Michtam[1] of David, when the [a]Philistines took him in Gath.

BE merciful[b] unto me, O God; for [2]man would swallow me up: he fighting daily oppresseth me.

2 Mine enemies[3] would daily [c]swallow *me* up: for *they be* [d]many that fight against me, O [e]thou most High.[4]

3 What[g] time I am afraid, I will trust in thee.

4 In[h] God I will praise his word: in God I have put my trust;[5] I will not fear what flesh can do unto me.

5 Every day they [i]wrest my words:[6] all their thoughts *are* against me for evil.

6 They[j] gather themselves together, they hide themselves, [k]they mark my steps, when they wait for my soul.

7 Shall[l] they escape by iniquity? in *thine* anger [m]cast down the people, O God.[7]

8 Thou[o] tellest my wanderings: put thou my tears into thy bottle: *are they* not in thy book?

9 When[p] I cry *unto thee,* then shall mine enemies turn back: this I know; [q]for God *is* for me.

10 In[r] God will I praise *his* word: in the LORD will I praise *his* word.

11 In[s] God have I put my trust: I will not be afraid what man can do unto me.

12 Thy[t] vows *are* upon me, O God: I will render praises unto thee.

13 For[u] thou hast delivered my soul from death:[8] *wilt* not *thou deliver* my feet from falling, that I may walk before God in the light of the living?

1 Or, *a golden* psalm, Ps. xvi. lvii.–lix. lx. titles.

[a] 1 Sa. 21. 11; 29. 4.

[b] Ps. 57. 1; 69. 13, 16; 43. 1; 120. 5–7; 140. 1–5; ver. 2, 6. Pr. 1. 12. Ho. 8. 3.

2 *Man.* That is, the natural man, whose 'carnal mind is enmity against God,' Ro. 8. 7.—*C.*

3 Heb. *mine observers.*

[c] Ps. 57. 3; 69. 15; 106. 17; 124. 3. La. 2. 2, 5, 16.

[d] Ps. 3. 1; 118. 10–12; 27. 3.

[e] Ps. 9. 2; 83. 18; 92. 8; 93. 4; 95. 3. Is. 57. 15. Mi. 6. 6.

4 Rather, 'who fight against me in their pride, or in high places.' See Ep. 6. 12.—*C.*

[g] 1 Sa. 30. 6. 2 Ch. 20. 3. Ps. 34. 4.

[h] ver. 10, 11; Ps. 118. 6. He. 13. 6. Is. 31. 3; 41. 10. Ro. 8. 31–39. Lu. 12. 4–5.

5 'In God will I glory on account of his word.'—*Boothroyd.*

[i] Lu. 11. 54. Jn. 2. 19. Mat. 26. 61.

6 Of this we have a remarkable example in the 'wresting' of the words of our Lord, the prophetic speaker in this psalm, Jn. 2. 19, 21; compare Mat. 26. 61; 27. 40.—*C.*

[j] Ps. 59. 3; 140. 2; 71. 10; 10. 8–10; 64. 2–6; 22. 12. Da. 6. 4. Ac. 4. 27, 28.

[k] Ps. 37. 32.

[l] Ec. 8. 8. Je. 7. 10. Is. 28. 15.

[m] Ps. 55. 9, 15, 23; 21. 8–12. Je. 10. 25.

7 For vindication of this petition, see notes on Ps. 5. 10; 35. 8.—*C.*

[o] Mal. 3. 16. Mat. 10. 30. 2 Co. 11. 26. Is. 63. 9.

[p] Ps. 55. 16; 34. 4–7, 15 22.

[q] He. 13. 6. Ro. 8. 31. Ge. 18. 14. Ps. 46. 1, 11.

[r] ver. 4; Ps. 27. 1–3; 118. 6–14.

[s] See ver. 4; Ps. 27. 1–3; 118. 6–14.

[t] Ps. 119. 106; 116. 14–19; 66. 13–15; 7. 17; 9. 1; 21. 13; 34. 1, 2; 59. 16, 17; 61. 8.

[u] Ps. 18. 16–19; 116. 8, 9. 2 Co. 1. 10. Ge. 37. 1. Job 33. 30. Lu. 1. 74, 75.

8 The complete parallelism between these words and Ps. 16. 10. Ac. 2. 27, can leave no doubt that the speaker is Christ.—*C.*

Ver. 22. *Cast thy burden.* The Father here addresses his beloved Son Jesus, when he 'bore our griefs and carried our sorrows,' and through him he addresses every believer, saying, 'Cast your care upon him (the Lord), for he careth for you,' 1 Pe. 5. 7. *C.*

Ver. 23. Turbulent combinations of bloody and deceitful men will not be judicially permitted to live half the days to which, as peaceful individuals, they would naturally have attained. *C.*

REFLECTIONS.—While here, as in a glass, we behold Jesus, hated, reproached, betrayed, and murdered at Jerusalem, and the judgment of God overtaking his persecutors in the destruction and dispersion of the Jewish nation, let us observe that the best of men are ordinarily most exposed to the hatred and reproach of a carnal world: and good men may, in great trials, find their fears strong and their faith shaken; but it is a great mercy that they have Jesus' bosom and the state of glory above to flee to when they can get no peace nor rest in this world. The city, the church of God, may soon be fearfully corrupted by the influence of wicked rulers. And none are more apt to promote the corruption or betray the saints than apostate or empty professors. There has always been a sad mixture of such in the church. Carnal policy and selfish ends may carry men far and long in a religious profession, even where there is no sincerity of heart. Earnest prayers of faith are effectual to bring salvation from God. How shameful then is it that they are so little used; and that the stated meals for our bodies are more frequent than those for our souls! It is God's being on our side that raises us above fear from our adversaries. Too often want of trouble hardens men in bold impiety. But impenitence and perdition are inseparably linked together. Falsehood and perfidy will quickly find a holy God. But happy, happy for ever, are they who trust in the Lord, and by the prayers of faith cast all their burdens, troubles, works, and cares upon God, as their God and Father in Christ!

PSALM LVI. Ver. 8. David wandered over nearly the whole of southern Palestine when Saul was pursuing him. In no spot was he safe, save amid the strongholds of the mountains. There is allusion in the mention of the bottle for tears, to the very ancient custom of preserving tears in little glass vessels, called lachrymatories. The last clause is somewhat obscure. The meaning would seem to be that all the afflictions and sorrows which visited him were well known to God. *P.*—A map of the recorded 'wanderings,' or journeying of our Lord, is one of the most impressive sights for the human eye. Of his 'tears,' we know that twice he publicly wept, Lu. 19. 41; Jn. 11. 35; and that they flowed more frequently than recorded, Paul clearly declares. But his *wanderings* give us rest; his *tears* secured our joy. *C.*

Ver. 10. See note on ver. 4. *In God*—that is, *in God,* as revealed by his name or attribute of power to Abraham, Ge. 17. 1; and *in Jehovah,* as revealed to Moses by his name or attribute of uncaused and eternal existence, Ex. 3. 14. *C.*

REFLECTIONS.—How inveterate is the enmity of the wicked against Jesus Christ and his people! With unanimity, cruelty, malice, restlessness, and craft, they exert themselves to destroy them, while they spy out their ways, wrest their words, and wait for their halting. But blessed are those trials which drive us nearer to God. Strong faith is necessary when troubles and dangers are very great. But the unchangeable promise of God, yea and amen in Christ, is not only sufficient ground of trust but of cordial praise. No enemies that we can have are too great for God to humble, or too secure, strong, or daring to withstand his blow. They who have him for their friend need not fear the impotent threats or strokes of human worms.

PSALM LVII.

1 David in prayer fleeing unto God, complaineth of his dangerous case. 7 He encourageth himself to praise God.

To the chief musician, Al-Taschith, Michtam[1] of David, [a]when he fled from Saul in the cave.

BE merciful[b] unto me, O God; be merciful unto me; for my soul trusteth in thee: yea, in[c] the shadow of thy wings will I make my refuge, until *these* calamities be overpast.

2 I will cry unto [d]God most high; unto God that[e] performeth *all things* for me.

3 He[g] shall send from heaven, and save me *from* the reproach of him that would swallow me[2] up. Selah. God [h]shall send forth his mercy and his truth.

4 My soul *is* among [i]lions: *and* I lie *even among* them that are set on fire,[3] *even* the sons of men, whose teeth *are* spears and arrows, and their tongue a sharp sword.[4]

5 Be[j] thou exalted, O God, above the heavens; *let* thy glory *be* above all the earth.

6 They[k] have prepared a net for my steps; my soul is bowed down: they have digged a pit before me, into the midst whereof they are fallen *themselves*. Selah.

7 My[l] heart is fixed,[5] O God, my heart is fixed; I will sing and give praise.[6]

8 Awake[m] up, my glory;[7] awake, psaltery and harp: I *myself* will awake early.

9 I will praise thee, O LORD, among the people: I will sing unto thee among the nations:[8]

10 For[o] thy mercy *is* great unto the heavens,[9] and thy truth unto the clouds.

11 Be[p] thou exalted, O God, above the heavens; *let* thy glory *be* above all the earth.

PSALM LVIII.

1 David reproving wicked judges, 3 describeth the nature of the wicked, 6 and devoteth them to God's judgments, 10 whereat the righteous shall rejoice.

To the chief musician, Al-Taschith, Michtam[1] of David.

DO ye[a] indeed speak righteousness, O congregation? do ye judge uprightly, O ye sons[b] of men?

A.M. cir. 2946. B.C. cir. 1058.

PSALM LVII.

1 Or, *Destroy not, A golden* psalm, Ps. xvi.lvi. titles.

a Ps.142. title. 1 Sa. 22.1;24.3.

b Ps.6.2;69.13,16;16. 2;17,7,8;56.1,4,11.

c Ps.17,8; 61.4; 63.7; 91.1,4,9. Is.26.20; 32.2; 25.4;4.5,6.

d Ps.56.2; 135.5; 136. 2,3.

e Ps. 138.8. Is.26.12; 63.7. Phi.1.6;2.12,13.

g 2 Sa.22.17. Ps. 55. 16.

2 Or, *he reproacheth him that would swallow me.*

h Ps. 40.11; 43.3; 25. 10;61.7.

i Ps. 35.17; 58.6; 55. 21; 64.3; 92.9,4. 2 Ti.4. 17. Pr.28.15;30.14.

3 Burning with envy, wrath, malice, 'set on fire of hell.' Ja.3.6.—*C.*

4 The meaning of this verse may be expressed as follows:—'My life is at the mercy of fierce and reckless men—men savage as lions; I am in the midst of those who are inflamed with passion—sons of men whose spears and arrows are as ready to wound me as the teeth of wild beasts, and whose slanderous tongues are sharp as swords.'—*P.*

j Ps.108.5; 7.6; 148. 13; ver. 11. Is.5.16;30. 18.

k Mi.7.2. Ps.7.16; 9. 15.1 Sa.24.3,4;23.22,23. Matt.27.15.

l Ps.108.1, &c.

5 Or, *prepared*, Pr. 16.1; Ps.10.17.

6 Surely any one who knows the instability and deceitfulness of his own heart, must perceive, independent of the proof by quotation, that he who can affirm that his 'heart is fixed,' can be no other than the Christ. *C.*—Confident in thy grace and salvation, my heart is established.—I fear not what man can do. Human wiles and threats will be alike in vain to move me from my adherence to truth and justice. I will sing praises to thee. —*P.*

n Ju.5.12. Ps.108.1–5.

7 Tongue, or soul, Ps.16.9;30.12.

8 Among both Jews and Gentiles, Ps.2.1.

o Ps.36.5;103.11;108. 4;85.11;89.1,2. Ex.34.6. La.3.22,23. ver.3.

9 *Unto the heavens*, where the redeemed are before the throne.

p Ps.8.1,9;ver.5. Re. 11.15,17.

PSALM LVIII.

1 Or, *Destroy not, A golden* psalm, &c.

a Is. 59.2–7,13–15;42. 19. Ps.82.2.

b Ps.82.1,6.

A.M. cir. 2946. B.C. cir. 1058.

c Ps.21.11;94.20. Ec. 3.16. Is.5.20;10.1.

2 Ye appear to *weigh* out justice with the exactness of a balance, but are in reality dealing out nothing but *violence*. —*C.*

d Ge.6.5. Ep.4.18;2. 1–3,12. Is.48.8. Ps.51.5. Mat.15.19.

3 Heb. *from the belly.*

e Ps.140.3. Ro.3.13. Ac.7.51,57.

4 Heb. *according to the likeness.*

5 Or, *asp.*

g Ec.10.11. Je.8.17.

6 Or, be *the charmer ever so cunning.*

7 The general idea of ver.4–5 is, that some men are so confirmed in their wickedness that they will listen to no remonstrance. They shut their ears deliberately against all warning and reproof.—*P.*

h Job.4.10;29.17. Ps.3. 7;10.15. Ezek.30.21–25.

i Ex 15.15. Jos. 7.5; 5.1. Ps.73.18–20;64.7,8; 7.15,16;9.15,16.

j Ps.37.35,36;68.2.

k Job 3.16. Ec.6.3.

l Ps.73.18–20; 55.15, 23;11.6. Job 20.5–29;18. 5–14;27.20,21. Pr.10.25; 14.32.

8 Heb. *as living as wrath.*

m Ps.52.6; 64.10. Pr. 11.10. Re.18.20; 19.1,2; 11.17,18.

o Ps.68.23. Re.14.20.

p Ps. 92.15. Is.3.10. Ro.2.6,7,10. 2 Th.1.6-9.

9 Heb. *fruit of*, &c.

q De.29.24–28. Ps.9. 16–20;64.9;83.18;59.13.

1 This verse affords a key to the whole psalm. In strong and indignant language the writer denounces the wicked and relentless persecutors of God's people; he shows that nothing short of the extermination of the godly will satisfy them. He therefore prays in earnestness for God to interfere in defence of his own. He prays for—he demands justice; and he shows that the exercise of that justice will re-establish the drooping faith of God's people, and prove to them that 'he is a God who judgeth in the earth.'—*P.*

PSALM LIX.

B.C. cir. 1059.

1 Or, *Destroy not, A golden* psalm, Ps. lvii.lviii. titles.

a 1 Sa.19.11.

b Ps.18.48;71.2,4;43. 17;1,2;64.1,2; 140. 1,4; 22.12,20,21.

2 Heb. *set me on high.*

c Ps. 6. 8; 55. 23; 139. 19. Jn.8.32.

d 1 Sa.19.1. Ps. 56.6; 10.8–10;38.12,19;142.6.

e 1 Sa. 24. 10–19; 26. 18. Ps.7.3,4.

2 Yea, in heart ye [c]work wickedness; ye weigh the violence of your hands in the [2]earth.

3 The[d] wicked are estranged from the womb: they go astray as soon as they be born,[3] speaking lies.

4 Their [e]poison *is* like[4] the poison of a serpent: *they are* like the deaf adder[5] *that* stoppeth her ear;

5 Which [g]will not hearken to the voice of charmers, charming never so [6]wisely.[7]

6 Break[h] their teeth, O God, in their mouth: break out the great teeth of the young lions, O LORD.

7 Let them [i]melt away as waters *which* run continually: *when* he bendeth *his bow to shoot* his arrows, let them be as cut in pieces.

8 As[j] a snail *which* melteth, let *every one of them* pass away: [k]*like* the untimely birth of a woman, *that* they may not see the sun.

9 Before[l] your pots can feel the thorns, he shall take them away as with a whirlwind, both living, and in *his* wrath.[8]

10 The[n] righteous shall rejoice when he seeth the vengeance: he shall [o]wash his feet in the blood of the wicked.

11 So that a man shall say, [p]Verily *there is* a reward for[9] the righteous; [q]verily he is a God that judgeth in the earth.[1]

PSALM LIX.

1 David, in great danger, prayeth to be saved from his enemies. 6 He complaineth of their cruelty. 8 He trusteth in God. 11 He prayeth against them. 16 He promiseth to praise God continually.

To the chief musician, Al-Taschith, Michtam[1] of David; [a]when Saul sent, and they watched the house to kill him.

DELIVER me[b] from mine enemies, O my God: defend me[2] from them that rise up against me.

2 Deliver me from the [c]workers of iniquity, and save me from bloody men.

3 For, lo, [d]they lie in wait for my soul: the mighty are gathered against me; [e]not *for* my transgression, nor *for* my sin, O LORD.

Saints may, nay must, weep in prayer for a time; but God regards every word, every tear; and will soon make them issue in praise to the weepers and in lasting ruin to their enemies. It is reasonable then that vows made, as well as mercies received, should animate us to trust in, pray to, serve and praise him, while we live in the enjoyment of the light of his countenance.

PSALM LVII. Ver. 2. This psalm being quoted, Ro. 15. 9, forms a *key* for opening the true meaning of many parallel psalms. The complainant is there found to be Christ, 'offering prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto him that was able to save him from death,' He. 5. 7. *C.*

Ver. 3 Messiah was reproached with meanness of rank, want of literature, base companionship, madness, leaguing with devils, sedition, blasphemy; and finally with the death of a malefactor—the cross. From all he was saved, by 'the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven,' 1 Pe.1.12, and raising him from the dead, Ro.1.4. *C.*

Ver. 10. *Unto the clouds*—which, though apparently the most variable of all things, yet constantly testify by the rainbow the truth of the divine covenant, Ge. 9. 11–17. *C.*

REFLECTIONS. — While saints continue on earth they will still need prayer from their heart and mercy from their God. For into what devouring beasts, and deceitful devils, hath sin transformed their enemies! Heart, lips, and hands appear all animated by infernal malice and craft. But they have a God of salvation, a new relation in Jesus' blood, to secure their safety from all their enemies. And often, because of blindness, these enemies perish in the snares which they had laid for others. With what fixed thought, wonder, desire, and delight, with what ardour of inward powers, ought we then to praise and glorify God for the mercy that made and fulfils, and the faithfulness which establishes, every gracious promise! And with great fervour ought we to desire our Almighty Lord to glorify himself in heaven above and in all the earth below.

PSALM LVIII. Ver. 1. That Ps. xxxv. is a psalm of Christ, is obvious from comparing ver. 19 with Jn. 15. 25; and its parallelism with Ps. lviii, conducts to the conclusion that the congregation (ver. 1) is an appeal against the *Sanhedrim* who pronounced sentence against our Lord. *C.*

Ver. 4. *Deaf adder.* The deafness here attributed to the adder, is not deafness to *sound*, but to *charming;* so the ear of our Lord's judges was not deaf to evidence, but *to just conclusions.*—*Note*, The many statements made by travellers concerning serpent-charming in the East, seem to be nothing more than the evidences of inattention and credulity of false pretensions, and successful juggling: nor do they receive any countenance; but, on the contrary, a flat contradiction, from the statement of the psalmist. *C.*

Ver. 6. *Break their teeth, O God.* For explanation and vindication of this and similar prayers in relation to the enemies of our Lord, see note on Ps. 5. 10; 35. 8. *C.*

Ver. 9. *Before your pots can feel the thorns.* Before the blaze from the dried thorn can ascend to the pot placed over it, the wicked shall be swept away: an expression of suddenness expressively equivalent to that of the apostle, 'in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye,' 1 Co. 15. 52. *C.*

REFLECTIONS. — What a plague to a church or nation are unjust rulers! Oppression by law is the most grievous tyranny; and good men often suffer by the partiality of unjust judges. Greatly humbling to such as see it is the wickedness of the human heart. And it makes those in whom it reigns earnest and obstinate in sinful courses. Neither the terrors of God's wrath nor the hopes of the gospel can effectually change it, only the Spirit of God can help to instruction. But it is a mercy for the saints that God cares for and protects them amidst such barbarous, brutish, and deceitful men, who have power on their sides; that he restrains these enemies by his power so that they waste themselves. In a sudden and tremendous manner they are sometimes destroyed. And however the godly now pity the folly and bewail the conduct of sinners, they will hereafter see God's justice in their punishment and bewail in their ruin. At last God will make the most haughty and brutish to know that he governs the world; and that it is only in the way of holiness and virtue that real happiness is to be found.

PSALM LIX. Ver. 1. The speaker declaring his innocence from *transgression, sin*, or *fault*, ver. 3, 4, can surely be no other than Jesus, who, while 'he bore our sins,' because 'the Lord laid' them on him, was yet in his own person 'holy, harmless, and undefiled.' *C.*

Ver. 6. The dogs which, in eastern cities, have neither masters nor homes, go about the streets by night in search of food—always noisy, and often troublesome. *C.*

THE WALLS OF TIBERIAS—NEAR HAMATH, OF OLD TESTAMENT TIMES. [PSALMS lxviii : 27.]—"There is little Benjamin with their ruler, the princes of Judah and their council, the princes of Zebulun, and the princes of Naphtali." Tiberias was a city of Zebulun, and was formerly occupied, according to Joshua xix : 35, by Rakkath, and is also near the hot baths referred to in Joshua xix : 35 as Hamath. The walls of the city were rebuilt by Justinian. The city was captured by the Persians under Khosrces in 614 B. C. In 1738 Dhahr-el-'Amr built a fort on the hill north of Tiberias and repaired the walls of the city, which suffered terrible damage through the earthquake of 1837. There are now in Tiberias about 6,000 people, 4,000 of whom are Jews, 300 are Christians and the rest Moslems. This is one of the four sacred cities of the Jews in Palestine.

4 They [g]run and prepare themselves without *my* fault: [h]awake to help me,[3] and behold.

5 Thou therefore, [i]O LORD God of hosts, the God of Israel, awake to visit all the [j]heathen: be[k] not merciful to any wicked [4]transgressors.[5] Selah.[6]

6 They[l] return at evening: they make a noise like a dog, and go round about the city.

7 Behold, [m]they belch out with their mouth: swords *are* in their lips: for [o]who, *say they*, doth hear?

8 But thou, O LORD, shalt [p]laugh at them; thou shalt have all the heathen in derision.

9 *Because*[q] *of* his strength[7] will I wait upon thee: for God *is* my defence.[8]

10 The[r] God of my mercy shall prevent me: God[s] shall let me see *my desire* upon mine enemies.[9]

11 Slay[t] them not, lest my people forget: scatter[u] them by thy power; and bring them down, O LORD our shield.

12 *For*[v] the sin of their mouth, *and* the words of their lips, let them even be taken in their pride; and for cursing and lying *which* they speak.

13 Consume[x] *them* in wrath, consume *them*, that they *may* not *be*;[1] and[y] let them know that God ruleth in Jacob unto the ends of the earth. Selah.[2]

14 And [z]at evening let them return; *and* let them make a noise like a dog, and go round about the city.

15 Let them wander up and down for meat,[3] and grudge if they be not satisfied.[4]

16 But[a] I will sing of thy power; yea, I will sing aloud of thy mercy in the morning: for thou[b] hast been my defence and refuge in the day of my trouble.

17 Unto[c] thee, O my strength, will I sing: for God *is* my defence, *and* the God of my mercy.

PSALM LX.

1 *David, complaining to God of former judgments,* 4 *now, upon better hope, prayeth for deliverance.* 6 *Comforting himself in God's promises, he craveth that help whereon he trusteth.*

To the chief musician [a]upon Shushan-eduth, Michtam[1] of David, to teach; when he strove with Aram-naharaim and with Aram-zobah,[2] when Joab returned, and smote of Edom in the Valley of Salt twelve thousand.

O GOD, [b]thou hast cast us off, thou hast scattered[3] us, thou hast been displeased; O[c] turn thyself to us again.

A.M. cir. 2945.
B.C. cir. 1059.

g 1 Sa. xviii. xix. xxiii.xxiv.xxvi.

h Ps.7. 6-9; 35. 1, 23; 44.23,26.

3 Heb. *to meet me.*

i Da.4.35.Ps.148.14.

j Ps. 54. 3. Is. 1. 10. Am.9.7.

k Ps.7.6;17.13;55.15; 58.6.

4 *Wicked transgressors.* 'Show no favour or pity to them who revolt to idolatry.'—*Boothroyd.*

5 'That is, arrest and punish them as transgressors. This prayer is not inconsistent with a desire that such men might be converted, and *thus* obtain mercy; but it is a prayer that God would not suffer them, being wicked men, to go at large and accomplish the work of wickedness which they designed' (*Barnes*).—*P.*

6 See note on Ps. 3. 2.—*C.*

l ver.14.1 Sa.19.11.

m Ps.55. 21; 57. 4; 64. 3-5;109.2,3.Pr.12.18.

o Ps.10.11,13; 73. 11; 94.4,7.

p Ps.2.4;37.13. Pr. 1. 26. Is.1.24. Am.5.9.

q 2Ch.20.12.Ps.62.1, 5.

7 *His strength.* 'O my strength.'—*Boothroyd.*

8 Heb. *my high place*, ver.1,17.

r ver. 17. 2 Co. 1. 3. Ex. 34. 6, 7. 1 Pe. 5. 10. Ps.21.3.Is.65.24.

s Ps.54. 7; 92. 11; 58. 10;ver.11-15.

9 Heb.*mine observers*, Ps.56.2.

t Ge.4.12,15. Re.9.6. ver. 13. Le.26. 39. Nu. 14.33.Ec.9.5.

u Is.41. 16. Ps. 53. 5; 52.5;55.23. Mat.22.7.

v Pr.12,13; 18. 7. Ps. 64.7,8;71.13; 109.17,18; 120.3,4;140.9,10;79.12.

x ver.11. Nu.14.33.

1 That they may not be a nation with unjust judges 'weighing' our violence, and with cruel officials putting it in execution against the innocent.—*C.*

y Is.26. 9, 11. Ps. 46. 10.11;58.11;83.18. Eze. 38.23;39.7.

2 See note on Ps. 3. 2.—*C.*

z ver.6,15; Ps.109.10 -12. Job 15. 23; 30. 3-8. Is.8.21.

3 Heb. *to eat*, Is.65. 13.

4 Or, *if they be not satisfied, then they will stay all night.*

a Ps.7.17;9.1,2; 13.6; 18.49;21.13; 22.22; 30.5; 35.28;41.13;52.9;54.6,7; 56. 12, 13, with ver. 9, 10.

b Ps.61.3;91.1,4,9;46. 1,7,11. Is.25.4; 32.2; 26. 20. He.5.7.

c Ps.18.1.

PSALM LX.

B.C. cir. 1037.

a Ps.80. title.

1 Or, *A golden* psalm.

2 The Syrians beyond the river Euphrates, and the Syrians of Zobah,* 2 Sa.8.3–14; 10. 16. 1 Ch. 18.3–13.

b Ps.44.9;80.12.

3 Heb. *broken.*

c La.3.31,32.Zec.10. 6. Ps.80.1–3,7,14,19;79. 8–11; 74.3,19,21; 44. 23–26.

A.M. cir. 2967.
B.C. cir. 1037.

d 1 Sa.14.15. Hag.2. 7. 2 Ch. 7. 14. Is. 30. 30. Je.30.17.

e Ps. 71. 20; 75. 8. Is. 51.17,22. Je.25.15. De. 26.28. Ro.11.7,8.

4 The legitimate use of wine is for revival of him who, through faintness and deep sorrow is ready to perish: Pr.31.6, but no cordial is administered to the weary Jew, but what produces *astonishment* or rather *confusion* of vision and of spirit.—*C.*

g Ca.2.4.Ps.20.5. Is. 11.10,12; 49. 22; 89. 20–29. Ro.15.8.

5 See note on Ps. 3. 2.—*C.*

h Ps.108.6,13;20.6. 2 Co.1.10. Is.63.1–5.

i Ps.89. 35. Je. 23. 9. Am.4.2.

j 2 Sa. 5. 1–3. 1 Ch. xii. with 2 Sa.2.8,9.

k 1 Sa. 28. 2. De. 33. 17.

l Ge.49.8–10.Ps.122. 5.

n 2 Sa.8. 2. 1 Ch. 18. 13.

o Ru.4.7. 2 Sa. 8. 14. 1Ch.18.13.

6 Or, *triumph thou over me* (by an irony), Ps.108.9. 2 Sa. 5.18–25; 8.1;21.15–22. Is.14.29.

7 The meaning is in plain terms:—Moab is already subdued. I can do with it what I please. Edom is not yet conquered; but I shall soon march against it and bring it under my power. Philistia, too, my ancient foe, will in due time submit to me. Its triumphant shout, so often raised on the discomfiture of my forefathers, shall now be heard *for* me (in my favour) when I appear among them a victor.—*P.*

8 Heb. *city of strength.*

p Ps.44.9; 108.11. Is. 12.1;49.14.

q Ps.25.22; 146.3. Is. 31.3.

9 Heb. *salvation.*

r Nu.24.18. 1 Ch.19. 13. Ps.27.1–3; 118.6–14; 18. 30–45. Is. 17, 13; 41. 14-16,26;63.3. Mal.4.1–3.

PSALM LXI.

B.C. cir. 1021 or 1058.

a Ps.4. title.

b Ps.4.1;5. 1, 2; 64.1; 80.1;130.2. Phi.4.6,19.

c Ps.42.6. 1 Ti.2.8.

1 *End of the earth.* —From the 'sorrows of death,' the *end* of all that dwell on the earth, Ps.116.3,4,8.

d La.3.65. Ps. iii.–v. xlii.xliii.; 54. 1;iv. cii. cxliii.

e Pr.18.10. Ps. 28.46; 91.1–16;92.15; 46. 1, 11; ver. 3.

g 2Co.1.10.Is.46.3,4. Pr.18.10.

h Ps.27.4; 42. 2,8,11; 91.2,4;57. 1;63.7.

2 Or, *make my refuge.*

3 The wings of the cherubim overshadowing the mercy-seat, Ex.37.9. He.9.5. —*C.*

4 See note on Ps. 3. 2.—*C.*

i Ps. 21. 4; 66. 13, 14; 56.12;116.14;6.9.

j Ps.16.5–7. 1 Co.3.22.

5 Heb. *Thou shalt add days to the days of the king*, Ps. 71. 9, 18;21.5–7.

6 Heb. *as generation and generation*

k Ps.56.13;68.3;27.4; 41.12. Lu.1.32.

l Ge. 24. 27; 32. 10. Mi.7.20. Ps.40.11;43.3; 57. 3. Pr.20.28.

2 Thou[d] hast made the earth to tremble; thou hast broken it: heal the breaches thereof; for it shaketh.

3 Thou[e] hast showed thy people hard things; thou hast made us to drink the wine of astonishment.[4]

4 Thou[g] hast given a banner to them that fear thee, that it may be displayed because of the truth. Selah.[5]

5 That[h] thy beloved may be delivered, save *with* thy right hand, and hear me.

6 God[i] hath spoken in his holiness; I will rejoice: I [j]will divide Shechem, and mete out the valley of Succoth.

7 Gilead *is* mine, and Manasseh *is* mine; Ephraim also *is* the [k]strength of mine head; Judah *is* my [l]lawgiver;

8 Moab *is* my [n]washpot; over [o]Edom will I cast out my shoe: Philistia, triumph thou because of [6]me.[7]

9 Who will bring me *into* the strong [8]city? who will lead me into Edom?

10 *Wilt* not thou, O God, *which* [p]hadst cast us off? and *thou*, O God, *which* didst not go out with our armies?

11 Give[q] us help from trouble: for vain *is* the help[9] of man.

12 Through[r] God we shall do valiantly: for he *it is that* shall tread down our enemies.

PSALM LXI.

1 *David fleeth to God in prayer upon his former experience.* 4 *He voweth perpetual service unto him, because of past, and in prospect of future mercies.*

To the chief musician upon [a]Neginah, *A psalm* of David.

HEAR my[b] cry, O God; attend unto my prayer.

2 From[c] the end of the earth[1] will I cry unto thee, when [d]my heart is overwhelmed: lead me to [e]the Rock *that* is higher than I.

3 For[g] thou hast been a shelter for me, *and* a strong tower from the enemy.

4 I[h] will abide in thy tabernacle for ever; I will trust[2] in the covert of thy wings.[3] Selah.[4]

5 For thou, O God, [i]hast heard my vows: thou hast given *me* [j]the heritage of those that fear thy name.

6 Thou wilt prolong the king's life;[5] *and* his years as many generations.[6]

7 He shall abide [k]before God for ever: O prepare [l]mercy and truth, *which* may preserve him.

Ver. 10. *My desire.* Not the revengeful *desire* of personal gratification by their punishment; but the holy *desire* of seeing their wicked counsels frustrated, and their impious combination dissolved. See ver. 11. *C.*

Ver. 11. *Slay them not.* Had the Jews and heathens who combined and plotted against Christ, Ps. ii.: Ac. ii., been utterly cut off, as for their sins they deserved, a large portion of the Scriptures would now be nearly unintelligible—and some of their brightest evidences almost extinguished. They still abide, lest believers should 'forget' any record either of the 'goodness' or 'severity of God,' Ro. 11. 22. *C.*

Ver. 14. This prophecy is still literally fulfilled. The poor unbelieving Jew 'returns,' and stealthily, 'in the evening, goes round about the city,' and is called 'a dog,' in contempt, by the Gentiles who tread under foot the home of his fathers. In Zion, the Jew and the dog are alike despised and homeless. O Lord! O Lord! how long? Appear in thy Glory; and repair and build thy Zion! Ps. cii. *C.*

REFLECTIONS.—Firm faith of our spiritual interest in God encourages to bold supplications in a day of trouble. None can destroy if he defend us. Though none be innocent before God, they may be so before men, at least with respect to particular crimes. And such innocence, though it cannot protect us from evil men, may encourage our appeals to God for redress. It is common for sinners to think that God overlooks their wickedness; but the awful punishment thereof will make them know that he observed it. If we wait on God and depend on his mercy, we are sure of preservation in trials and even of prevention with favours. But how dreadful is their danger against whom the prayers of Christ and his people ascend! The tongue, defiled with slander, cursing, and falsehood, will bring to itself misery. The punishment which God inflicts on men, correspondent to their sins, will force them to know his existence and government: and the sufferings of Jesus Christ and his people shall at last issue in everlasting honours, triumphs in their God, and praises for his mercy and kindness.

PSALM LX. Ver. 1. *Scattered.* Though Israel and Judah were both led captive, they were never *scattered* among the nations (De. 28. 64) till after the crucifixion of our Lord. This psalm is therefore mainly a prophetic prayer prepared for the believing penitent Jews, when their heart shall turn to the Lord. *C.*

Ver. 5. Messiah, who is the 'truth,' ver. 4; Jn. 14. 6, here intercedes, because him 'the Father heareth always,' Jn. 11. 42, and prophesies the future allotment of the land to the children of

8 So[n] will I sing praise unto thy name for ever, that I may daily perform my vows.

PSALM LXII.

1 *David, professing his confidence in God, discourageth his enemies.* 5 *In the same confidence he encourageth the godly.* 9 *No trust is to be put in worldly things.* 11 *Power and mercy belong to God.*

To the chief musician, to [a]Jeduthun, A psalm of David.

TRULY[1] my[b] soul waiteth[2] upon God: [c]from him *cometh* my salvation.

2 He[d] only *is* my rock and my salvation; *he is* my defence;[3] I[e] shall not be greatly moved.

3 How[g] long will ye imagine mischief against a man? ye shall be slain all of you: [h]as a bowing wall *shall ye be, and as* a tottering fence.

4 They[i] only consult to cast *him* down from his excellency: they delight in lies: they bless with their mouth, but they curse inwardly.[4] Selah.[5]

5 My soul, [j]wait thou only upon God; for my expectation *is* from him.

6 He [k]only *is* my rock and my salvation; *he is* my defence: I shall not be moved.

7 In God *is* my salvation and my [l]glory: the rock of my strength, *and* my refuge, *is* in God.

8 Trust[m] in him at all times; ye people, [o]pour out your heart[6] before him: God *is* a refuge for us. Selah.

A.M. cir. 2983 or 2946. B.C. cir. 1021 or 1058.

n Ps. 59.16,17; 56.12; 66.12–15; 116.14-19; 119. 106.

PSALM LXII.

B.C. cir. 1058 or 1021.

a 1 Ch. 25. 1, 3. Ps. xxxix.1,65.1.
1 Or, *only*.
b Ps.33.20;37. 7; 130. 5,6. Is.8.17;30.18;40.31.
2 Heb. *is silent*.
c Je.3. 23. Ps. 37. 39; 121.2.
d ver.6,8; Ps. 73. 25, 26;46.1,7; 142. 4, 5; 9. 9; 59.9,17. Na.1.6.
3 Heb. *high places*.
e Ps.37.24. Mi. 7.8. 2 Co.4.8,9.1 Co.10.13.
g Ps.4.2;38.12;55.12. 1 Sa.24.14;26.20.
h Is.30.13. Ps.73.18–20;64.7.1 Th.5.3.
i Ps.2.1–3; 4. 2; 28. 3; 55.21;5.9.
4 Heb. *in their inward parts*.
5 See note on Ps. 3.2.—*C*.
j Job 35.14. Ps.27.13, 14. Mi.7.7,10. Zep. 3.8. La.3.25,26. Is.49.23.
k Ps.18.31,32;33.20;91. 1,2. Je.3.23. Ho.1.7. Is. 45.17,22.
l Je.9.23,24. Ps. 3. 3. Is.45.25;60.19. 1 Co. 1. 31.
m Is.26.4;28.16. Ps.2. 12;13.5;22.4,5.
o La.2. 19. Ps. 42. 4; 102. title. 1 Sa. 1. 15. Phi.4.6,19. Mat.7.7,11.
6 *Pour out* the sins, weaknesses, sorrows, perplexities, wishes, desires, gratitude, joys and purposes—all the contents of your *hearts*—either in confession, petition, or thanksgiving. —*C*.

A.M. cir. 2946 or 2983. B.C. cir. 1058 or 1021.

p Is. 40. 15–17; 2. 22. Ps. 39.5,11;8.4. Je.17.5, 6.
7 *Vanity*—an exhalation, a vapour, smoke—dark, incohesive, and easily driven before every wind.—*C*.
8 Or, *alike*.
q Je.17.11. Job 20. 19 –28. Ps. 52.7.
r Job xviii. xx. xxvii.; 31. 25. Lu. 12. 15–20. 1 Ti.6.9,10,17.
s Job 33.14.
9 Or, *strength*, Re. 19.1. Is.26.4. Ps. 145. 5. Ge.17. 1;18.14.
t Ex. 34.6,7. Da. 9.9, 18. Ps.103.17.
u Job 34. 11. Pr. 24. 12. Je.32. 19;17. 10. Eze. 7.27. Mat.16.27. Ro. 2. 6. 2 Co. 5. 10. Ep. 6. 8. Col. 3.25. 1 Pe.1.17. Re. 22.12.

PSALM LXIII.

B.C. cir. 1058 or 1021.

a 1 Sa. 22. 5; 23. 14–16;26.1,2.
b Ps.18.1–3;31.2; 31. 14;142.4,5; 118.28;42.5, 11.
c Job 8.5. Ps.5.3; 78. 34. Pr.8.17;1.28. Ca.3.1 –3.
d Ps.42.1,2;143.6;84. 2,11;101.2;119.81.
1 Heb. *weary land without water*, Is.41. 17.
2 Heb. Like a dry, thirsty, waterless land.—*Boothroyd*.
e Ps.27.4;42.2; 68.24; 78.61. Is.60.13. 1 Ch.16. 11.1 Sa.4.21.
g Ps.30.5;36.7–9. Ca. 1.4. Ro.5.21. Jn.3.2,16.
h Ps.104.33,34; 145.1 –5;146.1,2. Is.63.7.
i Ps.28.2;134.2. 1 Ki. 8.22,23.1 Ti.2.8.
j Ps. 36.8;65 4; 103.5; 104.34. Is.25.6. Jn.6.53–57.
3 Heb. *fatness*.

9 Surely [p]men of low degree *are* vanity,[7] *and* men of high degree *are* a lie: to be laid in the balance, they *are* altogether[8] *lighter* than vanity.

10 Trust[q] not in oppression, and become not vain in robbery: [r]if riches increase, set not your heart *upon them*.

11 God[s] hath spoken once; twice have I heard this, that power[9] *belongeth* unto God.

12 Also unto thee, O LORD, [t]*belongeth* mercy: for [u]thou renderest to every man according to his work.

PSALM LXIII.

1 *David's thirst after God.* 4 *His manner of blessing God.* 9 *His confidence of his enemies' destruction, and of his own rejoicing.*

A psalm of David, [a]when he was in the wilderness of Judah.

O GOD, thou[b] *art* my God; [c]early will I seek thee: my soul [d]thirsteth for thee, my flesh longeth for thee in a dry and [1]thirsty [2]land, where no water is;

2 To[e] see thy power and thy glory, so *as* I have seen thee in the sanctuary.

3 Because [g]thy loving-kindness *is* better than life, my lips shall praise thee.

4 Thus [h]will I bless thee while I live: I will [i]lift up my hands in thy name.

5 My soul shall be [j]satisfied as *with* [3]marrow

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the restoration, the emblem also of the spiritual endowment and temporal blessedness of the Gentile church. *C*.

Ver. 6. *Shechem* was the first place in Canaan where ground was purchased for the permanent erection of the altar El-elohe-Israel, Ge. 33. 19. It was also the place to which Joshua summoned the tribes, and where they ratified their covenant with God, Jos. 24. 1, 25. It was also a city of refuge, Jos. 20. 7. It literally signifies a *portion*. From which four particulars, the meaning of the promise may be fully gathered. *C*.

Ver. 8. *Washpot*, or basin; not a phrase of contempt, or sign of servility, but rather of tender friendship and hospitable entertainment, see Lu. 7. 44; Jn. 13. 14, 15.—*Cast my shoe*. This phrase some interpret of taking possession; others of servile subjugation: is it not rather a token of friendly visitation, and peaceful entering into all the dwellings of the land, according to the eastern custom of putting off the shoes at the entrance of a dwelling or chamber?—*Philistia!* land of hereditary enemies, triumph in my victory of love that has conquered thy enmity. *C*.

Ver. 11. *Vain is the help of man*. Hence we learn that the victory expected is not that which can be wrought by the power or wrath of man—and not a victory over the literal Moab, Edom, and Philistia, but a spiritual victory of truth and love over the enemies of Jesus, represented by those nations. *C*.

REFLECTIONS.—What terrible rejection of God, what fearful convulsions and miseries in nations and churches, are occasioned by sin! But the deeper our distresses are, the more is the power and grace of our God magnified in our deliverance. Not David raised to a throne, according to promise, but Jesus exalted to his Father's right hand, and manifested in the truth of the gospel, is our banner displayed,—our means of victory and deliverance: let us then look to him and be saved. If sin has made deadly breaches, the sovereign grace of God can repair them. If we turn to him in prayer we may expect his return in mercy to us. Having loved us freely his right hand can save us. Our deliverance may be delayed, but faith triumphs. While Jesus subdues his opposers in mercy, or destroys all opposition, let us gladly receive him, and every promised blessing of grace or glory will necessarily follow. It may often happen that our bitterest enemies become our friends. At his pleasure he can unite nations and churches. Whatever difficulties then stand in our way let faith overcome them. Though we seem cast off, let us cleave fast to the promise, and trust and wait for the salvation of God. The greater our danger, our cries and prayers ought to be the more earnest. Let us put no trust in human helps; but in God's name and strength encounter our spiritual enemies; and so shall our victory be sure.

PSALM LXI. Ver. 1. That this is a prophetic prayer of the Messiah cannot be doubted, when the description of his immortal person and reign, ver. 6, 7, are considered. Of no other can they be spoken—of him they are literally true, therefore to him they infallibly belong. *C*.

Ver. 2. This is the prayer of an exile, far from home, and far from God's sanctuary. If written by David, as is probable, it must have been during Absalom's rebellion. Even then, when in trouble and in imminent danger, his faith in God does not desert him. Sustained by it he rises above temporary calamities and predicts his triumphant return to his home, and concludes with the noble declaration, 'So will I sing praise unto thy name for ever; that I may daily perform my vows.' *P*.——*Higher than I*. He that was 'in the form of God,' and who 'counted it not robbery to be equal with God,' having taken 'the form of a servant, and humbled himself,' uses these words, sustained by 'the joy set before him,' Phi. 2. 6–11; He. 12. 2. *C*.

REFLECTIONS.—Often are the saints overwhelmed with their sense of sin, their troubles, temptations, and fears. But whatever we be, and in whatever condition, a throne of grace and a prayer-hearing God are at hand to apply to. Jesus, the establishing and protecting Rock, is near; and his Word and Spirit are ready to lead us to him. And every former experience of protection or deliverance ought to encourage our flight to his refuge. Our trusting to his promises, perfections, and providences, and our cordial worship of him here, will issue in our being for ever with him in his mansions of glory above.—God hears our prayers, regards our vows, and will provide for us everything good. We are heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ. Since King Jesus for ever lives, for ever sits enthroned amidst mercy and truth, we may confidently expect to live and reign with him in everlasting felicity and praise. Let then the vows which we have made be conscientiously performed; and let praising of God and paying of our vows be our daily employment.

PSALM LXII. Ver. 1. The speaker is one who boldly affirms, ver. 6, 'I shall not be moved.' He who can so speak cannot be David the son of Jesse, who was subject to so many vicissitudes; but his greater Son, who was never 'moved' from his purpose of grace, and cannot be 'moved' from his kingdom of glory. *C*.

Ver. 3. The second clause of this verse may be translated as follows:—'How long will ye assail (or attempt to slay)? all of you shall be as a bowing wall, a tottering fence:' that is, though you attempt my life, ye shall fail; you will fall to the ground helpless as a shattered wall. *P*.

Ver. 9. *A lie*—not necessarily *liars*, but a *lie*, appearing to enjoy happiness, and secure a stable perpetuity, yet subject to as many sorrows and vicissitudes as the men of 'low degree,' by whom they are so often envied. *C*.

Ver. 10. Neither the pursuit, nor the acquirement, nor the possession of riches, is evil: the evil lies in the 'love of money,' and the consequent expulsion of God from the heart, 1 Jn. 2. 15. *C*.

Ver. 12. The general idea is that rank, wealth, worldly power, though good and useful in themselves when fairly acquired and rightly used, can never secure peace, or free man from trouble and death. To God alone belongeth true power, and he alone can give an eternal reward. *P*.

REFLECTIONS.—Patient and submissive resignation of our souls to God is the certain mean of a happy issue of all our troubles. He is the alone author and finisher of all our salvation. In so doing corruptions and temptations can shake us, but not drive us, either fully or finally, from grace. While liars and traitors meet with destruction from God, they who trust in him may defy hell or death to hurt them. In him they are saved, secured, strengthened, and protected; and in him, not in themselves, do they glory. The more their faith in him is exercised the stronger it becomes. The more we trust in men, or in worldly enjoyments, the more disappointment and hurt we shall meet with. But the more we depend on, cry to, or consider God, we shall find the more pleasure, safety, and comfort. The mercy and power which we see in him shall be employed to furnish, protect, and reward us, and to cut off our enemies.

PSALM LXIII. Ver. 1. David was away from the sanctuary when this psalm was written. It expresses the earnest longing desire of his soul for communion with God once again in his courts. The imagery is graphic. The desert traveller can fully realize it. As one longs for water in the parched wilderness, where the heaven is as brass and the earth as iron, so the psalmist longs for God. *P*.——On comparing Ac. 4. 25, 26 with Ps. ii.; 61. 66; 63. 11, there can remain no doubt that the King who speaks in this psalm is the Son of God, with whose supplications in the days of his flesh the ancient church was thus prophetically edified. *C*.

Ver. 2. This exactly corresponds with the prayer of our Lord, Jn. 17. 5, 'And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self, with the glory that I had with thee before the world was.' *C*.

Ver. 11. *Every one that sweareth by him shall glory*. Every one that reverences his name, and acknowledges his omniscience and judgment. *C*.

REFLECTIONS.—What a dry and barren wilderness is this world, with nothing in it that can satisfy the longings of a soul! And the more we find of the emptiness of created enjoyments the more we should fly to the fulness of God, as our God and all-sufficient portion. They who have experienced fellowship with him, and discoveries of his glory in public ordinances, will feelingly regret the want of them, and ardently desire the re-enjoyment of them. But great is the mercy that God himself, the fountain of happiness, and his throne of grace, are everywhere accessible. And if our hearts be refreshed with the tokens of his favour they ought to be enlarged in his praise. Happy and delightful is it to meditate on his loving-kindness—and in his strength to follow him closely in the means of grace and paths of duty. It is his help and favour only that can tune our hearts to praise him while we enjoy his protection.—Dreadful is the destruction of the enemies of Jesus Christ and his people! But eternal shall be the honours and unspeakable the joys of him and his children, while all their malicious reproachers and

and fatness; [k]and my mouth shall praise *thee* with joyful lips;

6 When I [l]remember thee upon my bed, *and* meditate on thee in the *night*-watches.

7 Because[m] thou hast been my help, therefore in the shadow of thy wings[4] will I rejoice.

8 My soul [o]followeth hard after thee: [p]thy right hand upholdeth me.

9 But[q] those *that* seek my soul, to destroy *it*, shall go into the lower parts of the earth.

10 They shall [r]fall by the sword:[5] they shall be a [s]portion for foxes.[6]

11 But the [t]king shall rejoice in God; every one that [u]sweareth by him shall glory: [v]but the mouth of them that speak lies shall be stopped.

PSALM LXIV.

1 David prayeth for deliverance, complaining of his enemies. 7 He promiseth himself to see such an evident destruction of his enemies, that the righteous shall rejoice at it.

To the chief musician, A psalm of David.

HEAR my[a] voice, O God, in my prayer: preserve[b] my life from fear of the enemy.

2 Hide[c] me from the [d]secret counsel of the wicked; from the insurrection of the workers of iniquity:

3 Who[e] whet their tongue like a sword, *and* bend *their bows to shoot* their arrows, *even* bitter words;

4 That they may shoot [g]in secret at the perfect: [h]suddenly do they shoot at him, and fear not.

5 They[i] encourage themselves *in* an evil matter:[1] they commune of laying snares [2]privily;[3] they[j] say, Who shall see them?

6 They [k]search out iniquities; [4]they accomplish a diligent search:[5] both the inward *thought* of every one *of them*, and the heart, *is* [l]deep.

7 But[n] God shall shoot at them *with* an arrow: suddenly shall they be wounded.[6]

8 So they [o]shall make their own tongue to fall upon themselves:[7] all[p] that see them shall flee away.[8]

9 And [q]all men shall fear, and shall declare the work of God: for they shall [r]wisely consider of his doing.

A.M. cir. 2946 or 2983. B.C. cir. 1058 or 1021.

k Ps. 103.1–6; 118.28; 71.8; 74.21; 149.1–6.
l Ca. 5.2. Ps. 42.8; 119.55; 149.5; 139.17, 18.
m Ps. 54.4; 13.5; 61.3, 4. 1 Sa. 17. 37. Is. 41.10; 46.3, 4. 2 Co. 1.10.
n See note on Ps. 61.4.—*C.*
o Is. 26.8, 9. Ca. 3.1–4; 2.6. Ps. 94.18, 19.
p Ps. 18.35.
q Ps. 2.1009.15–17; 21.8–12; 28.4; 35.4, 26; 52.5; 55.15; 2319.47.
r 1 Sa. xxxi. 2 Sa. v. viii. x. xviii. xx. Je. 18. 21.
s Heb. *They shall make him run out* like water *by the hands of the sword.*
t Ca. 2. 15. La. 5. 18. Job 40.13.
[6] The jackals search by night for dead bodies, which they tear up from defenceless graves, and greedily devour even in the most putrid condition.—*C.*
t Ps. 49.15. 1 Sa. 16.13; 23.17.
u De. 6.13. Is. 19.18; 45.23; 65.16. He. 6.13.
v Ps. 31.18; 140.9, 11. Re. 21.8; 22.15.

PSALM LXIV.

B.C. cir. 1059.

a Ps. 27.7; 102.1; 130.2; 140.6; 141.1; 142.1; 143.1, 6, 7.
b Ps. 16.1; 17.8; 34.4; 31.9–13.
c Ps. 27.5; 31.20; 143.9; 91.1–10; 46.1.
d Ge. 49.6. Ps. 56.6; 109.21; 140.2; 59.3.
e Ps. 57.4; 58.7. Pr. 30.14. Je. 9.3.
f Ps. 10.8, 9. Hab. 3.14.
g Ps. 56.1. Pr. 4.16.
h Pr. 1.10–14. Da. 6.4–7.
[1] Or, *speech.*
[2] Heb. *to hide snares.*
[3] How distinctly was this verified when the Pharisees sought to entangle our Lord in his talk, Mat. 22.15–22.—*C.*
i Ps. 10.11; 59.7. Eze. 8.12.
k Da. 6.4, 5. Pr. 4.16, 17. Mi. 7.3. Is. 59.3–15. 1 Ki. 18.10.
[4] Or, *we are consumed by that which they have thoroughly searched.*
[5] Heb. *a search searched.*
l Ps. 5.9. Je. 17.9.
m Ps. 7.12, 13; 38.2–8; 73.18–20; 91.5, 6. Job 6.4. De. 32.23. La. 3.12, 13. 1 Th. 5.3.
[6] Heb. *their wound shall be.*
n Pr. 12.13. Ps. 140.9; 7.15, 16; 9.15, 16.
[7] This was verified when the Jews prayed, 'His blood be upon us and upon our children,' Mat. 27.25; comp. Mat. 23.35.—*C.*
p Re. 18.4, 10. Nu. 16.34. Na. 3.7. Is. 13.14.
[8] Avoid them as disgraceful, or as persons smitten with an infectious disease.—*C.*
q Ps. 52.6; 119.120; 58.11. Re. 11.13. Je. 50.28.
r Ps. 111.2. De. 32.29, with Is. 5.12.

A.M. cir. 2945. B.C. cir. 1059.

s Ps. 58.10; 32.11; 33.1. Phi. 4.4. 1 Th. 5.16. 1 Co. 1.31.

PSALM LXV.

B.C. cir. 1027.

1 Heb. *is silent*, Ps. 62.1; 84.4.
a Ps. 76.2; 78.68, 69.
b Ps. 56.12; 76.11; 66.13, 14; 119.106.
c Is. 45.11. Da. 9.23.
d Ps. 66.1, 4; 22.27. Jn. 12.32. Is. 56.7. Zec. 8.21–23.
e Ps. 38.4; 40.12; 25.11. Ro. 7.24, 25; 5.20, 21. Mi. 7.18, 19. He. 1.3; 9.14. 1 Jn. 1.7, 9.
2 Heb. *Words*, or *matters of iniquities.*
g Ps. 33.12; 4.3; 84.4; 15.1; 23.6.
h Ps. 63.5; 36.8; 16.11; 17.15. Je. 31.12–14, 25. Ep. 3.18, 19.
3 The tabernacle was so called before the temple was built.—*C.*
i Ps. 45.4; 47.2; 66.3–7; 106.21, 22. De. 10.17, 21. Is. 37.35, 36, 38.
j Ps. 68.19, 20; 62.5, 8.
k Ps. 104.27. Is. 45.22, 24, 25. Ac. 17.28. He. 1.3.
l Ps. 119.90; 24.2.
n Ps. 93.1; 147.5. Ge. 18.14.
o Ps. 89.9; 107.29; 46.2, 3. Mat. 8.26.
p Ps. 2.1–5; 76.10; 124.1–5. Is. 17. 12, 13. Eze. 38.4. 2 Sa. xviii. xx.
q Job 37.5. Hab. 3.3–11. Ps. 48.5, 6; 126.2, 3.
r Job 38.12. Ps. 19.5; 104.20–23.
4 Or, *to sing.*
5 Or, *after thou hadst made it to desire* rain.
s Ps. 68.9; 104.13, 14; 46.4. Je. 5.24. De. 11.10, 11, 14. Job 37.6.
6 The river of God' is a metaphor for 'the great river,' a river rich, and full, and perennial, like the Nile. It may also mean a copious rain. In the East the whole soil is parched and barren during the long summer, except where artificially irrigated.—*P.*
7 Or, *thou causest* rain *to descend* into *the furrow thereof.*
8 Heb. *thou dissolvest it.*
t 1 Co. 3.6, 7. Ps. 147.8.
9 Heb. *the year of thy goodness.*
1 Clouds, Ps. 104.3. Na. 1.3. Hab. 3.15.
2 *Thy paths.* 'Thy chariot wheels.'—*Horsley.*——Rather thine orbits,—the planetary courses, whereby the circling seasons of the year are produced and perpetuated.—*C.*
u Job 38.26, 27. Ps. 147.8.
o 'Joy girds the hills'—'The hills gird themselves with joy'—a beautiful allusion to the splendid girdles that constitute so important an article of eastern dress.—*C.*
4 Heb. *are girded with joy*, Is. 35.1.

10 The [s]righteous shall be glad in the LORD, and shall trust in him: and all the upright in heart shall glory.

PSALM LXV.

1 David praiseth God. 4 The blessedness of God's chosen, because of his infinite power and goodness.

To the chief musician, A psalm *and* song of David.

PRAISE waiteth[1] for thee, O God, [a]in Zion: and unto thee [b]shall the vow be performed.

2 O thou [c]that hearest prayer, unto thee shall [d]all flesh come.

3 [e]Iniquities[2] prevail against me: *as for* our transgressions, thou shalt purge them away.

4 Blessed[g] *is the man whom* thou choosest, and causest to approach *unto thee, that* he may dwell in thy courts: we shall be [h]satisfied with the goodness of thy house, *even* of thy holy temple.[3]

5 *By*[i] terrible things in righteousness wilt thou answer us, O [j]God of our salvation; *who art* the [k]confidence of all the ends of the earth, and of them that are afar off *upon* the sea:

6 Which by his strength [l]setteth fast the mountains; *being* [n]girded with power:

7 Which [o]stilleth the noise of the seas, the noise of their waves, and the [p]tumult of the people.

8 They also that dwell in the uttermost parts are afraid at [q]thy tokens: [r]thou makest the outgoings of the morning and evening to rejoice.[4]

9 Thou visitest the earth, and waterest [5]it; [s]thou greatly enrichest it with the river of [6]God, *which* is full of water; thou preparest them corn, when thou hast so provided for it.

10 Thou waterest the ridges thereof abundantly; thou settlest the furrows thereof;[7] thou makest it soft[8] with showers; thou [t]blessest the springing thereof:

11 Thou crownest the year with thy goodness;[9] and thy [1]paths[2] drop fatness.

12 They[u] drop *upon* the pastures of the wilderness; and the little hills[3] rejoice on every side.[4]

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discouragers shall be filled with astonishment, and struck into endless silence and confusion.

PSALM LXIV. Ver. 1. The exact similarity of this psalm to Ps. lxiii. is sufficient *external* evidence that it is a prophetic prayer of Messiah; but there is an *internal* evidence that renders other proof unnecessary. The speaker (ver. 4) describes himself as *the perfect*, a description utterly inapplicable to any sinful man, and true only of the Christ. *C.*

REFLECTIONS.—A believer's troubles and enemies often fill his heart with fear, and drive him to his prayers. And in every age and place the bitterest words of reproach and infamy are liberally shot forth against the most faithful saints. Being perfect in Jesus' blessed sacrifice, and having the truth of grace in their hearts, they are hated by the world, who cannot bear their holy and heavenly conversation. Daring in wickedness, their enemies often neither fear God nor regard man, but encourage one another in sin; nor do they stick at anything to accomplish their malicious designs. With what care they pry into the faults of the godly, suborn false witnesses, wrest their words, and eke out their defamations with impudent falsehoods! but God will at last adjudge the injuries done to his people. And when he strikes home there is no escaping. Then the reproaches of the wicked, and their horrid imprecations, shall draw down judgment on their own heads. And it is our wisdom to profit by the judgments of others. Too often warnings are lost through inconsideration. Even persecutors ought to learn and tremble while the door of mercy is yet open. And saints should rejoice in God's manifestation of his power and justice, and in their own deliverance; and trust in him, and make him their glory.

PSALM LXV. Ver. 1. *Praise waiteth for thee, O God, in Zion.* 'Praise is silent for thee, O Lord;' silent, as if the heart of the church was too full of gratitude to find utterance; or, as an eastern servant, waiting in silence for a word or sign. *C.*

Ver. 3. 'Our iniquities have prevailed over us: but our trespasses thou hast covered.'—*Boothroyd.* An exact description of justification by grace. See Ro. 4. 6–8. *C.*

Ver. 4. *Blessed is the man*, &c. The church here describes Messiah, upon whom all gifts originally descend, Ps. 68. 18: Ep. 4. 8, and from whom they come down in rich and plenteous effusion of the Spirit showing the things of Christ. *C.*

Ver. 5. *By terrible things.* The answer to all the prayers of faith is concentred in the Father's sending his Son; and most terrible of all the works of God was the deliverance of that Son to the death for the church that he loved, Ep. 5. 25–27. And when the church prays 'Thy kingdom come,' terrible are the judgments that will respond in the coming destruction of Satan's kingdom. *C.*

Ver. 8. There is no people, even in the uttermost parts of the earth, so barbarous as to deny the being and power of God. God's *tokens* in the heavens, in the seasons, in thunder, in earthquakes, and storms, produce in the ignorant a superstitious terror, and in the most instructed and pious humble and reverential awe. *C.*

REFLECTIONS.—Patient expectations for God shall be succeeded with joyful praises of him in his church and ordinances. And candid vows must be followed with conscientious fulfilment. God's readiness to hear prayer should encourage every one earnestly and hopefully to address him in every case: and sense of loading guilt or prevalent lusts ought not to make us despair, but to implore, believe, and admire the pardoning and sanctifying mercy of God. Fellowship with God is our greatest happiness. And it is not our merit, but his gracious love and blessed grace, that brings us to it. Nor must it be by transient starts, but by a fixed attendance on the ordinances of his grace, as nothing but the fulness of God in Christ can satisfy our hungry souls. And however terrible the answer must be, God never disappoints the prayers or hopes of his people. Wherever they may be in the world, they have equal access to him as their trust and salvation. Everywhere in the works of nature we may discern the power, wisdom, goodness, and greatness of God. And everything we receive from mountains, from seas, from lumi-

13 The[r] pastures are clothed with flocks; the valleys also are covered over with corn; they shout for joy, they also sing.[5]

PSALM LXVI.

1 David exhorteth to praise God, 5 to observe the great works, & to bless him for his gracious benefits. 13 He vowetb for himself religious service to God. 16 He declareth God's special goodness to himself.

To the chief musician, A song or psalm.

MAKE a joyful noise unto God, [1]all ye lands:[2]

2 Sing[a] forth the honour of his name; make his praise glorious.

3 Say [b]unto God, How terrible *art thou in* thy works! [c]through the greatness of thy power[3] shall thine enemies [4]submit themselves[5] unto thee.

4 All[d] the earth shall worship thee, and shall sing unto thee; they shall sing *to* thy name. Selah.[6]

5 Come[e] and see the works of God: *he is* terrible *in his* doing toward the children of men.

6 He[g] turned the sea into dry *land:* they went through the flood on foot: there did we rejoice in him.

7 He[h] ruleth by his power for ever; [i]his eyes behold the nations: [j]let not the rebellious exalt themselves. Selah.

8 O[k] bless our God, ye people, and make the voice of his praise to be heard;

9 Which holdeth[7] our soul in life, and suffereth not our feet to be moved.

10 For[8] thou, O God, [l]hast proved us: thou hast tried us, as silver is tried.

11 Thou [m]broughtest us into the net;[9] thou laidest affliction upon our loins.

12 Thou hast caused men [n]to ride over our heads: we went [p]through fire and through water; but thou broughtest us out into a wealthy[1] *place.*

13 I[q] will go into thy house with burnt-offerings: I will pay thee my vows,

14 Which my lips have uttered,[2] and my mouth hath spoken, [r]when I was in trouble.

15 I will offer unto thee burnt-sacrifices of fatlings,[3] with the incense of rams; I will offer bullocks with goats. Selah.[4]

16 Come[s] *and* hear, all ye that fear God, and I will declare what he hath done for my soul.

17 I[t] cried unto him with my mouth, and he [u]was extolled with my tongue.

18 If I [v]regard iniquity in my heart, the LORD will [z]not hear *me:*[5]

19 *But* [a]verily God hath heard *me;* he hath attended to the voice of my prayer.

20 Blessed[b] *be* God, which hath not turned away my prayer, nor his mercy from me.

PSALM LXVII.

1 A prayer for the enlargement of God's kingdom, 3 to the joy of the people. 6 and to the increase of God's blessings.

To the chief musician on [z]Neginoth, A psalm *or* song.

GOD be[b] merciful unto us, and bless us; *and* cause his face [c]to shine upon[1] us. [2]Selah.

2 That[d] thy way[3] may be known upon earth, thy saving health among all nations.

3 Let[e] the people praise thee, O God; let all the people praise thee.

4 O let the nations be glad, and sing for joy; [f]for thou shalt judge the people righteously, and govern[4] the nations upon earth. Selah.

5 Let[h] the people praise thee, O God; let all the people praise thee.

6 *Then*[i] shall the earth yield her increase; *and* God, *even* [k]our own God, shall [l]bless us.

7 God shall bless us; and all the ends of the earth shall [m]fear him.

PSALM LXVIII.

1 A prayer at the removing of the ark. 4 An exhortation to praise God for his mercies, 7 for his care of the church, 19 and for his great works.

To the chief musician, A psalm *or* song of David.

LET God[a] arise, let his enemies be scattered: let them also that hate him flee before [1]him.

2 As[b] smoke is driven away, *so* drive *them* away: [c]as wax melteth before the fire, *so* let the wicked perish[2] at the presence of God.

3 But [d]let the righteous be glad; let them rejoice before God: yea, let them exceedingly rejoice.[3]

4 Sing[e] unto God, sing praises to his name: extol him that [z]rideth upon the heavens[4] by his name JAH,[5] and rejoice before him.

5 A [h]father of the fatherless, and a judge of the widows, *is* God in [i]his holy habitation.

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naries, from rains, from pastures, from fields, ought, with thankful admiration and praise, to be received as his gift. But in these let me discern, as in a figure, how he establishes his church, his ordinances, and his people. He limits, restrains, and directs their raging troubles. He enlightens by the word of his grace and the influences of his Spirit. And while Jesus, the Sun of Righteousness, rises with healing under his wings, his showers of gospel declarations and spiritual influences drop down abundantly, for the nourishment, satisfaction, and joy of the human race.

PSALM LXVI. Ver. 12. *Thou hast caused men.* &c. The Egyptian horsemen, with a representative respect unto them, continue to this day to pay little regard to the safety of the meaner classes, and would, without compunction or remorse, literally 'ride over their heads.' The expression here may probably refer to some elevated position, in which the Egyptian horse appeared when pursuing Moses and the Israelites to the Red Sea. See ver. 6. *C.*

Ver. 13. The speaker here, and to the end, is *one*—one who pays all his vows, and keeps all his resolutions—one so thoroughly *wise*, that he knows his own heart; and so thoroughly *pure*, that God declares all iniquity—even when prayer subsequently, God does not hear—away, ver. 20. Are not these marks of a character that can be perfect one in Christ, entering as High-priest into the holy place? *C.*

Ver. 15. *Rams.* These were the offerings of Aaron, the type of our Lord, at the time of his consecration. Le. 8. 22. 29. 2. *Bullocks.* One bullock was Aaron's own offering for sin. Le. 8. 2. 14. The *goats* were the sin-offerings of the people. Le. 9. 3. 15. all types of that one sacrifice, whereby Christ hath 'perfected for ever them that are sanctified.' He. 10. 12. 14. *C.*

REFLECTIONS.—With cordiality and joy ought all men to celebrate the praises of that God who is so great and so good to all. And as our fathers' sins should awaken our sorrows, their mercies should inflame our praises. But quickly shall antichristians, and other enemies of our all-governing Lord Jesus be made to bow or be destroyed before him! All the trials of churches or saints, their support and protection in them, and the happy issue of them, ought, and shall be, matter of cordial and lasting praise: and to make vows in an evangelical manner when under trouble is truly commendable; but much care must always be taken for the speedy and exact performance of them. To testify our gratitude to God, and to encourage others in his way, we ought prudently to communicate our most recent experiences of his goodness and grace. No duty performed amidst indulged wickedness can be acceptable to God. But such as in faith pour out their hearts unto God without any allowed guile, may now begin their praises and thanksgiving, in the confidence that their requests are accepted, and shall in due time be answered.

PSALM LXVII. Ver. 1. The choir of believers, that, in the last portion of the foregoing psalm, have been silently listening to their Lord, here resume their part in the worship of Jehovah, the light of whose glory they desire to behold in the face of Jesus Christ. 2 Cor. 4. 6. *C.*

Ver. 2. *Thy saving health among all nations.* Literally, 'thy salvation among all nations.' It is a prayer for the universal diffusion of the knowledge of God, and especially the knowledge of the way in which he saves sinners. *P.*

Ver. 4. This psalm is evidently a prophetic preparation for that

6 God [j]setteth the solitary in [6]families: [k]he bringeth out those which are bound with chains:[7] but [l]the rebellious dwell in a dry *land*.

7 O God, when thou [m]wentest forth before thy people, when thou didst march through the wilderness; Selah:[8]

8 The[o] earth shook, the heavens also dropped[9] at the presence of God: *even* Sinai itself *was moved* at the presence of God, the God of Israel.

9 Thou, O God, [p]didst send[1] a plentiful rain,[2] whereby thou didst [3]confirm[4] thine inheritance when it was weary.[5]

10 Thy[q] congregation hath dwelt therein: thou, O God, [r]hast prepared of thy goodness for the poor.

11 The LORD gave the word: [s]great *was* the company[6] of those that published *it*.

12 Kings of armies did flee apace;[7] and she that tarried at home[8] divided the spoil.

13 Though ye have [t]lien among the pots, *yet shall ye be as* [u]the wings of a dove covered with silver, and her feathers with yellow gold.

14 When[v] the Almighty scattered kings in it,[9] it [x]was[1] *white* as snow[2] in Salmon.

15 The[y] hill of God[3] *is as* the hill of Bashan; an high hill, *as* [z]the hill of Bashan.

16 Why leap ye, ye high hills? [a]*this is* the hill *which* God desireth to dwell in; yea, the LORD will dwell *in it* for ever.

17 The[b] chariots of God *are* twenty thousand, *even* thousands[4] of angels: the LORD *is* among them, *as* in Sinai, [c]in the holy *place*.

18 Thou[d] hast ascended on high, thou hast led captivity captive: thou [e]hast received gifts for men;[5] yea, *for* [g]the rebellious also, that the LORD God might dwell *among them*.

19 Blessed[h] *be* the LORD, *who* daily loadeth us *with benefits*, *even* the [i]God of our salvation.[6] Selah.[7]

20 *He that is* our God *is* the God of salvation; and unto God the Lord *belong* [j]the issues[8] from death.

21 But[k] God shall wound the head of his enemies, *and* the hairy scalp of such an one as goeth on still in his trespasses.

22 The [l]LORD said, I will bring again from Bashan, I will bring *my people* again from the depths of the sea;

23 That[n] thy foot may be dipped[9] in the blood of *thine* enemies, *and* the tongue of thy dogs in the same.

k 1 Co.6.9–11. Pr.1.22. Is.46.12,13;65.2;55.7. Mat.9.13;18.11. 1 Ti.1.13,15. Tit.3.3. Re.21.3. *h* Ps. 72.17–19;103.1–18;cv.cvii. Ep.1.3. La.3.23. Is.63.9. *i* Ps.18.50. Ho.1.7. Is.45.17,22. *j* 2 Co.1.10. Re.1.18. De.32.39. He.2.15. *k* Ps.110.6. Hab.3.13. Le.26.18,21, &c. *l* Is.56.8;11.11,12;27.12,13, with Nu.21.33. Ex.14.22. *m* Is.63.1–6. Ps.58.10. Re.19.17. 1 Ki.21.19. *n* Or, *red*.

A.M. cir. 2959.
B.C. cir. 1045.

j 1 Sa. 2. 5. Ps.113.9; 107.41.
6 Heb. *in a house.*
k Ps. 107. 10; 146. 7. Ac.12.4,7.
7 These two facts were remarkably exemplified in Joseph; and none but those who have been 'solitary' and friendless, can feel the entire import of such providential goodness.—*C.*
l Ps.107.34,40. Mal. 1.3.
m Ju.4.14. Ex.13.21. Hab.3.3,13. Ps.114.7.
8 See note on Ps. 3. 2.—*C.*
o Ex.19.16,18. Ju.5. 4. Is.64.3. Ps.77.18;114. 4–7.
9 *The heavens dropped*, that is, the clouds of heaven send down raindrops.—*C.*
p Ps. 78. 24. 27; 65. 9, 10. De.11.10–14. Eze. 34.26.
1 Heb. *shake out.*
2 Though *rain* be often employed as an emblem of spiritual blessings from heaven, there is no reason for concluding that it was not here a literal though miraculous descent.—*C.*
3 Heb. *confirm it.*
4 *Confirm* — 'refresh.'—*Lowth.*
5 Perhaps reference may be made to the *manna*, which fell as rain. The latter part of the verse may be translated, 'By which thou didst strengthen thy people when they were fainting.'—*P.*
q Ps.74.1,2,19;135.4. Ex.19.5,6.
r Mat. 11. 5. De.26. 5,9,15;28.8–14.
s Ex.15.20,21. Ju.v.; 11. 34. 1 Sa.18.6.
6 Heb. *army.*
7 Heb. *did flee, did flee*, Ex. 14. 25; 17. 13. Nu.xxi. xxxi. Jos.vi.–xii.
8 'The families (of women and children, comp. Nu.31.18, 1 Sa. 30.18. ver.22) must share the spoil.'—*Boothroyd.*
t Ps.81.6;105.25;119. 83. Ex.1.14.
u Ps.74.19;105.37. Is. 60.8.
v Nu. xxi. Jos. vi.–xii. Ne.9.24.
9 *In it.* In what? in the *wilderness* (ver. 7), wherein the people of God dwelt, ver.10. —*C.*
x Ju. 2.7. Jos. xxii.–xxiv. Je.2.3.
1 Or, *for her, she was.*
2 *As snow*—when the manna lay 'white' as the 'hoar-frost' upon the face of the wilderness, Ex. 16.14, 31.—*C.*
y Ps.78.68,69;2.6;48. 2 Is.2.2.
3 Rather, 'the hill of God. Is it the hill of Bashan?'—*C.*
z Ge. 31. 21, 23, 25. De.3.8,9.
a 1 Ki.9.3. Ps.78.68, 69;2.6;87.1;132.13,14. Ep.2.20–22. He.12.22–24.
b 2 Ki.6.17. De.33.2. Da.7.10. He.12.22. Re. 5.11.
4 Or, even *many thousands.*
c Ex.3.3;19.20,23;24. 17.
d Ac.1.2–9. Ep.4.8. Ps.47.5; 110.1. He.1.3; 4.14;8.1.
e Ac.2.4,33. Col.1.19; 2.3. Jn.1.14,16.
5 Heb. *in the man.*
6 'Blessed by JEHOVAH, from day to day: when oppressed he is God our salvation.'—*Boothroyd.*
7 See note on Ps. 3. 2.—*C.*
8 Deliverances from its fear by justification; from its power, by the resurrection. —*C.*

A.M. cir. 2959.
B.C. cir. 1045.

o 2 Sa.6.17. Ps.132.5; 24.7,9; 45.3–5. 1 Ch.13. 6;16.1.
1 The marchings in the wilderness ver.7, when the Shechinah of the sanctuary led the people.—*C.*
p Ps.15.2,3. Ps. 47. 5–7. 1 Ch.13.8; 15.16. 2 Sa.6.15.
q 1 Ch. 16. 7–41. Ps. 107. 32; 135. 19–21; cxxxvi.
r De. 33.28. Is.48.1. Pr.5.16.
2 Or, *ye that are of the fountain of Israel.*
3 'The Lord of the stock of Israel.'—*Horsley.*
s 2 Sa.6.1,2. 1 Ch.13. 1,2;15.3.
t 1 Sa. 9. 21. Ju. xx. xxi.
4 Or, with *their company.*
u Is.40.31. Ps. 42. 8; 33.9;28.8;44.4.
v Ps.20.2;59. 16,17. 2 1 Ki. 10. 11, 24, 25. 2 Ch. 32.23. Ps.72.10,15. 60.10.
x 2 Sa. viii. x. 2 Ch. xiv. xx. Is. x. xiii, xiv. Je. xlvi.–li. Eze. xxv.–xxxii. xxxviii.–xxxix.
5 Or, *the beasts of the reeds*, Je.51.33,33.
6 *Spearmen*—rather 'beasts of the reeds,' men voracious and destructive as the crocodile.—*C.*
7 Or, *he scattereth.*
z Ps.72. 10,11; 87.4. Is. 19.18–25. Zep.3.10. Ac.8.27.
8 Historically verified in the conversion of the Ethiopian, Ac. 8.26.—*C.*
a Ps.44.20; 63.4. Je. 4.31. Job 11.13.
b ver.4. Ps.67.3,5;47. 1; 100,126.1–4; 117.1,2. De.32.43. Is. 24.14–16; 44.23.
9 See note on Ps. 3. 2.—*C.*
c Is. 18. 10; 104. 3. ver. 4
1 Heb. *grave.*
d Ps. 29. 3,4. Ro.1 16 Is.2 3;13.2.
e Ps.29.3;96.6–8. De. 32.4.
g De.33.26.
2 Or, *heavens.*
h Ex.15.11. Na.1.5. De.4.24. He.12.24. Ps. 45.4;65.5.
3 'Adorable.'—*Horsley.* 'Awful.'—*Boothr.*
i Ps. 28.7,8. Zec. 10. 12. Is. 40. 31; 45. 24. Phi. 4.13.

PSALM LXIX.
B.C. cir. 1021.
a Ps. xiv. lx. lxxx. titles.
b Ps.42.7. Jonah 2.5. Is.43.2. Mat.26.38. Ju. 12.27
c ver.14,15. Ps. 40.2; 18.4,5. Is.38.14,17.
1 Heb. *the mire of depth.*
2 Heb. *depth of waters.*
d Ps.6.6;13.1–3;22.2, 15; 77. 1–4; 119. 82, 123 Is. 54. 2–5. 2 Co 5. 21. Ga. 3. 13.
e Ps. 3.1;22.12; 31.13; 35.15. Jn.15 25;14. 30. 1 Pe.2.23;3 18. 2 Co 5.21.
3 Wrongfully accused of breaking the law, and taking away its honour, Christ by dying restored that honour, Is.42.21.—*C.*
g 2 Sa. 24. 10. Ps. 40. 12. Is.53.6,11. 2 Co.5.21.
4 Heb. *guiltiness.*
5 Those who deny the real pardon of sin by Christ, and again the real impartation of his righteousness to believers, have adopted a theory that refuses to apply these words to him. But let men theorize as they will, *our sins* were truly called *his*, because 'the Lord laid upon him the iniquities of us all,' and because 'he bore *our sins* in his *own body* on the tree.' See Ps.25.11; 32. 5; 40. 12; 69.1.—*C.*

24 They have seen [o]thy goings,[1] O God; *even* the goings of my God, my King, in the sanctuary.

25 The[p] singers went before, the players on instruments *followed* after; among *them were* the damsels playing with timbrels.

26 Bless[q] ye God in the congregations, *even* the LORD, from [r]the fountain of [2]Israel.[3]

27 There[s] *is*[t] little Benjamin *with* their ruler, the princes of Judah *and* their council,[4] the princes of Zebulun, *and* the princes of Naphtali.

28 Thy God [u]hath commanded thy strength: [v]strengthen, O God, that which thou hast wrought for us.

29 Because[x] of thy temple at Jerusalem shall kings bring presents unto thee.

30 Rebuke[y] the company[5] of spearmen,[6] the multitude of the bulls, with the calves of the people, *till every one* submit himself with pieces of silver: scatter thou[7] the people *that* delight in war.

31 Princes[z] shall come out of Egypt: Ethiopia[8] shall soon [a]stretch out her hands unto God.

32 Sing[b] unto God, ye kingdoms of the earth; O sing praises unto the LORD; Selah:[9]

33 To him [c]that rideth upon the heavens of heavens, *which were* of old; lo, he doth [1]send out [d]his voice, *and that* a mighty voice.

34 Ascribe[e] ye strength unto God: [g]his excellency *is* over Israel, and his strength *is* in the clouds.[2]

35 O God, [h]*thou art* terrible[3] out of thy holy places: the God of Israel *is* he [i]that giveth strength and power unto *his* people. Blessed *be* God.

PSALM LXIX.

1 *David complaineth of his affliction.* 13 *He prayeth for deliverance.* 22 *He devoteth his enemies to destruction.* 30 *He engageth to praise God with thanksgiving.*

To the chief musician upon [a]Shoshannim, *A psalm* of David.

SAVE me, O God; for [b]the waters are come in unto *my* soul.

2 I[c] sink in deep mire,[1] where *there is* no standing: I am come into deep waters,[2] where the floods overflow me.

3 I[d] am weary of my crying: my throat is dried: mine eyes fail while I wait for my God.

4 They[e] that hate me without a cause are more than the hairs of mine head: they that would destroy me, *being* mine enemies wrongfully, are mighty: then I restored *that* which I took not away.[3]

5 O God, [g]thou knowest my foolishness; and my [4]sins[5] are not hid from thee.

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blessed time when 'the kingdoms of this world shall have become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ.' Re. 11. 15. *C.*

Ver. 6. This psalm sets forth a great principle which people and nations ought never to forget—that true religion can alone secure national blessings—peace, progress, temporal prosperity, and social happiness. *P.*

REFLECTIONS.—God's mercy is the spring and matter of all the blessings we need. His favour manifested is our whole joy and comfort. And the more kindness he bestows upon any person or church, the more they wish his gospel and kingdom to spread. His method of redeeming and saving men through Christ is health to their soul and marrow to their bones. It is an unspeakable mercy to be judged and governed according to the gospel and promise of grace. The service of Christ is the freedom and happiness of his people; and his government introduces the most inestimable benefits and exalted praises. What a harvest of converted souls the world yields as he pours forth his influences! And blessings innumerable flow from a spiritual relation to God as our God: while reverential love and holy obedience always attend the firm faith thereof.

PSALM LXVIII. Ver. 1. These opening words were employed by Moses, Nu. 10. 35, when the ark was removed in the wilderness. The whole psalm, however, is a description of the resurrection, ascension, and glorification of Christ. Compare ver. 1 18 with Eph. 4. 8. *C.*

6 Let[h] not them that wait on thee, O Lord GOD of hosts, be ashamed for my sake: let not those that seek thee be confounded for my sake, O God of Israel.

7 Because for thy sake [i]I have borne reproach; shame hath covered my face.

8 I[j] am become a stranger unto my brethren, and an alien unto my mother's children.

9 For[k] the zeal of thine house hath eaten[6] me up; [l]and the reproaches of them that reproached thee are fallen upon me.

10 When[m] I wept, *and chastened* my soul with fasting, that was to my reproach.

11 I[o] made sackcloth also my garment; and I became a proverb to them.

12 They[p] that sit in the gate speak against me; and I *was* [q]the song of the drunkards.[7]

13 But as for me, [r]my prayer *is* unto thee, O LORD, *in* [s]an acceptable time: O God, [t]in the multitude of thy mercy hear me, in the truth of thy salvation.

14 Deliver[u] me out of the mire, and let me not sink: let me be delivered from them that hate me, and out of the deep waters.

15 Let[v] not the water-flood overflow me, neither let the deep swallow me up, and let not the[w] pit shut her mouth[8] upon me.

16 Hear me, O LORD; [y]for thy loving-kindness *is* good: turn unto me, [z]according to the multitude of thy tender mercies.

17 And[a] hide not thy face from thy servant; for I am in trouble: hear me speedily.[9]

18 Draw[b] nigh unto my soul, *and* redeem it: deliver me, [c]because of mine enemies.

19 Thou hast known my [d]reproach, [e]and my shame, and my dishonour: [f]mine adversaries *are* all before thee.

20 Reproach[g] hath broken my heart; and I am full of heaviness: and I looked *for some*

A.M. cir. 2983.
B.C. cir. 1021.

h Ps.25.3. Joel 2.26, 27. Is.45.17; 49.23; 61.7, 7, 9; 66.16.
i Ps. 22.11; 22.6. ver. 9, 12, 19, 20. Is.54.2, 3; 60. 6; 52.14.
j Job 19.13–19. Ps. 31. 11. Is.53.3. Jn.7.5; 6.60, 66.
k I Ki.19.10, 14. Ps. 119.139. Jn.2.17.
6 'Zeal for thine house (as an inward fire) hath consumed me.'—*C.*
l Ro. 15. 3. Ps.89.50, 51.
m Ps. 35. 13, 14; 22. 7, 8. Lu.7.33, 34. He.5.7.
o Ps. 35. 13; 44.14. Is. 22.12. Mar.6.3.
p De.16.18. Ps.82.2–4; 22.12. Ac.4.26.
q Ps.35.16. Job 30.9.
7 Heb. *drinkers of strong drink.*
r Ps.50. 15; 91. 15. 1 Co.4.13.1 Pe.2.23. He. 5.7.
s Is.49.8; 55.6. 2 Co. 6.2.
t Ge.24.27. Mi.7.20. 2 Sa.7.25. Ps.40.11.
u Ps.144.7; 143.7; 18. 4, 16, 17; 109.4; 124. 4, 5; 42.7. ver.1. 2, 15. Mat. 26.39, 42. He.5.7.
v Is.43.1, 2.
w Ps.16.10; 55.23; 106. 17. Nu.16.33. Ac.2.24.
8 Let not the unjust plans that the rulers have laid to ensnare me in my words and bring me down to death be permitted to imprison me in the grave. —*C.*
y Ps. 30.5; 63.3; 36.7. Jn.17.24.
z ver.13. Ps.86.13, 15, 16. Is.63.7, 9. Je. 31. 20. Ex.34.6, 7. Mi.7.19.
a Ps.6.2, 3; 13.1, 2; 27. 9; 40.17; 143.7; 22.19–21.
9 Heb. *make haste to hear me.*
b Ps.10.1; 22.1–19.
c De.32.27. Ps. 13. 4. Jos.7.9.
d Ps.22.6, 7. Is. 53. 3, 4. Le.12.2.
e Ps.2.2–4; 11. 4. Je. 16.17.
f Is.53.3; 63.5. Mat. 26.38. Jn.12. 27. Ps.22. 14.

* All Israel were literally prisoners in Egypt and in Babylon; and still, though at large, are they prisoners among the Gentiles. Yet when their heart shall turn to the Lord, 'he will not despise the prayer of the destitute' (Ps. 102. 17), who, being set free from sin and the world, shall become the 'prisoners of the Lord,' 'apprehended in Christ Jesus,' and shall 'flee to the stronghold (of covenant promise) as prisoners of hope.'—*C.*

A.M. cir. 2983.
B.C. cir. 1021.

1 Heb. *to lament* with me.
h Mar.14.50. Ps.142. 4. Is 63.5. Mat.26.56.
2 Even Peter, James, and John slept when they should have comforted him in his agony by watching for him, Mat. 26. 36, 40.—*C.*
i Mat.27.34, 48. Mar. 15.23, 36. Lu.23.36. Jn. 19.29, 30.
j Ro.11.8–10. Ps. 28. 4. Pr.1.32. De.32.13–15. Is.8.14, 15; 66.3, 4. 1 Pe. 2.8. 1 Co.1.23.
3 See notes on Ps. 5.10; 35.8.—*C.*
k Is.5.9, 10. Jn.12.39, 40. Ro.11.8, 10, 25. 2 Co. 3.14. De.28.61–68.
l 1 Th. 2. 15, 16. Le. 26.14–39. De. 28.15–68; 29.18–28; 31. 17; 32.20–26. Mat. 23.35, 38. Lu. 19.43, 44.
4 Heb. *their palace.*
5 Heb. *let there not be a dweller.*
n Zec.1.15. Is 53.4. 1 Th.2.15, with 2 Ch. 28. 9.
6 Heb. *thy wounded.*
o Is.66.3, 4. Ps.81.12. Mat.23.32. Le.26.39.
7 Or, *punishment of iniquity*, Ro. 9.31; 10.3.
8 This is to be explained by the second commandment, where God is described as 'visiting the iniquities of the fathers upon the children, unto the third and fourth generation of them that (continue to) hate him'—an awful warning to the wicked, that in no wise contradicts the consoling assurance of mercy delivered to the penitent, Eze. 18. 3–32.—*C.*
p Ex.32.32. Re.13.8. Ho. 1.9, with Ps. 87. 6. Is.4.3.
q Ps.40.17. Mat.8.20. Is.53.3, 10.
r Ps 18. 19, 50; 40. 2; 21.5; 89.26–28; 22.27–31; 110.1, 7.
s Ps.18. 49; 22. 22, 25; 40.1–3, 9 10.
t Ps.50.13, 14. Ho.6.6; 14.2, 3; c.7.22, 23.
u Ps.34.7, 22. 26; 35. 27; 40.16. Jn. 16.22; 20. 20.
9 Or, *meek* or *afflicted.*
v Ps.72.12–14; 102.17, 19; 132.16; 146.7. Ac. iv. v. xii.
1 See note * in first column.
x Ps.96.11, 12; 98.7, 8; 148.1–14. Is. 44. 23; 49. 13.
2 Heb. *creepeth*, Ge. 1.24.
y Ps.51.18; 102.13, 16; 127.1. Is.44.26. Mat.16. 18. Ez.36.35, 36.
z Ps.102.28; 90.16. Is. 59.21; 60.21; 44.3.4.
a Jn.14.23. Re.21.27.

to take pity,[1] but[h] *there was* none;[2] and for comforters, but I found none.

21 They gave me also gall for my meat; [i]and in my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink.

22 Let[j] their table become a snare before them: and *that which should have been* for *their* welfare, *let it become* a trap.[3]

23 Let[k] their eyes be darkened, that they see not; and make their loins continually to shake.

24 Pour[l] out thine indignation upon them, and let thy wrathful anger take hold of them.

25 Let their habitation[4] be desolate; *and* let none dwell[5] in their tents.

26 For[n] they persecute *him* whom thou hast smitten; and they talk to the grief of those whom thou hast wounded.[6]

27 Add[o] iniquity[7] unto their iniquity;[8] and let them not come into thy righteousness.

28 Let[p] them be blotted out of the book of the living, and not be written with the righteous.

29 But[q] I *am* poor and sorrowful: [r]let thy salvation, O God, set me up on high.

30 I[s] will praise the name of God with a song, and will magnify him with thanksgiving.

31 *This*[t] also shall please the LORD better than an ox *or* bullock that hath horns and hoofs.

32 The [u]humble[9] shall see *this, and* be glad; and your heart shall live that seek God.

33 For[v] the LORD heareth the poor, and despiseth not his prisoners.[1]

34 Let[x] the heaven and earth praise him, the seas, and every thing that moveth[2] therein:

35 For[y] God will save Zion, and will build the cities of Judah; that they may dwell there, and have it in possession.

36 The[z] seed also of his servants shall inherit it; [a]and they that love his name shall dwell therein.

Ver. 4. 'Magnify him who rideth over the Arabah by his name JAH, and rejoice before him.' Reference is here made to the journey of the Israelites through the wilderness, and especially along the valley of Arabah to and from Kadesh. There God went before them in the cloudy pillar; there he proclaimed to them his name JEHOVAH; there he gave them displays of his power and mercy, such as had never been witnessed. *P.*——*By his name* JAH. 'In JAH is his name,' *Horsley*. That is, Christ, who was with the church through the wilderness, has his personal and official *name* in JAH, the unity of the self-existent Trinity. *C.*

Ver. 11. *Company.* The original directs to those female choirs (see ver. 25) who, in sweet, and holy, and joyful song, published the mercies of the Lord. See, as examples, Ex. 15. 20; 1 Sa. 18. 6. *C.*

Ver. 12. Allusion is made to the conquests of Moses and Joshua on entering Palestine. *P.*

Ver. 13. The whole book of Psalms presents no greater difficulty than this verse, and conjectures and emendations have been proportionally numerous. The words supplied in the authorized version render the passage *prophetical;* but the adjoining verses are merely *narrative.* May we not therefore rather understand the passage thus:—'Ye have shared the spoil (though ye lay timidly at home, hid among the pots), and are now garnished in these spoils as the wings of a dove covered with silver,' &c.? *C.*

Ver. 22. *My people.* Is it not rather *the enemy*, that God proposes to bring from Bashan on the east, and the sea on the west, that judgment may be executed upon their sins? Joel 3. 2, 12; Re. 16. 16. *C.*

Ver. 27. In the solemn procession, mentioned in ver. 24, all these tribes were present:—Benjamin on this occasion leading the way; the vast multitudes of Judah following: then the chiefs of Zebulun and Naphtali, representing probably the confederation of the northern tribes. *P.*

Ver. 30. 'The meaning of the whole verse is, that the most formidable enemies of the people of God, represented here by wild beasts, would be subdued, and would be made to show their submission by bringing presents,—by 'pieces of silver,'—or with tribute. Thus the idea corresponds with that in the previous verse, that kings would bring presents' (*Barnes*). *P.*——*Calves of the people.* The idolatrous worshippers of the Egyptian calf-gods.—*Note*, Such is the blindness of the human heart, that the cow is still worshipped as a deity in India! *C.*

REFLECTIONS.—No hatred, no opposition of men or devils, could exclude our Redeemer from his glory. However strong or obstinate his enemies, they are overcome by his power. But happy—thrice happy are they who have by faith accepted this glorious, this gracious JEHOVAH to be their God! Behold how he protects his afflicted church and people; raises up families of saints in our Gentile world; delivers the prisoners of sin and Satan from their chains of corruptions and curses! while sinners bring to themselves eternal ruin! Behold him leading up his people from their spiritual bondage, and by his Word and Spirit directing them in their paths! By his almighty influence he brought down all opposition. By showers of gospel truths and spiritual influences he quickens all who yield themselves to Christ. By the multitudes of his apostles and ministers he published the glad tidings of salvation. Through their faith he saves hell-enslaved sinners by his blood, and adorns them with his righteousness and grace. He established his church firm and high as mountains which cannot be moved, and from which he will never depart. While angelic hosts are her guard, the ascending Redeemer is her conquering head, her treasury, and almoner. How great are his triumphs, his grace, his glory! Never pardoned rebel owed such gratitude to his generous prince as every pardoned sinner owes to his Lord. Never is he weary of showing mercy. And even death is disarmed to them who by faith accept him and his salvation. But dreadful is the fate of obstinate Jews and others who oppose the designs of his grace: and behold, when he went forth in the ordinances of the gospel, by his apostles and other missionaries, how Jews and Gentiles saw his glory, sang his praise, and submitted themselves to his government!

PSALM LXIX. Ver. 1. It is impossible to question that this is a prayer of our Lord. See especially ver. 9, first clause, compare with Jn. 2. 17, also ver. 9, second clause, with Ro. 15. 3, and ver. 25, also with Jn. 19. 28; and surely it is impossible to doubt that Christ is the speaker of the whole psalm! See also farther references, Jn. 15. 25; Lu. 23. 34–38; Ro. 11. 9, 10; Ac. 1. 16, 20. *C.*

Ver. 22. Nothing is more certain than that God judicially delivers wicked men over to the counsels of their own hearts, and surely what God will righteously do, Christ as Judge may righteously call upon him to do. In this case, he calls upon him to deliver over the epicurean idolater, 'whose god is his belly,' Phi. 3. 19, so that his love of gluttony and drunkenness may become his punishment. *C.*

REFLECTIONS.—While I read these things let me, with deep concern, by faith behold my Redeemer charged in law with my sins and bearing their punishment. Let me learn with patience to run the race of holy obedience, and of necessary trials set before me, looking to Jesus as my pattern, and as the author and finisher of my faith. While I behold the tremendous severity of God's judgments against his ancient people for rejecting and murdering his Son, let me not be high-minded, but fear.—Let me behold the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, who, though he was rich, yet for our sakes became poor, that we through his poverty might be made rich.—And let me be a living and lively

PSALM LXX.

David prayeth for God's speedy help and deliverance, to the confusion of his enemies, and triumph of the godly.

To the chief musician, *A psalm* of David, [a]to bring to remembrance.

MAKE haste, [b]O God, to deliver me; make haste to help me,[1] O LORD.[2]

2 Let[c] them be ashamed and confounded that seek after my soul; let them be turned backward, and put to confusion, that desire my hurt.

3 Let them be turned back for a reward of their shame that say, Aha, aha!

4 Let[d] all those that seek thee rejoice and be glad in thee: and let such as love thy salvation say continually, Let God be magnified.

5 But[e] I *am* poor and needy: make haste unto me, O God: thou *art* my help and my deliverer; O LORD, make no tarrying.

PSALM LXXI.

1 *David, in confidence of faith, and experience of God's favour, prayeth both for himself, and against the enemies of his soul.* 14 *He promiseth acts of praise.* 17 *He prayeth not to be abandoned in the decline of life.* 19 *He praiseth God, and promiseth to do it cheerfully.*

IN thee,[a] O LORD, do I put my trust: let me never be put to confusion.

2 Deliver[b] me in thy righteousness, and cause me to escape: [c]incline thine ear unto me, and save me.

3 Be thou my strong habitation,[1] whereunto I may continually resort: [d]thou hast given commandment to save me; for thou *art* my rock and my fortress.

4 Deliver[e] me, O my God, out of the hand of the wicked, out of the hand of the unrighteous and cruel man.

5 For [g]thou *art* my hope, O Lord GOD: *thou art* my trust from my youth.

6 By[h] thee have I been holden up from the womb: thou art he that took me out of my mother's bowels: [i]my praise *shall be* continually of the thee.

A.M. cir. 2983.
B.C. cir. 1021.

PSALM LXX.

a Ps.xxviii. title.
b Ps. 40. 13–17; 18.6; 143.7,9; 1Ki.
1 Heb. *to my help.*
2 This psalm is substantially identical with Ps. 40. 13–17. There are verbal differences, however, which show that it was adapted for separate use, and for some new circumstance. A similar instance of parallelism may be seen in Ps. xiv. and liii.—*P.*
c Ps. 35.4,26; 71.13,16. 109.29. Je.17.18.
d La 3.25. Ps. 35.27; 40.16,97.12. Is.65.13,14, 18, 19; 49.13; 24. 14–16; 12. 1–6; xxv. xxvi.; 61. 10.
e Ps.40.17; 69.29; 109. 22, 31. 72.12–14; 102.17; 42.5, 11; 143.7; 13.1–3.

PSALM LXXI.

a Ps. 31. 1–3; 25. 2, 3; 34.22. 1 Ch.5.20. Ro. 9. 33.
b Ps.31.27,8; 18. 20, 23; 143.1; 56.1.
c Ps. 34.15; 4.1; 54. 1; 55.16; 59.1.
1 Heb. *be thou to me for a rock of habitation*, Ps. 31.2,3; 91. 2; 143.5. Pr.18.10.
d Ps.44.4; 42.8; 68.28; 91.11; 33.9.
e Ps.7.1; 17.8,9; 13; 54. 1,3; 59.1; 64.1,2; 140.1,4; 142.6; 22.20,21.
f Je.17.7, 17. Ps. 13. 5; 31.14; 42 11; 119. 81, 166; 130. 5, 7; 22.9, 10. 1 Ti.1.1.
g Ps.22.9, 10. Is.46.3, 4. Je.31.32. 2.Pr.8.17.
h Ps.145.1,2.

* This is the faithful and grateful song of an old man. He speaks of a long experience of God's mercy. He feels that his physical strength is fast waning; the vigour of youth and manhood is gone; the weakness and helplessness of old age are beginning to be painfully realized; his enemies are still watchful and persevering. Yet he does not despair. God is still his God; divine strength increases as bodily strength fails; the eye of faith brightens as the eye of sense becomes dim; he is able even to look beyond death and the grave, and to exclaim triumphantly:—'Thou . . shalt quicken me again, and shalt bring me up again from the depths of the earth.' How cheering then is this noble psalm to the aged Christian! —*P.*

A.M. cir. 2983.
B.C. cir. 1021.

i Zec.3.8. Is. 8. 18. 1 Co.4.9.
2 This description was exemplified when Christ became "a sign spoken against," Lu. 2. 34.—*C.*
k Ps.51.2; 142.4,5; 49. 1,11.
l Job 8.21. Ps.104.33; 145.2; 146.2.
m ver. 18. Ps. 94. 14; 73.26. La.3.31. Is.46.4; 49.15,16. He.13.5.
o Ps.56.6; 2.2; 83.3. 2 Sa.16.7, 20–23; 17. 1–4. Mat.27.1.
3 Heb. *watch* or *observe.*
p Ps.3.2; 41.8; 142.4. 2 Sa.17.1,2. Job 19.13–19; 30.1.
q Ps.22.19; 69.18; 70. 1,5; 143.7.
r Ps.6.10; 35.4,26; 40. 14; 59.13; 70.2,3; 109. 29; 132.18.
4 See notes on Ps. 5.10; 35.8.—*C.*
s Job 13.15. Ps.42.11; 104.33,34; 103.1–18; 145. 2.
t Ps. 22. 22, 25; 40. 9, 10; 30. 12; 145. 2, 21; 146. 2.
u Ps.40.5; 139.17,18.
5 *I know not*—'I cannot enumerate.' But this incapacity arose not from ignorance, but the impossibility of recounting in time the acts of love that will occupy eternity.—*C.*
v Phi.3.9; 4.13. Is.45. 24,25. Zec.10.12. Ep.6. 10; 3,16. 2 Ti.2.2.
w ver. 2, 15, 19, 24. 2 Th. 1. 6. Is. 26. 12. Ps. 115.1.
y Ps.22.9, 10; 78. 34. ver.5. 2 Ti.3.15. Je.31.3. Pr.8.17. 1 Sa.17.23,34.
x Ps.40.9, 10; 66. 16; 105.1–5; 145. 1–4, 21; 26. 7.
6 See note * in first column.
7 Heb. *unto old age and gray hairs.* See ver.9. Is.46.4.
a Ps.145.4; 78.4–6. Is. 38.19. Phi.1.6. He.13.5.
8 Heb. *thine arm,* Is.51.9.
9 Surely none but Christ could ever expect to exemplify the power of God to all future generations. In any other it had been vanity and arrogance—in Christ it was humility and truth.—*C.*
b Ps.36.5,6. Is. 5. 16; 55.9. 2 Co.5.21.
c Ps.72.18; 86.8; 89.6, 8; 35.10. Job 5.9.
d Ps.60.3; 42.8, 11; 40. 2; 88.6. 2 Sa. 12. 11. Is. 38.17. Ho.6.1,2. De.32. 36,39.
1 From the grave. —*C.*

7 I [j]am as a wonder unto many:[2] but[k] thou *art* my strong refuge.

8 Let[l] my mouth be filled *with* thy praise *and with* thy honour all the day.

9 Cast[m] me not off in the time of old age; forsake me not when my strength faileth.

10 For[o] mine enemies speak against me; and they that lay wait[3] for my soul take counsel together,

11 Saying, [p]God hath forsaken him: persecute and take him; for *there is* none to deliver *him.*

12 O [q]God, be not far from me: O my God, make haste for my help.

13 Let[r] them be confounded *and* consumed that are adversaries to my soul;[4] let them be covered *with* reproach and dishonour that seek my hurt.

14 But[s] I will hope continually, and will yet praise thee more and more.

15 My[t] mouth shall show forth thy righteousness *and* thy salvation all the day; for [u]I know[5] not the numbers *thereof.*

16 I[v] will go in the strength of the Lord GOD: I will make mention [x]of thy righteousness, *even* of thine only.

17 O God, [y]thou hast taught me from my youth; and hitherto [z]have I declared thy wondrous works.[6]

18 Now also when I am old and gray-headed,[7] O God, forsake me not; until [a]I have showed thy strength[8] unto *this* generation, *and* thy power to every one *that is* to come.[9]

19 Thy[b] righteousness also, O God, *is* very high, [c]who hast done great things: O God, who *is* like unto thee?

20 *Thou,* [d]which hast showed me great and sore troubles, shalt quicken me again, and shalt bring me up again from the depths of the [1]earth.

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member of that church which is founded in his blood, and blessed in him with all spiritual blessings.

PSALM LXX. Ver. 1. This psalm exemplifies the two chief principles for interpretation of the Psalms, viz. 1. Quotation and exposition in the New Testament. 2. Parallelism of sentiment between those which New Testament quotation applies to Christ and those not so quoted. The parallelism between Ps. lxix. and lxx. proves Ps. lxx. to belong to Christ; but this fact is put beyond question by its identity with Ps. 40. 13–17, which psalm is distinctly applied to Christ, He. 10. 5. *C.*

REFLECTIONS.—While here also I behold Jesus Christ in great abasement, poverty, and distress, denouncing just and fearful punishment on his Jewish, heathen, antichristian, and other enemies; and interpeople, but never rejects believers. Their enemies may Father's honour let me apply these things to my own troubled circumstances, and so, in a believing manner, bring them and the sinful causes thereof to my remembrance. Urgent trials should always awaken fervent prayers.

PSALM LXXI. Ver. 2. *Deliver me in thy righteousness.* A sinner is to be delivered only in mercy—the sin-bearing Saviour alone in righteousness. By this mark it is evident, that if the speaker was guided by the Spirit of knowledge, a point not to be doubted, he must be the Christ. *C.*

Ver. 9. *Old age.* Inasmuch as our Lord died literally *young,* this verse is supposed necessarily to indicate another speaker. But old age is not absolute, but comparative. Thus it is common to speak of premature old age, a fact evidently true of our Lord, whom a little after thirty the Jews supposed fifty. The period referred to, when, as in old age, his strength failed, seems literally, that, when worn out with sleeplessness, buffetings, and scourgings, and, tottering under his cross, Simon of Cyrene was compelled to carry it, Jn. 19. 17; Lu. 23. 26. *C.*

Ver. 18. *When I am old,* &c. Better, as in the margin, 'Now also unto old age and gray hairs, O God, forsake me not.' That our Lord was, in the ordinary acceptation of the word, prematurely old—consumed by his zeal—both himself and the Jews testified. Nor is anything more probable, that his incessant sorrows had produced, what sorrow has often produced—premature gray hairs, the snows of an unnatural winter enshrouding the greenness of spring. *C.*

Ver. 21. This is surely not descriptive of David's expectations or experience. God had positively told him, 'the sword should never depart from his house,' 2 Sa. 12. 10, 11, and from that hour onwards his whole life was a succession of troubles. But of Jesus the description is true; for his declarative greatness is ever increasing, and 'the joy set before him' was his sun of comfort in the darkest hour of sorrows. *C.*

REFLECTIONS.—They who know God and his faithfulness and grace will with comfort and confidence be engaged to trust him in every time of need. The more we reflect on what God hath done for us, it will the more engage our trust and animate our praise. In the depth of our misery God delights to magnify his mercy. And they who confidently plead his faithfulness shall never be disappointed. In old age we must expect infirmities; but God can give an increase of faith and patience to bear them. His aged servants are never cast off by him; but when they experience most weakness, they shall most assuredly experience abundant support in time of need. He may afflict his ceding for the joy and happiness of all people; to his boast in vain a while, but just ruin shall reward them at last. Happy they whose grand supports are the power and promise of God, and whose early and long-continued experience of his favours encourages them to maintain their hopes and increase in their holiness. And if we hope for eternal happiness, let us do what we can to spread the honour and good savour of Christ on earth! For how becoming is it for aged saints to be remarkable in cheerfully expecting good at the hand of God; and to have heart, and lips, and life all filled with his praise! How pleasant is it to step as it were into heaven, scarcely needing to change either our work or our song!

PSALM LXXII. Ver. 1. The strict parallelism of the opening of this with Ps. ii., and the New Testament application of that psalm to Christ, necessarily leads to a similar application here. Christ was King, as chosen, sent, and exalted of the Father; he was also the King's Son, as, according to the flesh, he was the Son of David. *C.*

Ver. 5. This exemplifies an important principle of interpretation, viz. what cannot be true of David or any other mere man, but is true of Messiah, is not to be applied to any mere man, but to 'the Word that was God,' and was, for our salvation, 'made flesh,' and of whom the description is strictly accurate. See also ver. 7. *C.*

Ver. 7. The moon is here introduced as the emblem of successive change of aspect, with permanence of nature, and faithfulness of service; the measuring out of the returning periods for renovated joy, in which she places before the world at once the character both of providence and grace. *C.*

Ver. 11. This can only be true of Messiah, never of David or Solomon, whose kingdom, in its highest splendour, was of very limited extent and of brief duration. *C.*

Ver. 17. The marks of Messiah are here so distinct, that they must be acknowledged. How sweet the name of Jesus to the ear, how glorious to the eye—it is the theme of heaven's loudest song, it is the light of heaven's brightest sun, 'and blessed be his glorious name to all eternity. The whole earth let his glory fill. Amen! so let it be!' *C.*

REFLECTIONS.—Behold how Jesus Christ, endowed with the Holy Ghost above measure, and with all

21 Thou[e] shalt increase my greatness, and comfort me on every side.

22 I[g] will also praise thee with the psaltery,[2] *even* [h]thy truth, O my God: unto thee will I sing with the harp, O thou [i]Holy One of Israel.

23 My[j] lips shall greatly rejoice when I sing unto thee; and my soul, which thou hast redeemed.

24 My tongue also shall talk of thy righteousness all the day long: for they are confounded, for[k] they are brought unto shame, that seek my hurt.[3]

PSALM LXXII.

1 David, praying for Solomon, showeth the happiness, justice, and glory of his reign, and of Christ's kingdom under that type. 18 He blesseth God.

A psalm for[1] Solomon.[2]

GIVE [a]the king thy judgments, O God, and thy righteousness unto the king's son.

2 He[b] shall judge thy people with righteousness, and thy poor with judgment.

3 The[c] mountains shall bring peace to the people, and the little hills, by righteousness.

4 He[d] shall judge the poor of the people, he shall save the children of the needy, and [e]shall break in pieces the oppressor.

5 They[g] shall fear thee as long as the sun and moon endure, throughout all generations.

6 He[h] shall come down like rain upon the mown grass; as showers *that* water the earth.

7 In[i] his days shall the righteous flourish; and abundance of peace so long as the moon endureth.[3]

8 He[j] shall have dominion also from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth.

A.M. cir. 2983.
B.C. cir. 1021.

e 2 Sa. 3. 1. Ps. 92. 10-15. Zec. 2. 5.

f Ps. 57. 7, 8; 108. 1, 2; 150. 3-5. Hab. 3. 18, 19.

[2] Heb. *with the instrument of psaltery.*

h Ps. 25. 10; 115. 1; 89. 1, 2; 92. 2. Mi. 7. 20.

i 2 Ki. 19. 22. Is. 5. 16; 57. 15.

j Ps. 30. 12; 145. 21; 103. 1, 2; 104. 33, 34. Lu. 1. 46, 47, 64.

k ver. 13. Ps. 58. 10; 48. 11; 97. 8; 68. 23; 92. 11; 112. 8, 10; 21. 8-12.

[3] Who but Christ has ever thus resolved or acted? He alone had heart and lips for ever filled with God.—*C.*

PSALM LXXII.

B.C. cir. 1015.

[1] Or, *of*, Ps. 127. title.

[2] It is highly probable that this psalm was composed by David when Solomon was crowned as his successor on the throne. The general scope accords with this idea. But at the same time it is evident that, in the fulness of its meaning, the psalm is not, and cannot be, applicable to Solomon and his reign. It has a higher reference. Solomon was but the type of a greater King. The Messiah was the antitype, and the ultimate sense of many of the expressions culminated in him.—*P.*

a 1 Ki. 1. 35, 37. 1 Ch. 29. 19, 23 Ch. 1. 1. Is. 11. 2. Jn. 3. 34. He. 7. 26; 1. 8.

b Is. 11. 2-5, 11, 17. ver. 12-14. Is. 32. 3, 4.

c Is. 55. 10, 11. Is. 52. 7; 32. 16, 17. Joel 3. 18. Je. 31. 11. Eze. 34. 13, 14, 26.

d ver. 12-14. Is. 11. 4. Mat. 11. 5. Ps. 107. 41.

e Is. 51. 12, 13. Ps. 20. 26. Re. 12. 10; 17. 14; 6. 12-17.

g 1 Ki. 3. 28. Is. 9. 7. Da. 7. 27. Jn. 12. 34. Lu. 1. 32, 33. Re. 11. 15, 17.

h 2 Sa. 23. 4. Pr. 16. 15; 19. 12. De. 32. 2. Ho. 6. 3; 14. 5. Is. 44. 3-5.

i Ps. 92. 13-15. Is. 9. 7; xlix. lx. Lu. 2. 14. Jn. 14. 27.

[3] Heb. *till* there be *no moon.*

j 1 Ki. 4. 20-24. Is. 11. 9, 10. Re. 11. 15. Ps. 22. 27-31; 67. 3, 7; 89. 25, 36. Zec. 9. 10.

A.M. cir. 2989.
B.C. cir. 1015.

k 1 Ki. 4. 34; 9. 20, 21. Ps. 110. 1-7. Is. 49. 23.

l 2 Ch. 9. 21. Mat. 2. 11. 1 Ki. 10. 2, 22-25. Ps. 45. 12; 68. 29. Is. 60. 6; 43. 6.

m Is. 49. 7, 23. Re. 21. 24; 11. 15. Da. 2. 44. Ps. 2. 8-12; 22. 27-31.

o Job 29. 12. Ps. 102. 17, 20; 109. 31. Is. 41. 17. Zec. 11. 7, 11. Lu. 19. 10. He. 7. 25.

p He. 2. 17. Mat. 11. 5; 18. 11; 9. 13; 22. 9.

q Ps. 130. 8; 25. 22; 116. 15. Mat. 20. 28. Tit. 2. 14. Re. 5. 9.

r Re. 1. 18. He. 7. 25. Jn. 11. 25.

[4] Heb. *one shall give.*

s 2 Ch. 9. 1. 1 Ki. 10. 15. Mat. 2. 11.

t He. 10. 19-22. ver. 19. Mat. 6. 10. Re. 22. 20. Jude 25.

[5] Prayer is made for Christ continually when we say, as taught by our Lord himself, 'Thy kingdom come.'—*C.*

u Mar. 16. 15. Is. 2. 2, 3; 44. 3-5. 2 Th. 3. 1. Re. 7. 4, 9. Zec. 8. 23.

v Ho. 14. 5-7.

[6] The small beginning of Christ's kingdom, and its ultimate extension and triumph, are here set forth. Like a handful of grain sown upon a mountain top, in the most unlikely place, among rocks and stones, was the church in its infancy. It gradually increased, until at length, like the vast cedar forests of Lebanon, its abundant fruit bowed before the blast.—*P.*

x Is. 9. 6, 7; 7. 14. Je. 23. 6. Ps. 89. 36. Phi. 2. 9.

[7] Heb. *shall be.*

[8] Heb. *be sonned*, or *produce children before the face of the sun*, Ps. 45. 16, 17; 22. 27-31. Is. 2. 2, 3.

y Ge. 12. 3; 22. 18. Ep. 1. 3. Je. 4. 2.

z Ge. 9. 26. 1 Ch. 29. 10. Ps. 136. 4; 86. 8; 89. 6, 8. Is. 45. 11.

a Nu. 14. 21. Is. 11. 9, 10. Hab. 2. 14. Da. 2. 35, 44. Zec. 14. 9. Re. 5. 13; 11. 15.

b Job 31. 40. Je. 51. 64, with 1 Ki. 2. 10.

[9] This concluding verse is of doubtful authenticity. It does not seem to have been written by the author of the psalm, but to have been added at a later period.—*P.*

9 They[k] that dwell in the wilderness shall bow before him; and his enemies shall lick the dust.

10 The [l]kings of Tarshish and of the isles shall bring presents: the kings of Sheba and Seba shall offer gifts.

11 Yea, [m]all kings shall fall down before him; all nations shall serve him.

12 For[o] he shall deliver the needy when he crieth; the poor also, and *him* that hath no helper.

13 He[p] shall spare the poor and needy, and shall save the souls of the needy.

14 He[q] shall redeem their soul from deceit and violence: and precious shall their blood be in his sight.

15 And[r] he shall live, and to him[4] shall be given of [s]the gold of Sheba: [t]prayer also shall be made for him continually;[5] *and* daily shall he be praised.

16 There[u] shall be an handful of corn in the earth upon the top of the mountains; the fruit thereof shall shake like Lebanon: [v]and *they* of the city shall flourish like grass of the earth.[6]

17 His[x] name shall endure[7] for ever: his name shall be continued as long as the [8]sun; [y]and *men* shall be blessed in him: all nations shall call him blessed.

18 Blessed[z] be the LORD God, the God of Israel, who only doeth wondrous things:

19 And blessed *be* his glorious name for ever; and let [a]the whole earth be filled *with* his glory. Amen, and Amen.

20 The[b] prayers of David the son of Jesse are ended.[9]

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power in heaven and earth, reigns over his gospel church! In infinite equity and wisdom he conducts his whole administration. By his righteousness he secured, by his intercession he procures, and by his word, ordinances, and Spirit, he confers on men peace with God, peace in the conscience, and with one another. Poor destitute sinners he supplies from his fulness of blessings, and delivers them from the hand of sin, Satan, and the world, their oppressors. His spiritual influences, coming down in their season, shall render believers flourishing and fruitful in holiness. And how extensive his gospel church, comprehending both Jews and Gentiles—the wildest Arabs and most distant islanders not excepted! In it persons of every station, but chiefly of the poor, submit to his yoke, and devote themselves and all that they have to his service. Earnest are their prayers for his presence and power in his ordinances, and for his coming in the clouds; and high their songs of praise to his name. What commendations of him are in the word of the gospel! From him the corn of wheat, sown in death upon Calvary, and from the handful of gospel truth, sown among hardened hearts, shall proceed converts, strong and tall in grace as the cedars of Lebanon, and numerous as the piles of grass. How lasting is his kingdom, and how certainly useful for diffusing every spiritual blessing among those who accept Jesus Christ! United to his person, and sharing of his benefits, let us wish well to his interests and honour, and admire, adore, and praise JEHOVAH in him, as the author of all the wonders of providence and grace.

PSALM LXXIII. Ver. 1. *Israel.* Those who wrestle with God for a blessing, and will not let him go till they receive it, and, with it or in it, that new name which the Spirit of adoption alone can bestow, Ge. 22. 24-30. *C.*

Ver. 5. The freedom of thoughtless sinners from trouble arises from ignorance of themselves, disregard of futurity, and want of sympathy with a world lying in misery, because lying in wickedness. *C.*

Ver. 9. *Walketh.* Their tongue assails every one; none can escape its ridicule, contempt, censure, calumnies, or condemnation. *C.*

Ver. 10. 'His people return hither.' Therefore his (God's) people turn aside hither, to the service of these prosperous men, and waters of a full cup (of oppression) are wrung out from them in bitter tears. *C.*

Ver. 17. *Sanctuary.* This word never signifies *sanctuary*, in the singular, but signifies 'the secret principles of God's providential government.' *C.*

Ver. 18. The wicked are here referred to, and the true nature of God's dealings with them. To human appearance they were prosperous and secure; but in reality their condition was one of uncertainty and danger, from which they must inevitably fall. Ultimate ruin is before them whatever may be their apparent security now. *P.*

Ver. 22. *So foolish.* The whole gospel of Christ is called *foolishness* by the world, and 'he that would be wise must become a fool.' The very apostles were 'fools for Christ's sake,' 1 Co. 1. 18; 3. 18; 4. 10. *C.*

Ver. 23. Notwithstanding this low estimation of men, I am still with thee. Here we have a distinct note that the speaker, inquirer, and expounder of providence, is no other than Christ. *C.*

Ver. 24. This is another mark of Christ; not a prayer for guidance and glory, but a confident announcement like that in Jn. 17. 5. *C.*

REFLECTIONS.—In our perplexing difficulties we ought to recur to the first principles of our most holy faith. And never should we lose the views of God's kindness to those who are washed in the blood and sanctified by the Spirit of his Son. Often the strongest believers are most violently tempted, and dragged to the very brink of death and destruction; while God, in this world, marks his enemies and friends in the most perplexing manner. The sinner often prospers to his ruin; and whom he loves he corrects and scourges for their profit. What need then have we to attend closely to his word as our rule; and amidst perplexing providences to wait till we see the end of the Lord! The worst that a good man hath is better than the prosperity of many wicked, which but brings them to everlasting ruin and hastens them into it. But whatever sad lengths the afflictions and temptations of the godly draw them, they should lead to instruction, humiliation, comfort, and holiness. When atheistical thoughts arise in our hearts, they must be carefully and quickly suppressed. We must never grieve nor stumble the children of God by representing his service as vain and unprofitable. And it is not the strongest carnal reasoning, but fellowship with God in his word and ordinances, that can illuminate a darkened soul, or disentangle from an ensnaring temptation. Great is the mercy when God relieves his children who had, by their envy and fretfulness, become their own tormentors; and that even at their worst he never ceases to attend and support them as weak infants in his family. But bright views of God and eternal things are sometimes ushered in by great darkness and trouble of mind. Holiness here and glory hereafter are closely connected. And little reason hath one, guided of God, and an heir of everlasting happiness, nay, of God himself, and a joint-heir with Christ, to envy the earthly happiness of the wicked. How insignificant other things appear when compared with the everlasting enjoyment of the INFINITE ALL, the REDEEMING GODHEAD! How light and easy are death and trouble when considered as our way to it! While apostates from God hasten towards endless perdition, let me therefore draw near to him, in habitual fellowship with him. Let me by faith depend on his promise, that here and hereafter my lips may be filled with his praise.

PSALM LXXIV. Ver. 1. This title (compare Ps. 95. 7 with He. 3. 17), together with the plurality and circumstances of the form of speech, clearly point to a church cruelly persecuted, and a nation grievously oppressed, pouring out their complaints, not in the ears of men, but of God. *C.*

Ver. 5. 'As men are seen with uplifted axes, cutting down the thick wood, so the whole carved work of thy temple with chisel

ALTAR OF LATIN CHURCH, NAZARETH—ON THE SITE OF THE HOUSE WHERE CHRIST LIVED. [PSALMS, lxxii:8.]—"He shall have dominion also from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth." It seems as if the prophesies quoted from the above Psalm have been fulfilled when we remember that churches now stand in nearly all of the great cities of the world. The Latin church in Nazareth is called the Church of the Annunciation. The modern city of Nazareth consists of stone houses with flat roofs. The Church of the Annunciation is small, but it is decorated with pictures of great beauty and with finely wrought marble. It is said to stand on the site of the house of Mary. The church was begun in 1620 out of materials which remained from the ruins of former structures of a similar character. It was destroyed by an earthquake in 1837, but has been rebuilt. The name of Nazareth does not occur in the Old Testament nor in Josephus.

PSALM LXXIII.

1 The psalmist, prevailing in a temptation, 2 showeth the occasion thereof, the prosperity of the wicked. 13 The wound given thereby, diffidence. 15 The victory over it, knowledge of God's purpose, in destroying of the wicked, and sustaining the righteous.

A psalm of[1] Asaph.

TRULY[2] God[a] *is* good to Israel, *even* to such as are of a [b]clean heart.[3]

2 But as for me, [c]my feet were almost gone, my steps had well nigh slipped.[4]

3 For[d] I was envious[5] at the foolish, *when* I saw the prosperity of the wicked:

4 For[e] *there are* no bands in their death; but their strength *is* [6]firm.[7]

5 They[g] *are* not in trouble *as other* men;[8] neither are they plagued like[9] *other* men:

6 Therefore[h] pride compasseth them about as a chain; violence covereth them *as* a garment.

7 Their[i] eyes stand out with fatness: they have more than heart could wish.[1]

8 They[j] are corrupt, and speak wickedly *concerning* oppression: they speak loftily.

9 They [k]set their mouth against the heavens, and their tongue walketh through the earth.

10 Therefore his people [l]return hither; and waters[n] of a full *cup* are wrung out to them.

11 And they say,[2] How[o] doth God know? and is there knowledge in the most High?

12 Behold,[p] these *are* the ungodly, who prosper in the world; they increase *in* riches.

13 Verily[q] I have cleansed my heart *in* vain, and washed my hands in innocency.[3]

14 For[r] all the day long have I been plagued, and chastened[4] every morning.

15 If I say, I will speak thus; behold, [s]I should offend *against* the generation of thy children.

16 When[t] I thought to know this, it *was* too painful[5] for me,[6]

17 Until[u] I went into the sanctuary of God; *then* understood I their end.

18 Surely[v] thou didst set them in slippery places; thou castedst them down into destruction.

19 How[w] are they *brought* into desolation, as in a moment! they are utterly consumed with terrors.

20 As[y] a dream when *one* awaketh; *so*, O LORD, when thou awakest, thou shalt despise their image.[7]

21 Thus[z] my heart was grieved, and I was pricked in my reins.

22 So[a] foolish *was* I, and [8]ignorant:[9] I was *as* a beast[1] before thee.[2]

23 Nevertheless[b] I *am* continually with thee: thou hast holden *me* by my right hand.

24 Thou[c] shalt guide me with thy counsel, and afterward receive me *to* glory.

A.M. cir. 2984.
B.C. cir. 1020.

PSALM LXXIII.

1 Or, *for.*
2 Or, *Yea.*
a Ps.34.8–10; 84. 11; 85.12. Is.63.7–9. Lu.22. 32.
b Jn.3.3. 2 Co. 5. 17. Tit.3.5.
3 Heb. *clean of heart,* Ps. 18. 26. Mat. 5.8.
c Ro.7.23. Ps. 94.18; 38.16.
4 *Slipped*—not into sin, but in the slippery paths of difficulty and danger.—*C.*
d Job 21. 7. Ps. 37.1, 35. Je.12.1. Ja.4.5.
5 *Envious*—grieved and indignant.—*C.*
e Job 27.9,23–25.
6 Heb., *fat.*
7 'I saw the wicked live prosperously, and die peacefully. There was no appearance of great pain of body or agony of mind. They were firm and strong. This almost led me to doubt the divine sovereignty and justice.' Such is the general meaning of the writer.—*P.*
g He.12.8. Am.3.2.
8 Heb. *in the trouble of* other *men.*
9 Heb. *with.*
h Ec.8.11. De.32.15. Job 21. 7–15; 24.2–4. Is. 59.6. Ps.109.18.
i Job 15.27. Ps.17.10; 119.70.
1 Heb. *they pass the thoughts of the heart.*
j Je. 5. 28. Is. 59. 13. Ps.14.1–4. Pr.30.12–14. Ho.7.16. Jude 16.
k Ex.5.2. Job 21. 14, 15. Re.13.6. Ps.10.7. Is. 37.17,23.
l Ps. 125. 3. Je. 12. 1. Ec.8.11.
m ver.4,7,12. Job 21. 7–13, or xix.xxx.; ver. 14.
2 *They say* — not God's people, but the oppressors—the very sentiment of Pharaoh, Ex.5.2.—*C.*
o ver.9. Job 22.13,14. Ps.10.11; 94.7. Ze.1.12.
p Job xxi. xxiv. Ps. 17.10,14; 37.7.35. Je.12. 1.
q Mal.3.14. Job 9.27–31; 21.15; 34.9; 35.3, with Ps. 26.6; 24.4. He.10.19–22.
3 On comparing ver. 13, 14 with 15, ver. 13, 14 are found not to be the sentiments of the speaker, but a supposition which he rejects.—*C.*
r Job vi. vii. x. xix. xxx. Am.3.2. Ps. 34.19. Ac.14.22. He. 12. 5–10. 1 Pe. 1.6.
4 Heb. *my chastisement* was.
s Mal.2.8. Mat.18.6, 7. He.12.13.
t Ro.11.33. Ps. 36. 6; 77.19; 97.2. Ec.8.17. Pr. 30.2.
5 *Too painful*—grief of eyes to look upon: Jesus wept over Jerusalem.—*C.*
6 Heb. *it* was *labour in mine eyes.*
u Ps.77.13; 68.24; 119. 98, 118; 37.38.
v De.32.35. Ps. 35.6; 37.35, 36, 38; 55. 23; 94. 23. Je.23.12.
w Job 20.5,22–28. Ps. 58.9. Is.30.13. Je.51.37. Re.18.10. 1 Th.5.3.
y Is.29.7,8. Job 20.8; 36.18,19. Ps.7.6; 78.65.
7 Cast into disgrace the idol of selfishness and pride that they have set up.—*C.*
z Ps.37.1,7. Je. 12.1. ver.2,3.
a Ps.92.6,7. Pr. 30.2, 3. Ec.3.18.
8 Heb. *I knew not.*
9 *Ignorant.* See this phrase explained, Is.42.19,20.—*C.*
1 *As a beast*—not in disposition, but in estimation 'counted as a sheep for the slaughter,' Ro.8.36.—*C.*
2 Heb. *with thee.*
b He.13.5. Ps. 37.24, 28; 16.8; 21. 3, 8. Ju. 10. 28, 29. 1 Pe.1.5. Jude 24.
c Ps. 32. 8; 48. 14. Jn. 14.3. 2 Co.5.1. 2 Ti.4.7, 8.

A.M. cir. 2984.
B.C. cir. 1020.

d Ps.35.10; 89.6, 8; 16. 5–7; 142.4, 5. Is.26.8, 9.
e Ps.84.3; 119. 81–83; 39.10, 11; 102.3–5; 18. 2; 28.8. Is. 40.29, 31. Zec. 10.12.
3 Heb. *rock.*
g Ps. 16. 5, 6; 119.57; 142.5; 84. 11, 12. La. 3. 24.
h Ps.58.3. Ep.2.13.
i Ex.34.15. Nu.15.39. Ja.4.4. Phi.3.18,19.
j Ps.34.8; 65.4. La.3. 25, 26. Ja.4.8.
k Ps.31.14,27. 14; 7.1.5 –24. Job 35.14.
4 Could any but Messiah undertake this commission, and confidently declare his capacity of understanding and expounding 'all God's works?' Is not this he, therefore, in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge?—*C.*

PSALM LXXIV.

B.C. cir. 1021.
1 Or, a psalm *for Asaph to give instruction,* Ps. i. xxxii. titles.
a Ps.10.1; 13.1–3; 60. 1–3.
b Is.10. 5. Ps. 78. 58, 59. De.29.20; 32.21–26.
c Ps.95.7; 100.3.
d Ex. 19. 5, 6; 15. 16. ver.19. Is.63.26.
2 Or, *tribe,* De.32.9. Je.10.16. Ps.135.4.
3 *Rod of thine inheritance,* 'Thy chosen inheritance.'—*C.*
e Ps.78.68,69; 132.13, 14; 48.1,2.
g Ps.68.1; 44.23,26; 80. 1–16; 143.7.
4 *Lift up thy feet.* 'Hasten thy steps.'—*Boothroyd.*
h ver.7. Ps.79.1. 1 Ki. 14.26. 2 Ki. 25.9, 13–17. Re.xiii.
5 This psalm is prophetic as well as descriptive. Reference is doubtless made in the first instance to the destruction of the city and temple by the hosts of Babylon; but the prophet's eye looks onward, and sees in the dim and distant future woe more dreadful and ruin more lasting. The psalm was probably written just after the capture of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar.—*P.*
i La.2.7. Re. 13. 4, 6. De.9.27.
6 They plant their banners amid the ruins of the Holy City as emblems of its entire subjugation.
j 1 Ki. 5. 6, 15; 6. 14–36.
k 1 Ki.6.18,29,32,35, with Je.46.22,23.
7 Heb. *They have sent thy sanctuary into the fire,* 2 Ki. 25. 9. Mat.22.7.
l Ps. 83. 4; 137.7. Es. 3.9.
8 Heb. *break.*
m Mat.4.23; 9.35. Lu. 4.15,44. Ac.13.5.
n 1 Sa.3.1. Am. 8.11. Mi.3.6. Is.42.20.
9 We see no token of the divine presence, no sign of deliverance.—*C.*
p Ps.44.16; 89. 50,51. Is.37.4,23. Re.13.4–6.
q La. 2. 3. Ps. 44. 23; 78.60–62,65. Pr.19.24.
r Ps.44.4. Ex.19.5,6. Is.63.9; 51.7,9. Hab. 3. 12–14.
1 *My King*—'our King.'—*Boothroyd.*
s Ex.14.21. Ne.9.11. Ps.66.6.
2 Heb. *break.*
t Is.27.1; 51.9, 10. Eze. 29.3; 32.2. Ex.14.28; 15. 10, 12.
3 Or, *whales.*
u Nu.14.9. Ex. 15.1–19.
4 Ravenous beasts and birds of prey, the tenants of the wilderness.—*C.*
v Ex.17.5,6. Nu. 20. 11. Ps.105.41. Is.48.21.
5 The rocks at Meribah and Kadesh.—*C.*
x Jos.3.13. 2 Ki. 2.8, 14. Is.44.27.
6 Heb. *rivers of strength.*

25 Whom[d] have I in heaven *but thee?* and *there is* none upon earth *that* I desire besides thee.

26 My[e] flesh and my heart faileth: *but* God *is* the strength[3] of my heart, and [g]my portion for ever.

27 For, lo, [h]they that are far from thee shall perish: thou hast destroyed all them that [i]go a whoring from thee.

28 But [j]*it is* good for me to draw near to God: [k]I have put my trust in the Lord GOD, that I may declare all thy works.[4]

PSALM LXXIV.

1 The psalmist complaineth of the desolation of the sanctuary. 10 He moveth God to help in consideration of his power, 18 of his reproachful enemies, of his children, and of his covenant.

Maschil of Asaph.[1]

O GOD, [a]why hast thou cast *us* off for ever? [b]*why* doth thine anger smoke against [c]the sheep of thy pasture?

2 Remember [d]thy congregation, *which* thou hast purchased of old; the rod[2] of thine inheritance,[3] *which* thou hast redeemed; this [e]mount Zion, wherein thou hast dwelt.

3 Lift[g] up thy feet[4] unto the perpetual desolations; *even* all [h]*that* the enemy hath done wickedly in the sanctuary.[5]

4 Thine[i] enemies roar in the midst of thy congregations; they set up their ensigns *for* signs.[6]

5 *A man* was famous according as he [j]had lifted up axes upon the thick trees.

6 But now they break down [k]the carved work thereof at once with axes and hammers.

7 They have cast fire into thy [7]sanctuary; they have defiled *by casting down* the dwelling-place of thy name to the ground.

8 They said in their hearts, [l]Let us [8]destroy them together: they have burnt up all the [m]synagogues of God in the land.

9 We[o] see not our signs:[9] *there is* no more any prophet; neither *is there* among us any that knoweth how long.

10 O God, [p]how long shall the adversary reproach? shall the enemy blaspheme thy name for ever?

11 Why[q] withdrawest thou thy hand, even thy right hand? pluck *it* out of thy bosom.

12 For[r] God *is* my King[1] of old, working salvation in the midst of the earth.

13 Thou[s] didst divide[2] the sea by thy strength: thou [t]brakest the heads of the dragons[3] in the waters.

14 Thou brakest the heads of leviathan in pieces, *and* gavest him *to be* [u]meat to the people inhabiting the wilderness.[4]

15 Thou [v]didst cleave the fountain[5] and the flood: [x]thou driedst up mighty rivers.[6]

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and mallet they have hewed down.'—*Boothroyd.* The imagery in this translation seems forced and incongruous. May it not better be paraphrased thus:—'In former times, the Tyrian woodsman acquired respect and honour, even from his own Gentile fellow-citizens, by cutting down timber in the mountains for Solomon; but now, our Gentile invaders with axes and hammers, recklessly tear down the exquisite carved work of the temple, dedicated by the piety of former years.' *C.*

Ver. 9. *No more any prophet.* This statement has been supposed to carry the date of the psalm beyond the invasion of Nebuchadnezzar, because the prophet Jeremiah was then alive. But may not the psalm have been composed by one of the pious rem-

MOUNT OF OLIVES FROM ZION'S GATE—OVER WHICH DAVID WALKED AND WEPT DURING ABSALOM'S REBELLION. [PSALMS lxxiv : 2.]—"Remember thy congregation, which thou hast purchased of old ; the rod of thine inheritance, which thou hast redeemed ; this Mount Zion, wherein thou hast dwelt." Mount Zion occupies the soutwest section of the city. The west and south sides rise abruptly from the valley of Hinnom, and the south brow of Zion is bold and prominent. The mount of Olives from Mount Zion is an inspiring sight. The graceful outlines of the Mount of Olives are conspicuous from every part of the city. We see on the summit of the central crest the lofty tower erected by the Russians. There are many buildings upon the Mount of Olives and they interfere with the simple beauty of the sacred hill. It is over the Mount of Olives that David ascended when fleeing from his rebel son Absalom (II. Samuel, xv : 30).

16 The[y] day *is* thine, the night also *is* thine: thou hast prepared the light and the sun.

17 Thou[z] hast set all the borders of the earth: thou hast made[7] summer and winter.

18 Remember[a] this, *that* the enemy hath reproached, O LORD, and *that* the foolish people have blasphemed thy name.

19 O deliver not the soul of thy [b]turtle-dove[8] unto the multitude[9] *of the wicked:* forget not the congregation of thy poor for ever.

20 Have[c] respect unto the covenant:[1] for the [3]dark places of the earth are full of the habitations of cruelty.

21 O [d]let not the oppressed return ashamed: let the poor and needy praise thy name.

22 Arise,[g] O God, plead thine own cause: remember how the foolish man [h]reproacheth thee daily.

23 Forget not the voice of thine enemies: the[i] tumult of those that rise up against thee increaseth[2] continually.

PSALM LXXV.

1 *The psalmist praiseth God.* 2 *He promiseth to judge uprightly.* 4 *He rebuketh the proud by consideration of God's providence.* 9 *He promiseth to praise God and execute justice.*

To the chief musician, Al-taschith,[1] A psalm *or* song of[2] Asaph.

UNTO thee,[a] O God, do we give thanks, *unto thee* do we give thanks: for [b]*that* thy name[3] *is* near thy wondrous works declare.

2 When [c]I shall receive the congregation[4] I will judge uprightly.

3 The[d] earth and all the inhabitants thereof are dissolved: [e]I bear up the pillars of it. Selah.[5]

4 I[g] said unto the fools,[6] Deal not foolishly; and to the wicked, [h]Lift not up the horn:[7]

5 Lift not up your horn on high:[8] speak *not* with a stiff neck.

6 For promotion *cometh* neither from the east, nor from the west, nor from the south;[9]

7 But[i] God *is* the judge: [j]he putteth down one, and setteth up another.

A.M. cir. 2983.
B.C. cir. 1021.

y Ge. 1. 14–16; 8. 22. Ps. 8. 3; 136. 7–9. Mat. 5. 45.

z Ac. 17. 26. Ps. 24. 1, 2; 136. 6. De. 32. 8.

7 Heb. *formed them*, Ge. 8. 22. Ca. 2. 11, 12.

a ver. 22. Ps. 89. 50, 51; 94. 7, 8. De. 32. 21, with Re. 16. 19. Ps. 137. 7.

b Ca. 2. 14; 6. 9. Ex. 19. 5, 6. Ps. 135. 4; 68. 10, 13. De. 32. 9. Is. 60. 8.

8 *Turtle-dove.* Thy defenceless and mourning church.

9 *Multitude.* 'Beasts of appetite,' hungry and devouring spoilers.—*C.*

c Ge. 17. 7, 8. Ps. 105. 8–11. Je. 32. 20, 21. Le. 26. 42; 44, 45. De. 30. 3, 4. 1 Ki. 8. 50. 2 Sa. 23. 5. Ps. 106. 45. He. 8. 10.

1 'Thine own covenant.'—*Boothroyd.*

d Pr. 29. 18. Ep. 2. 12. Is. 14. 4–6. Ps. 12. 1, 8.

e Ps. 9. 18; 12. 5; 102. 17, 20, 21; 109. 31. Re. 19. 1, 2.

g Ps. 9. 19, 20; 44. 23, 26; 89. 50, 51.

h Ps. 89. 50, 51; 73. 9; 79. 10, 12. Is. 37. 23; 52. 4. ver. 10, 18.

i Ps. 2. 1, 2. Re. 16. 14; 17, 14.

2 Heb. *ascendeth*, Ge. 18. 20, 21. Jonah 1. 2.

PSALM LXXV.

B.C. cir. 1048.

1 Or, *Destroy not*, Ps. 57. title.

2 Or, *for.*

a Ps. 92. 1; ciii.–cv. cvii. cxxxv. cxxxvi.

b Ps. 76. 1; ix. xviii. lx. vii.–xx.

3 In this opening verse the church renders united thanks, seeing by faith the speedy coming of Messiah in the *name*, that is, in all the attributes of Jehovah.—*C.*

c 2 Sa. 2. 4; 5. 3–8, 15; 23. 3, 4. Ps. 78. 70–72; 101. 2–4, 6, 7, 8.

4 Or, *When I shall take a set time.*

d Ps. 60. 1–3. 1 Sa. 31. 1–7. 2 Sa. 4. 1–7.

e Ps. 60. 4. 2 Sa. v. viii. He. 3. Is. 49. 8. 1 Ti. 3. 15, 16. Ga. 2. 9.

5 See note on Ps. 3. 2.—*C.*

g 2 Sa. ii. v. viii. x. Ps. 82. 1–7; 101. 2–8.

6 *Fools.* To men forgetting or practically denying God. See Ps. 14. 1.—*C.*

h Zec. 1. 21. Ps. 52. 1. Is. 17. 12–14. Da. 7. 8, 20.

7 *Horn.* The horn is used throughout the Psalms as an emblem of *power.*—*C.*

8 Use your power humbly; be ready to stoop to men of low degree.—*C.*

9 Heb. *desert.*

i Ps. 50. 6; 58. 11. Da. 4. 35.

j 1 Sa. 2. 7, 8. Ps. 113. 7, 8. Da. 2. 21. Eze. 17. 24.

A.M. cir. 2956.
B.C. cir. 1048.

k Ps. 11. 6; 60. 3; 73. 10. Is. 51. 17. Je. 25. 15. Re. 14. 9, 10; 16. 19. Job 20. 21. 1 Th. 2. 16.

l Ps. 22. 22; 145. 1, 2; 146. 2; 103. 1–5; 104. 33, 34; 115. 1, 3.

1 Jacob prized the blessing, was exiled, and a pilgrim (He. 11. 13), prospered in toil, wrestled in faith and prayer—of all such Jehovah is the God.—*C.*

m Ps. 101. 8. Je. 48. 25. Zec. 1. 20.

o Ps. 89. 17; 148. 14; 92. 10; 132. 17, 18. 1 Sa. 2. 10.

PSALM LXXVI.

a Ps. iv. liv. lv. lxi. lxvii. titles.

1 Or, *for.*

b Ps. 48. 1, &c.; 147. 19, 20. De. 4. 7, 8.

c Ps. 99. 3; 113. 3; 132. 13. Is. 63. 12, 14; 49. 6. Phi. 2. 9, 10.

d 2 Ch. 6. 6. Ps. 132. 13, 14; 78. 68, 69; 48. 1, 2.

e Ps. 46. 9; 48. 3–7. Is. 37. 33, 36; 9. 5; 2. 4. Eze. 39. 3, 9. Zec. 9. 9, 10.

2 See note on Ps. 3. 2.—*C.*

g Eze. 38. 12, 13; 39. 4. Ca. 4. 8.

h Is. 46. 12. Job 40. 11. 2 Ch. 32. 21. Ps. 13. 3. Je. 51. 39, 57. Na. 3. 13, 18. Eze. 30. 21–25.

3 That is, the judgment of God was so heavy upon them that their hands were paralyzed, so that they were neither able to fight nor to take the spoil.—*P.*

i Ex. 15. 1, 21. Eze. 39. 20. Na. 3. 18. Zec. 12. 4. Is. 37. 36; 31. 8. Re. 2. 22, 23.

4 More accurately, 'Both the rider and horse are cast into a deep sleep.' This statement would apply well to the destruction of the vast host of Sennacherib, as recorded in 2 Ki. 18. 35.—*P.*

j Je. 20. 7. Ps. 111. 9; 48. 1; 89. 7. Ke. 15; 4; 14. 7.

k Na. 1. 6. Job 41. 10. Ps. 90. 11. Is. 33. 14. 1 Co. 10. 22. Re. 6. 16, 17.

l Ex. 19. 10. Ju. 5. 20. Ch. 32. 21–23; 20. 29. Ps. 46. 10. Zec. 2. 13. Re. 11. 13.

m Ps. 9. 7, 19; 7. 6; 44. 23, 26; 78. 65. Zep. 3. 8; 2. 3.

o Da. 3. 19, 28. Ex. 9. 16; 18. 11.

p Ps. 65. 7; 46. 6, 10; 138. 7. Is. 37. 29. Re. 11. 17, 18.

q Ec. 4. 5. Ps. 50. 14; 119. 106.

5 The Spirit thus 'speaketh to the churches.'—*C.*

r Ps. 89. 7; 68. 29. 2 Ch. 32. 22, 23.

6 Heb. *to the fear*, Ge. 31. 42. Is. 8. 13.

s Ps. 2. 5, 10; 68. 12, 35; 48. 4–6. 2 Ch. 32. 21. Is. xiii.–xxiv. Je. xxv. xlvi. –li. Eze. xxv. – xxxii. xxxviii. xxxix. Re. xiv. –xix.

8 For[k] in the hand of the LORD *there is* a cup, and the wine is red; it is full of mixture: and he poureth out of the same: but the dregs thereof, all the wicked of the earth shall wring *them* out, *and* drink *them.*

9 But[l] I will declare for ever; I will sing praises to the God of Jacob.[1]

10 All[m] the horns of the wicked also will I cut off; *but* [o]the horns of the righteous shall be exalted.

PSALM LXXVI.

1 *A declaration of God's majesty in the church.* 11 *An exhortation to serve him reverently.*

To the chief musician on [a]Neginoth, A psalm *or* song of[1] Asaph.

IN Judah[b] *is* God known: his[c] name *is* great in Israel.

2 In[d] Salem also is his tabernacle, and his dwelling-place in Zion.

3 There[e] brake he the arrows of the bow, the shield, and the sword, and the battle. [2]Selah.

4 Thou *art* more glorious *and* excellent than [g]the mountains of prey.

5 The[h] stout-hearted are spoiled, they have slept their sleep; and none of the men of might have found their hands.[3]

6 At[i] thy rebuke, O God of Jacob, both the chariot and horse[4] are cast into a dead sleep.

7 Thou,[j] *even* thou, *art* to be feared: and [k]who may stand in thy sight when once thou art angry?

8 Thou[l] didst cause judgment to be heard from heaven; the earth feared, and was still,

9 When [m]God arose to judgment, to save all the meek of the earth. Selah.

10 Surely[o] the wrath of man shall praise thee: the [p]remainder of wrath shalt thou restrain.

11 Vow,[q] and[5] pay unto the LORD your God: let [r]all that be round about him bring presents unto him that ought to be feared.[6]

12 He[s] shall cut off the spirit of princes: *he is* terrible to the kings of the earth.

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nant that still lingered, in sorrow, amidst the ruins of the temple, after Jeremiah was carried down from Mizpah to Egypt (Je. 43. 6), and is it not, most probably, an expression of regret for that rebellious act of abduction? *C.*

Ver. 17. *Summer and winter.* Therefore the God by whose power the glory of light emerges from the deformity of darkness, and the beauty of summer from the desolation of winter, is able to grant deliverance from enemies, and bring comfort out of sorrow. See ver. 10. *C.*

Ver. 20. 'The prayer in this passage may with propriety be used by the people of God now. It is still true that 'the dark parts of the earth are full of the habitations of cruelty;' and in view of this fact, and of the utter hopelessness of the renovation of the world by any human means, or by any progress which society can make of itself, it is proper to seek God's interposition. And it is proper in such prayers to him now, to make the ground of our appeal to him his own gracious covenant; his promises made to his church; his solemn assurance that this state of things shall not always continue, but that the time will arrive when the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the Lord' (*Barnes*). *P.*

REFLECTIONS.—Alas! to what melancholy apprehensions of their state and case are the people of God sometimes reduced! They fear that the rod of his correction is the sword of his judgment. But though he cast them down, he will not forsake believers. They who are redeemed by Jesus' blood should not come under the bondage of corruption. The favours which they have received are a presage, and ought to be made a plea for greater. While worldly minds feel only worldly crosses, the interests of religion and welfare of the church are incomparably dearest to the children of God. And however certain the ruin which will fall upon the destroyers of his church at last, it is extremely affecting to behold them making havoc of God's truths, ordinances, or people, while there is none to comfort us or to explain the dark providences. But under sore troubles it is proper to commemorate and plead upon God's former and distinguished mercies. He who divided the Red Sea and destroyed Pharaoh and his host, and who brought waters from the rock for Israel; he who is the Sovereign of nature, can, at his pleasure, command our and his church's deliverance. Importunate wrestlings and pleadings with God for the relief of his church, which is so dear to him, and for fulfilling his promise, of which he is ever mindful, and for destroying his daring and implacable reproachers, will not be long unanswered.

PSALM LXXV. Ver. 3. The single speaker can be no other than Messiah, prophetically arrived in his church. None but Christ alone could, without vain boasting and arrogance, attribute to himself such mighty power.—*Note*, The world, with all its institutions, is preserved from ruin merely that Christ may be glorified. *C.*

REFLECTIONS.—While we think of Jesus Christ, whom God has marvellously crowned with glory and honour, and of the infinite danger of opposing his government, let us remark what wonderful works of God have been exercised to usward. Great is the praise which we owe to God on every review of his mercies. Important and useful is the charge which is committed to magistrates and ministers: and there is great need of activity and care in their administrations, as they must be accountable to God, from whom they received their power. One true patriot may sometimes save a disjointed church or state from impending ruin. But vain and dangerous is it to withstand God's deputies. The righteous shall be advanced and flourish, while obstinate sinners shall be plunged into everlasting misery.

PSALM LXXVI. Ver. 1. *In Judah God is known.* God was known in the doctrine that expressed his nature—in the commandments that prescribed his will—in the history that recorded his acts—and the prophecy that foretold his coming to salvation, victory, and judgment. *C.*

Ver. 4. This is a passage of great difficulty. May it not be paraphrased thus: 'Thou *Zion*, undistinguished among cities, art yet, as the dwelling-place of God, more excellent than them all; and thou, *Salem*, taught by thy very name to cultivate peace, art yet, in that peace of God, more glorious than the mountains of the warriors—their strongholds and fortresses—enriched and stored with all the spoils of conquest.' *C.*

Ver. 9. Though spoken of as an event *past*, these words are evidently a description of a time still *future*—a mode of speech common with the prophets (see, for example, Is. 5. 3), the time at which God will arise and have mercy upon Zion, and save in his judgment *all* the meek of the earth. *C.*

REFLECTIONS.—Happy are those nations and churches which have the knowledge and presence of God in them! How profitable, pleasant, and enriching! Gloriously he protects them in danger, and destroys their enemies, however mighty or numerous. Their tyrannical oppressors, though like *mountains of prey*, shall destroy themselves utterly. His meek ones must indeed patiently wait awhile; but at last he will, to the terror of all around, appear for their relief. Whatever his people suffer shall but brighten their graces and

PSALM LXXVII.

1 The psalmist showeth what fierce combat he had with diffidence. 10 The victory which he had by considering God's great and gracious works.

To the chief musician, to [a]Jeduthun, A psalm of[1] Asaph.

I CRIED[b] unto God with my voice, *even* unto God with my voice; and he gave ear unto me.[2]

2 In[c] the day of my trouble I sought the LORD: my [3]sore[4] ran[d] in the night, and ceased not: [e]my soul refused to be comforted.

3 I[g] remembered God, and was troubled: I[h] complained, and my spirit was overwhelmed. Selah.[5]

4 Thou[i] holdest mine eyes waking: I am so troubled that I cannot speak.

5 I[j] have considered the days of old, the years of ancient times.

6 I call to remembrance my [k]song in the night: [l]I commune with mine own heart; and my spirit made diligent search.

7 Will[m] the LORD cast off for ever? and will he be favourable no more?

8 Is[o] his mercy clean gone for ever? doth *his* promise fail for evermore?[6]

9 Hath[p] God forgotten to be gracious? hath he in anger shut up his tender mercies? Selah.

10 And I said, [q]This *is* my infirmity: *but I will remember* the [r]years of the right hand of the most High.[7]

11 I[s] will remember the works of the LORD; surely I will remember thy wonders of old.

12 I will [t]meditate also of all thy work, and talk of thy doings.[8]

13 Thy[u] way, O God, *is* in the sanctuary:[9] who[v] *is so* great a God as *our* God?

14 Thou[x] *art* the God that doest wonders: thou[y] hast declared thy strength among the people.

15 Thou[z] hast with *thine* arm redeemed thy people, the sons of Jacob and Joseph. Selah.

16 The[a] waters saw thee, O God, the waters saw thee; they were afraid: the depths also were troubled.

17 The clouds poured out water:[1] the skies sent out a sound: thine [b]arrows also went abroad.

18 The[c] voice of thy thunder *was* in the heaven: the lightnings lightened the world: the earth trembled and shook.

A.M. cir. 2983.
B.C. cir. 1021.

PSALM LXXVII.

a 1 Ch.16.41,42;25.3, 6.Ps.xxxix.lxii titles.

1 Or, *for*, 1 Ch.16.7; 25.1.Ps.l. title.

b Ps.50.15;55.16;141. 1;142.1,5;34.6;86.7.

2 This psalm is manifestly the record of an inward struggle in the mind of the writer between good and evil, faith and despair. At first anguish fills his soul, hope seems to desert him, and overwhelmed with affliction he yields himself up to despair. Then, however, memory of past mercies returns; thoughts of divine love and power spring up, and at length hope dawns, and he rejoices in the salvation of the Lord.—*P.*

c Ps.130.1; 18.6; 102. 1,2.

3 Heb. *hand.*

4 *Sore.* Rather, 'my hand has been stretched out without ceasing—in prayer—to him through the night.'—*C.*

d Ps.6.2,3;38.2–8.

e Pr.18.14. Je. 31. 14. La.3.49,50;1.12,16.

g Job 31. 23; 6. 4; 10. 15. Je.17.17.

h Ps.143.4,5; 62. 3, 6; 13 1. 4; ch. title; 142. 2 4;55.4,5;61.2. La.3.17.

5 See note on Ps. 3. 2.—*C.*

i La. 2. 49. Ps. 6. 6. Job 7. 13–15; 2. 13; 6. 2; 23.2.

j De.32.7. Ps. 143. 5. Is.51.9;63.11.

k Ps.42.8. Job 35.10.

l Ps. 4. 4. De. 32. 29. Hag. 1. 5. La. 3.40. Job 34.32.

m Ps.13. 1–3; 6.3; 74. 1;85.5. La.3.31,32.

o Jn. 2. 4. Je. 15. 18. Nu.23.19.

6 Heb. *to generation and generation.*

p Ex.34.6,7. Is.49.15; 63.15. Je.31.20. Ro. 11. 1, 2.

q Ps.31.22. Je. 10. 19. Da. 9. 7. Ro. 7.23, 24. Mar. 9.24.Jo.16.33.

r Is.63.4;51.9. De.32. 7. ver.5,11. Ps. 143. 5.

7 Then I said, This is the time of my sorrow, but the right hand of the Most High can change it.' —*Boothroyd.*

s Ps.111.2,4; 107. 43, with Is.5.12.Ps.28.5.

t Ps.44.1;143.5;105.1 —5;145.4.

8 He that can meditate of 'all the work' of God, is, and must be, more than man—the Christ in the days of his flesh. —*C.*

u Ps.68.24;73.17; 27. 4;63.2.

9 *In the sanctuary* —rather, 'in holiness;' all thy ways of providence, however dark, are holy.—*C.*

v Ex.15.11. De. 3.24. Ps.89.6,8;147.5. Job 11. 7.

x Ex.15.11. Ps.72.18; 86.8;136.4.

y Ro.1.19,20. Ps. 93. 1. Is 51.9;52.10.

z Is.51.9, Is.51.9;63. 9,12. Ps 114.1,11,12.

a Ex. 14. 21; 15. 18. Ps 114.3;18 15. Hab. 3. 8–10.

1491.

1 Heb. *The clouds were poured forth with water.*

b ver. 18. Ps. 18. 14; 144.6;11.6.

c 2 Sa.22.14. Job 37.1 –5. Ps.29.3–9;50.3;97.4; 114.4. Hab. 3.5,6. Jos. 2. 9,10.

A.M. cir. 2983.
B.C. cir. 1021.

d Ne.9.11. Is. 63. 12, 13. Ps.29.10;97.2. Na.1. 4. Ro.11.33.

e Ex.14. 19. Hos. 12. 13. Ps.78. 52. Is. 63. 11–14. Je. 32, 20, 21. Ac.7. 36. Ne.9.12–14.

2 The sustaining and comforting influence of a study of God's goodness, as displayed in the history of his church in all ages, is here incidentally shown. It is sufficient to cheer the soul under all circumstances. It is calculated to preserve the church from faithless despondency, no matter how great the calamities that beset her. Let churches and individuals alike learn the lesson.—*P.*

PSALM LXXVIII.

B.C. cir. 1015.

1 Or, A psalm *for Asaph to give instruction.* Ps.74. title.

a De.32.29. Ps. 49.1, 3.Is.51.4.

b 2 Ki.17.17,Je.9.2.

2 The person calling the law *my law*, must be the lawgiver —must be the Christ. —*C.*

c Ps.49.4. Mat 13.13, 35;&c. with 1 Co.10.11.

3 The word *parable* is not here to be taken in the New Testament sense of the word; it here rather means 'sage observations.'—*C.*

4 *Dark sayings*— rather 'pointed sayings,' fitted to retouch the tablets of memory, and stir up the hearts of men. *C.* ——Those wise maxims which have been handed down from a remoteage, and which embody the results of long and thoughtful experience.—*P.*

d Ps.44.1;48.3;145.4. Is.38.19. De.6.7.

e Ex.13.8,14. De.4.9. Joel 1.3. Jn.3.11. Is. 63. 7–14. Ps.105.1,2; 48.13; 145.5,6;&c. ver. xxxvi.

5 In this verse prophets and apostles speak as commissioned by Messiah and taught by his Spirit. —*C.*

g Ps.147.19,20. Is. 8. 20. Ro.3.2. De.4. 45; 6. 7;11.19.

h De. 4. 9. Is. 38. 19. Ep.6.4.

i Ps.102.18;145.4;44. 1. De.4.9. Is. 38.19; 59. 21.

j Ps.130. 7, 8; 115. 9–11. Ho 3.1,5.

k Ps. 77. 10–12, with Ju. 2. 7,10,11. Jn. 14.15, 21,23.

l Eze. 20. 18; 2. 3–8. Ex.32.9;33.5;34.9. De. 1. 3; 31. 27. 2 Ki. 17. 14. Mat 3.7. Ac.7.51.

6 Heb. that *prepared not their heart*, 2 Ch.20.33.

7 Heb. *throwing forth.*

n De.1.41–44.1 Sa.4. 10;31.1.

o Ju.2.10–12.2 Ki.17. 14,15. Ne.9. 26, 29. De. 31. 16, 20.

p Ps. 106. 13. De. 32. 15, 18. Is. 63. 8. Je. 2. 32. Ho 2. 13. Ne 9. 17. Ps. 44. 20. Ne 9. 17 with 25–31. Ps. 105. 24–41; 106.7;135.9.

r Nu.13.22. Is.19.11, 13.

s Ex.14. 21, 29; 15. 8. Ne. 9. 11. Is. 63. 11–13. Ps.66.6.

t Ex.13. 21, 22; 14.24. Ne.9.12,19. Ps.105.39.

19 Thy[d] way *is* in the sea, and thy path in the great waters, and thy footsteps are not known.

20 Thou[e] leddest thy people like a flock by the hand of Moses and Aaron.[2]

PSALM LXXVIII.

1 An exhortation both to learn and to preach the law of God. 9 The story of God's wrath against the incredulous and disobedient. 67 The Israelites being rejected, God chose Judah, Zion, and David.

Maschil of Asaph.[1]

GIVE [a]ear, O [b]my people, *to* my law:[2] incline your ears to the words of my mouth.

2 I[c] will open my mouth in a parable;[3] I will utter dark sayings of old;[4]

3 Which[d] we have heard and known, and our fathers have told us.

4 We[e] will not hide *them* from their children, showing to the generation to come the praises of the LORD, and his strength, and his wonderful works that he hath done.[5]

5 For[g] he established a testimony in Jacob, and appointed a law in Israel, which he commanded our fathers, [h]that they should make them known to their children:

6 That[i] the generation to come might know *them, even* the children *which* should be born; *who* should arise and declare *them* to their children:

7 That[j] they might set their hope in God, [k]and not forget the works of God, but keep his commandments:

8 And might not be [l]as their fathers, a stubborn and rebellious generation; a generation *that* set not their heart aright,[6] and whose spirit was not steadfast with God.

9 The children of Ephraim, *being* armed, *and* carrying[7] bows, [m]turned back in the day of battle.

10 They[o] kept not the covenant of God, and refused to walk in his law;

11 And[p] forgat his works, and his wonders that he had showed them.

12 Marvellous[q] things did he in the sight of their fathers, in the land of Egypt, *in* the field of [r]Zoan.

13 He[s] divided the sea, and caused them to pass through; and he made the waters to stand as an heap.

14 In[t] the day-time also he led them with a cloud, and all the night with a light of fire.

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redound to his glory. And whatever of his enemies' fury hath not this tendency he restrains. The more awful our God and our deliverances are, the more ought we to wait on him, fear him, and make and pay grateful vows to him.

PSALM LXXVII. Ver. 1. There is one, and one only, 'whom the Father heareth always,' Jn. 11. 42, and in whose name alone are the prayers of sinners heard—that one is Christ. *C.*

Ver. 15. The sons of *Joseph* who was sold into slavery—the sons of *Jacob* who were brought into it in search of food, and hope of protection and prosperity. The first, the emblem of the natural man, 'sold under sin;' the second, the emblem of the spiritual man, for a time seduced, like Peter, to forget and deny his Lord. *C.*

Ver. 18. There is here a description of a storm of rain, hail, thunder, and lightning, with most probably an earthquake, not recorded in any of the books of Moses. The occasional supply of such omissions, when thus furnished by the Spirit, is serviceable as reminding us that the Scriptures were written, not to be histories of men, but of God and his government—a consideration that will often solve the most remarkable Scripture difficulties. *C.*

REFLECTIONS.—What days of trouble saints have to endure from temptations, corruptions, afflictions, and desertions! But in distress we must flee to the compassionate bosom of our God, and pour out our complaints before him. And if we would speed we must be both importunate and unwearied in our application. If we but speak in groans God can understand us and will answer. But often, under strong temptations, saints feed their sorrows and reject the consolations which God suggests to them in his Word: often they indulge the melancholy apprehension that he hath forsaken them and left them to eternal perdition. Terrible then is their case: and dishonourable to God is this their distrust. But hopeful is the appearance when they are brought to condemn their own unbelief, and to cast themselves on his almighty power and mercy; and when they continue meditating on and declaring his former almighty works of providence or grace. This awakens themselves and others to honourable thoughts of his conduct and to grateful praise. However deep and mysterious the dispensations of his providence, they are all holy and just. And however awful, they are infinitely gracious, and issue in the deliverance of believers from their manifold bondage, and in their guidance, by Jesus their great Leader and Priest, to the Canaan above.

PSALM LXXVIII. Ver. 8. *Steadfast. Steadfastness* is essential to religion, and is equally required in doctrine, testimony, and practice. Versatility and compliance will save for a time from many inconveniences that consistency must bear; but steadfastness will triumph in the end, while Reuben, *unstable as water*, will never excel. *C.*

15 He[u] clave the rocks in the wilderness, and gave *them* drink as *out of* the great depths.

16 He brought [v]streams also out of the rock, and caused waters to run down like rivers.

17 And [z]they sinned yet more against him, by provoking the most High in the wilderness.

18 And[y] they tempted God in their heart, by asking meat for their lust.

19 Yea, they spake against God; they said, Can[z] God furnish[8] a table in the wilderness?

20 Behold,[a] he smote the rock, that the waters gushed out, and the streams overflowed; can he give bread also? can he provide flesh for his people?

21 Therefore the LORD heard *this*, and [b]was wroth; so a fire[9] was kindled against Jacob, and anger also came up against Israel;

22 Because [c]they believed not in God, and trusted not in his salvation;[1]

23 Though he [d]had commanded the clouds from above, and opened the [e]doors of heaven,

24 And[g] had rained down manna upon them to eat, and had given them of the corn of heaven.

25 Man did eat [2]angels'[3] food: he sent them meat to the full.

26 He[h] caused an east wind to blow[4] in the heaven; and by his power he brought in the south wind.

27 He rained flesh also upon them as dust, and feathered fowls[5] like as the sand of the sea;

28 And he let *it* fall in the midst of their camp, round about their habitations.

29 So[i] they did eat, and were well filled: for he gave them their own desire;

30 They[j] were not estranged from their lust: but while their meat *was* yet in their mouths,

31 The wrath of God came upon them, and slew the fattest of them, and smote down[6] the chosen *men*[7] of Israel.

32 For[k] all this they sinned still, and believed not for his wondrous works.

A.M. cir. 2989. B.C. cir. 1015.

u Ex.17.6. Nu.20.11. Ps.105.41.1 Co.10.3,4.

v De.9.21. Ps.105.41. 1491.

x De.9.22. He.3.16-19. Ps.95. 8; 106. 7 32. Ex.xv.-xvii.xxxii. Nu. xi.xiv.&c.

y Ex.16.2. Nu. 11. 4. Ja.4.2,3.

1490.

z Nu.11.4,21,22.

[8] Heb. *order.*

a Ex.17.6. Nu.20.11.

b Nu.11.1,10,33.ver. 31. De.32. 22. Is. 27. 4. 1 Co.10.5,22.

[9] This evidently refers to the judgment of *fire* recorded Nu. 11. 1; which may have been either lightning, or the fiery desert wind called *samiel*—natural agents, but miraculously employed, and miraculously yielding at the voice of prayer.—*C.*

c Ps.106.24. Mat.13. 58. He.3.12,17-19; 2.3. 1 Jn.5.10. 2 Ch.20.12.

[1] This is one lesson which that portion of Jewish history was calculated to teach—that unbelief and distrust, resulting in open disobedience, will entail divine judgment.—*P.*

d Ps.33.9;148.5,6,8.

e 2 Ki.7.2,19. Ge.7. 11. Mal.3.10.

g Ex. 16. 14, 16. Ps. 105,40. Jn.6.31.1 Co.10. 3. Ne.9.15,20. De.8.3.

[2] Or, *Every one did eat the bread of the mighty*, Ps. 103. 20; 147.5.

[3] *Angels* is not the original Hebrew. The word signifies 'mighty ones—nobles.' That is, the people did eat exquisite food, fit for the table of nobles.—*C.*

h Ps.135.7. Nu.11.18, 31,32.

[4] Heb. *to go.*

[5] Heb. *fowl of wing.*

i Nu. 11. 13, 18-20. Ps.106.14,15. De.8.3.

j Ps. 106. 14, 15. Nu. 11.33.

[6] Heb. *made to bow.*

[7] Or, *young men*, Is.40.30,31.

k Nu. xiv. xvi. xvii. xxv. De.9.6,7. Ne.9.16, 17. Eze.20.13. Ps.106. 16-29.

* The *fly*, in the previous state of *caterpillar*, is perhaps the most voracious of all animals—some of them destroying in a single day many times the weight of themselves. It is related in the *Philosophical Transactions*, vol. ii. p. 766, that an insect in the form of a small maggot, and which afterwards turned into a *fly*, crept out of holes in the ground in New England, and in a short time destroyed all the trees in the country. So terrible are the natural scourges always at the command of the Almighty.—*C.*

A.M. cir. 2989. B.C. cir. 1015.

l Nu.14.29,33. Ps.90. 7-9. 1 Ce.26.20.15.

n Is.26.16. Ho.5.15. Jo.22.23. Ju.3.9,15;4.3; 10.10.

o De.32.4,15,31. Ex. 6.6. Is.63.9;48.17.

p De. 5. 28, 29. Eze. 33.31. Ho.11.12. Is.29. 13.

q Je. 17. 9. ver. 8,10, 57.

r Ps. 108. 1; 112. 7,8; 44.17-19.

s Ex.34.6,7.9. Nu.14. 18,20. Ps.86.15; 112.4; 130.7,8. Is.44.22. Mi.7. 18,19.

t 1 Ki.21.29. Is.48.9. Eze.xx.

u Job 7.7,16. Ps.103. 14,15. Ge.6. 3. Jn. 3. 6. Ja.4.14.

v Nu.14.11. Ps.95.8-10. Is.63.10. Ep.4.30.

[8] Or, *rebel against him.*

x 2 Pe. 2. 20. Nu. 14. 22. Ps. 95. 9. De. 6. 16. ver.19,20.

[9] *Turned back.*—Returned in heart and purpose to Egypt.—*C.*

[1] *Limited.* Doubted whether he had power or will to purpose or do what he had promised.—*C.*

y Ex. 6, 6; vii.-xiv. Ps.136.10-12. Je.32.21.

[2] Or, *from affliction.*

z Ex.vii.-xiv. De.4. 34; 6.22. Ne.9.10. Ps. 135.9;105.27;ver.12.

[3] Heb. *set.*

a Ex.7.20. Ps.105.29.

b Ex.8.6,24. Ps.105. 31.

[4] See note * in first column.

c Ex.8.6. Ps.105.30.

d Ex.10.13. Ps. 105. 34,35.

[5] According to Michaelis, the molecricket, which, in the grub state, commits great devastation on the roots of various vegetables.—*C.*

e Ex.9.23-25. Ps.105. 32,33.

[6] Or, *killed.*

[7] A tree of great national importance, as its fruit formed an extensive article of food, while the trunk furnished the wood ordinarily used for coffins, &c.—*C.*

[8] Or, *great hailstones.*

[9] Heb. *he shut up*, Ex.9.24,25.

[1] Or, *lightnings.*

g ver.47,48. Ps. 105. 27,28. Ex.7.4. Ro.2.8,9.

[2] *Evil angels.* The plagues, which, as messengers of divine wrath, may be called *angels*, or because that, for aught we can tell, such plagues may be inflicted by the intermediate agency of evil spirits delighting in human misery.—*C.*

[3] Heb. *he weighed a path.*

33 Therefore[l] their days did he consume in vanity, and their years in trouble.

34 When[n] he slew them, then they sought him; and they returned and inquired early after God:

35 And they remembered [o]that God *was* their Rock, and the high God their Redeemer.

36 Nevertheless[p] they did flatter him with their mouth, and they lied unto him with their tongues.

37 For[q] their heart was not right with him, neither were they [r]steadfast in his covenant.

38 But he, [s]*being* full of compassion, forgave *their* iniquity, and destroyed *them* not; [t]yea, many a time turned he his anger away, and did not stir up all his wrath.

39 For[u] he remembered that they *were but* flesh; a wind that passeth away, and cometh not again.

40 How[v] oft did they provoke him[8] in the wilderness, *and* grieve him in the desert!

41 Yea,[x] they turned back[9] and tempted God, and limited[1] the Holy One of Israel.

42 They remembered not [y]his hand, *nor* the day when he delivered them from the enemy.[2]

43 How[z] he had wrought[3] his signs in Egypt, and his wonders in the field of Zoan;

44 And[a] had turned their rivers into blood; and their floods, that they could not drink.

45 He[b] sent divers sorts of flies among them, which devoured[4] them; and [c]frogs, which destroyed them.

46 He[d] gave also their increase unto the caterpillar,[5] and their labour unto the locust.

47 He[e] destroyed[6] their vines with hail, and their sycamore-trees[7] with frost.[8]

48 He gave up[9] their cattle also to the hail, and their flocks to hot thunderbolts.[1]

49 He[g] cast upon them the fierceness of his anger, wrath, and indignation, and trouble, by sending evil angels[2] *among them.*

50 He made a way[3] to his anger; he spared

Ver. 9. *Ephraim.* Ephraim is selected to exemplify the result of unsteadiness, (1) Because, as the chief son of Joseph, he inherited peculiar promises, Ge. 48. 20. (2) Because Ephraim was the ruling tribe at entering Canaan under Joshua. (3) Because Ephraim attained to supreme power in the ten tribes, Is. 7. 9. (4) Because Ephraim became conspicuous among the tribes for dissolution of morals and idolatry, Is. 17. 28; Ho. 8. 11. (5) Because in their danger they sought not God, but Assyria, Ho. 5. 13. And (6) Because God visited them with calamities as conspicuous as the privileges they abused, Ho. 5. 9, 12. *C.*

Ver. 32. To many unthinking persons it appears strange, almost, if not altogether, beyond credibility, that the Israelites could receive so many mercies, and feel so many judgments, and yet remain the sensual, stupid, stiff-necked, rebellious, and incorrigible people they are represented to have been. A little consideration of the disregard of God's mercies and judgments that may still be seen in the world would soon remove this surprise or incredulity, and enforce the conviction, that the providence of God, and the blindness and rebellion of men, still continue, as in the days of Moses, to refuse to be enlightened, and to spurn the hand that relieves and feeds them. *C.*

Ver. 34. *When he slew them*, &c. That is, when he was slaying them, then, out of fear, they sought him; an occurrence every day exemplified in sick-bed professions of sorrow for past sins, and resolutions of amendment for the future—professions and resolutions that are often forgotten so soon as returning health prepares the way for renewed temptation. *C.*

Ver. 57. *Deceitful bow.* The eastern bow is ordinarily composed of several pieces of different elastic materials, and when unstrung is recurved nearly into the form of a hoop; and, if the elastic tendency of the curvature vary in the least from the plane of the string, the bow, when the arrow is discharged, will unstring itself and spring back, and the arrow will fall at the feet of the archer. *C.*

Ver. 59. *When God heard this.* We know little more of the relations between men and angels, than that 'they are all ministering spirits sent forth to minister to them who shall be heirs of salvation,' and that there is 'joy in heaven over one sinner that repenteth'—but these words seem also to intimate that the idolatries and other apostasies of the church may be brought up in heavenly records, or—if such in heaven there may be—even in holy lamentations 'to the ears of the God of Sabaoth.' *C.*

Ver. 64. *No lamentation.* It has often been remarked that among the many evils of continued public calamities, none is more grievous than the almost total destruction of sympathy and natural affection, and the paramount domination of selfishness. No instance can be more remarkable than that of a widow whose heart has been rendered so callous that she drops no tear of sorrow to the memory of the husband of her youth! *C.*

REFLECTIONS.—Important are the great things of God's law and the matters of our eternal salvation; and they demand the most serious attention. With great care ought parents to instruct children in the knowledge of the great truths and works of God. Neglect of this issues in children's unbelief, hypocrisy, and lasting ruin. And to avoid the bad effects of parents' guilt, children of wicked men ought to be doubly careful to avoid imitating them. How weak men are when God is their enemy; and how cowardly when their consciences are burdened with guilt! No miracles, however gracious and striking, can melt an ignorant and hardened heart, or induce it to gratitude. No favours will satisfy a discontented spirit, and restrain its malicious murmurings against God. With amazing patience and kindness God provides for his abusers amongst mankind! But when he gratifies sinners in their requests, his gifts become their snare and curse: this world's abundance is abused to excess: reflection is banished: and men hurry headlong into ruin. They who make a god of their belly will find their end to be destruction: and they who will not be bowed by mercies or corrections must be broken by judgments. If sin be indulged sorrow must follow. Nor shall the stoutest be able to resist the uplifted arm of an angry God. Troubles often force men to their profession, prayers, or tears, whose wickedness is quickly thereafter discovered. The danger is scarcely blown over when all their convictions and promises are forgotten and contemned.—O the infinite compassion and patience of God towards all professing people! But, alas! his most singular favours and tremendous judgments are soon forgotten and despised!—The creatures of God sometimes become means, and in the most fearful manner cover his enemies with ruin. But abundant returns of thankfulness, love, and service are due to him from those to whom he has been liberal of his favours. How ready are most to imitate their wicked progenitors, to the dishonour of their gracious God! But more fearfully criminal is the unfaithful-

not their soul from death, but gave their life over to the pestilence;[4]

51 And[h] smote all the first-born in Egypt; the chief of *their* strength in the tabernacles of Ham:[i]

52 But[j] made his own people to go forth like sheep, and guided them in the wilderness like a flock.[5]

53 And[k] he led them on safely, so that they feared not: but the sea [l]overwhelmed[6] their enemies.

54 And he brought them [m]to the border of his sanctuary,[7] *even to* this mountain, *which* his right hand had purchased.

55 He[o] cast out the heathen also before them, and divided them an inheritance by line,[8] and made the tribes of Israel to dwell in their tents.

56 Yet[p] they tempted and provoked the most high God, and kept not his testimonies:

57 But[q] turned back, and dealt unfaithfully like their fathers: they were turned aside [r]like a deceitful bow.

58 For[s] they provoked him to anger with their high places, and moved him to jealousy with their graven images.

59 When God [t]heard *this*, he [u]was wroth, and greatly abhorred Israel:

60 So[v] that he forsook the tabernacle of Shiloh, the tent *which* he placed among men;

61 And delivered his strength[9] into captivity, and his glory into the enemy's hand.[1]

62 He[w] gave his people over also unto the sword; and was wroth with his inheritance.

63 The[y] fire consumed their young men; and their maidens were not given[2] to marriage.

64 Their[z] priests fell by the sword; and their widows made no lamentation.

65 Then[a] the LORD awaked as one out of sleep, *and* like a mighty man that shouteth by reason of wine:

66 And he [b]smote his enemies in the hinder parts; he put them to a perpetual reproach.

67 Moreover [c]he refused the tabernacle of Joseph, and chose not the tribe of Ephraim:

68 But[d] chose the tribe of Judah, the mount Zion which he loved.

69 And[e] he built his sanctuary like high *palaces*, like the earth which he hath established[3] for ever.[4]

A.M. cir. 2989.
B.C. cir. 1015.

4 Or, *their beasts to the murrain*, Ex. 9. 3–6.
h Ex.12.29. Ps. 105. 36;135.8;136.10.
i Ge.9.22,25. Ps.105. 23;106.22.
j Ex.12.37. Ps.77.20; 136. 11, 12, 16; 105. 37. Ne.9.12, Is.63.9–14. Je. 32.21.
5 The figure is equally beautiful and graphic. The eastern shepherd goes before his sheep, and they follow him. He leads them to the best pastures, along the safest paths, and to the choicest fountains. He keeps off all danger, meets and drives away wild beasts that would destroy and devour. So did God with Israel in the wilderness. In the cloudy pillar by day and the fiery pillar by night he led them. He made them encamp by the fountains in the desert. He procured for them necessary food, and he defended them against all enemies.—'He led them in safety, so that they feared not.' —*P.*
k Ex.xiv.xv.
l Ex.14.27;15.10. Ps. 136.15.
6 Heb. *covered.*
m Ex. 15. 13, 17. De. 32.10–12; 11.11. Ps.44. 3. Ne.9.22–25.
1451.
7 God's *sanctuary* here means the whole land of Canaan. The Shekinah glory never left them till they reached the border of the country.—*P.*
o Jos. vi.–xxi. Nu. xxi. De. 32. 13, 14. Ps. 135. 10–13; 136. 17–22; 105.44. Ne.9.22–25. Ex. 3.8;23.23 31.
8 *By line.* Each tribe having its lot adjusted by distinct geographical landmarks with a territory proportioned to its population.—*C.*
p Is. 26.10. Ne.9.26. Eze.20.28;16.15,26. Ps. 106.34–39.2 Ki.17.7–17. De 31.16,20;32.15–19.
q Ju.2.11–13,19; 3.5–7,12;4.1;6.1;10.6.
r Ho. 7. 16. Ju.2.19. ver. 8,10,37;Ps.106.43.
s Ju.2.12,20. De. 11. 16; 32. 16, 21. See on ver. 56, 57.
t Ps.14.2–4;11.5. He. 4.13.
u Le. 26. 14–39. De. 28.15–68; 29.18–28; 31. 17;32.19–26.
v 1 Sa.4.11. Je.7.12, 14;26.6,9. Jos.18.1.
9 Ark, 1 Ch. 16. 11. Ps.132.8.1 Sa.4.11,21.
1 The capture of the ark of the covenant by the Philistines is here referred to. After that period it was never again set up in Shiloh.—*P.*
x 1 Sa.4.2,10,11.
y ver. 21. De. 32. 22; 29,20.
2 Heb. *praised*, Is. 4.1. Je.7.34;15.9;25.10. *z* 1 Sa. 14. 19. Job 27.15 Eze 24.23.
a Ps.7.6;44.23,26;83. 1.Is.42.13,14;51.9.
b 1 Sa.5.6–12; 6.4,11. Ex.28.11. Job 40.12.
c Je.7.12,14;26.6,9. 1055.
d Ge.49.10. Ps.132. 6,12,14; 48.1,2; 87.2. 2 Ch.6.6.
e 1 Ki.vi.–viii.;9.1–8.
3 Heb. *founded.*
4 The sanctuary constructed by David, and not the temple built by Solomon, is here referred to. The former was on Mount Zion, the latter on Moriah. The site of the sanctuary, on the summit of Zion, seen from afar, is well described in the first clause: 'He built his sanctuarylike heights.'—*P.*
g 1 Sa.16.11. 2 Sa.7. 8;12.7. Ps.89.3,4,15–20.
5 Heb. *from after*
h Ge.33.13. Is.40.11.
i 2 Sa.5.2. 2 Ch.11.2. Ps.75.6,7; 113.7,8. Ac. 13.22,36.
j 1 Ki.9.4. Ps. 75.2; 101.3–8. 2 Sa.8.15.1 Ki. 15.5. Ac.13.22, with Is. 52.13;11.2–4.
6 The *integrity* attributed to David lay not in sinlessness—for David acknowledged his guilt —but it lay in his perfect abhorrence of idolatry, and his undivided attachment to the service of the true God.—*C.*

PSALM LXXIX.
B.C. cir. 1588.
1 Or, *for.*
a La. 1. 10. 2 Ki. 23. 33; 24. 1, 2, 11; 25. 1–10. Lu.21.24.
b Ex.15.17. Ps.78.54, 55;74.1–4.
c Ps.74.2–8. 2 Ki. 25. 9, 10. Je.19.13;39.8; 26. 18. Mi.3.12.
d Je.7.33;15.4; 14.16. Ps.141.7. Re.11.9.
e Je.16.4;34.20.
f De.28.37. Ps.44.13, 14;80.6; 137.7. Eze. 35. 12–14.
h Ps.89.46;80.4;85.5; 74.10. De.32.22.
i Zep.1.18.
j Je.10.25; xxv. xlvi. –li. 1 Th.1. 8. Ps. 9. 16, 17. Is.x.xiii.–xxiv. Re. 6.10;16.1.
2 *Who have not known thee.* 'Who own thee not.'—*Boothroyd.*
k Ps.80.13. Je.51.34, 35;50.6,7.
l Is.64.9;43.25;44.22. Je.31.34. ver. 9. Ex. 34. 9. Ps.106.6;25.7;130.3.
3 Or, *the iniquities of them that were before us.*
m Joel2.17,18. Ps.51. 28;85.4,7. De.28.43.
4 *Let thy tender mercies speedily prevent us.* Come quickly.—*Boothroyd.*
o 2 Ch.14.11. Jos.7.9. Ps.106.8; 32.1,2. Da. 9. 16–19. Eze.20.9,14,22.
5 For the manifestation of his glorious attributes proclaimed, see note on Ex. 34.6.—*C.*
p Ps.115.2;42.3,9,10.
q Ps.9.16;58.11;64.9; 83.9–18. Je. 51. 36. Re. 18.24;6.9;16.6,7;19.2.
6 Heb. *vengeance.*
7 *Revenging* — not the revenge of wrath and malice, as it is put forth by sinful men, but the righteous sentence which divine justice inflicts, as much for the merciful protection of the innocent as for the retributive punishment of the guilty. —*C.*
r Ps.12.5;102.20.
8 Such, be it remembered, was Jesus!—*C.*
s Nu.14.17–19. 1 Pe. 1.5. Is. 27. 3. Ps. 44.22, 23.
9 Heb. *thine arm.*
1 Heb. *reserve the children of death.*
2 *Appointed to die.* So were the holy apostles! the servants being judged and condemned, as their Lord is.—*C.*
t Is. 65. 6. Lu. 6. 38. Ge.4.15.
3 Awake their consciences to feel, confess, and punish their guiltiness.—*C.*
u Ps.44.16; 74.18,22; 89.50,51. La.3.64.
v Ps.95.7; 100.3. Ex. 19.5,6.
x Is.43.21. Ps. 45.17; 145.4.
4 Heb. *to generation and generation.*

70 He[g] chose David also his servant, and took him from the sheep-folds:

71 From following[5] the [h]ewes great with young he brought him [i]to feed Jacob his people, and Israel his inheritance.

72 So[j] he fed them according to the integrity[6] of his heart, and guided them by the skilfulness of his hands.

PSALM LXXIX.

1 *The psalmist complaineth of the desolation of Jerusalem.* 8 *He prayeth for deliverance,* 13 *and promiseth thankfulness.*

A psalm of[1] Asaph.

O GOD, [a]the heathen are come into [b]thine inheritance; [c]thy holy temple have they defiled; they have laid Jerusalem on heaps.

2 The[d] dead bodies of thy servants have they given *to be* meat unto the fowls of the heaven, the flesh of thy saints unto the beasts of the earth.

3 Their blood have they shed like water round about Jerusalem; [e]and *there was* none to bury *them.*

4 We[g] are become a reproach to our neighbours, a scorn and derision to them that are round about us.

5 How[h] long, LORD? wilt thou be angry for ever? [i]shall thy jealousy burn like fire?

6 Pour[j] out thy wrath upon the heathen that have not known thee,[2] and upon the kingdoms that have not called upon thy name.

7 For[k] they have devoured Jacob, and laid waste his dwelling-place.

8 O[l] remember not against us former iniquities:[3] let[n] thy tender mercies speedily prevent us;[4] for we are brought very low.

9 Help[o] us, O God of our salvation, for the glory of thy name;[5] and deliver us, and purge away our sins, for thy name's sake.

10 Wherefore[p] should the heathen say, Where *is* their God? [q]let him be known among the heathen in our sight *by* the [6]revenging[7] of the blood of thy servants *which is* shed.

11 Let[r] the sighing of the prisoner[8] come before thee: [s]according to the greatness of thy power[9] preserve thou those that are appointed to [1]die:[2]

12 And [t]render unto our neighbours sevenfold into their bosom[3] their [u]reproach, wherewith they have reproached thee, O LORD.

13 So[v] we thy people, and sheep of thy pasture, will give thee thanks for ever; we will [x]show forth thy praise to all generations.[4]

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ness of those who profess to serve him; it draws tremendous destruction upon the transgressors. If we forsake God he will forsake us; and no tabernacle, no formalities in religion, can avail us when he is departed. —But however sharply he corrects faithful people, he hath still mercy in store for them. They who triumph over them a little shall quickly have their glory turned to shame: and he will maintain a church to himself for ever. If to punish one nation he remove their gospel candlestick, he will send the light of his truth to another, and often the most unlikely. And not David, but Jesus Christ, shall for ever feed God's flock of ransomed men, according to the integrity of his heart and good skill of his hands.

PSALM LXXIX. Ver. 1. There is no internal note of the precise date of this psalm, and conjecture is useless. It is enough to know that it records some one of those lamentable occasions upon which a righteous God gave up to judgment a backsliding and forgetful church. But let the Gentile churches recollect that such judgments are not confined to Israel, but are prophetically suspended over themselves, should they fall into the Jewish sins of self-righteousness and unbelief, Ro. 9. 31; 10. 3; 11. 20, 21. *C.*

Ver. 5. These words may have been, and probably were, descriptive of the ravages of the Babylonians, when the first temple was destroyed and Jerusalem laid waste; but they were also prophetic of more terrible calamities in the distant future. To this day the poor Jews assemble at stated times outside the massive wall of the ancient temple area, and, wailing, chant these lines. *P.*

REFLECTIONS. —To what fearful and lasting distress and desolation is the church of God sometimes brought, while forced to bear at once the cruelty and derision of men and the manifested displeasure of God! But he will assuredly visit with his wrath such as live in ignorance of him and neglect of his worship. And though he permit his people to be

PSALM LXXX.

1 *The psalmist in his prayer complaineth of the miseries of the church.* 8 *God's former favours are turned into judgments.* 14 *He prayeth for deliverance.*

To the chief musician upon [a]Shoshannim-Eduth, A psalm of Asaph.[1]

GIVE ear, [b]O [c]Shepherd of Israel, thou that [d]leadest Joseph like a flock; thou that dwellest[e] *between* the cherubims, [g]shine[2] forth.

2 Before[h] Ephraim, and Benjamin, and Manasseh, stir up thy strength, and come *and* save us.[3]

3 Turn[i] us again,[4] O God, and [j]cause thy face to shine; and we shall be saved.

4 O LORD God of hosts, how long wilt thou be angry[5] against the prayer of thy people?

5 Thou feedest them with [k]the bread of tears; and givest them tears to drink in great measure.

6 Thou[l] makest us a strife[6] unto our neighbours; and our enemies laugh[7] among themselves.

7 Turn[m] us again, O God of hosts, and [c]cause thy face to shine; and we shall be saved.

8 Thou hast brought a [p]vine out of Egypt: thou[q] hast cast out the heathen, and planted it.

9 Thou[r] preparedst *room* before it, and didst cause it to take deep root, and it filled the land.

10 The[s] hills were covered with the shadow of it:[8] and the boughs thereof *were like* the goodly cedars.[9]

11 She[t] sent out her boughs unto the sea, and her branches unto the river.[1]

12 Why hast thou *then* [u]broken down her hedges, so that all they which pass by the way do pluck her?

13 The [v]boar out of the wood doth waste it, and the wild beast of the field doth devour it.

14 Return, [x]we beseech thee, O God of hosts: look down from heaven, and behold, and visit this vine;

15 And the [y]vineyard which thy right hand hath planted, and the branch *that* thou madest strong for thyself.

16 *It*[z] *is* burnt with fire, *it is* cut down: they perish[2] at the rebuke of thy countenance.

17 Let thy hand be upon the [a]man of thy right hand, upon the son of man *whom* thou madest strong for thyself.

18 So [b]will we not go back from thee: [c]quicken us, and we will call upon thy name.

19 Turn[d] us again, O LORD God of hosts, [e]cause thy face to shine; and we shall be saved.

PSALM LXXXI.

1 *An exhortation to a solemn praising of God.* 4 *God challengeth that duty by reason of his benefits.* 8 *God, exhorting to obedience, complaineth of their disobedience, which proveth their own hurt.*

To the chief musician upon [a]Gittith, *A psalm* of Asaph.[1]

SING aloud [b]unto God [c]our strength: [d]make a joyful noise unto the God of Jacob.

2 Take a psalm, and bring hither the timbrel, the pleasant harp with the psaltery.

3 Blow up the trumpet [e]in the new-moon, in the time appointed, on our solemn feast-day.

4 For [g]this *was* a statute for Israel, *and* a law of the God of Jacob.[2]

5 This he ordained in Joseph[3] *for* a testimony, when he went out through[4] the land of Egypt: *where* [h]I heard a language *that* I understood not.

6 I[i] removed his shoulder from the burden: his hands were delivered[5] from the pots.[6]

7 Thou[j] calledst in trouble, and I delivered thee; I answered thee in the [k]secret place of thunder: [l]I proved thee at the waters of Meribah.[7] Selah.[8]

8 Hear, [m]O my people, and I will testify unto thee; O Israel, [c]if thou wilt hearken unto me;

9 There[p] shall no strange god be in thee; neither shalt thou worship any strange god.

10 I[q] *am* the LORD thy God, which brought

A.M. cir. 2967 or 2983. B.C. cir. 1037 or 1021.

PSALM LXXX.

a Ps.xlv.lx. titles. 1 Or, *for Asaph.*

b Ps.4.15.1.130.2.

c Ps.23. 1. Is. 40. 11. Ge.49.24.

d Ps.77. 15, 20; 81. 5; 78.55.2 Sa.6.2.

e 1 Sa.4.4. Ex.25.20, 22;30.6.

g Ps.4.6; 50. 2; 94. 1. De.33.2.

2 Allusion is here made to the *Shechinah* glory, or visible presence of God, upon the mercy-seat, between the cherubims. From that place God gave responses to the high-priest; to that place the Israelites always turned in prayer.—*P.*

h Nu.2.18–24;10.22–24. Ps.44.23, 26; 74. 11. Is.51.9,10.

g Heb. *come for salvation to us.*

i ver.7,19. La. 5. 21. Ps.126.1;18.37;8.34.

4 *Turn us again,* 'Restore us again.' *Boothroyd.*

j ver.1. Nu. 6. 25,26. Ps.4.6;67.1.

5 Heb. *wilt thou smoke!* Ps.74. 1; 85. 5. De.32.22. La.3.8.

k Ps.42. 3; 102. 9. Is. 30.20.

l Ps.44. 13; 79. 4. Je. 15.10. Ju.16.25. Re.11. 10.

6 *Thou makest us a strife.* They strive with one another for dominion over us.—*C.*

7 *Our enemies laugh.* They deride our religion, and triumph over our calamities; the surest evidence of little but wicked minds.—*C.*

m ver.3, 19. 1 Ki. 18. 37. Ps.126.1. La. 5. 21. Lu.1.16.

o Nu.6.25,26. Ps.4.6; 67.1.

p Is.5.1–7;27.2,3. Je. 2.21. Eze.17.6. Mat.21. 33.

q Ps.44.2;78.55; 135. 10–12.

r Ex. 23. 28. Jos. 24. 12;vi.–xxi. Ps. 136. 17–22;105.44. Ne.9.22–25.

s 1 Ch. 21. 5. 1 Ki. 4. 20,25.2 Ch.xvii.

8 That vines were trained to be summer shades for eating or reposing, is evident from 1 Ki. 4. 25. Mi. 4. 4; a beautiful emblem of Christ, *the true vine*, under whose providential headship the whole church reclines, Ep. 1.22.—*C.*

9 Heb. *cedars of God.*

t Ge.15.18. Ex.23.31. 1 Ki.4.21. Ps.72.8. Jos. 24.11–13.

1 From *the Mediterranean* on the west, to the *Euphrates* on the east.—*C.*

u Ps.89.40;78.62. Is. 5.2,5. Ju.2.14,15. Ne.9. 27,28. Na.2.2.

A.M. cir. 2967 or 2983. B.C. cir. 1037 or 1021.

v Is.5.1,2;11.1. Je. 2. 21. Ex.19.5,6. De.32.9. Zec.3.8.

x Ps.79.5;39.11;68.1, 2;76.6,7. De.32.22.

2 *They perish.*—That is, the vineyard and the branch. Christ's glory is obscured, and his people are distressed and ruined—events that have often occurred in the history of the church.—*C.*

a Is.53.5, ver.15. Ex. 4.22; 15. 5,6. Ps. 89. 21; 110.1. Da.7.13,14.

b Job 34. 32. He. 10. 39. Ps.119.32.

c Ep.2.1,5. Ps. 85. 6; 119.37,40.

d Ps. 80. 4; 126. 1. Je. 31. 18; 3.18.

e ver.1,3,7. Ps. 27. 4, 9;44. 3;31.16.

PSALM LXXXI.

B.C. cir. 1045.

a Ps. viii. lxxxiv. titles. 1 Or, *for Asaph,* Ps.lxxiii.

b Ps.149.5;150.5.

c 2 Sa.22.2,3. Ps. 28. 8. Jn. 15. 5. Phi.4.13.

d Ps. 33. 1–3; 47. 1–7; 66.1;xcv.–c.cxliv.cl.

e Nu. 10. 10; xxviii. xxix. Le.xxiii. De. 16. 16.2 Ki.4.23.

g Nu. 10. 10. Ex. 12. 18,19. Le.23.24,26,34.

2 It would appear from verses 3 and 4 that this psalm was intended for the public service of the temple or sanctuary, on the great annual festivals in the seventh month. The month was ushered in by a solemn sabbath—'a memorial of blowing of trumpets,' Le. 23. 24. On the tenth of the same month was the feast of atonement; on the fifteenth the feast of tabernacles, or of ingathering, which lasted seven days.—*P.*

3 i.e. *Israel,* Ps. 77. 15; 80. 1, 2. Am. 6. 6.

4 Or, *against.*

h Ps. 114. 1. Ge.42.23. De.28.49. Je. 5. 15. Is. 28. 11.

i Is.9.4;10.27. Ex. 1. 14;6.6. Ps.68.13.

5 Heb. *passed away.*

6 Or, *baskets.* Rather, 'the baskets,' or clay troughs, used in the manufacture of brick. —*C.*

j Ex.2.23;3.7–10; 14. 10, 11. Ps.50.15; 91. 14, 15.

k Ex.14.24;19.19.

l Ex.17. 2–7. Nu. 20. 13.

7 Or, *strife.*

8 See note on Ps.3. 2.—*C.*

m Ps.50.7. De.4. 26; 31.28. Is.55.3,6,7.

o Ex.15.26, ver.13.

p Ex.20.3. 1 Co.8. 4, 5. De.4.19,25; 6. 13,14. Ho.14.8. 1 Jn.5.21.

q Ex.20.2. Je. 31. 33; 3.14;11.4;24.7;30.22.

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oppressed for a while, he will speedily rid them of their persecutors; and often their extremity ushers in their deliverance. Humble prayers for forgiveness, poured forth in sighs and groans, and attended with deep concern for God's dishonour, will not be long unanswered. And deliverances, founded in pardon through Jesus' blood, will animate to cordial praise and thankfulness.

PSALM LXXX. Ver. 1. *Leadest Jacob.* In the pastoral countries of the East, the flock intrusted to a shepherd is generally under a hundred (see Mat. 18. 12); because it must be sedulously watched, and kept within the view of the shepherd, for fear of the predatory bands by whom these countries are infested. The shepherd accordingly teaches his flock to know his voice, come at his call—he *leads* them, and they follow his movements, Jn. 10. 27. *C.*

Ver. 2. *Before Ephraim*—Joseph's *first-born*, by divine election; before *Benjamin*, Joseph's beloved brother; before *Manasseh*, his *first-born* in point of time, but placed last by divine appointment, to teach families that the Lord reigneth in all their arrangements. These three tribes marched immediately before the Kohathites who carried the ark, Nu. 2. 17–24; 10. 21–24. *C.*

Ver. 13. *The boar*, &c. This is a literal representation of fact at this day in some of the vine districts of the East, especially in Mesopotamia. In the lips of a Jew, the words had a meaning doubly emblematic of the persecutors of the church, as represented not merely by a *destructive* but an *unclean* animal. *C.*

Ver. 17. *Man of thy right hand.* Let thy hand, anointing him to office and power, by the Holy Ghost, be upon Messiah, the man who is to be exalted to thy 'right hand'—the 'Son of man' who comes to redeem the world. *C.*

REFLECTIONS.—Great is the mercy that God is the shepherd, leader, and protector of his people—that he is a God reconciled in Christ, to the everlasting wonder of angels and men—and that now it is not the Jewish tribes who marched after the ark in the desert, but multitudes of Gentiles, that see his salvation. Awakened souls ardently desire reconciliation with God, and repeated manifestations of his favour. And if we are turned to God by faith, we cannot fail to inherit his eternal glory. But through seeming rejection of prayers and angry frowns from God, and through tears, griefs, and reproaches, must we sometimes go thither. With what kind care did God settle the Israelites in Canaan and make them flourish there! With how much more did he gather, found, and increase his gospel church! But, alas! the misery and ruin that sin draws down upon the best-constituted churches and nations. Enemies, furious as wild beasts, waste them when God withdraws his protection. Yet the design hereof is not his people's ruin; but to excite their prayers, quicken their repentance, and magnify the wonders of his power and grace in their deliverance. It is impossible for his church to be ruined when her help is laid on her almighty Redeemer, the man of God's right hand. God's love for us is the source of all our salvation, quickening, and blessedness of grace. Through him strengthening us, we can do all things. No wonder then that prayer is the daily employment of such as are spiritually alive; and that a sense of God's favour is more earnestly desired than the removal of any affliction.

PSALM LXXXI. Ver. 1. God is called the God of Jacob, in reference to the following circumstances in Jacob's history:—(1) He was a specimen, representative, or type of the electing grace of God, Ro. 9. 11. (2) He learned, by grace, to prize the birthright. (3) He was willing to purchase it with his food, the representative of his life. (4) He was forced into exile, and became a stranger, a pilgrim. (5) He was tried with hard measures by his friends. (6) He was a faithful servant. (7) He was an affectionate husband and parent. (8) He was a bold wrestler in prayer—utterly refusing to resign without a blessing. (9) He was the father of a numerous progeny. (10) He was, in the fulfilment of prophecy, and the designs of Providence, led down into Egypt. (11) He was brought up from it after death—an emblem of deliverance by the resurrection. (12) He rested in the land of promise. *C.*

Ver. 5. *Understood not.* Messiah, as prophet, is the speaker, and so speaks, as when he shall say to the wicked, 'I never knew you.' *C.*

Ver. 10. Ask what you need; make any request consonant with my holy will, and the granting of which will promote your own welfare, and I will liberally respond to every wish, and bestow to the utmost extent of your desire. 'There is not a want of our nature—of our bodies or our souls; a want pertaining to this life or the life to come—to ourselves, to our families, to our friends, to the church, or to our country—which God is not able to meet; and there is not a *real* necessity in any of these respects which he is not willing to meet.' *P.*

REFLECTIONS.—God's saving relations are a delightful foundation of our warmest praise. Deliverances from God, as well as his authoritative command, oblige us to a punctual observance of his ordinances of worship. And nothing can do it more effectually than our eternal redemption through Christ. How ready is God to help and to save those who call upon him in trouble! And all our obedience is delightfully founded.

thee out of the land of Egypt: [r]open thy mouth wide, and I will fill it.

11 But[s] my people would not hearken to my voice; and Israel would none of me.[9]

12 So[t] I gave them up unto their own hearts' lust;[1] *and* they walked in their own counsels.

13 Oh[u] that my people had hearkened unto me, *and* Israel had walked in my ways!

14 I should soon have subdued [v]their enemies, and turned my hand against their adversaries.

15 The haters of the LORD should have submitted themselves[2] unto him: [x]but their time[3] should have endured for ever.

16 He [y]should have fed them also with the finest of the wheat:[4] and with honey out of the rock should I have satisfied thee.

PSALM LXXXII.

1 *The psalmist, having exhorted the judges,* 5 *and reproved their misconduct,* 8 *prayeth God to judge.*

A psalm of Asaph.[1]

GOD standeth[2] in the [a]congregation of the mighty; he judgeth among the gods.

2 How long will ye [b]judge unjustly, and accept the persons of the wicked? Selah.[3]

3 Defend[4] the poor and fatherless: do justice to the afflicted and needy.

4 Deliver[c] the poor and needy: rid *them* out of the hand of the wicked.

5 They[d] know not, neither will they understand; they walk on in darkness: [e]all the foundations of the earth are out of course.[5]

6 I[g] have said, Ye *are* gods; and all of you *are* children of the most High:[6]

7 But[h] ye shall die like men, and fall like one of the princes.[7]

8 Arise,[i] O God, judge the earth: for [j]thou shalt inherit all nations.

PSALM LXXXIII.

1 *A complaint to God of the enemies' conspiracies.* 9 *A prayer against them that oppress the church.*

A song *or* psalm of Asaph.[1]

KEEP not[a] thou silence, O God: hold not thy peace, and be not still, O God.

2 For, [b]lo, thine enemies make a tumult; and they that hate thee have lifted up the head.

A.M. cir. 2959.
B.C. cir. 1045.

r Mat.7.7. Jn. 15. 7. Ps. 37. 4; 36. 8; 65. 4, 7. Ep. 3. 19, 20. Is. 45. 11. Je.31.14,25.
s De.32.15,18. Ho.11. 2.Pr.1.25,30. He.10.29. Zec.7.11;11.8.
1 Laid believing hold upon none of mine attributes.—*C.*
t Ac. 7. 42. Ro. 1.26. Is.30.1.
1 Or, *to the hardness of their hearts,* or *imaginations.*
u De.5.29; 32.29. Is. 48. 18. Mat. 23. 37. Lu. 19.41,42.
v Ps.83.2-8. Ju.3.3.
2 Heb. *lied,* i.e. *yielded feigned obedience,* Ps.18.44;66.3.
x Ps.102.28. Is.65.22. Joel 3.20.
3 Their possession of Canaan should not have been taken away.—*C.*
y Is. 1. 19. De.32.13, 14. Ps. 147. 14. 1 Sa.14. 25,26. Job 29.6.
4 Heb. *with the fat of wheat.*

PSALM LXXXII.

B.C. cir. 1048.

1 Or, *for Asaph.*
2 *God standeth.*—That is, he stands not merely supreme, while all *bow down;* but he stands justified in all his government, whether of providence or grace. Comp. Ps.v. with Ro. 3.26.—*C.*
a ver. 6. 2 Ch. 19. 6. Ex.12.12;22.28. Ac.23. 5.Ec.5.8.Pr.8.15,16.
b Ps. 58. 2. De. 1. 17; 16.19. 2 Ch.19.6,7. Le. 19.15.
3 See note on Ps.3. 2.—*C.*
4 Heb. *judge,* De. 10.18. Is.1.17. Je.22.3, 16.Ex.23.6.
c Pr.24.10,11.Job 29. 12.Ps.72.12-14.
d Mi.3.1,6. Ps.58.1-3.Is.42.19,20.Jn.12.35.
e Ps.11.3;75.3. Ec.3. 16.Is.5.7.2 Ti.2.19.
5 Heb. *moved.*
g Jn.10.34,35.Ex.12. 12; 22.28. Ac.23.5. Ec. 5.8.Ro.13.1-4.
6 The sense is, I have given you the highest title which can be bestowed upon mortals—title indicative of power and rule. Ye are the representatives of God on earth, ruling for him over the beasts. Ye are by nature, as well as by office, children of the most High;—yet ye are still mortal, and like other men, low in rank and station, ye shall die.—*P.*
h Ps. 49. 12. Job 21. 32.Eze 31 14.
7 'And fall as well as they, O ye princes.' —*Boothroyd.*
i Ps. 7. 6. Mi.7.9,17. Zep.3.8.
j Ps. 2. 8; 22. 27-31. Re.11.15.

PSALM LXXXIII.

B.C. cir. 1038 or 892.

1 Or, *for Asaph,* Ps.xlii. title.
a Ps.28.1; 7.6; 35.22; 44. 23, 26. Joel 3. 12. Zep.3.8.
b Ps. 2. 1, 2, with 81. 15; 74. 4, 18-23; 75. 4, 5; 93.3.Is.37.23,29.

A.M. cir. 2966 or 3112.
B.C. cir. 1038 or 892.

c Ps.2.1,2; 10.5,9; 56. 5,6.2.
d Ps.31.20; 27.5,9; 1. 4. De. 33. 27. Col. 3. 3. Mal.3.17.
2 'Thy treasured ones' (*Mudge*). Those whose life is 'hid with Christ in God,' Col.3.3.—*C.*
e Ex. 1. 10. Pr. 1. 12. Je.11.19. Es.3.6,9. Da. 7.25. Re.13.6,7.
g Ps. 2. 2. Re. 17. 13; 19.19. Ac.9.4.
3 Heb. *heart.*
4 There is no more certain mark of evil designs than the combination of men of opposite opinions and interests. Here the most jarring elements unite into one compact body, the sole object of which is the extirpation of Israel.—*C.*
Note, To divide good men is one of Satan's great devices; and so he attempted to divide Paul and Barnabas, Ac.15.39. But to unite bad men is another of his favourite schemes — so Herod and Pilate were reconciled on occasion of the crucifixion of our Lord, Lu.23.12.—*C.*
h 2 Ch. 20. 1, 10, 11. Ge. 36. 1-43; 25. 12-18; 19.31-38. 1 Ch.5.10,19, 20.
5 Some of the tribes descended from Ishmael took the name of their mother Hagar, and were known as Hagarenes. —*P.*
i Ge.19.38; 14.7; 10. 14,15. Jos.13.5. Is.23.1, 12.Eze.27.9.
j Ge.10.11;25.3.
6 Heb. *been an arm to,* Ge.19.37,38.
7 The children or descendants of Lot were the Moabites and Ammonites, whose possessions lay on the east of the Dead Sea, and consequently inside the descendants of Ishmael.—*P.*
8 See note on Ps. 3.2.—*C.*
k Ju. 7. 22. Nu.31.1-12.Is.9.4;10.26.
l Ju.4.15,24;5.19,21.
n 2 Ki. 9. 37. Zep. 1. 17. Je. 8. 2; 16. 4.
o Ju. 7. 25.
p Ju. 8. 12-21.
q 2 Ch. 20. 11. ver. 4.
r Ps. 44. 4; 74. 11, 12; 68. 1, 2. Is. 17. 12-14. Mat. 3.12.
9 *A wheel.* 'Whirling chaff.'—*Boothroyd.*
s De. 32. 22. Is.64.1, 2;30.27,33; 33.11,12; 66. 15,16. Eze. 38.22.
t Ps.11.6; 50. 3. Job 27.20-23. Is.28.17; 30. 30. Eze.38.22. Je.4.11, 12.
u Job 5. 12, 13. Ps. 6. 10;9.19,20; 58.10,11; 64. 7-9. Eze.30.19.
1 Or, *that men may.*
v Ps. 35. 4, 26; 40. 14; 59.13;109.29.
2 See notes on Ps. 5.10;35.8.—*C.*
x Ps. 9. 16; 58.10,11; 59.13. Eze.30.19; 38.23; 5.13; 7.4,9,27. Is.5.16; 59.19;42.8.

PSALM LXXXIV.

B.C. cir. 1021.

a Ps. viii. lxxxi. titles.
1 Or, *of.*
b Ps.26.8;122.1,4; 27. 4. Re.4.1,3;22.1,2.
c Ps.27.4;42.1,2;63.1, 2;98.2;143.7;ver.10.
d Job 23.3. Ps.40.17; 101.2. Is.20.8,9;64.1.

3 They[c] have taken crafty counsel against thy people, and consulted against thy [d]hidden ones.[2]

4 They have said, [e]Come, and let us cut them off from *being* a nation; that the name of Israel may be no more in remembrance.

5 For[g] they have consulted together with one [3]consent;[4] they are confederate against thee:

6 The[h] tabernacles of Edom, and the Ishmaelites; of Moab, and the Hagarenes;[5]

7 Gebal,[i] and Ammon, and Amalek; the Philistines, with the inhabitants of Tyre;

8 Assur[j] also is joined with them: they have holpen[6] the children of Lot.[7] Selah.[8]

9 Do unto them as *unto* the [k]Midianites; as *to* [l]Sisera, as *to* Jabin at the brook of Kison;

10 *Which* perished at En-dor: they became [m]*as* dung for the earth.

11 Make their nobles like [o]Oreb, and like Zeeb; yea, all their princes as [p]Zebah, and as Zalmunna:

12 Who said, [q]Let us take to ourselves the houses of God in possession.

13 O[r] my God, make them like a wheel;[9] as the stubble before the wind.

14 As[s] the fire burneth a wood, and as the flame setteth the mountains on fire;

15 So[t] persecute them with thy tempest, and make them afraid with thy storm.

16 Fill[u] their faces with shame; that they may[1] seek thy name, O LORD.

17 Let[v] them be confounded and troubled for ever; yea, let them be put to shame, and perish:[2]

18 That[x] men may know that thou, whose name alone *is* JEHOVAH, *art* the most High over all the earth.

PSALM LXXXIV.

1 *The psalmist, longing for the communion of the sanctuary,* 4 *showeth how blessed they are that dwell therein.* 8 *He prayeth to be restored unto it.*

To the chief musician upon [a]Gittith, A psalm for[1] the sons of Korah.

HOW amiable[b] *are* thy tabernacles, O LORD of hosts!

2 My[c] soul longeth, yea, even fainteth, for the courts of the LORD: [d]my heart and my flesh crieth out for the living God.

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on his gospel grant of himself to us as OUR GOD. His service must then be our highest interest as well as duty. Past obligations are sufficient to engage our hearts, even though we had no future promises in view. And when God grants himself and his fulness, our desires or prayers for enjoyment can never be too much enlarged. They only who have him for their portion have all that heart can wish. But how terrible is the punishment of a wilful refusal of his gracious offers! What loss of victory over enemies, of perpetuated enjoyments, and of delightful provision! Alas! what enemies are sinners to their own souls! And they who resist God's Word and Spirit have only their own wilfulness to blame when their destruction comes. Their perishing is not through want of compassion in God, but through the hardness and impenitence of their own hearts.

PSALM LXXXII. Ver. 1. *Among the gods.* That is, among kings, judges, and magistrates, who are called gods, as bound by oath to execute justice; as God has bound himself by oath, for consolation of the 'heirs of promise.'' He. 6.17. *C.*

Ver. 5. *Foundations.* The principal foundations of society are truth, justice and mercy; and that these are continually *out of course,* is manifest in this, that the greatest efforts of human wisdom and power, either are, or pretend to be, employed in preserving or restoring them. *C.*

REFLECTIONS.—Dignified is the office of magistrates, as the deputies of God. And with solemn awe and strict equity ought they to fix their decisions, as in God's presence, and as accountable to him. Yet how commonly do they indulge themselves in injustice and partiality! For want of substance to procure right to themselves the poor are ordinarily trampled on; but God is their guardian; and, let magistrates do their worst, he will at last redress the grievances of his poor ones. The high station and mighty influence of magistrates shall not long protect them from death; nor, if wicked, from damnation. If our rulers then be wicked, let us give ourselves to prayer, that God may rectify matters, and subdue the world to the righteous government of his Son.

PSALM LXXXIII. Ver. 2. To *hate* the God of philosophical imagination may be deemed impossible; but to hate the God of truth, holiness, and grace, is the very constitution of every unrenewed heart. Ro. 8. 7. *C.*

REFLECTIONS.—To quicken his people's importunity in prayer the Lord sometimes appears for a time to disregard their distress. Whatever pretences men make for their opposition to God's people, the real cause is their enmity against God himself, whose holiness they cannot endure, and whose image they cannot but hate. But while saints are *hid with Christ in God,* no enemy can really hurt them. Wicked men, though

3 Yea, the sparrow[2] hath found an house, and the swallow[3] a nest for herself, where she may lay her young, *even* thine altars,[4] O LORD of hosts, my King, and my God.

4 Blessed[e] *are* they that dwell in thy house: they will be still praising thee. Selah.[5]

5 Blessed *is* the man [g]whose strength *is* in thee; [h]in whose heart *are* the ways *of them*;[6]

6 *Who*[i] passing through the valley of Baca make it a well:[7] the rain also filleth[8] the pools.

7 They[j] go from strength to [9]strength; [k]*every one of them* in Zion appeareth before God.

8 O[l] LORD God of hosts, [m]hear my prayer: give ear, O God of Jacob. Selah.

9 Behold, O God our [o]shield, and look upon the face of [p]thine anointed.[1]

10 For[q] a day in thy courts *is* better than a thousand: I had rather be a door-keeper[2] in the house of my God, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness.

11 For the LORD God *is* [r]a sun and [s]shield: the[t] LORD will give grace and glory: no good *thing* will he withhold from them that walk uprightly.

12 O LORD of hosts, [u]blessed *is* the man that trusteth in thee.

PSALM LXXXV.

1 *The psalmist, out of the experience of former mercies, prayeth for the continuance thereof.* 8 *He promiseth to wait God's answer, in confidence of his manifold blessings.*

To the chief musician, A psalm for[1] the sons of Korah.

LORD, thou[a] hast been favourable[2] unto thy land: [b]thou hast brought back the captivity of Jacob.

2 Thou[c] hast forgiven the iniquity of thy people: thou hast covered all their sin. [3]Selah.

3 Thou[d] hast taken away all the wrath: thou hast turned thyself from the fierceness of thine anger.[4]

4 Turn[e] us, O God of our salvation, and cause thine anger toward us to cease.

5 Wilt[g] thou be angry with us for ever? wilt thou draw out thine anger to all generations?

6 Wilt[h] thou not revive us again, that thy people may rejoice in thee?

7 Show[i] us thy mercy, O LORD, and grant us thy salvation.

8 I[j] will hear[5] what God the LORD will speak: [k]for he will speak peace unto his people, and to his saints: but [l]let them not turn again to folly.

9 Surely[n] his salvation *is* nigh them that fear him; that [o]glory may dwell in our land.

10 Mercy[p] and truth are met together; righteousness and peace have kissed *each other*.[6]

11 Truth[q] shall spring out of the earth; and righteousness shall look down from heaven.

12 Yea,[r] the LORD shall give *that which is* good; and our land shall yield her increase.

13 Righteousness[s] shall go before him; and shall set *us* in the way of his steps.

PSALM LXXXVI.

1 *David imploreth God's aid because of his need and religious faith,* 5 *and of the power and goodness of God.* 11 *He prayeth for grace, and promiseth praise for past mercies.* 14 *Complaining of the proud, he craveth some token of God's favour.*

A prayer of[1] David.

BOW down[a] thine ear, O LORD, hear me: for I[b] *am* poor and needy.

2 Preserve[c] my soul; for I *am* holy:[2] O thou my God, save thy servant that [d]trusteth in thee.

3 Be merciful unto me, O LORD: [e]for I cry unto thee daily.[3]

4 Rejoice[g] the soul of thy servant: for unto thee, O LORD, do [h]I lift up my soul.

A.M. cir. 2983.
B.C. cir. 1021.

2 *The sparrow.*—This is not in the original a specific name, but a general term for any bird.—*C.*

3 *Swallow.* Rather the turtle or ring-dove.—*C.*

4 Or, 'as the sparrow findeth an house, and the swallow a nest for herself, so findeth my soul thine altars.' See ver. 1, 2, 10.

e Ps. 65. 4; 134. 1–3; 171. 8, 15; 145. 1, 2, 21.

5 See note on Ps. 3. 2.—*C.*

f Ps. 28. 8. Zec. 10. 12. Phi. 4. 13.

g Ps. 122. 1; 42. 4; 55. 14.

6 'Happy the man whose strength thou art, confidence reigns in his heart' (*Boothroyd*). Literally, 'steep ascents are in their hearts.'—*C.*

h Ac. 14. 22. Jn. 16. 33.

7 Or, *of mulberry-trees make him a well*, &c., 2 Sa. 5. 23.

8 Heb. *covereth.*

i Job 17. 9. Pr. 4. 18. 1 Pe. 1. 5. 2 Pe. 3. 18.

9 Or, *from company to company.*

k Ps. 122. 1–4; 43. 4. Je. 31. 6. Is. 35. 10. Jn. 10. 28; 14. 3. 1 Th. 4. 17.

l Da. 4. 35. Ps. 103. 20, 21; cxlviii.

m Ps. 130. 2. Da. 9. 18, 19. Is. 65. 24.

o Ge. 15. 1, 2. De. 33. 29.

p Ps. 2. 6; 89. 20.

1 The church here pleads by the righteousness of Messiah the anointed, Lu. 4. 18. Ac. 10. 38.—*C.*

q ver. 1, 2. Ps. 27. 4; 63. 2; 42. 2; 68. 24; 143. 4.

2 Heb. *I would choose rather to sit at the threshold.*

r Is. 60. 19. Ps. 27. 1; 43. 3. Mal. 4. 2.

s Ps. 119 114; 3. 3; 28. 3515. 12.

t Ps. 85. 12; 34. 9, 10. Jn. 1. 14, 16. Phi. 4. 19. Col. 2. 10.

u Ps. 2. 12; 34. 8; 33. 12, 21. Is. 30. 18; 28. 16; 30. 10. Je. 17. 7, 8.

PSALM LXXXV.

B.C. cir. 1021.

1 Or, *of*, Ps. xlii.–xlix. lxxxiv.–lxxxviii. titles.

a Joel 2. 18. Le. 26, 42. Zec. 1. 16. Is. 12. 1.

2 Or, *well pleased.*

b Ps. 14. 7; 126. 1, 2.

c Col. 2. 13. Ps. 32. 1. Je. 50. 20. Mi. 7. 18. Ro. 8. 1. Ac. 13. 39. 1 Jn. 1. 7.

3 See note on Ps. 3. 2.—*C.*

d Is. 12. 1; 54. 7–10.

A.M. cir. 2983.
B.C. cir. 1021.

4 Or, *thou hast turned thine anger from waxing hot*, De. 13. 17.

e Ps. 80. 3, 7, 19; 106. 45; 90. 13. Je. 31. 18. La. 5. 21.

g Ps. 77. 7; 74. 1, 3; 89. 46. Is. 64. 12. Je. 14. 19, 21.

h Ps. 80. 18; 53. 6; 90. 14, 15. Is. 35. 10. Hab. 3. 2. Ho. 6. 1, 2.

i Ps. 106. 45–47; 98. 2, 3. Is. 45. 17; 62. 1, 7.

j Hab. 2. 1. He. 12. 25; 3. 7, 8. 1 Sa. 3. 9, 10.

5 *I will hear.*—Messiah here, as prophet, instructs the church concerning that 'peace of God which is spoken by the blood of his cross,' Jn. 3. 32. Col. 1. 20.—*C.*

k Zec. 9. 10. Is. 57. 17–20. Ep. 2. 17.

l Ps. 130. 4. 2 Pe. 2. 21. 2 Ti. 2. 19. Lu. 1. 74, 75.

n Is. 46. 13. Mal. 3. 1. Lu. 18. 7.

o Ex. 29. 43. Zec. 12. 7. Lu. 2. 32. Jn. 1. 14.

p Mi. 7. 20. Is. 32. 17, 18. Ps. 72. 3, 17. Lu. 2. 14. Jn. 1. 17. Ro. 5. 1, 21.

6 A perfect reconciliation of mercy and truth, or justice, can never be effected in human governments or acts. When mercy is exercised towards a criminal, justice is so far sacrificed; and on the other hand, when justice is rigidly carried out, there is no place for mercy. But in the divine plan of salvation, infinite mercy and infinite justice were displayed.—*P.*

q Is. 4. 2; 45. 8; 42. 21. Je. 31. 22. Ja. 1. 17. 2 Co. 5. 14–21.

r Ps. 84. 11; 34. 9, 10; 65. 13; 67. 6.

s Ps. 89. 14; 72. 2, 3; 119. 32, 35. Is. 58. 8; 40. 1–3. Eze. 36. 27.

PSALM LXXXVI.

B.C. cir. 1021 or 1057.

1 Or, being a psalm *of.*

a 2 Ki. 19. 16. Ps. 31 2; 130. 2; 143. 1.

b Ps. 40. 17; 72. 12–14; 102. 17.

c Ps. 16. 1; 119. 94; 4. 3. 2 Ch. 14. 11.

2 Or, *one whom thou favourest.*

d Is. 26. 3.

e Lu. 18. 1–7; 11. 8. Ps. 65. 2. Ep. 6. 18.

3 Or, *all the day.*

g Ps. 51. 12. Is. 61. 3; 65. 18.

h Ps. 25. 1; 143. 8; 10. 1; 62. 8.

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diversified by nations, humours, or interests, strongly unite in opposing the cause of God and truth. Glad would they be if neither preacher nor professor of the true religion were left upon earth. But though craft be employed to seduce, threatenings to intimidate, and fury to extirpate, the foundation of God standeth sure. God knoweth them that believe, and they shall never be moved. At the worst they have their all-sufficient Lord to flee to, who can check the madness of the devourers. And past interpositions of God in favour of his people should encourage us to plead and hope for the like mercy. All opposition to God and his church is but rushing headlong into certain ruin. Even in this life, sinners' terrors of mind often make their life a burden, and are a presage of more dreadful misery in hell for ever. Men must know at last that the Lord omnipotent reigneth; and the execution of deserved judgment on the ungodly but shows the tendency of sin. Meanwhile we ought to long for the conviction and conversion of our bitterest enemies of mankind, rather than their destruction.

PSALM LXXXIV. Ver. 3. *Even* is not in the Hebrew. The words between *yea* and *young* should rather be taken as a parenthesis, and the meaning stands thus—'My heart cries out for the living God, for thine altars, O Lord of hosts,' &c. That birds could not build in the altars, is evident both from their construction and constant use; nor can altars be put for courts, for they are already mentioned. The longing of the psalmist is for the altar of sacrifice, the one great sacrifice that perfects for ever them that are sanctified. He. 10. 12, 14. *C.*—'The idea here is, that the sparrows and the swallows seemed to have a happy lot: to be in a condition to be envied. Even they might come freely to the place where God was worshipped—to the very altars—and make their home there undisturbed. How strangely in contrast with this was the condition of the wandering—the exiled—author of the psalm!' (*Barnes*). *P.*

Ver. 6. *Baca.* Not any particular place; for the people, in ascending to the festivals, could not all pass through any one valley. It signifies, 'valley of weeping,' the emblem of the life of 'the Man of Sorrows,' 'in the fellowship of whose sufferings' every pilgrim of Zion must partake, Phi. 3. 10. *C.*

Ver. 5–7. The meaning of this difficult passage is probably this:—'Blessed is the man whose strength (or trust) is in thee, whose heart rejoiceth at the prospect of following the way to thy house. Even when passing through the vale of misery—through sorrow and suffering and persecution—make it as a well (or fountain of delight), and the early rain falleth upon it, and covereth it with verdure. They go from strength, and at length appear before God perfect in Zion. *P.*—*Every one of them in Zion appeareth before God.* 'The God of gods will appear to them.' (*Williams*). *C.*

Ver. 8. *Give ear, O God of Jacob.* See note on Ps. 81. 1. Christ here personally intercedes for the church, and him 'the Father heareth always,' Jn. 11. 42. *C.*

REFLECTIONS.—What inexpressible beauty gracious souls see in holiness and in holy work! Fellowship with God in Christ, in his ordinances, is the delight, the desire of their soul. The meanest abode, with his presence and ordinances, is preferred to a palace without them. Not only faithful ministers who attend to their work, but all who study a life of close fellowship with God, and faithful service of him, increase their joy in the Lord and their strength for his work. If our heart be once engaged we can walk with pleasure in God's ways, and in attending his solemn ordinances. However troublesome the way to heaven be, not one of those who truly set out need faint or miscarry. And O the inexpressible glories they there enjoy in the immediate vision and presence of God! If he be our own and our father's God we shall never seek him in vain. If he be our shield we shall be safe from fear of evil. If our confidence towards him be founded solely on the merit and intercession of Jesus his *Anointed*, he cannot but behold us in mercy and love. Infinitely preferable is fellowship with God in his ordinances, to all the pleasures of sin or sense that can be enjoyed on earth: and happy are those who have God ALL IN ALL to them, bestowing ALL on them; and who, in all cases, depend for ALL they need only upon him.

PSALM LXXXV. Ver. 2. This psalm must be descriptive of the times and sacrifice of Messiah; for at no other period did God 'cover all the sin' of his church. See Ro. 4. 7, 23–25. *C.*

Ver. 5. The believing remnant of the Jews here intercede for their unbelieving 'brethren, their kinsmen according to the flesh,' during the long dispersion that has succeeded the crucifixion of our Lord. *C.*

Ver. 11. Under a broken law there is no *righteousness*, except the finished work of Christ, in which all holy commandment was fulfilled, and the penalty of death endured. Righteousness looked down from heaven when Christ ascended, and 'through the eternal Spirit presented himself without spot before God.' *C.*

REFLECTIONS.—Present distress should never obliterate the grateful memory of God's past favours. His pardons of sin, through active faith, are all free, full, and everlasting; and when guilt is removed wrath ceases of course. Though our unfaithfulness may have plunged us into distress, God is rich in mercy and ready to turn us to himself. But no salvation can be hoped for while we continue indulging our sins. And unless he save us freely, through faith in Christ, we are undone forever. Impenitent sinners must undergo eternal pain; but earnest believers are only corrected for a time. Having experienced the power of his quickening and restoring grace, they rejoice in God their Saviour, and speak, to his glory, of the wonders of his grace. And having expected and obtained an answer to their prayers, the peace which God speaks in his promise withdraws their heart from sinning. But how sure was the promise, near the fulfilment, and great the glory of Jesus' incarnation and office! Herein the mercy, faithfulness, and equity of God appear harmoniously and brightly displayed. While Jesus, the truth, grows upward from earth, his righteous Father

5 For[i] thou, LORD, *art* good, and ready to forgive; and plenteous in mercy unto all them that call upon thee.

6 Give[j] ear, O LORD, unto my prayer; and attend to the voice of my supplications.

7 In [k]the day of my trouble I will call upon thee: for thou wilt answer me.

8 Among[l] the gods[4] *there is* none like unto thee, O LORD; neither *are there any works* like unto thy works.

9 All[m] nations whom thou hast made shall come and worship before thee, O LORD; and shall glorify thy name.

10 For[o] thou *art* great, and doest wondrous things: [p]thou *art* God alone.[5]

11 Teach[q] me thy way, O LORD; I will walk in thy truth: unite my heart[6] to fear thy name.

12 I[r] will praise thee, O LORD my God, with all my heart; and I will glorify thy name for evermore.

13 For[s] great *is* thy mercy toward me; and thou hast delivered my soul from the lowest [7]hell.[8]

14 O God, the [t]proud are risen against me, and the assemblies of violent[9] *men* have sought after my soul, and [u]have not set thee before them.

15 But[v] thou, O LORD, *art* a God full of compassion, and gracious, long-suffering, and plenteous in mercy and truth.

16 O[x] turn unto me, and have mercy upon me; [y]give thy strength unto [z]thy servant, and save the son of thine handmaid.

17 Show me [a]a token[1] for good; [b]that they which hate me may see *it*, and be ashamed: because thou, LORD, [c]hast holpen me, and comforted me.

PSALM LXXXVII.

1 *The seat and glory of the church.* 4 *The increase, honour, and comfort of the members thereof.*

A psalm *or* song for[1] the sons of Korah.

HIS foundation[a] *is* in the holy mountains.
2 The[b] LORD loveth the gates of Zion more than all the dwellings of Jacob.[2]

3 Glorious[c] things are spoken of thee, O city of God. Selah.[3]

A.M. cir. 2983 or 2947.
B.C. cir. 1021 or 1057.

i ver. 13, 15. Joel 2. 13,18. Ps.69.13,16; 130. 7; 145. 9; 73. 1; 103. 17. Ex. 34.6,7. Mi.7.18,19. La. 3.22–26.
j ver. 1. Ps. 4. 1; 5.1; 143.1,7. Da.9.18,19.
k Ps.55.16; 50.15; 91. 15; 18.6; 22. 5; 34. 4, 6; 102.17.
l Ex.15.11. Ps.35.10; 89.6,8;92.5;72.18;136.4. Is.40.18,25.
4 Among the kings of the earth, and the principalities of heaven.—*C.*
m Ps. 22. 27–31; 72.8; 66.1,4; 67. 7. Is.11.9,10; 59.19;66.23.
o Job 11.7. De. 3. 24. Ps. 147. 5; 72.18; 77. 14. Re.15.3,4;19.1.
p De.6.4; 4.39;32.39. Is.37.16; 44.6. Mar.12. 29. Co.8.4. Ep.4.6.
5 This is not an assertion of the sole Deity of the Father, but of that *unity of Godhead*, in which the Son and the Father 'are one,' Jn.10. 30. In this sense he is 'God alone,' as distinguished from all that are 'called gods.'—*C.*
q Ps.25.4;5.8; 119.33; 143. 8. Je.10. 23. Jn. 17. 20,21. 1 Co.6.17.
6 *Unite my heart.* Unite those affections and desires which in others are so scattered in pursuit of vanities—unite them all in one centre—the fear (the holy reverence) of thy name.—*C.*
r Ps.104.33;34.1;145. 1,2;146.1,2. 1 Co.10.31; 6.20.
s Ps.103.4,8,11. Is.38. 17.1 Th. 1.10.
7 Or, *grave.*
8 A prophetic anticipation of the glorious resurrection of Jesus.—*C.*
t Ps. 119. 51, 69, 85; 140.5;54. 1;12.1;10.
9 Heb. *terrible.*
u Ps. 10. 4, 11, 13; 14. 4. Eze.8.12;9.9.
v Ex. 34. 6,7. Nu.14. 18. Ne.9. 17. Ps. 103. 8; 130.4;145.8; 86. 10. Joel 2.13. Ro.5.20,21. Ep.2. 4,7. Tit.3.4,5.
x Ps.25.16;69.16;101. 2;90.13;56.1;57.1.
y Ps.28.8. Zec.10.12. Is.45.24;40.31.
z Ps. 119. 94; 116. 16. Is.63.16–19.
a 2Co.5.5. Ex.34.5,6. Ps.41.10. Is.7.14; 38.22.
1 Even such a token the Father gave, when he answered him from heaven, to glorify him before his disciples and the people, Jn. 12.28–30.—*C.*
b Mi.7.8–10. Ps. 109. 26–31.
c Ps. 18.18, 19; 40.1–3; 103.1–5; 116.1–7.

PSALM LXXXVII.

B.C. cir. 1045.

1 Or, *of.*
a 2 Ch. 3. 1. Ps. 48.1, 2;78.67–69. Mat. 16.18. Is.2.2,3.
b 2 Ch.6.6. Ps.132.13, 14.
2 See Ps.78.67.—*C.*
c Hag. 2.9. Is.49.16–26; 54.1–17; 55.1–13; 56. 8; 57. 15–20. 59. 19–21; &c.—lxii. lxv. lvi. Je. iii. xxxi. xxxiii. Eze. xxxiv. xxxvi. xxxvii. xl.–xlviii., &c. Re. 21. 2.
3 See note on Ps. 3. 2.—*C.*

A.M. cir. 2959.
B.C. cir. 1045.

4 Or, Egypt, Ps. 89. 10. Is.51. 9; 19. 18–25. 1 Pe.5.13.
d Ac.8.27,40; 21.3, 4; 8.27. Ps.45.12;68.31.
6 *This man. Man* is not in the original. The meaning seems to be—these renowned Egyptians, &c., were born *there*—each in his own celebrated country. 'But of Zion it shall be said'—her glory above all lands—'The man of men,' the Messiah, was born in her.—*C.*
e Jn.1.12,13;3. 3, 5,7. Ga.3.26;4.26. 1 Pe.1.23. 2 Co.5.17.
g Is.60.1–9; 49.12,20; 19.24,25; 44.4,5. Col. 3. 11. Ga.3.28.
h Mat. 16. 18. Is. 22. 23,24.
i Eze. 13.9. Is.4.3. Ps. 22.30. Je.3.19.
j 1 Ch.23.5. Ps.68.25, 26. Re.14.1–5.
k Ja. 1. 17. Ps. 46. 4. Re.22.1,2. Ca.4.15. Is. 12.3.
6 All the sources of pleasure, happiness, and life, are in them—in Zion, because God and his ordinances are there.—*P.*

PS. LXXXVIII.

B.C. cir. 1021.

1 Or, *of.*
a 1 Ki.4.31. 1 Ch. 25. 1,4, or 2.6.
2 Or, A psalm *of Heman the Ezrahite, giving instruction.*
b Ps. 27. 1; 68. 19, 20. Lu.1.47. Tit.2.13,14.
c Ps.22.2; 77. 2; 86. 3. Lu.18.7. Ep.6.18.
3 The whole psalm is prophetical—the lamentations of Messiah (*Horsley, Light foot*); and with him alone the assertion of 'prayer without ceasing—day and night,' appears possibly to correspond.—*C.*
d La.3.8. Da.9.18,19. 1 Ki.8.52. Ps.141.1,2.
e ver. 14–16. Ps.77.1–9;22.6–21; 107.18;143.3, 7.
g Job 17.1. Ps.102.2–11,23;109.22–24.2 Co.1. 9.
4 I am counted by my cruel enemies as one to be caught, like a wild beast, in a pitfall. Even so the Pharisees sought to ensnare and entangle our Lord, that they might have whereof to accuse and whereby to destroy him.—*C.*
h Is.38. 1, 10–12. Ps. 31.12; 119. 83. Eze. 37. 11. La.3.1–16.
5 'Cast out among the dead, like the wounded on the field of battle; like them that be in the grave.' —*Horsley.*
6 Or, *by thy hand.*
l La.3.1–16. Ps.143.3; 69.1,2, with 40.2;18.16. Is.38.17.
j 1 Pe.2.24. Ps.102.10. Is.38.14. Job 6.4; 16. 9. 17. Ps. 42. 7, with Is. 43.1,2;64.12.
7 See note on Ps. 3. 2.—*C.*
k ver. 18. Job 19. 13–19. Ps.31.11;142.4.
8 Even so, until this day, the very name of Jesus is an *abomination* to the unbelieving Jew.—*C.*

4 I will make mention of Rahab[4] and Babylon to them that know me: behold [d]Philistia, and Tyre, with Ethiopia; this man[5] was [e]born there.

5 And[g] of Zion it shall be said, This and that man was born in her; [h]and the Highest himself shall establish her.

6 The LORD shall count, when he [i]writeth up the people, *that* this *man* was born there. Selah.

7 As[j] well the singers as the players on instruments *shall be there:* [k]all my springs *are* in thee.[6]

PSALM LXXXVIII.

A prayer containing a grievous complaint.

A song *or* psalm for[1] the sons of Korah, to the chief musician upon Mahalath Leannoth, Maschil of [a]Heman the Ezrahite.[2]

O LORD [b]God of my salvation, [c]I have cried day *and* night before thee.[3]

2 Let[d] my prayer come before thee: incline thine ear unto my cry;

3 For[e] my soul is full of troubles; and my life draweth nigh unto the grave.

4 I[g] am counted with them that go down into the pit: I am as a man *that hath* no strength:[4]

5 Free[h] among the dead, like the slain that lie in the grave,[5] whom thou rememberest no more: and they are cut off from thy hand.[6]

6 Thou[i] hast laid me in the lowest pit, in darkness, in the deeps.

7 Thy [j]wrath lieth hard upon me, and thou hast afflicted *me* with all thy waves. Selah.[7]

8 Thou[k] hast put away mine acquaintance far from me; thou hast made me an abomination[8] unto them: *I* [l]*am* shut up, and I cannot come forth.

9 Mine[n] eye mourneth by reason of affliction: LORD, I have called daily upon thee; [o]I have stretched out my hands unto thee.

10 Wilt[p] thou show wonders to the dead? shall the dead arise *and* praise thee? Selah.

11 Shall thy loving-kindness be declared in the grave? *or* thy faithfulness in destruction?

12 Shall thy wonders be known in [q]the dark?

f Job 12.14;36.8;19.8. La.3.3,5,7,9. Ho.2.6. *n* Ps.38.10;77.1–4;22.1,2;42.3;102.9. *o* Job 11. 13. Ps.143.6;68.31. *p* Ps.6.5;30.9;115.17;118.17. Is.38.18,19. *q* Job 10.21,22. Ps.143.3.

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from heaven beholds him with pleasure. While the gospel and its influences take place among men, JEHOVAH manifests his righteousness in pardoning and blessing us with all spiritual blessings in Christ; in making us to abound in fruits of righteousness to the praise of his glory; and in directing us to Jesus and his law and example, that we may be led into the paths of everlasting peace.

PSALM LXXXVI. Ver. 2. *I am holy.* 'Thy favoured one' (*Mudge*). 'Thy gracious saint' (*Ainsworth*). But, however it may be translated, the confident assertion of the purity of his personal character, proves the speaker either to be a self-deceiving Pharisee, sporting a righteousness he did not possess, or 'Jesus Christ the righteous,' 'the Holy One of Israel.' The former he could not be, the latter therefore he must be. *C.*

REFLECTIONS.—While I here behold Jesus as the holy but sacrificial servant of his Father, imploring his favours and triumphing in his praise, let me, in every case, pour forth importunate prayers; place all my confidence in God; lodge all my complaints and requests with him; and ascribe to him the glory of his own perfections, and of all my own and the people's deliverances.

PSALM LXXXVII. Ver. 1. The chief object of this psalm is to show the advantages of religious ordinances and religious training. Especially the psalmist illustrates the great benefit of having been born and educated in the holy city, where God is honoured, and where the enlightening, restraining, and quickening influences of his worship are felt. *P.*——The Lord's *foundation* is Christ, 1 Co. 3. 10, upon whom are builded, first apostles and prophets, then the whole church, Ep. 2. 20: and this foundation rests upon the mountains, the high raised strength of the Redeemer's holiness, ver. 2. See Ps. 78. 68. *C.*

Ver. 4. I will mention Egypt, Ps. 89. 10: Is. 51. 9, 10, whom I judged with many plagues, and whence I delivered my people at the first: and Babylon, which I have doomed to extirpation, because she led Zion captive. Behold, also, Philistia, whose persevering enmity I have foiled and punished: Tyre, that once great city, which I have left a desolate rock—with the whole land of Ethiopia (Cush), which I have swept with successive judgments—and all this I have done for my Zion's sake. *C.*

REFLECTIONS.—Behold how firmly and publicly our gospel church is founded upon Jesus Christ the Rock of ages! And how JEHOVAH delights in fellowship with his people in the public and private ordinances of his grace. Glorious things are spoken of her foundation, her ordinances, her members, her properties, her fulness. And under the influence of almighty grace the heathen nations on every side crowd into her. Behold also the exact and kind care which God takes of every true member! And great spiritual joy and rejoicing, and fresh springs of salvation, are found in her by the saints.

PSALM LXXXVIII. Ver. 7. *Thou hast afflicted me with all thy waves.* Surely in the lips of any but Messiah, upon whom 'the Lord laid the iniquities of us all,' these words would be nothing but selfish exaggeration; while in the lips of Messiah they are literally true, and are therefore to be absolutely interpreted of him alone. *C.*

REFLECTIONS.—How inexpressibly grievous are the afflictions of some of God's loving children! nay, of his Son! Their sorrows are enlarged. They are reduced to the very brink of despair; loaded

and thy righteousness in the [r]land of forgetfulness?

13 But[s] unto thee have I cried, O LORD; and in the morning[9] shall my prayer prevent thee.

14 LORD, [t]why castest thou off my soul? *why* hidest thou thy face from me?[1]

15 I[u] *am* afflicted and ready to die from *my* youth up: *while* [v]I suffer thy terrors I am distracted.

16 Thy[w] fierce wrath[2] goeth over me; thy terrors have cut me off.

17 They[y] came round about me daily[3] like water; they compassed me about together.

18 Lover[z] and friend hast thou put far from me, *and* mine acquaintance into darkness.

PSALM LXXXIX.

1 *The psalmist praiseth God for his covenant,* 5 *for his wonderful power,* 15 *for the people,* 19 *for his favour to the kingdom of David.* 38 *Then complaining of contrary events,* 46 *he expostulateth, prayeth, and blesseth God.*

Maschil of [a]Ethan the Ezrahite.[1]

I WILL[b] sing of the mercies of the LORD for ever: with my mouth will I make known thy faithfulness [2]to all generations.[3]

2 For I have said, [c]Mercy shall be built up for ever: thy faithfulness shalt thou establish in the very heavens.

3 I [d]have made a covenant with my chosen, I have sworn unto [e]David my servant,

4 Thy[g] seed will I establish for ever, and build up thy throne to all generations. Selah.[4]

5 And [h]the heavens shall praise thy wonders, O LORD: thy faithfulness also in the congregation of the saints.

6 For [i]who in the heaven can be compared unto the LORD? *who* among the sons of the mighty can be likened unto the LORD?

7 God[j] is greatly to be feared in the assembly of the saints, and to be had in reverence of all *them that are* about him.

8 O LORD God of [5]hosts, [k]who *is* a strong LORD like unto thee? or to thy faithfulness round about thee?

9 Thou[l] rulest the raging of the sea: when the waves thereof arise, thou stillest them.

10 Thou[m] hast broken [6]Rahab[7] in pieces, as one that is slain; thou hast scattered thine enemies with thy strong arm.[8]

11 The[o] heavens *are* thine, the earth also *is* thine: *as for* the world, and the fulness thereof, thou hast founded them.

12 The[p] north and the south thou hast created them: [q]Tabor[9] and Hermon[1] shall [r]rejoice in thy name.

13 Thou hast a mighty arm:[2] strong is thy hand, *and* high is thy right hand.

14 Justice[s] and judgment *are* the [3]habitation of thy throne; mercy and truth shall [t]go before thy face.

15 Blessed *is* the people that know the [u]joyful sound: [v]they shall walk, O LORD, in the light of thy countenance.[4]

16 In[w] thy name shall they rejoice all the day; and [x]in thy righteousness shall they be exalted.

17 For [z]thou *art* the glory of their strength; and [a]in thy favour our horn shall be exalted.

18 For[b] the LORD *is* our defence; and the Holy One of Israel *is* our [5]King.[6]

19 Then thou spakest in vision to thy Holy One, and saidst, [c]I have laid help upon *one that is* mighty; I have exalted *one* chosen out of the people.

20 I[d] have found David[7] my servant; with my holy oil have I anointed him:

21 With[e] whom my hand shall be established; mine arm also shall strengthen him.

22 The[g] enemy shall not exact upon him; [h]nor the son of wickedness afflict him.

23 And[i] I will beat down his foes before his face, and plague them that hate him.

24 But[j] my faithfulness and my mercy *shall be* with him; [k]and in my name shall his horn be exalted.

25 I[l] will set his hand also in the sea, and his right hand in the rivers.

26 He[n] shall cry unto me, Thou *art* my Father, my God, and the Rock of my salvation.

27 Also I will make him *my* [o]first-born, higher than the kings of the earth.[8]

28 My[p] mercy will I keep for him for evermore, and my covenant shall stand fast with him.

29 His[q] seed also will I make *to endure* for ever, and his throne as the days of heaven.[9]

30 If[r] his children forsake my law, and walk not in my judgments;

31 If they break my statutes,[1] and keep not my commandments;

32 Then[s] will I visit their transgression with the rod, and their iniquity with stripes.

33 Nevertheless[t] my loving-kindness will I not utterly take from him,[2] nor suffer my faithfulness to fail.[3]

A.M. cir. 2983. B.C. cir. 1021.

r Ec.9.5;8.10. Ps.31.12.

s Ps.139.1,2;77.1;5.1–3.

9 In the morning. In the morning of the resurrection from darkness and the land of forgetfulness, my prayer of intercession for the church shall come before thee, when I shall appear her prevailing advocate and risen head. —*C.*

t Ps.10.1; 13.1–3;43.2;77.5–9.

1 These words were realized when our Lord cried, 'My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?' —*C.*

u Ps.73.14. Job 17.1; 7.15,16.

v Job 6.4; 7.11,14,20. Ps.18.4,5. Jn.12.27.

w Re.6.17. Ps. 89.38; 42.7;69.1,2.

2 Heb. *burnings.*

y Ps.116.3;102.10;42.7; 69.1,2,14,15; 18.4,5; 22.12,16. La.3.3,7,9.

3 Or, *all the day.*

z See ver.9. Job 10.21,22.

PSALM LXXXIX.

B.C. cir. 1021.

a 1 Ki. 4.31. 1 Ch.6. 44;25.3, or 2.6.

1 Or, A psalm *for Ethan the Ezrahite, to give instruction.*

b Ps.101.1; 86.12,13; 22.22,25; 40.9,10; 145.2, 21;71.8–24. Ep.2.4–7.

2 Heb. *to generation and generation.* So ver.4.

3 The main object of this psalm is to declare the promises made to David regarding the perpetuityof his throne and kingdom. The promise had a double reference—typical and real. David's line and throne and kingdom were to continue until, in the person, and work, and reign of our Lord, David's great Son, the typical merged into the real—the temporal into the spiritual.—*P.*

c Ne.1.5. Da.9.5. Ps. 103.17;23.6; 36.5; 119. 89,90. Ro.5.21. Nu.23. 19. He.6.18.

d 2 Sa.7.11–16. Ps. 40.6,8. Is.53.10;54. 6,7;49.6,8. Mat.3.15. Lu.24.26.

e 1 Sa.16.13. Eze.34. 23,24. Ho.3.5. Is.49.3. Phi.2.7,8.

g ver. 29, 36. 2 Sa.7. 16. Ps.22.30,31. Is.53.10 –12. He. 2.13. Lu.1.32, 33. Phi.2.7–11.

4 See note on Ps. 3. 2.—*C.*

h Ps. 19. 1; 47. 5–7. Re. 5. 9–14; 7. 10–12. Lu.2.14.

i Ps.35. 10;71.19; 73. 25;86. 6; 113. 5. Ex. 15. 11.

j Ps.76.11, 12. Phi. 2. 10,11 Re.15.3,4.

5 This title evidently belongs to Christ, as will be seen on comparing Is. 6. 3 with Jn. 12. 41; a portion of evidence for his Godhead, which the perverse ingenuity of men has not been able to gainsay, while yet they resist the testimony of the Holy Ghost.—*C.*

k ver.6. Ps.147.5. Je. 32.17. La.3.23. Nu.23. 19. 1 Sa.2.2; 15.29. Tit. 1.2.

l Job 38. 11. Mar. 4. 39,41. Ps. 29. 10;65.7;66. 6; 93. 3, 4; 107. 25, 29. Mat.8.26; 14. 32. Na.1. 4.

n Ex.vii.–xv. Is. 51. 9. Ps.78. 43–53; 105.27–36.

A.M. cir. 2983. B.C. cir. 1021.

q Ju.4.6,12. De. 3. 8, 9. Jos.12.1.

9 Tabor, an isolated mountain situated in the east of Esdraelon, is described as a mile in elevation, with a plain at the top 3000 paces in circumference. It is still a scene of great beauty and magnificence, with many ruins.—*C.*

1 *Hermon.* This mountain is commonly distinguished from the *Hermon* mentioned, De. 3.8,9; but for this distinction there appears no sufficient authority. See Robinson's *Palestine,* vol. iii. p. 171. —*C.*

r Ps.65.12,13. Is.35.2.

2 Heb. *an arm with might,* Ge. 17.1; 18.14. Da.4.34,35.

s Ps.97.2; 45.6,7. Je. 12.1. De.32.4.

3 Or, *establishment,* Is.16.5. Pr.16.12.

t Ps.85.13;61.7. Mi.7. 20.

u Nu.10.6,10. Le.25. 9. 1 Th.1.5; 2.13. Tit.2. 11–14. Ro. 1. 16; 10. 18. Ps.98.6.

v Is.2.5. Ps. 80. 3, 7, 19. Nu.6.26.

4 That is, 'in the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ,' 2 Co. 4. 6.—*C.*

w Ps.20.5,7; 44.4–8. 2 Co.10.2,4. Lu.1. 47. Phi. 4.4.

y 1 Co.1.30. Ro. 3.24 26; 5. 1–5, 15–21. 2 Co.5. 21. Ep. 1.4–7.

x Ps.28.8. Phi. 4. 13. Zec.10.12.

a ver.24. Is.63.7. Ro. 5.21. Ps.132.17.

b De. 33. 27–29. Ps. 74.11,12. Is.33.22.

5 Or, *our shield* is *of the LORD, and our king* is *of the Holy One of Israel,* Ps.47.9. Is.9.6,7.

6 That is, the latter clause of ver. 17 and the whole of ver. 18 the grammar demonstrates that the church speaks her confidence and obedience.—*C.*

c Is.9. 6; 42. 1. He. 7. 25;10. 11 18. Ac. 3.22.

d 1 Sa. 16. 1, 12, 13. 1 Pe.1.20. Pr.8.23. Je.30. 21. Is. 61. 1–3. Ps. 45.7. Jn.3.34.

7 See note on ver. 3. —*C.*

e Ps. 18. 32, 39; 28. 8; 80.17. Is.42.1;49.8.

g 2 Sa. 7. 8–16. Mat. 4.1–10. He.2.14. Jn. 14. 30.

h 2 Sa.xv.–xx. 2 Th. 2.3,8. 1 Ki. xi. xxi.

i 2 Sa. 3. 1; v. viii x. xviii. xx Ps. 110. 1,5,6. Re.vi.viii.ix.xiv.–xx.

j Ps. 61. 7;ver. 28, 33.

k Ps. 21. 3–7; 132. 17, 18. Jn.17.2.

l 2Sa.v.viii.x. Ps. 72. 8,11; 22.27–31; 66. 4. Is. 49.12;54.5.

n Mat. 26. 39,42. Ps. 22.1,2. He. 5.7, with Is. 41.49.8;50.7,9.

o He.1.2,6. Ro. 8.29. Col.1.15,16, 18. Nu. 24. 7. Re.19.16;21.24.

8 David as a king never attained to this extent of dominion or supremacy; it is true of Messiah and not of another.—*C.*

p 2 Sa. 7. 15; 23. 5. Is 55. 3;54.10. Je. 33.20,21.

q ver.4,36. Is.44.5,6; 59.21; 9.7. Ps.45.6. Da. 2.44. Lu.1.33. Je.33.20, 21; xvii. with 31.35,36. De. 11.21.

9 The throne of David in Jerusalem is ruined, deserted, and desecrated—the throne of his Son abideth for ever in glory.—*C.*

r Je.9.13–16. 2 Sa. 7. 14. Am. 3.2.

1 Heb. *profane my statutes.*

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s 2Sa.7.14. He.12.6–11. Is.27.9. Am.3.2. Re.3.19. Ps.94.12. He.6.18. Ro.8.35–39.

t La.3.31,32. 2 Sa.7.15. Is.54.8–10.

2 Heb. *I will not make void from him.*

3 Heb. *to lie.*

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with a sense of deep sorrow; deserted by friends; and, while their case is apparently remediless, their way lies along the road of pain. If I be cast into this depth, let me, though with a trembling heart, still claim the Lord as *my God, my Saviour.* Let me, with fervent cries and humble expostulations, pour out my complaints into his bosom. The more my afflictions press me, let my supplications be the more pressing and persevering. And if I wish to live longer on earth, let my great end be to serve God's interests and to show forth his praise.

PSALM LXXXIX. Ver. 1. None but Messiah could confidently adopt the opening resolution and prophecy of this verse: of him, accordingly, it has been interpreted by *Rabbi Solomon,* amongst the Jews; and by *Aben Ezra,* amongst Jewish converts to Christianity. *C.*

Ver. 3. In this verse, the Father addresses the Son, whom he designates as 'David my servant:' *David* signifies *beloved,* the name given to the Son by the Father from heaven, Mat. 3. 17; and the apostolic name by which his justifying grace is commended to the church, Ep. 1. 6. And that it applies here, not to David the son of Jesse, but to David's Lord, will appear certain from considering ver. 4, which applies not to the desolated throne of David in Jerusalem, but to the abiding throne of Messiah in glory. *C.*

Ver. 5. *The heavens shall praise thy wonders, O Lord.* The comparison of this passage from verse 5–17, with He. 1. 10 and Ps. 102. 1, 25, will clearly demonstrate that it contains a continued address of the Father to the Son, delivered in prophecy for establishment of the faith of the ancient church. See Lu. 1. 39. *C.*

Ver. 30. *His children.* The church is called Christ's 'children,' He. 2. 13, and they are here warned against the terrible judgments upon the various forms of apostasy and infidelity, He. 3. 10; infidelity combined with self-righteousness, Ro. 10. 3, 11, 15; worldliness, 1 Co. 5. 11; final heresy, Tit. 3. 10; and impenitence, Re. 2. 21–23. *C.*

Ver. 37. *As the moon.* A lovely satellite to earth, borrowing and reflecting the light of the sun, and supplying in his absence the lack of his brighter beams; equalizing the temperature of sea

STAIRWAY TO TOWER OF CASTLE—NEAR THE PLACE WHERE CHRIST WAS TRANSFIGURED. [PSALMS, lxxxix: 12.]—"The North and the South thou hast created them: Tabor and Hermon shall rejoice in thy name." This is a view of the stairway to the tower of Subeibeh castle. It stands three miles from Cæsarea Philippi, and about one thousand feet higher than this town. It is in sight of Mount Hermon where the Lord Jesus Christ was transfigured in the presence of Peter, James and John. This picture was taken about two o'clock on May 11th, 1894. We are looking toward the North. This castle figured largely in the wars of the Saracenes of Damascus against the Templars of Jerusalem. As it commands the passage from the Huleh to the plains of the Jordan over Hermon to Damascus and the East, it must have been a place of importance at least during those troublous times when such passes were dominated by a frowning castle.

34 My[u] covenant will I not break, nor alter the thing *that is* gone out of my lips.

35 Once[v] have I sworn [z]by my holiness that I will not lie[4] unto David.[5]

36 His[y] seed shall endure for ever, and his throne as the sun before me.[6]

37 It[z] shall be established for ever as the moon, and *as* a faithful witness in heaven. Selah.

38 But[a] thou hast cast off and abhorred; thou hast been wroth with thine anointed.[7]

39 Thou[b] hast made void the covenant of thy servant; thou hast profaned his crown, *by* casting it to the ground.

40 Thou[c] hast broken down all his hedges; thou hast brought his strong holds to ruin.

41 All[d] that pass by the way spoil him: he is a reproach to his neighbours.

42 Thou hast set up the right hand of his adversaries; thou hast made all his enemies to rejoice.

43 Thou hast also turned the edge of his sword, and hast not made him to stand in the battle.

44 Thou[e] hast made his glory[8] to cease, and cast his throne down to the ground.

45 The[g] days of his youth hast thou shortened; thou hast covered him with shame. Selah.

46 How[h] long, LORD? wilt thou hide thyself for ever? shall thy wrath burn like fire?

47 Remember[i] how short my time is: wherefore hast thou made all men in vain?

48 What[j] man *is he that* liveth, and shall not see death? shall he deliver his soul from the hand of the grave? Selah.

49 LORD, [k]where *are* thy former [l]lovingkindnesses, *which* thou [l]swarest unto David in thy truth?

50 Remember, LORD, [m]the reproach of thy servants; *how* I do bear in my bosom *the reproach of* all the mighty people;

51 Wherewith[o] thine enemies have reproached,[9] O LORD; wherewith they have reproached the footsteps of thine anointed.

52 Blessed[p] *be* the LORD for evermore. Amen, and amen.

A.M. cir. 2983.
B.C. cir. 1021.

u Je.33.20. Mal. 3.6. Ja.1.17. Ro.11.29. 2Sa. 23.5.

v He.6.17,18. Ps.110. 4.ver.4.

x Am.4.2;8.7.

4 Heb. *if I lie.*

5 See note on ver. 3.—*C.*

y 2Sa.7.16. Ps.22,30; 102.28; 72.16,17. Lu.1. 33. Jn.12.34.

6 See note on ver. 27,29.—*C.*

z Je.31.35,36; 33.20–22. Ge.9.13.

a 1Ch.28.9. Ps.61.10. Ho. 9. 17. Job 30. 1. Is. 53.2–10. 2 Sa. xv.–xx. 1 Ki. xii. xiv. 2 Ch. xxi. xxviii. Ze.13.7. Ac. 14. 22. Re.6.4,11; 12.4,17.

7 By comparing ver. 38 with 47 and 50, it will be seen that Messiah is described speaking first in the days of his humiliation, and then in the days of his waiting—while he is opposed by 'principalities and powers' both of the visible and invisible worlds — when his glory is obscured, 'his headship over all things to the church' rejected — when he is 'crucified afresh' by the sins of his nominal followers, and by their ungodly conversation 'put to an open shame,' He.6.6.—*C.*

b 1 Ki. xii. 2 Sa. xv. with 7. 16. ver. 4,29,36. La.5.16.

c Ps.80.12; 78. 61, 62. Is.5.5,6. Ac.2.23; 4. 27, 28; 8. 1–4; 9.5.

d Ps.80.12; 44.9–14. 2 Ch. x. xii. xxi. xxviii. xxxii. xxxiii. xxxvi. De.28.25–51. Le.26. 15–39. Re. vi. viii.–xiii. 2 Th.2.3–12.

e 2 Sa.xv. 2 Ch.x. Is. 53. 1–10. Mat. xxvi. xxvii. He.10.32–34.

8 Heb. *brightness.*

g 2 Sa. xv. xvi. 1 Ki. xii. Da.9.26. Is.53.8; 52. 14; 50.6. 2 Ti.3.11,12.

h Ps.13.1; 79.5; 85.5; 78. 63. Is. 45.15. De.32. 22. Na.1.6.

i Ps. 39. 5, 6; 119. 84; 144.4. Job 7.6,7; 9.25, 26; 10.9. Ja.1.10; 4.14.

j Job 30. 24. Ps.49.7, 9. Ec.12.7. He.9.27.

k Is.63.11,15. Ps. 77. 7–9.

l ver.35. 2Sa.7.15; 23. 5. Is.55.3. Ps.13.11,12.

m Ps.44. 14–16; 69. 9, 12, 20; 22. 6, 7. Mat. 12. 24; 27.63.

A.M. cir. 2983.
B.C. cir. 1021.

o Ps.74.22. Ac.4.41. 1 Co.4.12, 13. He. 10. 33; 11.36. 1 Pe.4.14.

9 Calling him the friend of publicans and sinners, a winebibber, a glutton, a madman, a raiser of sedition, devil-aided, and a blasphemer.—*C.*

p Hab. 3. 17–19. Ps. 41. 13; 72.18,19; 106.48. Eze.3.12. 1 Ti.1.17. Re. 4.11; 5.12,13; 7.12. Ne.9. 5. 1 Ch.29.10–13.

PSALM XC.

B.C. cir. 1490.

1 Or, *A prayer*, being a psalm *of Moses.*

a De.33.1; 34.5,10.

b Ps.71.3. De.33.27. Is.8.14. Eze.11.16. 1 Jn. 4.8.

2 'Our refuge.'—*Boothroyd.*

3 Heb. *in generation and generation.*

c Pr.8.25, 26. Job 38. 29. Ge.1.2.

d De.33.27. Is.57.15. Je. 10. 10. 1 Ti. 1. 17; 6. 16.

e Nu.14.29,35. Ge. 3. 19. Ps.146.4. Ec.12.7.

g 2 Pe.3.8. Ps.39.5.

4 Or, *when he hath passed* them.

h Pr.14.32. Job27.20, 21. Is.8.7,8.

i Ps.73.20. Is.29.7,8.

j Ps.103.15,16. Is.40. 6. Ja.1.10,11.

5 Or, *is changed.*

6 There is a terseness, an abruptness, and a plenitude of meaning in this verse, which evidence its high antiquity:—'Thou sweepest them away; a dream they are; in the morning, as the grass, it flourisheth.'—*P.*

k Ps. 92. 7; 73. 18, 19. Job 14.2.

l Nu.14.29,35. ver.9, 11. Is.33.14. De.32.22; 4. 24. Ps.59.13.

m Ps.50.21; 10.12. Je. 2. 22; 16. 17. Job 34. 21. Pr.5.21.

7 Heb. *turned away.*

o Ps.78.33; ver.7.

8 Or, *as a meditation*, Ps.39.5.

9 As a word, as a thought, as a groan, as a sigh, as those of the spider — various translations—all characterizing instability, brevity, evanescence and vanity.—*C.*

1 Heb. As for *the days of our years*, in them are *seventy years.*

p Ec.1.2,14; 12.1–5.

q Job 6.6,7,9.9.25,26. Ja.4.14. Ps.78.39.

PSALM XC.

1 *The psalmist declareth God's providence over Israel,* 3 *complaineth of human frailty,* 7 *divine chastisements,* 10 *and brevity of life.* 12 *He prayeth for the knowledge and sensible experience of God's good providence.*

A prayer of Moses[1] the [a]man of God.

LORD, thou hast been our [b]dwelling-place[2] in all generations.[3]

2 Before[c] the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world, [d]even from everlasting to everlasting, thou *art* God.

3 Thou[e] turnest man to destruction; and sayest, Return, ye children of men.

4 For[g] a thousand years in thy sight *are* but as yesterday when it is past,[4] and *as* a watch in the night.

5 Thou[h] carriest them away as with a flood; [i]they are *as* a sleep: in the morning *they are* [j]like grass *which* groweth [5]up.[6]

6 In[k] the morning it flourisheth, and groweth up; in the evening it is cut down, and withereth.

7 For[l] we are consumed by thine anger, and by thy wrath are we troubled.

8 Thou[m] hast set our iniquities before thee, our secret *sins* in the light of thy countenance.

9 For all our days are passed away[7] in [o]thy wrath: we spend our years as a [8]tale[9] *that is told.*

10 The days of our years *are* threescore years and ten;[1] and if by reason of strength *they be* fourscore years, [p]yet *is* their strength labour and sorrow: for [q]it is soon cut off, and we fly away.

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and earth by the rolling tides; measuring out the months of the life of man, and the returns of God's solemn festivals; and 'ruling the night,' as a 'faithful witness in heaven,' that though the sun be withdrawn for a time, his beams are not extinguished. In all which respects, the *moon* is a beautiful emblem of the covenant grace of God. Some interpret it of the rainbow, but there is no necessity for such straining. *C.*

REFLECTIONS.—Glorious is that promise of grace which JEHOVAH has made in Jesus Christ as the Head and Representative of all believers. The mercy and faithfulness of God are therein for ever clearly and comfortably manifested; and for ever adored, both in heaven and earth. How infinite are the greatness and majesty of our loving God! How unbounded his strength! No unruly elements in nature, nor outrageous nations of men, can control it. His dominion extends to all parts and ends of the earth; and in a powerful, steady, judicious, righteous, and merciful manner, he conducts his whole providential work, but chiefly that of redemption through the blood of his Son. Happy are they who experimentally know the joyful sound of the gospel, proclaiming Jesus' victories over sin, Satan, the world, death, and hell; and pardon, peace, liberty, and eternal happiness through his blood to sinful men. They walk in the light of JEHOVAH'S favour, direction, and joys! And gloriously are they justified, saved, strengthened, and honoured in Christ!—In these declarations of God to Samuel concerning David, let me contemplate how JEHOVAH found out and laid our help, our salvation, upon Jesus Christ. He it was that supported, strengthened, attended, honoured, and owned him. He it is that aids, favours, corrects, but blesses all believers. —Behold too the sufferings of Jesus and his church, from Satan, from Jews, from heathens, from the wicked: and how terrible the Almighty's displeasure! To be under it for ever constitutes hell. How short, how uncertain, are our days on earth! If through Jesus, as our risen life and quickening Head, we do not live to God's glory here, and with God in glory hereafter, our life is worse than in vain. But painful is it for exercised souls to want the sense of God's love, even though it be secured in the gracious promise. And grievous are the virulent reproaches of Christ, his Father, and his people, and hard to be borne by a tender saint.

PSALM XC. *Title.* This is one of the most remarkable, and, in some respects, one of the most beautiful, psalms in the whole book. It has been called the funeral hymn of the world. Human frailty is brought out in it with equal vividness and pathos; but it is brought out in such a way that it teaches man humble resignation rather than blank despair. It teaches the thoughtful man to utter in faith and hope the sublime prayer, 'Thy will be done,' for it shows him that God's will is the supreme good of the creature. It is called in the title a prayer of Moses; and Prof. Alexander has well said:—'The correctness of the title is confirmed by its unique simplicity and grandeur; its appropriateness to his times and circumstances; its resemblance to the law in urging the connection between sin and death; its simplicity of diction akin to the poetical parts of the Pentateuch, without the slightest trace of imitation or quotation; its marked unlikeness to the psalms of David, and still more to those of later date; and finally the proved impossibility of assigning it to any other age or author.' *P.*

Ver. 1. *In all generations.* In the days of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, in the slavery of Egypt, in the wanderings of the desert, in the wars with Philistia, &c., and even in the captivity and dispersion. Yea, still he is the refuge of his people, whenever their heart shall turn to the Lord. *C.*

Ver. 3. *Return, ye children of men.* That is, as some understand it, 'return to the dust from whence ye were taken.' But is it not more natural to understand the word *return* of the 'return of the spirit to God who gave it;' or of the resurrection, in which the body of his children, though 'sown in dishonour, is raised in glory?' *C.*

Ver. 11. *Power of thine anger.* None, in this life, can fully estimate the awful torment of 'the worm that dieth not, and the fire that is not quenched.'—'Yet who regardeth the power of thine anger, or thy wrath with reverence becoming thee?' (*Boothroyd*). *C.*

Ver. 16. Thy work of creation—thy work of providence—thy work of grace. Of the first, the natural man seeth but little; of the second, less; of the third, nothing; for, spiritual things must be spiritually discerned; and the 'pure in heart,' those renewed by the Holy Spirit, 'shall (alone) see God.' *C.*

REFLECTIONS.—Happy are they who, amidst a transitory and perishing world, have the eternal God for their ALL IN ALL. Wise is his dominion over mankind and unsearchable his duration. But weak and short-lived are men. And it is madness to seek satisfaction and happiness in things so fleeting and unsubstantial. With what armies of sorrows hath sin invaded and overspread our earth: and how exactly every crime is observed by God, in order to correct or punish on account of it! But it is unavailing to live, or live long, unless we live to and in Christ. Yea, intolerable is the woe which God has reserved for those who die in their sins. Every day, therefore, ought to be so numbered as to flee from them to Jesus Christ our refuge. The great business of life is to make ready for death. To ponder aright what is to become of us in eternity is wisdom indeed, and deserves the most serious application. Gracious souls cannot without sorrow abide the sense of God's displeasure. And they who have truly tasted the bitterness of sin cannot rest till the Lord return in pardoning mercy, speak peace to

STATIONS OF THE CROSS IN THE GARDEN. [PSALMS, lxxxix : 45.] —"The days of his youth hast thou shortened : thou hast covered him with shame." The Greek church, or the Eastern church, has placed within the Garden of Gethsemane little stations which represent the incidents of the crucifixion. Poor pligrims from all parts of the world upon visiting Jerusalem make the rounds of these stations of the Cross, praying at each. One cannot stand in the Garden of Gethsemane during the Greek Easter week without having a new apprehension of the hold the Lord Jesus Christ has upon the hearts of the human race. To see people kissing the wood of which the stations representing the incidents of the crucifixion are built ; to see them kissing the rocks made dear to their hearts because lying upon the ground over which the Lord Jesus Christ walked, is sufficient to bring tears to the eyes of the hardest heart.

11 Who[r] knoweth the power of thine anger? even according to thy fear, *so is* thy wrath.[2]

12 So[s] teach *us* to number our days, that we may apply[3] *our* hearts unto wisdom.

13 Return,[t] O LORD, how long? and let it repent thee concerning thy servants.[4]

14 O[u] satisfy us early with thy mercy; that we may rejoice and be glad all our days.

15 Make us glad according to the days *wherein* thou hast afflicted us, *and* the years *wherein* we have seen evil.

16 Let[v] thy work appear unto thy servants, and thy glory unto their children.

17 And[x] let the beauty of the LORD our God be upon us: and [y]establish thou the work of our hands upon us; yea, the work of our hands establish thou it.[5]

PSALM XCI.

1 The state of the godly. 3 Their safety. 9 Their habitation. 11 Their servants. 14 Their friend; with the effects of them all.

HE that[a] dwelleth in the secret place of the most High shall abide[1] under the shadow of the Almighty.[2]

2 I will say of the LORD, [b]*He is* my refuge and my fortress: [c]my God; in him will I trust.

3 Surely[d] he shall deliver thee from the snare of the fowler, *and* from the noisome pestilence.

4 He[e] shall cover thee with his feathers, and under his wings shalt thou trust: his truth *shall be thy* [g]shield and buckler.

5 Thou[h] shalt not be afraid for the terror by night; *nor* for the arrow *that* flieth by day;

6 *Nor* for [i]the pestilence *that* walketh in darkness; *nor* for the destruction *that* wasteth at noon-day.

7 A thousand shall fall at thy side, and ten thousand at thy right hand; *but* it [j]shall not come nigh thee.

8 Only[k] with thine eyes shalt thou behold, and see the reward of the wicked.

9 Because [l]thou hast made the LORD *which is* my refuge, *even* the most High, thy habitation;

A.M. cir. 2514.
B.C. cir. 1490.

r Ps. 76, 7. Job 9, 13. Is. 33, 14. Re. 6, 16, 17. Mal. 3, 2. Na. 1, 2, 6.

2 'For even as thy majesty, so is thy wrath.'—*P.*

s Ps. 39, 4. De. 32, 29. Ep. 5, 16, 17.

3 Heb. *cause to come*, Pr. ii.–ix. 2 Ti. 3, 15, 16. Lu. 12, 19, 20.

t Ps. 6, 4; 80, 14; 106, 45. Je. 12, 15; 31, 20. Joel 2, 13, 14. Zec. 1, 16. De. 32, 36. Ho. 11, 8.

4 'At length, O Lord, return to us, and be reconciled to thy servants.'—*Green.*

u Ps. 63, 3–5, 7; 103, 5; 65, 4; 85, 6; 30, 5; 126, 5, 6; 86, 4. Is. 29, 19; 40, 1, 2; 61, 3; 65, 18, 19.

v Hab. 3, 2. Eze. 20, 6. Nu. 14, 31. Ps. 105, 42, 44; 135, 12.

x Ps. 110, 3; 80, 3, 7, 19; 27, 4.

y Job 22, 28. Pr. 16, 3. Is. 26, 12. Ps. 138, 8; 68, 28. Phi. 1, 6; 2, 13. 1 Pe. 5, 10. 2 Th. 2, 16, 17; 3, 3. 2 Co. 1, 21.

5 If Moses was the author, then 'the work' he was so intensely desirous of accomplishing was the leading of Israel to the Land of Promise.—*P.*

PSALM XCI.

B.C. cir. 1016.

a Eze. 12, 16. Ps. 27, 5; 31, 20; 32, 7; 17, 8; 57, 1. Ju. 9, 15. ver. 4.

1 Heb. *lodge.*

2 It would seem from the structure of this psalm, and the abrupt change of person, that it was intended to be sung by a double choir—one making a statement regarding God and the other responding. It is arranged as follows:—Statement, ver. 1. Response, ver. 2. Statement, ver. 3–8. Response, ver. 9. Statement, ver. 10–13. Response, ver. 14–16.—*P.*

b Ps. 18, 2; 46, 1; 142, 5; 71, 2. De. 33, 27–29. Zec. 2, 5, 1 Pe. 1, 5.

c Ps. 31, 14; 73, 28.

d Ps. 124, 6, 7. 2 Ti. 2, 26. Job 5, 19–22. Is. 46, 4. 2 Co. 1, 10.

e De. 32, 11. Is. 31, 5. Mat. 23, 37. Ps. 17, 8; 61, 4; 57, 1.

f Ge. 15, 1. He. 6, 17, 18. 1 Th. 5, 23, 24.

h Ps. 3, 6; 4, 8; 112, 7; 121, 5, 6. Job 5, 19–22. Pr. 3, 25. Is. 41, 10, 14; 43, 1, 2. De. 32, 23, 42. La. 3, 12, 13.

i Ex. 12, 29, 30. 2 Ki. 19, 35. 2 Sa. 24, 15.

j ver. 10. Ps. 32, 6.

k Pr. 3, 25, 26. Ps. 58, 10; 64, 8, 9; 37, 34. Mal. 1, 5. Is. 3, 11. Ro. 2, 8, 9.

l Ps. 142, 4, 5; 46, 1–4. Eze. 11, 16. ver. 1, 2. He. 6, 18. Pr. 18, 10.

A.M. cir. 2988.
B.C. cir. 1016.

m ver. 1. Pr. 1, 33; 12, 21; 3, 33. Ps. 121, 6, 7; 46, 1–4; xxxvii. Ro. 8, 28.

o 2 Ki. 6, 16, 17. Ps. 34, 7. Mat. 4, 6. Lu. 4, 10. He. 1, 14.

p Is. 46, 4; 63, 9. Pr. 3, 23. Job 5, 23. Ps. 37, 24; 94, 18.

q Da. 6, 22. Mar. 16, 18. Ro. 16, 20.

3 Or, *asp.*

r Is. 3, 10. Ps. 119, 165. Ro. 2, 7, 10. Pr. 1, 33.

s Phi. 2, 9–11. Ps. 89, 16, 17; 9, 10. Is. 33, 10.

4 From ver. 14, to the end, the Father proclaims his exaltation of the Son, who now waiteth till all his enemies shall be put under his feet, and the last, which is death, shall be destroyed.—*C.*

5 The *name* is the revelation of the attributes or nature of God, chiefly in relation to man. See note on Ex. 34, 6, also Mat. 11, 27. Ju. 10, 15.—*C.*

t Ps. 50, 15; 18, 6; 34, 5, 6; 65, 2. Is. 58, 9; 65, 24. 1 Jn. 5, 14, 15. Jn. 15, 7.

u Is. 43, 1, 2; 41, 10; 46, 4. 2 Co. 1, 4, 10. 1 Sa. 2, 30. Ps. 28, 9.

v Pr. 3, 2; 22, 4. Ge. 15, 15. Job 5, 22. Is. 65, 20.

6 Heb. *length of days.*

x Ps. 50, 23; 16, 11. Is. 45, 17, 1 Jn. 3, 2.

PSALM XCII.

B.C. cir. 1045.

a Ps. 33, 1; 147, 1; 107, 1, 8, 15, 21; 135, 3. Lu. 1, 47. Phi. 4, 4.

b La. 3, 23. Ps. 55, 17; 89, 1, 2; 45, 17; 145, 2; 71, 8, 15.

1 Heb. *in the night.*

c Ps. 33, 2; 57, 8; 68, 25; 150, 3–5.

2 Or, *upon the solemn sound with the harp.*

3 Heb. *Higgaion.* Ps. 9, 16; 19, 14.

d Ge. 1, 31. Ps. 104, 31; 13, 5; 145, 6, 7; 149, 2–5.

4 The *work* here commemorated, is that to which praise is ascribed under the NAME of God (ver. 1), consequently the whole work of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit; and, in these words, the Son addresses the Father, triumphing in the works of creation, providence, and redemption, which he had been commissioned to achieve.—*C.*

e Ps. 104, 24; 40, 5; 139, 17. Is. 28, 29; 55, 9. Ro. 11, 33. 1 Co. 2, 10.

g Ps. 94, 8; 14, 1. 1 Co. 2, 14. Is. 1, 3.

h ver. 7, 9. Ps. 73, 16–22; 37, 35, 36.

i Job 12, 6; 21, 7–12. Ps. 73, 12. Je. 12, 1, 2. Mal. 3, 15; 4, 1.

j Ps. 37, 2, 35; 73, 18–20; 55, 15, 23. 2 Th. 1, 7–9.

k Ex. 18, 11. Ps. 56, 2. Ec. 5, 8. Da. 4, 34, 35.

l Ps. 73, 27; 58, 1, 2, 30; 1, 4; 83, 13–17. Mat. 7, 23.

10 There[m] shall no evil befall thee, neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling.

11 For[o] he shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways.

12 They[p] shall bear thee up in *their* hands, lest thou dash thy foot against a stone.

13 Thou[q] shalt tread upon the lion and adder:[3] the young lion and the dragon shalt thou trample under feet.

14 Because[r] he hath set his love upon me, therefore will I deliver him: [s]I will set him on high,[4] because he hath known my name.[5]

15 He[t] shall call upon me, and I will answer him: [u]I *will be* with him in trouble; I will deliver him, and honour him.

16 With[v] long life[6] will I satisfy him, and [x]show him my salvation.

PSALM XCII.

1 The prophet exhorteth to praise God, 4 for his great works, 6 for his judgments on the wicked, 10 and for his goodness to the godly.

A psalm *or* song for the sabbath-day.

IT is[a] *a* good *thing* to give thanks unto the LORD, and to sing praises unto thy name, O most High:

2 To[b] show forth thy loving-kindness in the morning, and thy faithfulness every night,[1]

3 Upon[c] an instrument of ten strings, and upon the psaltery; [2]upon the harp with a solemn sound.[3]

4 For thou, LORD, [d]hast made me glad through thy work:[4] I will triumph in the works of thy hands.

5 O LORD, [e]how great are thy works! *and* thy thoughts are very deep.

6 A[g] brutish man knoweth not; neither doth a fool [h]understand this.

7 When[i] the wicked spring as the grass, and when all the workers of iniquity do flourish; *it is* that they shall be [j]destroyed for ever:

8 But thou, LORD, *art* [k]*most* high for evermore.

9 For, lo, thine enemies, O LORD, for, lo, [l]thine enemies shall perish; all the workers of iniquity shall be scattered.

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their conscience, and enable them to rejoice in himself. And such as are faithful to Christ will be greatly concerned that he may work all in them, do all for them, give all to them; and that he may herein be glorified, not only in them, but also in their posterity after them.

PSALM XCI. Ver. 1. *Secret place.* In the bosom of the Father, where the Son was in glory 'before the foundation of the world'—our only conception of eternity (see Jn. 1, 18; and 17, 5; 1 Jn. 1, 2); for he that was before creation was, must have been eternal. *C.*

Ver. 2. *I will say.* That the speaker is Christ, his own tacit acknowledgment (Mat. 4, 6, compared with ver. 11, 12) undeniably demonstrates. The amended translation of Lowth, instead of 'I will say,' gives 'who saith,' which seems more natural. *C.*

Ver. 4. The *wings* and *feathers* which God adopted in the emblematic cherubim that overshadowed the mercy-seat—which, again, was the emblem of Jesus, the propitiation or mercy-seat for our sins. *C.*

Ver. 9. *The Lord which is my refuge.* By supplying the words *which is*, the sense is obscured. 'The Lord my refuge,' like 'the Lord our righteousness,' should be taken as a title of Jehovah, appropriating the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, as his refuge; and, through him, the refuge of every believer in his name. *C.*

Ver. 11. Satan quoted this text correctly, so far as he went; and, so far, our Lord acknowledged the interpretation. But yet he quoted falsely, because he quoted imperfectly, and misrepresented the truth, as he suppressed an essential part. And so, in all ages, have all his servants dealt. *C.*

REFLECTIONS.—While I here contemplate Jesus Christ as the Father's Son, protecting, guarded, attended, heard in his prayers, honoured, and crowned with life and glory everlasting, let me with wonder behold the happiness of all people who make God their refuge and delightful habitation, who know his name, set their love on him, and call on him. Secured against every disappointment and danger, distinguished in the providence of God, guarded by angels, delivered from and victorious over the devil, that fowler, dragon, and lion of hell, JEHOVAH attends them in their troubles, hears their prayers, and gives them answers of peace. He exalts them on Christ their Rock, and makes them to sit with him on his throne; honours them with the relations of children, kings, and priests unto God, and decks them with blessed righteousness and imparted grace. And after preserving all who believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, he bestows upon them his unutterable blessedness above. May these things in Christ be the desire of my heart.

PSALM XCII. Ver. 3. Of the several musical instruments here enumerated, there is little, if any, certain knowledge. Nor is their specific nature important; as the object of the speaker is merely to show, that all instruments of music should be dedicated to the praise of God—to show forth his 'loving-kindness' in 'the morning,' because he has preserved his children while they slept—and his 'faithfulness every night,' because he has given them 'bread' through the day. *C.*

Ver. 12. *Like the palm-tree*—lofty and fruitful. *Like the cedar*—great and incorruptible. These characters meet in one, but are from him transfused to many. *C.*

REFLECTIONS.—Whatever our engagements be, we are bound at least to begin and end every day with prayer and praise. And they who have lively experience of God's love and faithfulness, will delight in daily showing forth his salvation. None but such as are ignorant or wicked will disregard his work of creation or providence; and much less that of redemption—but short-lived is the flourishing of wicked men, and dreadful the misery in which it issues; and yet this misery is the legitimate outcome of sin against God! But pleasant and profitable to themselves and others, and honourable to God, shall be the spiritual growth of those who are planted in Christ, and live in continued fellowship with him.

PSALM XCIII. Ver. 1. *The Lord reigneth.* The prophetic period to which this and some parallel psalms refer can be easily ascertained from comparing them with Re. 11, 17; 19, 6; at which time God shall 'take to him his mighty power and reign,' and when all the things that are now temporary and movable shall pass under that 'kingdom that cannot be moved,' He. 12, 28. *C.*

REFLECTIONS.—Solid and believing views of Jesus Christ are excellent means to subdue the pride and remove the fear of man. They who have him for their king and keeper have no reason to be moved from their steadfastness. No earthly dishonours need

10 But[n] my horn shalt thou exalt like *the horn of* an unicorn:[5] I [o]shall be anointed with fresh oil.

11 Mine[p] eye also shall see *my desire* on mine enemies; *and* mine ears shall hear *my desire* of the wicked that rise up against me.[6]

12 The[q] righteous shall flourish like the palm-tree; he shall grow like a cedar in Lebanon.

13 Those that [r]be planted[7] in the house of the LORD shall flourish in the courts of our God.

14 They[s] shall still bring forth fruit in old age; they shall be fat and flourishing;[8]

15 To show [t]that the LORD *is* upright; *he is* my rock, and *there is* no unrighteousness in him.

PSALM XCIII.

The majesty, stability, power, and holiness of Christ's kingdom.

THE LORD[a] reigneth, [b]he is clothed with majesty; the LORD is clothed with strength, *wherewith* he hath [c]girded himself: [d]the world also is stablished, that it cannot be moved.

2 Thy[e] throne *is* established of old:[1] thou *art*[g] from everlasting.

3 The[h] floods have lifted up, O LORD, the floods have lifted up their voice; the floods lift up their waves.

4 The[i] LORD on high *is* mightier than the noise of many waters,[2] *yea, than* the mighty waves of the sea.

5 Thy[j] testimonies are very sure: [k]holiness becometh thine house, O LORD, for ever.[3]

PSALM XCIV.

1 *The psalmist, calling for justice, complaineth of tyranny and impiety.* 8 *He showeth God's providence;* 12 *and teacheth the blessedness of affliction.* 16 *God is the defender of the afflicted.*

O LORD God, to whom vengeance belongeth;[1] O God, to whom vengeance belongeth, show thyself.[2]

2 Lift[a] up thyself, [b]thou Judge of the earth: render[c] a reward to the proud.[3]

3 LORD, [d]how long shall the wicked, how long shall the wicked triumph?

4 *How long* shall they [e]utter *and* speak hard things? *and* all the workers of iniquity boast themselves?

5 They[g] break in pieces thy people, O LORD, and afflict thine heritage:

6 They slay the widow and the stranger, and murder the fatherless:

A.M. cir. 2959.
B.C. cir. 1045.

n Ps. 57. 10; 132. 17; 89. 17, 24. Ke. 3. 21.

5 Of any animal specifically meant, nothing is known. The real meaning is, —'My power wilt thou exalt as a *sole and supreme ruler.*' And as the head is alone in the body, so is Christ in his church. —*C.*

o 2 Co. 1. 21. 1 Jn. 2. 20. Ps. 23. 5. Job 29. 6.

p Ps. 52. 6; 54. 7; 58. 10; 91. 8; 112. 8; 37. 34. Job 22. 19. Mal. 3. 5. Re. 19. 1, 2.

6 Literally, 'Of mine enemies mine eyes shall see; of those that rise up against me mine ears shall hear.' It is a prophecy rather than a prayer.—*P.*

q Is. 65. 22; 41. 19; 55. 13; 61. 3. Ca. 7. 7, 8. Ps. 52. 8. Ho. 14. 5–8. Re. 7. 9.

r Ps. 1. 3. Is. 60. 21. Eze. 47. 12. Ro. 6. 4, 5; 11. 17, 2 Pe. 3. 18.

7 Those trees that are planted in the house and courts of God, represent those children that, having been received into his house by the 'Spirit of adoption,' frequent his courts for the purposes of worship.—*C.*

s Job 17. 9. Pr. 4. 18. Is. 44. 3, 4. Je. 17. 8; 31. 12.

8 Heb. *green*, Eze. 47. 12.

t Ps. 25. 8. De. 32. 4. Ro. 9. 14. 2 Ti. 4. 8. He. 6. 10. 2 Th. 1. 6, 7. Zep. 3. 5.

PSALM XCIII.

a Ps. 96. 10; 99. 1; 90. 1. Is. 52. 7. Re. 11. 15, 17; 19. 6.

b Job 40. 10. Ps. 104. 1; 96. 6, 7, 9.

c Ps. 65. 6. Is. 11. 5, with 8, 9.

d Ps. 96. 10; 102. 28; 125. 1. Mat. 16. 18. He. 6. 5; 12. 28.

e Ps. 45. 6; 89. 4, 29, 36.

1 Heb. *from then.*

g Ps. 90. 2. Pr. 8. 23. Mi. 5. 2. 1 Ti. 1. 17; 6. 16.

h Ps. 18. 4; 69. 1, 2; 124. 1–3. Ac. iv. v. vii. &c. Re. vi. viii. xiii. with Je. 46. 7, 8. Is. 17. 12, 13.

i Ps. 89. 9; 29. 10; 65. 7; 2. 4, 5; 110. 5, 6. Col. 2. 15. Re. 17. 14.

2 These are the emblems of the opposition which a world 'unstable as water,' yet furious in its storms of passion, is continually presenting to Christ and his kingdom, Re. 17. 15.—*C.*

j Ps. 19. 7, 8. He. 6. 17, 18. Mat. 5. 18.

k Eze. 43. 12. Zec. 14. 20, 21. Re. 21. 27. Is. 60. 21. He. 12. 14.

3 Heb. *to length of days*, Ps. 23. 6.

PSALM XCIV.

B.C. cir. 1057.

1 Heb. *God of revenges*, De. 32. 35. Na. 1. 2, 6. Ro. 12. 19.

2 Heb. *shine forth*, Ps. 80. 1.

a Ps. 7. 6; 68. 1; 44. 26; 74. 22. Is. 33. 10.

b Ge. 18. 25. Ps. 50. 3.

c Job 40. 11, 12. Is. 2. 11, 12, 17; 35. 4.

d Ps. 13. 2. Job 20. 5. Je. 12. 1, 2.

e Ps. 31. 18; 73. 8, 9. Jude 15. Is. 37. 23, 24. Job 21. 14, 15; 34. 37.

g Ps. 10. 8–14; 83. 4; 58. 2; lxiv. lxxix.; 80. 13; 124. 2, 3; 129. 1–3. Mi. 3. 2, 3. Je. 22. 16, 17. Eze. 22. 27.

3 This verse is explanatory of the first.

A.M. cir. 2047.
B.C. cir. 1057.

Vengeance is not to be interpreted in the ordinary sense. God is appealed to as a *Judge*, who could fully investigate crime, and righteously punish the criminal.—*P.*

h Ps. 10. 11, 13; 59. 7. Eze. 8. 12; 9. 9. Is. 29. 15. Je. 23. 23, 24.

4 Insult to the Majesty of heaven is added to oppression and cruelty. Such double wickedness could not be tolerated by a just ruler.—*P.*

i Ps. 92. 6; 50. 22. Is. 27. 11. 1 Co. 2. 14. De. 32. 29. Je. 6. 8. Ro. 3. 11.

5 This appeal is to those, among God's people, who do not rightly read or interpret the providence of God in the infliction of judgments: a lesson which the Jew has not been able to learn during the continued chastisements of 1800 years.—*C.*

j Ex. 4. 11. Pr. 20. 12. Je. 32. 19. Ps. 147. 5. He. 4. 13. Ro. 11. 33.

k Eze. 39. 21. Hab. 3. 17. Ge. vii. xiv. xix. Ex. vii. xiv. Jos. vi.–xii. Ju. iii. iv. vii. xi. &c. Am. 3. 2.

l Pr. 2. 6. Job 32. 8; 35. 11.

n 1 Co. 3. 19, 20; 1. 21. Ro. 1. 21, 22.

o Job 5. 17, 18; 33. 16–24. He. 12. 5–11. 1 Co. 11. 32. Is. 27. 9. Pr. 3. 11, 12. Ps. 119. 67, 71.

6 *Blessed is the man* —the man Christ Jesus, to whom alone this description originally and absolutely applies. All others blessed in afflictions, are only blessed through him.—*C.*

p Hab. 3. 16. Is. 65. 12–16. 2 Co. 4. 17, 18. 2 Th. 1. 6–9.

q 1 Sa. 12. 22. Ro. 11. 1, 2, 12. Ps. 37. 28. He. 13. 5. Je. 32. 39, 40. Is. 49. 15; 44. 21. Eze. 39. 29.

r De. 32. 35, 36. Job 35. 14. Ps. 125. 3.

7 Heb. shall be *after it*, Re. 15. 3, 4. Mat. 5. 48. 1 Pe. 1. 15.

s Is. 59. 15, 16. Je. 5. 1. Eze. 22. 30. Mi. 7. 2–7.

t Ps. 124. 1–5; 129. 4; 142. 4, 5. 2 Ti. 4. 16, 17. 2 Co. 1. 10; 12. 9.

8 Or, *quickly*, Ps. 143. 7; 13. 2, 3.

u Ps. 38. 16; 22. 13; 121. 3. Is. 46. 4. Job 35. 14.

v Ps. 61. 2; 63. 5, 6. Hab. 3. 16–18. 2 Co. 1. 3, 4; 7. 6.

x Job 34. 17, 19. Ps. 5. 4–6. 2 Co. 6. 14.

y Is. 32. 1. Ps. 58. 2. Mi. 6. 16. Da. 6. 7; 3. 4–6.

z Pr. 1. 11, 16. Mat. 27. 1. Da. 6. 6. Ps. 2. 1–3; 58. 2. ver. 4–6.

9 This verse describes the combination of Jews and Gentiles against Christ—none else was righteous—no other was innocent.—*C.*

a Ps. 7. 10; 57. 2; 59. 9, 10, 17; 91. 1–4, 9. 2 Co. 1. 10.

b Ps. 7. 16; 9. 16, 17; 55. 23. Pr. 5. 22. Eze. 18. 4. Ro. 2. 8, 9. 2 Th. 1. 1–10. Is. 3. 11.

PSALM XCV.

B.C. cir. 1045.

a Ps. 100. 1; 101. 1; 34. 2; 148. 1–14; 150. 1–6. Ep. 5. 19. Zec. 8. 21. Col. 3. 16.

b 2 Sa. 22. 47. 1 Co. 10. 4. Ps. 89. 26.

1 Heb. *prevent his face*, Ps. 24. 6; 100. 2, 4.

7 Yet[h] they say, The LORD shall not see, neither shall the God of Jacob regard *it*.[4]

8 Understand,[i] ye brutish among the [5]people; and, *ye* fools, when will ye be wise?

9 He[j] that planted the ear, shall he not hear? he that formed the eye, shall he not see?

10 He that [k]chastiseth the heathen, shall not he correct? he that [l]teacheth man knowledge, *shall not he know?*

11 The[n] LORD knoweth the thoughts of man, that they *are* vanity.

12 Blessed[o] *is* the man[6] whom thou chastenest, O LORD, and teachest him out of thy law;

13 That[p] thou mayest give him rest from the days of adversity, until the pit be digged for the wicked.

14 For[q] the LORD will not cast off his people, neither will he forsake his inheritance:

15 But [r]judgment shall return unto righteousness; and all the upright in heart shall follow [7]it.

16 Who[s] will rise up for me against the evil-doers? *or* who will stand up for me against the workers of iniquity?

17 Unless[t] the LORD *had been* my help, my soul had almost[8] dwelt in silence.

18 When I said, [u]My foot slippeth; thy mercy, O LORD, held me up.

19 In[v] the multitude of my thoughts within me thy comforts delight my soul.

20 Shall[x] the throne of iniquity have fellowship with thee, which [y]frameth mischief by a law?

21 They[z] gather themselves together against the soul of the righteous, and condemn the innocent blood.[9]

22 But[a] the LORD is my defence; and my God *is* the rock of my refuge.

23 And[b] he shall bring upon them their own iniquity, and shall cut them off in their own wickedness; *yea*, the LORD our God shall cut them off.

PSALM XCV.

1 *An exhortation to praise God for his greatness,* 6 *and for his goodness,* 8 *and not to tempt him as did Israel in the wilderness.*

O COME, [a]let us sing unto the LORD; let us make a joyful noise to the [b]Rock of our salvation.

2 Let us come before his presence[1] with thanksgiving, and make a joyful noise unto him with psalms.

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disquiet those who have Christ, the Lord of all, to be their Father and portion. No troubles need dismay those who are by grace made one with the King eternal. No changes need discontent them who have God's sure testimonies for their heritage and the ground of their hope. None need be ashamed of holiness, which is the ornament of God's nature, of his renewed hearts, his church, and his heaven.

PSALM XCIV. Ver. 1. The infliction of punishment is essential to the character of justice in God, both as a corrective of the wicked, and a warning to the godly. It is in vain, then, for foolish men to quarrel with this appeal to him who hath said —'Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves;' but, at the same time, has added—'Vengeance is mine,—I will repay, saith the Lord.' *C.*

Ver. 6. Every period of the persecutions of the Christian church has fully and literally realized this description. But such, alas! is unrenewed human nature, ever prone, in its fatal selfishness, to assail the defenceless, and, in its blinded ignorance, to conclude that God will neither see, regard, nor requite! *C.*

Ver. 15. *Judgment shall return unto righteousness.* That is, the judgment of God which the Jews imprecated, and which now has left them to harden in their sins, will return and lead them through their afflictions, to the righteousness of faith, when they shall look upon him whom they pierced, and follow on to know the Lord. *C.*

REFLECTIONS.—Saints must always expect manifold injuries and oppressions in this world. But never must they usurp God's prerogative in avenging themselves, but patiently endure and wait for the day when he that judges righteously shall arise to judge their adversaries. When men leaving God are left to themselves, how their heart, hands, and tongue concur in abusing him and his people! Astonishing is their atheism and stupidity! They sink even below common sense. But God makes the correction of his people to issue in their instruction, and in their spiritual or eternal rest and safety, while hardened sinners are ruined. In due time he will rectify all seeming disorders; and the righteousness of his judgments shall be made clearly manifest to the encouragement of the upright to follow him, and to praise him for his providences. And thrice happy are they who have treasured up manifold experiences of God's support, comfort, and deliverance in their times of extreme distress! It will encourage them to expect the proper, seasonable, and righteous overthrow of opposition to the church, whether wicked courts in Israel, Assyrians, Chaldeans, Syro-Grecians, obstinate Jews, Romish heathens, antichristians, or others.

PSALM XCV. Ver. 1. *Let us sing.* The church here exhorts all her members to praise God by united *singing*— a depart-

3 For[c] the LORD *is* a great God, and a great King above all gods.

4 In[d] his[2] hand *are* the deep places[3] of the earth: [e]the strength of the hills[4] *is* his also.

5 The sea *is* his,[5] and he made it; and his hands formed the dry *land*.

6 O come, [g]let us worship and bow down: let us kneel before the LORD [h]our Maker.

7 For[i] he *is* our God; and we *are* the people of his pasture, and the sheep of his hand. [j]To-day, if ye will hear his voice,

8 Harden[k] not your heart, [l]as in the [6]provocation,[7] *and* as *in* the day of temptation in the wilderness;

9 When[n] your fathers tempted me,[8] proved me, and saw my work.

10 Forty[o] years long was I grieved with *this* generation, and said, It *is* a people that do err in their heart, and they have not known my ways:

11 Unto[p] whom I sware in my wrath, that they should not enter[9] into my rest.

PSALM XCVI.

1 *An exhortation to praise God,* 4 *for his greatness,* 8 *for his kingdom,* 10 *and to rejoice in his righteous government of the world.*

O SING[a] unto the LORD a new song:[1] sing unto the LORD, all the earth.

2 Sing unto the LORD, bless his name; [b]show forth his salvation from day to day.

3 Declare[c] his glory among the heathen, his wonders among all people.

4 For[d] the LORD *is* great, and greatly to be praised: he *is* to be feared above all gods.

5 For [e]all the gods of the nations *are* idols: but the LORD made the heavens.

6 Honour[g] and majesty *are* before him; strength and beauty *are* in his sanctuary.

7 Give[h] unto the LORD, O ye kindreds of the people, give unto the LORD glory and strength.

8 Give[i] unto the LORD the glory *due unto* his name:[2] bring[j] an offering, and come into his courts.

9 O worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness;[3] fear before him, all the earth.

10 Say among the heathen *that* [k]the LORD reigneth:[4] the [l]world also shall be established that it shall not be moved:[5] he [m]shall judge the people righteously.

11 Let[o] the heavens rejoice, and let the earth be glad; let the sea roar, and the fulness thereof.

12 Let the field be joyful, and all that *is* therein; then shall all the trees of the wood rejoice

13 Before the LORD: [p]for he cometh,[6] for he cometh to judge the earth: he shall judge the world with righteousness, and the people with his truth.

PSALM XCVII.

1 *The majesty of God's kingdom.* 8 *The church rejoiceth at God's judgments against idolaters.* 10 *An exhortation to godliness and joy in the Lord.*

THE LORD[a] reigneth;[1] let [b]the earth rejoice; let the multitude of isles[2] be glad *thereof.*

2 Clouds[c] and darkness *are* round about him: [d]righteousness and judgment *are* the [3]habitation of his throne.

3 A[e] fire[4] goeth before him, and burneth up his enemies round about.

4 His[g] lightnings enlightened the world; the earth saw, and trembled.

5 The[h] hills melted like wax at the presence of the LORD, at the presence of the [i]LORD of the whole earth.

6 The[j] heavens declare his righteousness, and all the people see his glory.

7 Confounded[k] be all they that serve graven

A.M. cir. 2959.
B.C. cir. 1045.

c Ps.96.4;97.9;135.5. De.10.17. Tit. 2. 13. 1 Ti.6.15. Re.17.14; 19. 16. Mal.1.14.
d Ps.24.1; 135.6. Je. 31.37.
2 Heb. *in whose.*
3 *Deep places*—the very central bases of the earth, which he shakes at his pleasure.—*C.*
e Or, *the heights of the hills,* Nu.23.22.
4 *Strength of the hills.* 'The inaccessible summits of the mountains.' — *Horsley.*
5 Heb. *whose the sea is,* Ge.1.9,10.
g Ac.21.5. Phi.2.10. Ps.45.11;89.7. Ex.4.31. 1 Ki.8.54.
h Jn.1.3. Is.54.5.
i Ex.20.2; 19.5,6. Ps. 79.13;100.3.
j He. 3.7,15; 4.7. Pr. 27.1 Ja.4.13,14.
k 2 Ch.30.8. He. 3 12, 13;12.25.
l Ex.17.2,7. Nu.14.2, 22,27;20.13. De.9.22.
6 Heb. *contention.*
7 *In the provocation,* as in Meribah. *In the temptation,* as in Massah. See Ex. 17.7.—*C.*
n Ps. 78. 40, 41, 56. 1 Co.10.9.
8 Christ, who was with the church in the wilderness, here speaks; him the people tempted, and from his rest they were excluded, 1 Co. 10. 9. —*C.*
o Nu.14.33,34. De.1. 1;9.7; 29.4,5. Ne.9.16, 17. Ps.78.10-42; 2c6.6-29. Eze.20.5-24.
p He. 3.11,19; 4. 3, 5, 9,11.
9 Heb. *if they enter.*

PSALM XCVI.

a 1 Ch.16.23-33. Ps. 33.3;147.1;66.1,4;67.3,5; 68.32;98.1;100.1;117.1.
1 See note ' below.
b Ps. 3. 8. Is. 45. 17. Re.7.10;9.19.1.
c Ps. 72.18,19. Mar. 16.15. Mat.28.19. Re. 14.6.
d Ex.18.11. Ps.18.3; 86.8;135.3,5; 89.6-8. Je. 10.10,16.
e Ps.115.3-8; 135.15-18. Is.40.18-20;42.5;44. 8-20. Je.10.1-16. 1 Co. 8.4-6.
g Ps.29.2,9;104.1;27. 4;93.1;63.2.
h Ps. 29.1,2;68.32,34. Re.5.9-13; 15.3,4. Lu. 2.14. Jude 25.
* *A new song*—'famous, excellent.'—*Gill.* But *new* should rather be taken literally. For while some songs concerning the 'old things wax old, and are ready, like clouds, to vanish away;' other songs are concerning the

A.M. cir. 2959.
B.C. cir. 1045.

'new things' which God shall yet create, and, like the sun, are daily renewed, never 'wax old,' and can never be changed. See ver.2.—*C.*
i Re.5.9;7.10,12; 14. 7;15.3,4.
2 Heb. *of his names.*
j Mal.1.11. Ro.12.1. He.13.15,16;1 Pe.2.5.
3 Or, *in the glorious sanctuary,* Ps. 29.2;110.3.
k Ps. 46.6,10;93.1;97. 1;99.1. Is.9.6,7. Je.23.5, 6. Mat.28.18. Re.11.15; 19.6.
4 This declaration, with what follows concerning judgment, carries this psalm forward to the period described, Re. 11.15.—*C.*
l Ps.72.3,7. Is.9.6,7; 65.12. Mi.5.5. Zec.9.10. He. 2. 5, 9. Mat.16.18. Lu.2.14..
5 See note on Ps. 93.1.—*C.*
m Ps.45.6;98.9. Is.11. 2-5; 32.1,10; 42.1. Jn.5. 22.
o Ps. 98. 7-9; 69. 34; 148.1-14. Re.12.12; 11. 17;15.3,4;19.1-7.
p Is.7.14;9.6;11.1-5. Mat.10.23. Jn.16.8-11. Re. 6. 2,16,17; 19.2,11; 20.11-13.
6 The repetition of the words *he cometh* to judgment, according to scriptural custom, proves that it is nigh at hand, and carries us forward to the hour when 'he shall come the second time, without sin, to salvation.'—*C.*

PSALM XCVII.

a Ps.93.1;96.10;99.1.
1 See note on Ps. 93. 1. 'A prophecy of the dominion of Christ over all nations.'—*Cotterill.*
b Ps.2.11;96.1. Is.24. 15,16; 42.10-12; 49.13. Re.10.1.
2 Heb. *many* or *great isles,* Is.41.1;42. 4,10,12;49.1;51.5;60.9; 66.19. Zep.2.11. Mal.1. 11. Ps.72.10.
c 1 Ki.8.12. 2 Sa. 22. 12. Re.10.1. Ps.65.6;77. 19.
d See Ps.89.1,14;45. 6.
3 Or, *establishment.*
e Da.7.10. He.12.29. De. 32. 22. Ps. 21.9-12; 50.3. Mal.4.1. Mat.22. 7. Re.6.17; viii.ix.xvi. xx.;21.8.
4 The Spirit of prophecy, before whom is all time, here describes, as past events that are yet to come. See 2 Pe. 3. 7-11. Re. 18.18.—*C.*
g Ps. 77. 18; 104. 32; 144.5,6.

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2 Heb. *of his names.*
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5 See note on Ps. 93.1.—*C.*
m Ps.45.6;98.9. Is.11. 2-5; 32.1,10; 42.1. Jn.5. 22.
o Ps. 98. 7-9; 69. 34; 148.1-14. Re.12.12; 11. 17;15.3,4;19.1-7.
p Is.7.14;9.6;11.1-5. Mat.10.23. Jn.16.8-11. Re. 6. 2,16,17; 19.2,11; 20.11-13.
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c 1 Ki.8.12. 2 Sa. 22. 12. Re.10.1. Ps.65.6;77. 19.
d See Ps.89.1,14;45. 6.
3 Or, *establishment.*
e Da.7.10. He.12.29. De. 32. 22. Ps. 21.9-12; 50.3. Mal.4.1. Mat.22. 7. Re.6.17; viii.ix.xvi. xx.;21.8.
4 The Spirit of prophecy, before whom is all time, here describes, as past events that are yet to come. See 2 Pe. 3. 7-11. Re. 18.18.—*C.*
g Ps. 77. 18; 104. 32; 144.5,6.

k Ju.5.5. Mi.1.4. Na.1.5. Hab.3.4-6.
f Ps.19.1;50.6;98.3. Is.45.8. Nu.14.21. Mat.25.31.
i Ps 24.1. Is.66 1; 54.5. Da 7.14.
k Ex.20.4. Le.26.1. De.5.8 Re.14.9,10.

ment of worship by many churches sadly neglected, or most imperfectly attempted—and a duty and privilege to which many professing Christians consider themselves in no wise obligated. In addition, however, to this, and similar calls of the Spirit, the example of Christ on earth, and of saints in heaven, demands the universal voice of the church to engage in the praises of Jehovah. *C.*

Ver. 3. The heathen worshipped false gods; the Jews also were addicted to idolatry. One great object of this noble song of praise is to celebrate the praises of the one only exalted God of heaven and earth. He is called by his peculiar and incommunicable name JEHOVAH. By it he made himself known to Moses and the whole Jewish nation. By it he was distinguished from all false deities. Hence in this verse the psalmist says:—'For JEHOVAH is a great God, and a great King over all gods.' *P.*

REFLECTIONS.—God richly deserves our highest and most cordial praise. And we should invite one another to this blessed employ. How great is he, possessed of every necessary, infinite, and eternal excellency! How glorious his formation of all things, and his extensive dominion over them! How delightful and effective of blessings unnumbered is his new-covenant relation to men!—But if he be our Saviour and King, it is proper, it is necessary, that we be obedient subjects. To none but such is he the author of eternal salvation. To-day, without a moment's delay, we ought to hear his voice in the gospel, and to receive the offers of his grace. However slightly men pass over their sins, they are highly provoking in God's sight. And disbelief of his promises is one of the greatest insults that we can put upon him. That heart is hardened indeed whom the great and precious promises of the gospel cannot effect. Let us take warning by the ruin of others, that we fall not after the same example of unbelief. Though God bear long with us, he will not bear always. The mercies which we have received from him, as well as the wilfulness of our ignorance and our love to our errors, will fearfully aggravate our sin. And dreadful will be our case, if because of our sins he once exclude us from his new kingdom, his celestial rest, on account of our despising it when offered to us in the gospel.

PSALM XCVI. REFLECTIONS.—Since to us Gentiles Jesus Christ and his word of salvation are now come, let us, in songs ever fresh, ever cordial, publish the glories of his grace, and the wonders of his redeeming mercy, power, holiness, and majesty. Let us acknowledge him as our saving Lord, present ourselves to him as living sacrifices, and in the pure ordinances of his grace worship him with pure hearts and in a reverent and holy manner. Let us rejoice that his kingdom has been, is, and will be established among the Gentiles on earth. Let us, with joy, hope for these latter days, in which Satan shall be bound, and all the kingdoms on earth subjected to the righteous and merciful government of our Redeemer. And let us, with more exalted joy, expect his coming in the clouds, with power and great glory, to judge, and finally decide the eternal state of men and angels.

PSALM XCVII. Ver. 2. *Clouds and darkness* are the emblems of both his government of providence and plan of redemption, which are yet veiled from our eyes—in some parts by clouds, through which we see obscurely; and in others by darkness, through which we cannot see at all. *C.*

Ver. 7. *Confounded.* This is not any angry imprecation, but a humble prayer that God would confound the counsels of idolaters against truth and godliness, as he confounded the counsel of Ahithophel against David—that he would confound their combinations to do evil in the world, as he confounded the tongues of the Babel conspirators, and scattered them abroad upon the face of the whole earth. *C.*

REFLECTIONS.—However mysterious and unsearchable God's providences be, they are always just and equal. A great shaking of the nations, by the Roman and other conquests, ushered in the gospel kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ. A great destruction of obstinate Jews and heathens, and overturning of idolatry in the world, attended the erection and spread of it. And a great overturning of antichristians, Mahometans, and all their false worship, shall yet take place in its most glorious period. No exalted potentates, no mighty nations, nor fixed customs of wickedness, shall be able to withstand his conquering influence. Let saints then rejoice in his dignity of person, office, and state; in his gracious preservation and deliverance of his people; in the comforts and glory which he has prepared for them; and in his righteous judgments upon their implacable foes. And let their delight in his holiness inflame their love to himself and their hatred of sin.

PSALM XCVIII. Ver. 3. *Ends*—countries of the world, evidently carrying forward to the period foretold by our Lord, Mat. 24. 14. *C.*

Ver. 6. See note on Ps. 92. 3. But these instruments are now, almost without exception, dedicated to military pomp, theatrical spectacles, bacchanalian revellings, and worldly amusements; and, married to a sensual and degrading poetry, whereby they become the great auxiliaries of the world against God—and are by many held inconsistent with the simplicity and purity of Christian worship. *C.*

REFLECTIONS.—While I review these lofty notes,

PRISON, NAPLES. [PSALMS xcvi : 10.]—"Say among the heathen that the Lord reigneth; the world also shall be established that it shall not be moved; he shall judge the people righteously." Perhaps there is no city on earth that furnishes a better point for the study of the judgments of God upon cities, nations, and individuals, than Naples. In no other city that has ever existed, have men gone further in defiance of the laws of God and man, and in no other city have they suffered more. Here, in the time of Rome's power and glory, her wealthy people reveled in vices too horrible to mention. And here the judgments of heaven have fallen with a fury and an emphasis almost without parallel. This region, so amply favored as one might be led to suppose it dropped from heaven, as the poet says, has done more to insult heaven than almost any other spot. But Naples has been judged, and here the Lord reigns, either to build those who obey or to destroy those who violate His law.

images, that boast themselves of idols: worship him, all *ye* [5]gods.[6]

8 Zion[t] heard, and was glad; and the daughters of Judah rejoiced because of thy judgments, O LORD.

9 For[m] thou, LORD, *art* high above all the earth; thou art exalted far above all gods.[7]

10 Ye that love the LORD, [o]hate evil: [p]he preserveth the souls of his saints; he delivereth them out of the hand of the wicked.

11 Light[q] *is* sown[8] for the righteous, and gladness for the upright in heart.

12 Rejoice[r] in the LORD, ye righteous; and give thanks at the remembrance[9] of his holiness.

PSALM XCVIII.

1 *The psalmist exhorteth the Jews,* 4 *the Gentiles,* 7 *and all the creatures to praise God.*

A psalm.

O SING[a] unto the LORD a new song;[1] for he hath done marvellous things: [b]his right hand and his holy arm hath gotten him the victory.

2 The[c] LORD hath made known his salvation: his righteousness hath he openly showed[2] in the sight of the heathen.

3 He[d] hath remembered his mercy and his truth toward the house of Israel: [e]all the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God.[3]

4 Make[g] a joyful noise unto the LORD, all the earth: make a loud noise, and rejoice, and sing praise.

5 Sing[h] unto the LORD with the harp; with the harp, and the voice of a psalm.

6 With trumpets and sound of cornet make a joyful noise before the LORD, the King.

7 Let[i] the sea roar, and the fulness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein.

8 Let the floods clap *their* hands; let the hills be joyful together

9 Before[j] the LORD; for he cometh to judge the earth: with righteousness shall he judge the world, and the people with equity.

PSALM XCIX.

1 *The prophet, setting forth the kingdom of God in Zion,* 5 *exhorteth all, by the example of their forefathers, to worship God at his holy hill.*

THE LORD [a]reigneth; let the people tremble: [b]he sitteth *between* the cherubims; let the earth be moved.[1]

2 The[c] LORD *is* great in Zion; [d]and he *is* high above all people.[2]

3 Let them praise thy [e]great and terrible name; *for* it *is* [g]holy.

d Ps.97.9;66.7. Ex.18.11. Da.4.34,35. *e* De.7.21;28.58. Ne.1.5;4.14;9.23. Job 37.22. Ps.47.2;66.3,5. Re.15.3,4. *g* Ex.15.11. Jos.24.19.1 Sa.2.2. Ps.111.9;145.17.

A.M. cir. 2959.
B.C. cir. 1045.

5 Angels, He.1.6.
6 More literally: 'Let all those that serve graven images, that make boast of their idols, be ashamed.—Worship him all ye elohim.' Elohim is one of the names given in Scripture to God. It signifies power; and the same word was applied to all those who exercised, or were supposed to possess power, such as angels, magistrates, princes, and false deities. That the word is intended in this place to signify 'angels' is proved by the quotation of the apostle in He.1.6.—*P.*

f Ps.48.11;64.9;58.10; 52.6. Re.11.17; 12.12; 18.20;19.1–7.
g Phi.2.9–11. Ep.1. 21. Ps.95.3;96.4.
7 'Thou art exalted far above all angels.' —*P.*
o Pr. 3. 7. Ps. 34. 14. Am.5.15. Ro.12.9.
p Ps.16.1; 17.7,8; 25. 20; 59.1. 2 Co.1.10. Is. 46.4. Da.3.28.
q Es.8.16. Ps.112.4; 18.28. Mi.7.8,9. 1 Jn.3. 2. Col.3.4.
8 *Light is sown*—*diffused*, like seed radiating from the hand of the sower.—*C.*
r Ps.32.11;33.1. Phi. 4.4.
9 Or, *to the memorial*, Ps. 30.4; 89. 35. Ex.15.11. Hab.1.12,13.

PSALM XCVIII.
B.C. cir. 1045.

a Ps.33.3;96.1. Is.42. 10. Re.15.3;14.3.
1 See note on Ps. 96.1.—*C.*
b Ex.15.6. Is.59.16; 63.5. Da.9.24. Col.2.15. Ps.110.2–6. Re.6.2,17; 11.17.
c Is.52.10; 46.13; 61. 10. Mar.16.15. Tit.2.11. Ps.22.31.
2 Or, *revealed*, Ro. 1.17; 3.21,22.
d Mi.7.20. Lu.1.54, 68–75.
e Ro.10.12,18. Is.52. 10; 45.22; 42.6,7; 49.8. Lu.2.30. He.2.3. Tit. 2.11.
3 This psalm was, in all probability, composed to celebrate the dedication of the second temple. It was thus emphatically 'a new song'—a song in which the grateful nation expressed anew praise & thanks to Jehovah for restoring them to their fatherland, and giving them another temple. All nations had witnessed their humiliation and captivity; and now again all nations could see how JEHOVAH brought salvation to his people.—*P.*
g Ps.95.1;100.1; 66.1, 4;97.3,5;47.1,5–7;149.2. Is.44.23;42.10.
h Ps.33.2,3;68.25;81. 1,2;92.3–5. Re.14.2,3.
i Ps.96.11–13. Is.35. 1,2; 42.10–12; 49.13; 61. 10,11. Re.xv,xix.
j Re.1.7. Ps.96.13;50. 6;67.4;72.2;49.8; 17.5. Is.5.16; 26.21. De. 32.35. 2 Th.1.0–9.

PSALM XCIX.
B.C. cir. 1015.

a Ps.93.1;96.10;97.1; 89. Mat. 28. 18. Jn. 5. 22. Re. 11. 15, 17. Je 5. 22.
b Ps.80.1. Ex. 25. 22. 2 Co.5.19,20. Is.42.21.
1 Heb. *stagger*.
c Is.48. 1; 26.13; 76.1; 99.9;89.7. Re.14.1.
2 This psalm is closely connected in style and sense with the preceding. It was also designed for the public service, and apparently in the new

A.M. cir. 2989.
B.C. cir. 1015.

temple. The statement in ver. 1, 'He sitteth between the cherubims,' proves that the temple was standing perfect, and the first clause of ver. 2 confirms this view.—*P.*

h Ps.28.8; 27.1; 46.1; 73. 26; 81. 1; 147. 5. Job 36.5–7
3 *The king's strength.* 'Thestrong and mighty king.'—*Gill.*
i Ge.18.25. De. 32.4. Zep. 3. 5. Ne.9.13. Ps. 45.6,7;119.137.
j ver.9. Ps.34.3;96.7. Lu.1.47.
k 2 Sa. 6. 2. 2 Ki. 19. 15. 1 Ch.28.2.
4 Or, it is *holy*.
l Ex.29.11,44.1 Sa.7. 9. Re.1.6.
m Ex. 15. 25; xxxii. xxxiii. Nu. xiv. xvi. 1 Sa.vii.xii. Je.15.1.
5 The idea seems to be that Moses and Aaron were representatives of one class, the priests; and Samuel the representative of another, the people. All classes are thus called upon to worship and praise Jehovah, and a blessing is promised to all without distinction.—*P.*
o Ex. 33.9; 19. 9. Nu. 12.5. 1 Sa.12.18.
p Ps.66.18. Pr. 28. 9. Jn.9.31.
q Ex. 32. 10, 14, 34. Nu.14.19,20,26–28.
r Ps.89.33. Je.33.25, 26.
s ver.5; Ps.2.6; 68.4, 34. De.32.3.
t Ps.2.6;48.1,2;87.1–3.
u 1 Sa.2.2. Hab.1.12, 13. Is.5.16;6.3. Re.4.8.

PSALM C.
1 Or, *thanksgiving*, Ps. cxiv. title.
a Ps.47.1;66.1,4;117. 1. Is.24.15,16; 42.10–12. De. 32. 43. Ro. 15. 10. Phi.4.4.
2 Heb. *all the earth.*
b 1 Ch. 28. 9. Ps. 46. 10. Jn.1.14. 1 Jn.5.20.
c Ps.119. 73; 139. 13–16;149.2. Ep.2.10.
3 Or, *and his we are.*
d Is. 63. 19. Eze. 34. 11, 30, 31. Ps. 95. 7. Ex. 19. 5, 6. 1 Pe. 2. 9, 25. Jn. 10.1–29. 2 Ch.30.8.
e Ps.65.1; 66. 13; 116. 14, 17–19; 95. 2; 105. 1, 5; 106.1,47; 107. 1, 8, 15, 21, 31; cxxxv. cxxxvi. Is. 35.10.
g Ps.103.17;136.1–26; 85. 10; 119.89; 146.6–10. De. 32.4.
4 Heb. *to generation and generation*, Ps.89.1.

PSALM CI.
B.C. cir. 1055 or 1048.

a Ps.89. 1; 48. 11; 97. 8; 103. 1–17; 105. 1–45; 107.1–42. Re.15.3,4; 19. 1–7.
b 1 Sa. 18. 14. Ps. 75. 2.
c Ps.40.17;70.5;143.7.
d 1 Ki.9.4. 2 Sa.23.3. 1 Ti.3.4,5.
e Is.33.15. Job 31. 1. Ps.39.1;18.21–23.
1 Heb. *thing of Belial.*
g Ps.97. 10; 119. 104, 113.
h Ps.125.5;78.57.
i Pr.2.12,1513,32. Ps. 18.26. Lu.9.20.
j 1 Co.15.33. Ps. 6. 8; 119.115. Pr.6.9. Mat.7. 23.
2 *Know*—I will not acknowledge as mine any hypocritical pretender to Christianity, Mat.7.23.—*C.*
k Pr.25.23,1 Co.5.11.
3 *Cut off*—excommunicate from my church, and exclude from my kingdom, 2 Co.12.20; 13. 2. Re. 22. 15.—*C.*
l Pr. 6. 16–19; 30. 13. Ps.138.6. Job 40.11,12.
n Ps. 15. 4; 119. 63. Ro.13.4. Re.17.14.

4 The king's [h]strength[3] also loveth judgment: thou dost [i]establish equity; thou executest judgment and righteousness in Jacob.

5 Exalt[j] ye the LORD our God, and worship at [k]his footstool; *for* he *is* holy.[4]

6 Moses[l] and Aaron among his priests, and Samuel among them that call upon his name; [m]they called upon the LORD, and he answered them.[5]

7 He[o] spake unto them in the cloudy pillar: [p]they kept his testimonies, and the ordinance *that* he gave them.

8 Thou[q] answeredst them, O LORD our God: [r]thou wast a God that forgavest them, though thou tookest vengeance of their inventions.

9 Exalt[s] the LORD our God, and worship at [t]his holy hill: [u]for the LORD our God *is* holy.

PSALM C.

An exhortation to serve God joyfully as our creator and preserver, and to praise him for his goodness, mercy, and truth.

A psalm of praise.[1]

MAKE a[a] joyful noise unto the LORD, all ye lands.[2]

2 Serve the LORD with gladness; come before his presence with singing.

3 Know[b] ye that the LORD he *is* God: *it is* he *that* hath [c]made us, and not we [3]ourselves: [d]*we are* his people, and the sheep of his pasture.

4 Enter[e] into his gates with thanksgiving, *and* into his courts with praise: be thankful unto him, *and* bless his name.

5 For the LORD *is* good; [g]his mercy *is* everlasting; and his truth *endureth* to all generations.[4]

PSALM CI.

David maketh a vow and profession of godliness.

A psalm of David.

I WILL [a]sing of mercy and judgment: unto thee, O LORD, will I sing.

2 I[b] will behave myself wisely in a perfect way. [c]O when wilt thou come unto me? [d]I will walk within my house with a perfect heart.

3 I[e] will set no wicked thing[1] before mine eyes: I [g]hate the work of them that [h]turn aside; *it* shall not cleave to me.

4 A[i] froward heart shall depart from me; I will not [j]know[2] a wicked *person*.

5 Whoso[k] privily slandereth his neighbour, him will I cut off:[3] him [l]that hath an high look, and a proud heart, will not I suffer.

6 Mine[n] eyes *shall be* upon the faithful of

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let me think what is JEHOVAH! What is Jesus to my heart! What of his marvellous incarnation, miracles, life, death, resurrection, and ascension; of his love to sinners; and of his gifts of pardon, grace, and glory; have I seen! What of his victories over sin, Satan, the world, and death; and of his righteousness and salvation manifested in the gospel; have I known, believed, and embraced! What of his mercy and truth, in fulfilling his promises, have I experienced! What of his coming in power to gather the world to himself, and of his coming in glory to judge the world, do I know, believe, and rejoice in hope of!

PSALM XCIX. Ver. 1. *The Lord reigneth.* See note on Ps. 93. 1. 'The Lord reigneth: let the earth rejoice,' Ps. 97. 1. 'The Lord reigneth; let the people tremble,' Ps. 99. 1.—Why this contrariety? Because Ps. xcvii. addressed a people that loved the Lord (ver. 10), a people made righteous by faith in a Saviour; but Ps. xcix. addresses a people who had 'sought out many inventions,' ver. 8, upon which, even a God of mercy takes, for the correction and ensample of others, severe and righteous judgment. *C.*

Ver. 8. *Inventions.* The calling for, contributing to, forming, setting up, and worshipping of the golden calf, and other such acts, in which their hearts seemed inexhaustibly prolific. *C.*

REFLECTIONS.—Terrible is Jesus' royal power and dominion to unbelievers; but comfortable and kindly awing to his saints. And in mercy, wisdom, and righteousness he executes his office. God honours and holds intimate fellowship with those who are remarkably given to prayer: and effectual are their intercessions for the preservation of nations and churches.

the land, that they may dwell with me: he that walketh in a perfect way,[4] he shall serve me.

7 He[o] that worketh deceit shall not dwell within my house: he that telleth lies shall not tarry in my sight.[5]

8 I[p] will early destroy all the wicked of the land;[6] that I may cut off all wicked doers from the [q]city of the LORD.

PSALM CII.

1 *The prophet in his prayer maketh a grievous complaint.* 12 *He taketh comfort in the eternity and mercy of God.* 18 *The mercies of God are worthy to be recorded.* 23 *The prophet, sensible of his own weakness, resteth his hope on the unchangeable nature of God.*

A prayer of[1] the afflicted, when he is [a]overwhelmed, and poureth out his complaint before the LORD.

HEAR my [b]prayer, O LORD, and let my cry come unto thee.[2]

2 Hide[c] not thy face from me in the day *when* I am in trouble; incline thine ear unto me: in the day *when* I call, answer me speedily.

3 For[d] my days are consumed like smoke,[3] and[e] my bones are burnt as an hearth.

4 My[g] heart is smitten, and withered like grass; so that I forget to eat my bread.

5 By[h] reason of the voice of my groaning my bones cleave to my skin.[4]

6 I[i] am like a pelican of the wilderness: I am like an owl of the desert.

7 I[j] watch, and am as a sparrow alone upon the house-top.

8 Mine[k] enemies reproach me all the day; *and* they that are [l]mad against me are sworn against me.

9 For[m] I have eaten ashes like bread, and mingled[o] my drink with weeping,[5]

10 Because[p] of thine indignation and thy wrath: for thou [q]hast lifted me up, and cast me down.

11 My[r] days *are* like a shadow that declineth; and [s]I am withered like grass.

12 But thou, O LORD, [t]shalt endure for ever; and thy remembrance unto all generations.

A.M. cir. 2949 or 2956.
B.C. cir. 2055 or 1048.

4 Or, *perfect in the way*, Ps.119.1.—[That is, he that walketh in Christ Jesus, the only way to the Father, Col.2.6.—*C.*]

o Ps. 55. 3; 56. 2, 3. Pr. 29. 12; 29. 8, 20; 10. 12. Re.21.27.

p Heb. *shall not be established.*

q Ps.75.10. Je.21.12.

5 This resolve can be true in the lips of Christ alone; and though wicked men deem him 'slack concerning his promise,' his promise will be fulfilled at a time they think not of.—*C.*

a Ps.48.2,8.2 Ch.6.6. Ho.9.3.

PSALM CII.
B.C. cir. 1056.

1 Or, *for.*

a Ps.61.2;69.1,2;142. 1-5. Ps.62.8. La.3.1-66. Is.33.14.

b Ps. 145. 19; 4.1;5.2; 130.2;141.1,2;17.6.

2 That the Son of God utters this complaint and prayer is evident from the replies of the Father, ver. 12. He.1.8,10,&c. comp. with Ps. 104. 2.—*C.*

c Is.43.2. 2 Co.10.13. Ps. 27. 9; 69. 17; 143. 7; 102. 2-4; 69. 16, 17; 143. 7; 40. 17; 130. 2.

d Ps. 32. 3, 4; 37. 20; 119.83. Ja.4.14.

3 Or (as some read), *into smoke.*

e Job 30.30. Ps.22.14, 15; 32.4. La.1.13.4.

g Ps.6.3; 22.14; 88.3, 15, 16; 143. 3,4. Job 6.4. La.3.11,13,15-17.

h Job 19.20. La.4. 8. Pr.17.22. Is.38.10-13. 2 Co.2.7. Ps.6.6,7.

4 Or, *flesh*, *i* ver. 7. Job 30.29. Is. 38.14,15. Mi.1.8.

j Ps.6. 6; 77.4; 25. 16. Job 7.13-16. De.28. 66, 67.

k Job 19.18;30.9. Ps. 35.15;26.6-8;69.9-11,20.

l Ps. 2. 1. Ac.26.11;23. 12,14;12.1.

m 2 Sa. 13. 19. Mi. 1. 10. La. 3. 15, 16. Is. 30. 22.

o Job 3. 24. Ps. 42. 3; 80.5;60.3. La.3.48,49.

5 In the East it is customary for those who are in deep sorrow to sit upon a heap of ashes and to sprinkle them over the head and whole person. 'To eat ashes' is a proverbial expression, and means to be in deep grief.—*P.*

p Ps.6.1;38.1;77.2-9; 88.1-18. La.3.1-19. Is. 51.17,20;22.5-17.

q Ps. 30. 7; 73. 18-20; 42.4,5;109.23,30.6,7.

r Ps. 109. 23; 39. 5, 6; 144.6. Ec.6.12. Ja.4.14.

s ver.4. Is.40.6. Ja.1. 10. Ps.103.15,16.

t Ps.90.1, 2; 135. 13. 1 Ti.6.16. La.5.19. Ex.3. 15.

A.M. cir. 2948.
B.C. cir. 1056.

u Ps.51.18; 44.26; 69. 35; 3. 1 Ki.1.9.2,10 19.

6 *Arise*—that is, from that long night of sorrow and darkness in which thy glories have been enveloped. Thou shalt arise, as the Sun of Righteousness, with healing in thy wings.—*C.*

v Is.60.1,&c. Zec.1. 12,13. Is.40.2.

x Ps.79.1. Da.9.2-19. Ne.1.3-11;2.13.

7 How strikingly these words are illustrated by the modern Jews in the Holy City! They have a spot beside the colossal wall of the temple inclosure where they assemble every Friday to wail over the ruins of their venerated sanctuary. I have seen them kiss the stones, spread out their arms as if they would clasp them to their bosoms, and bathe them with their tears, sobbing all the while as if their very hearts would break.—*P.*

y Ps.126.1-3. Is.60.1, 3;55.5;14.1. Zec.8.20-23. Re.21.24.

z Is.44.23, 26; 2. 2-5; 60.1,19,20. Zec.2.5,8.

a Ne. 1. 6, 11; 2. 1-8. Ps.9.18;72.12. Is.41.17, 18. De.32.36.

b Da. 9. 2. Ro. 15. 4. Jn.20.31. 1 Co.10.11.

c Ps.22.27-31; 45. 16, 17. Ep.2.10,15.

8 Every new man born is in one sense a new creation. Each new generation is a new creation. The immortal soul is a fresh work of the great Creator's hand.—*P.*

d Ps.14.2;11.4;33.13. 2 Ch.16.9.

e Ex. 2. 23-25; 3.7,8. Ps.79.11;146. 7. Zec.9. 11. Je.51.34.

9 Heb. *the children of death.*

g 1 Pe.2.9. Is. 51. 11; 43.21. Ps. 51. 19; 79. 13. Ep.3.21;2.4-7.

h Ho.1.11;3.5. Is.60. 4-8. Ps.72.8-11. Zec.8. 20-23.

1 Heb. *afflicted*, Ps. 89.38-47. Job 21.23.

i Ps. 39.13. Is. 38.3, 10 -14.

j De. 33. 27. Ps. 9. 7; 90.1,2. Hab. 1.12. ver. 12. 1 Ti.1.17.

k Heb. 1.10-12. Ge. i. Ex.20.11. Ps.24.1;33. 6. Je.32.17.

l Is.51.6,8; 65.17; 66. 22. Ro.8.20-22. 2 Pe.3. 7,10.

2 Heb. *stand.*

m Mal. 3. 6. Ja. 1.17. He. 13. 8. 1 Ti. 1.17; 6. 16. Is.9.6,7.

o Ps.69. 36; 45.16, 17; Mat.16.18. Is.45.17,59. 19-21;65.22;66.22.

13 Thou[u] shalt arise,[6] and have mercy upon them: [v]for the time to favour her, yea, the set time is come.

14 For[x] thy servants take pleasure in her stones, and favour the dust thereof.[7]

15 So[y] the heathen shall fear the name of the LORD, and all the kings of the earth thy glory.

16 When[z] the LORD shall build up Zion, he shall appear in his glory.

17 He[a] will regard the prayer of the destitute, and not despise their prayer.

18 This[b] shall be written for the generation to come: and [c]the people which shall be created shall praise the LORD.[8]

19 For[d] he hath looked down from the height of his sanctuary; from heaven did the LORD behold the earth;

20 To[e] hear the groaning of the prisoner; to loose those that are appointed to death;[9]

21 To[g] declare the name of the LORD in Zion, and his praise in Jerusalem:

22 When[h] the people are gathered together, and the kingdoms, to serve the LORD.

23 He weakened[1] my strength in the way; he shortened my days.

24 I[i] said, O my God, take me not away in the midst of my days: [j]thy years *are* throughout all generations.

25 Of[k] old hast thou laid the foundation of the earth; and the heavens *are* the work of thy hands.

26 They[l] shall perish, but thou shalt [2]endure; yea, all of them shall wax old like a garment: as a vesture shalt thou change them, and they shall be changed:

27 But[n] thou *art* the same, and thy years shall have no end.

28 The[o] children of thy servants shall continue, and their seed shall be established before thee.

But he will make the dearest of them to smart severely for their sin in this life, notwithstanding they may triumph through faith. Great praise is due to God for his mercies. And deep awe and inward purity are necessary in worshipping him that is infinitely holy.

PSALM C. Ver. 1. That this summons is not confined to 'the land of Judea' is obvious from ver. 4, in which the parties called are exhorted to enter Jehovah's courts. For, whereas the temple had within the gates an outward court, into which the Gentiles might freely enter—the converted Gentiles must here be united as 'God's sheep and people' with the believing Jews. See Jn. 10. 16; Is. 19. 25. *C.*

REFLECTIONS.—What joyful praise, what grateful thanksgiving, what cheerful and hearty service do we Gentiles owe to the Lord!—to him who is JEHOVAH, the infinite ALL!—to him who forms us both in nature and in grace!—to him who is our high proprietor and redeemer, our kind shepherd, leader, provider, and provision!—to him who is good in himself, and whose mercy and truth are for ever exerted in the fulfilment of gracious and ever-blessed promises to sinful men!

PSALM CI. Ver. 2. *In a perfect way . . . with a perfect heart.* Surely he that so resolves, if he do it not in self-ignorance, as Peter resolved never to forsake his Master, must be the Christ. *C.*—This is a noble resolution, well worthy of 'the man after God's own heart.' Wisdom, divine wisdom, should guide him in everything. His principles and motives would be wise; his conduct and acts in all the relations of life, private as well as public, would be regulated by wisdom; his words and his very thoughts would be wise; his companions and friends would be selected wisely. In the verses which follow, the psalmist shows how he was resolved to carry out his noble resolution. What a lesson does this psalm teach us! *P.*

REFLECTIONS.—The lot of saints on earth is a strange mixture of mercies and judgments. But all of them, taken in their connection and tendency, are to be improved as matter of praise and thanksgiving. Fellowship with and influences from God must strengthen and animate us to every holy practice. Serious godliness is the most substantial wisdom; and to act for God in the religious management of families, kingdoms, or in other relative stations, is a noted branch of it. With the utmost care ought men, by whatever power they have, to discourage everything wicked, and to encourage everything virtuous and holy. But it is in vain to attempt instructing or reforming others if we do not set them an example in our own practice.

PSALM CII. Ver. 6, 7. What three birds are specifically intended it is impossible with certainty to say; two of them are, however, inhabitants of the deserts, far from the haunts of men; and one, though the inhabitant of cities, a solitary watcher on house-tops. The different habits of these birds formed admirable emblems of that solitary state into which our Lord was often forced in order to elude the watchful and incessant malice of his enemies. *C.*

Ver. 12. This address exactly corresponds with its continuation in ver. 25; and as there is apostolic authority for considering ver. 25 to be words of the Father to the Son, there can be no doubt that ver. 12 is the address of the Father likewise. *C.*

Ver. 13. Would not history rather prove that the time to punish Zion had come at the period of our Lord's prayer of distress? Not so. 'Whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth.' And though her salvation seem to linger in the eye of sense, it was then secured to the heart of faith; and all that now grows in the field of promise, shall be reaped in the harvest of vision. *C.*

Ver. 23. In this, and the first clause of ver. 24, the Son, in the days of his flesh, resumes his address to the Father. The reply of the Father, as quoted by the apostle, He. 1. 10, is one amongst the many and overwhelming evidences of the Godhead of the Son. In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth, Ge. 1. 1. But the Father being witness, the Son created the heavens and the earth; therefore—hear it, ye gainsayers, and be silent for ever—therefore the Son is God. *C.*

REFLECTIONS.—To what low condition God reduces his church and people for the exercise and trial of their grace, and for exciting their more importunate prayers. In darkness, vexation, and trouble, their days often post toward an end. Afflicted, dispirited, and pained in their heart, and their body wasted to skin and bones, like owls and pelicans, they shun converse and comfort, and pine away in melancholy solitude. Often, like lonely sparrows, they are debarred from rest and sleep, and are deserted by friends, or avoid their company: are exposed to the reproach and fury of inveterate enemies—oppressed with grief—overwhelmed with a sense of God's indignation, in his sudden and awful changing of their comforts into depths of misery, till near the grave, and apparently near the pit! But great is the mercy that they have, notwithstanding, a God, a hearer of prayer, to whom they may complain; and a heart to pour out before him. Be the afflictions of the righteous as numerous as they will, the eternal Saviour has, and does, and will deliver them out of

PSALM CIII.

1 An exhortation to bless God for his mercy, 15 and for the constancy thereof.

A psalm of David.

BLESS the [a]LORD, O my soul; and all that is within me, *bless* his holy name.

2 Bless the LORD, O my soul, and [b]forget not all his benefits:

3 Who [c]forgiveth all thine iniquities;[1] who healeth[d] all thy diseases;

4 Who[e] redeemeth thy life from destruction; who[g] crowneth thee with loving-kindness and tender mercies;

5 Who[h] satisfieth thy mouth with good *things; so that* [i]thy youth is renewed like the eagle's.

6 The [j]LORD executeth righteousness and judgment for all *that are* oppressed.

7 He[k] made known his ways unto Moses, his acts unto the children of Israel.

8 The[l] LORD *is* merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and plenteous in mercy.

9 He[n] will not always chide; neither will he keep *his anger* for ever.

10 He[o] hath not dealt with us after our sins; nor rewarded us according to our iniquities.

11 For as the heaven is high[2] above the earth, *so* great is his mercy toward them that fear him.

12 As[p] far as the east is from the west, *so* far hath he removed our transgressions from us.

13 Like[q] as a father pitieth *his* children, *so* the LORD pitieth them that fear him.

14 For[r] he knoweth our frame; he remembereth that we *are* dust.

15 *As*[s] *for* man, his days *are* as grass; [t]as a flower of the field, so he flourisheth.

16 For[u] the wind passeth over it, and it[v] is gone;[3] and the place thereof [v]shall know it no more.

17 But[z] the mercy of the LORD *is* from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear him, and [y]his righteousness unto children's children;

18 To [x]such as keep his covenant, and to those that remember his commandments to do them.

19 The[a] LORD hath prepared[4] his throne in the heavens; and his kingdom ruleth over all.

20 Bless[b] the LORD, ye his angels, that excel in strength,[5] that[c] do his commandments, hearkening unto the voice of his word.[6]

21 Bless ye the LORD, all *ye* [d]his hosts; *ye* ministers of his, that do his pleasure.

22 Bless[e] the LORD, all his works in all places of his dominion: bless the LORD, O my soul.[7]

A.M. cir. 2948.
B.C. cir. 1056.

PSALM CIII.

a ver.2,22. Ps. 104.1; 146.1,2;32.11;33.1. Lu. 1.47.1 Co.14.15. Re.14. 3.

b Ps.116.12; cv. cvii. cxxxvi. cxlv. cxlvi. Is. 63.7.1 Ch.16.12.

c Ps.130.8. Is. 33. 24; 43.25;44.22. Mat.9.2–6. Lu.7.47. Ep.1.7.

1 *Iniquities.*—For the literal but peculiar sense of imputation, or laying on, in which Christ could address these words to his soul, see on Ps. 32.5;40.12;55.11.—*C.*

d Ex 15.26. Ps.41.4. Is.53.5;57.18;54.11.

e Job 33.25. Ps. 30.3; 71.23. Re.5.9;7.10.

f Ps.5.12;86.13.

g Ps.81.10;65.4;23.5; 90.14. Ep.3.17,19.

h Is.40.31. Ho.2.15. 2 Co.4.16.

i Ps.146.7; 10. 17, 18; 72.4. De.32.36.

j Ps.147.19. Ne.9.7–22. Ex.iii.to De.xxxiv.

k Ex.34. 6, 7. Nu. 14. 18. Ps.85.3,10. De.5.10. Ne.9.17. Je.32.18.

l Ps. 30. 5. Is. 57. 16. Je.3.5. Mi.7.10,1 8.

n Ps.103.9. Is. 57. 16. Je.3.5. Mi.7.10,1 8.

o Ezr.9.13. Job 11.6. La.3.22. Hab.3.2. Ro. 5.20.

2 Heb. *according to the height of the heaven,* Is.55.9. Ps.36. 5;89.2. Ro.5.20,21. Ep. 1.4–7;2.18,19.

p Is.43.25;44.22. Je. 31.34;50.20. Mi.7.18,19. Ep.1.7.

q Mal.3.17. Is.63.7. 9,16;57.15–20. Ho.11.8. Ep.1.3–7. 1 Pe.1.3.

r Ge.3.19. Ps. 78. 39. Ec.12.7. Job 25.6.

s Ps.90.5,6.1 Pe.1.24.

t Job 14.1,2. Ja.1.10, 11.

u Job27.20,21. Is.40. 6–8.

3 Heb. *it is not.*

v Job 7.6–10;20.9. Ps. 37.10,36.

x Ep.1.3–8;2.4–7. Ps. 100.5;23.6. Ex.20.6.

y Da.9.24. Is.51.6,8. Jn.17.25.2 Co.5.21.

z Ex.20.6. De.7.9. Is. 54.5; 3.10. 1 Co.15.58. 2 Ti.4.7,8. Ro.2.7,10.

a Ps. 11.4;115.3. Is.66. 1. Da.4.34,35. Ep.1.11.

4 That is, *prepared* it first for his Son, and then for believers in him. Comp. this verse with Jn. 14. 2. Re.3.21.—*C.*

b Ps.148.2;ver.21,22.

5 Heb. *mighty in strength,* Joel.2.11. Ps. 104.4;68.17. 2 Ki.19.35.

c Mat.6.10;18.10; 26. 53. Da.9.23.

6 To the voice of his incarnate Word —his Son. He.1.6.—*C.*

d Da.7.10. Ge.32.2. 1 Ki. 22. 19. Ps. 104. 4. 2 Ch.18.18. Lu.2.13. He. 1.14.

e Ps.150.6; 148. 1–14; 145.10. Is.42.10–12; 44. 23.

7 For sublimity of conception, beauty of expression, and enobling sentiment, this psalm is not surpassed by any in the book. It is adapted for all times, it is suited to all classes, and it is calculated at once to humble the soul before God, to elevate it above the vanities of earth, and to raise it heavenward.—*P.*

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[x] Literally, 'Who maketh the winds his messengers, and flaming fire his servants.' He ruleth supreme in the elements, doing his pleasure by their instrumentality. By his winds he tempers and purifies the atmosphere; by his lightnings he accomplishes his purposes of judgment and grace.—*P.*

A.M. cir. 2948.
B.C. cir. 1056.

PSALM CIV.

B.C. cir. 1042.

a ver.35. Ps. 103. 12, 22.

b Job 11. 7. Ne. 1. 5. Je.23.24; 32.17–19. Ex. 18.11.

c Re. 1. 13. Ps. 93. 1; 96.6;29.1.

d Ge.1.3. Da.7.9,10. 1 Ti.6.16.1 Jn.1.5,7.

e Ge.1.1,7. Is. 45. 12; 40.22;44.24. Ne.9.6. Job 9.8. Zec.12.1.

f Am.9.6. Ps.24.2.

g Is.19. 1. Ps. 65. 11, 12. Hab.3.8.

h Ps.18.10. Na.1.3–6. Mi.1.3,4.

i He. 1.7, 14. 2 Th. 1. 7, 8. 1 Ki.22.19. 2 Ki. 2. 11;6.17.

1 See note [x] in first column.

2 Heb. He *hath founded the earth upon her bases,* Job 26.7;38.4;26.7. Ps.24.2; 136.6. Ec.1.4.

k Ge. 1.2,9; 7.19. Job 38.8,25.

l Ge.1.9,10;8.1 5.

3 The waters go up, partly in vapours, which are condensed into water by cold; and partly in clouds, which are changed into water, not by cold, but by the electric agency. These waters are then absorbed into the bowels of the mountains, and chiefly by gravitation reconducted to the valleys.—*C.*

4 Or, *The mountains ascend, the valleys descend.*

n Job 26.10; 38.9–11. Ps. 33.7. Is.54.9. Ge.9. 11,15. Je.5.22.

o De.8.7.

5 Heb. *Who.*

6 Heb. *walk.*

7 'Though the waters are gathered together into seas, yet God has taken care that the earth shall not be dry, parched, and barren. He has made provision for watering it, and by a most wise, wonderful, and benevolent arrangement he has formed springs a. mong the valleys and hills' (*Barnes.*—*I'.*

p Ps. 145. 16. Job 39. 5,6. Mat.6.26.

8 Heb. *break.*

9 Heb. *give a voice,* Eze.17.23. Mat.13.32.

q Ps.65.9–13. Job 38. 26, 27. Je. 10. 13; 14.22. Eze. 34. 26. De. 11. 11. He.6.7.

1 Heavens or clouds.

2 Everything needful to make it fruitful and beautiful is provided. Nothing is wanting. It is therefore satisfied.—*P.*

r Ge.1.29,30; 3.18; 9. 3. Ps.145.9,15; 65.9–13; 147.8,9. Pr.12.10.

s Pr.31.6,7. Ps. 23. 5. Ju.9.13.

3 Heb. *to make his face shine with oil,* or *more than oil,* Ru. 3.3. Ps.5. Mat.6.17.

t Is.3.1;33.17. Ps.105. 16.

u Ps.29.5;92.12. Nu. 24.6, *i.e.* large trees.

v Eze. 17. 23. Da. 4. 12. Mat.13.31,32.

y Le.11.19. De.14.18.

4 See note on Le. 11.5.—*C.*

a Job 39.1,1 Sa.24.2.

b Pr.30.26. Le. 11.5. De.14.7.

c Ge.1. 14. De. 4. 19. Ps.136.7–9; 18.5, 6. Je. 31.35. Job 38.12.

d Ge.1.4,5; 8. 22. Ps. 74.16. Is.45.7.

PSALM CIV.

1 A meditation upon the mighty power, 7 and wonderful providence of God. 31 God's glory is eternal. 33 The prophet voweth perpetually to praise God.

BLESS the [a]LORD, O my soul. O LORD my God, [b]thou art very great; [c]thou art clothed with honour and majesty:

2 Who coverest *thyself* [d]with light as *with* a garment; [e]who stretchest out the heavens like a curtain;

3 Who[g] layeth the beams of his chambers in the waters; [h]who maketh the clouds his chariot; [i]who walketh upon the wings of the wind;

4 Who[j] maketh his angels spirits, his ministers a flaming fire;[1]

5 *Who* laid the foundations of the [2]earth, *that it* should not be removed for ever.

6 Thou[k] coveredst it with the deep as *with* a garment: the waters stood above the mountains.

7 At[l] thy rebuke they fled; at the voice of thy thunder they hasted away.

8 They go up[3] by the mountains; they go down by the valleys[4] unto the place which thou hast founded for them.

9 Thou[n] hast set a bound that they may not pass over; that they turn not again to cover the earth.

10 [o]He[5] sendeth the springs into the valleys, *which* run[6] among the hills.[7]

11 They[p] give drink to every beast of the field: the wild asses quench[8] their thirst.

12 By them shall the fowls of the heaven have their habitation, *which* sing[9] among the branches.

13 He[q] watereth the hills from his chambers;[1] the earth is satisfied with the fruit of thy works.[2]

14 He[r] causeth the grass to grow for the cattle, and herb for the service of man; that he may bring forth food out of the earth,

15 And [s]wine *that* maketh glad the heart of man, *and* oil to make *his* face to shine,[3] and [t]bread *which* strengtheneth man's heart.

16 The[u] trees of the LORD are full *of sap;* the cedars of Lebanon, which he hath planted;

17 Where[v] the birds make their nests: *as for* the stork, [y]the fir-trees *are* her house.[4]

18 The[a] high hills *are* a refuge for the wild goats, *and* the rocks for [b]the conies.

19 He[c] appointed the moon for seasons; the sun knoweth his going down.

20 Thou[d] makest darkness, and it is night;

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them all. He has fixed the periods of his church's deliverance, and issued forth promises ascertaining the same. While with deep concern his servants are affected with her ruinous case, and pour forth their importunate prayers, he will flee to her relief, to the conversion of multitudes and the terror of obstinate opposers. What he did in former times, in delivering from Babylon, in erecting the New Testament church, and in destroying her Jewish and heathen persecutors, encourages us to hope for more glorious deliverances from Antichrist, and at last from the world that lieth in wickedness. And whatever distresses befall the faithful in their way to the heavenly mansions, Jesus' eternity secures the power and stability of his church, and of all who believe in Christ.

PSALM CIII. Ver. 2. *Forget not all his benefits.* A large portion of 'childhood and youth' are truly 'vanity,' are spent in much ignorance of God, and pass into forgetfulness of his mercies. He whose eye saw, and whose memory records, 'all the mercies' of Jehovah, can be no other than the all-perfect Son of God. *C.*

Ver. 5. *Like the eagle's.* This is no mere adoption of a popular opinion about the eagle's moulting in old age; nor any mere poetical ornament, which would be utterly inconsistent with simple and unchanging truth. Does not the entire difficulty arise from departing from the literal translation and natural position of the original? Literally translated and placed, the passage would read thus:—'shall be renewed (not as an eagle's, but) as an eagle, thy youth.' That is, thy youthful strength, Is. 40. 31, shall be renewed; and, as an eagle spurns the earth, soars above the clouds, and hides him in the sunbeams; so, on wings of heavenly devotion, thou shalt mount, and, while yet on earth, establish thy conversation in heaven. *C.*

Ver. 14. From ver. 10, the true 'children of Israel' make full acknowledgment of the preceding character of God, and especially in the total removal of their sins (ver. 12), effected by the blood of the Lamb. The east and west can never meet, no more can the justified believer again encounter his sins. The waters of mercy have passed over them, and their remembrance is gone for ever. *C.*

Ver. 17. Righteousness here signifies that just, good, and gracious way in which he deals with all those that are his true children. He deals *justly* with them in Christ their Saviour, counting them justified by his blood; he manifests his goodness to them in providing for all their wants, preserving them amid all dangers,

wherein all the beasts of the forest do creep *forth*.[5]

21 The[g] young lions roar after their prey, and seek their meat from God.

22 The [h]sun ariseth, they gather themselves together, and lay them down in their dens.

23 Man[i] goeth forth unto his work and to his labour until the evening.

24 O LORD, [j]how manifold are thy works! in wisdom hast thou made them all: the earth is full of [k]thy riches:

25 *So is* [l]this great and wide sea, wherein *are* things creeping innumerable, both small and great beasts.

26 There[m] go the ships:[6] *there is* that [o]leviathan, *whom* thou hast made[7] to play therein.

27 These[p] wait all upon thee; that thou mayest give *them* their meat in due season.

28 *That* thou givest them they gather: thou openest thine hand, they are filled with good.

29 Thou[q] hidest thy face, they are troubled: thou[r] takest away their breath, they die, and return to their dust.

30 Thou[s] sendest forth thy spirit, they are created: and thou [t]renewest the face of the earth.[8]

31 The[u] glory of the LORD shall endure[9] for ever; [v]the LORD shall rejoice in his works.

32 He[x] looketh on the earth, and it trembleth; he toucheth the hills, and they smoke.

33 I[y] will sing unto the LORD as long as I live; I will sing praise to my God while I have my being.[1]

34 My[z] meditation of him shall be sweet; I will be glad in the LORD.

35 Let[a] the sinners be consumed out of the earth, and let the wicked be no more.[2] Bless thou the LORD, O my soul. Praise ye the LORD.[3]

A.M. cir. 2962.
B.C. cir. 1042.

5 Heb. *all the beasts thereof do trample in the forest.*
g Am. 3. 4. Is. 31. 4. Job 38. 39. Ps. 34. 9, 10; 145. 15, 16.
h Ec. 1. 5. Mat. 5. 45. Ca. 4. 8. Na. 2. 12.
i Ge. 3. 19. Ro. 12. 11. Ep. 4. 28. 2 Th. 3. 10–13.
j Ge. i. Ne. 9. 6. Pr. 3. 19. Je. 10. 12.
k Ge. 14. 19. Ps. 24. 1; 33. 5.
l Ps. 95. 4, 5. Ge. 1. 20, 21. Hab. 1. 14.
m Pr. 30. 19. Re. 8. 9.
6 See note * below.
n Ge. 1. 21. Job 41. 1.
7 Heb. *formed.*
o Ps. 145. 15, 16; 147. 9; 36. 6; 136. 25. Job 38. 41. Mat. 6. 26. Pr. 6. 8.
p Ps. 30. 7, with Ro. 11. 36. Ac. 17. 25. Col. 1. 17.
q Job 34. 14, 15. Ps. 146. 4. Ec. 12. 7.
r Job 26. 5, 13; 33. 4. Ps. 33. 6. Is. 32. 14, 15. Eze. 37. 9. Re. 4. 11.
s Ec. 1. 4. Ps. 65. 9–13. Is. 35. 1, 2; 65. 17, 18.
8 The meaning is, when one race of animals passes away, or becomes extinct, God creates another. May there not be incidental allusion here to those wonders which geology has brought to light in the crust of the earth within the past few years?—*P.*
t Ac. 7. 2. Ps. 29. 2.
9 Heb. *shall be.*
u Ge. 1. 31. Ex. 31. 17. Is. 60. 5.
x Ps. 114 7; 68. 8; 77. 19; 144. 5. Ex. 19. 18. Hab. 3. 5–7, 10. Na. 1. 5, 6. De. 32. 22. Is. 64. 1, 2.
y Ps. 34. 1; 71. 8–24; 63. 4–6; 146. 2. Hab. 3. 17, 18. Phi. 4. 6. 2 Co. 2. 14.
1 The width of this resolution sufficiently demonstrates that the speaker is the Christ. —*C.*
z Ps. 63. 5, 6; 139. 17, 18. Is. 61. 10. Phi. 4. 4. Lu. 1. 47.
a Ps. 72. 22; Ps. 10. 16; 101. 8; 59. 13; 58. 6–10; 73. 27; 1. 4.
2 See notes on Ps. 5. 10; 35. 8.—*C.*
3 Heb. *Hallelujah*, Re. 19. 1, 3, 4, 6.
* Among the many blessings derived from the sea, navigation is one of the most obvious: and that not merely because it is the medium of the valuable interchanges of commerce, and consequently the great *peace-preserver* of the nations, but because of the blessed facilities which it affords for diffusing the knowledge of Jesus to regions that Christianity could never have approached had the *highway of the sea* been occupied as land by heathen or Mahometan nations.—*C.*

A.M. cir. 2962.
B.C. cir. 1042.

PSALM CV.
B.C. cir. 1045.
a 1 Ch. 16. 8–22. Is. 12. 4. Ps. 136. 1–26.
1 See note on Ex. 34. 6.—*C.*
b Ps. 40. 10; 145. 5, 6, 11. Je. 50. 28; 51. 10.
c Ps. 48. 11; 33. 1; 146. 1, 2; 149. 1, 2.
d 1 Co. 1. 31. Is. 45. 25. Ps. 34. 2; 149. 2. Je. 9. 24.
e Ps. 32. 11; 33. 1, 2 1 Jn. 3. 21. 1 Ch. 22. 19; 28. 9. Phi. 3. 3; 4. 4.
f Ps. 27. 8. Am. 5. 4, 6, 8, 14. Mat. 7. 7.
2 Ark, Ps. 78. 61; 132. 8.
3 That is, seek Christ, the end of the law for righteousness —the wisdom of God, and the power of God, 1 Co. 1. 24. Of the power of God we know nothing, but by his *Word* in creation, providence, and redemption.—*C.*
h Ps. 77. 11; 135. 4–12. De. 7. 18, 19; 8. 2; 32. 7, 10.
i 1 Ch. 16. 13. He. 11. 12. Ro. 9. 4, 5.
j Ge. 17. 7. Ex. 20. 2.
4 *Our God.* This expression sufficiently indicates that the church speaks by the instruction of the Spirit, making known by her experience the manifold wisdom of God.—*C.*
k Is. 26. 9. Ps. 9. 16; 48. 11; 97. 8.
l Lu. 1. 73. 1 Ch. 16. 15. Ps. 111. 5. Ne. 1. 5. Ex. 20. 6. De. 9. 4.
m Ge. 17. 2–8; 22. 16–18; 26. 3, 4; 28. 13–15; 35. 11. Lu. 1. 73. He. 6. 17, 18. Ne. 9. 8. Ac. 7. 8.
o Ge. 12. 7; 13. 15; 26. 4; 28. 13.
5 Heb. *the cord*, Jos. 13. 6; 14. 2. Ps. 78. 55. De. 32. 9.
p Ge. 34. 30. De. 7. 7; 26. 5.
q Ge. 17. 8; 28. 4; 37. 1. He. 11. 9, 13.
r Ge. xii. xiii. xxvi. xxxv. xlvi.
s Ge. 12. 17; 20. 3, 7; 33. 4; 35. 5.
1920.
t Ge. 20. 7; 26. 11, 29.
6 This was the grand lesson taught by all God's providential dealings with his people. It was taught in the life of Abraham, but especially in the deliverance of Israel out of Egypt. This was the teaching of history rather than of direct revelation.—*P.*

PSALM CV.

1 An exhortation to praise God, and to seek out his works. 8 His providence over Abraham, 16 over Joseph, 23 over Israel in Egypt, 26 over Moses delivering the Israelites, 37 over the Israelites brought out of Egypt, fed in the wilderness, and planted in Canaan.

O GIVE[c] thanks unto the LORD; call upon his name;[1] make [b]known his deeds among the people.

2 Sing[c] unto him, sing psalms unto him; talk ye of all his wondrous works.

3 Glory[d] ye in his holy name: [e]let the heart of them rejoice that seek the LORD.

4 Seek[g] the LORD, and his [2]strength;[3] seek his face evermore.

5 Remember[h] his marvellous works that he hath done; his wonders, and the judgments of his mouth,

6 O[i] ye seed of Abraham his servant, ye children of Jacob his chosen.

7 He[j] *is* the LORD our God:[4] his [k]judgments *are* in all the earth.

8 He[l] hath remembered his covenant for ever, the word *which* he commanded to a thousand generations:

9 Which[m] *covenant* he made with Abraham, and his oath unto Isaac;

10 And confirmed the same unto Jacob for a law, *and* to Israel *for* an everlasting covenant;

11 Saying, [o]Unto thee will I give the land of Canaan, the lot[5] of your inheritance:

12 When they were *but* [p]a few men in number; yea, very few, and [q]strangers in it.

13 When[r] they went from one nation to another, from *one* kingdom to another people,

14 He[s] suffered no man to do them wrong; yea, he reproved kings for their sakes;

15 *Saying*, [t]Touch not mine anointed, and do my prophets no harm.[6]

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enabling them to overcome all temptations; he deals graciously in showering down spiritual mercies, fulfilling to them promises, and cherishing them with bright and glorious hopes. *P.*

Ver. 18. *Covenant.* This is not that covenant of works which saith, 'Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things written in the book of the law, to do them;' but that covenant of grace, recorded by Paul, He. 8. 8–12, wherein the cleansing of the believer lies in the Redeemer's blood, 1 Jn. 1. 7, and his completeness and acceptance in the Redeemer's righteousness, Col. 2. 10; Ep. 1. 6. *C.*

REFLECTIONS.—Our hearts need to be much encouraged and excited, even to the most proper and most delightful exercises. And in dealing with God our hearts ought to be wholly engaged. But how shameful is it that we ever forget, that we so early forget, his mercies!—his mercies so great, so necessary, so numerous, so connected, so everlasting!—his unbounded compassion to us who are so mean, so frail, so polluted!—his free, full, and everlasting pardons should humble our hearts, and animate us to holy fear, love, and obedience. And while all his creatures in heaven and earth concur to bless and serve him, surely we, above all, whom Christ hath redeemed by his blood, should never be silent, never be slothful!

PSALM CIV. Ver. 1. *Thou art very great.* The greatness of God in power can be estimated only by his works. Accordingly, the Spirit, by Christ, as the prophet of the church, here catalogues, as it were, and expounds some of the most remarkable and intelligible departments, whereby man may learn his own comparative weakness, nay, nothingness, and humble himself beneath the mighty power of God. *C.*

Ver. 5. *Not removed for ever.* This is not contradicted by what is declared, He. 1. 10–12: for, in point of fact, it is completely demonstrable by mathematical evidence, that the 'foundations of the earth, and of the whole planetary system, are calculated to abide *for ever*,' unless he that laid them be pleased again to overturn them, and make all things new. Both these views are in strict accordance with the assertion in this verse. *C.*

Ver. 7. *Voice of thy thunder.* Modern discovery is daily bringing to light more of the power of electricity in the works of creation; and though we do not affirm with some that the Scriptures contain a system of natural philosophy, yet it is satisfactory to the believer who may live within the polluted atmosphere of infidelity, to learn that no progress of philosophical discovery has ever detected a single philosophical error in the Bible. *C.*

REFLECTIONS.—Great is the glory, the awful majesty, the infinite goodness, and mercy of our God! In what bright abodes of light is he enthroned! While clouds and winds convey the influences of his power, angelic hosts, made by himself, surround his seat, and bear his messages. Established earth and bounded seas confess his power. Springs below, rains from above, fruitful fields, and towering trees, nestling birds, shining luminaries, changing seasons, ravenous animals, swarming fishes and their spacious sea, and labouring man, his Maker's image, all preserved, all maintained, all governed by his power, his kindness, and his care, owe their whole selves and service to this mighty Lord! Can he then, who hangs a whole creation on his arm, and feeds them at his board, overlook a ransomed child, or let him starve! While he with pleasure upholds all, governs all, and rejoices in all his works, let my soul, touched by his grace, meditate and praise: and while obstinate sinners turn away from him and find themselves ruined, let my hosannas and hallelujahs ascend to him that loved me and gave himself for me.

PSALM CV. Ver. 16. Human skill and industry are instruments of abundance: and to cultivate and exercise them, a bounden duty—yet abundance is not attainable, nor famine avoidable, by their utmost exertion; every comfort, every blessing, is of God that showeth mercy. *C.*

Ver. 44. It has been customary for infidels to charge this as an act of injustice against the God of Israel. But how little do they consider, that even a human superior is universally held entitled to remove a wicked and dishonest occupant, who refuses to render his stipulated return. How much more had God a right to drive out the most wicked of all nations, who not only refused to acknowledge their righteous Lord paramount, but who worshipped devils, while they hated him? *C.*

REFLECTIONS.—How infinitely excellent is this God, who deserves such gratitude, such praise, such search, such confidence! Marvellous is his blessed relation to us, and tender mercies towards us: and thrice happy are they who have him their own and their fathers' God! Happy are they who know the judgments of his mouth, his word, and live thereby; and for whose welfare the judgments of his hand are executed in all the earth! From mean appearances God's great manifestations of himself take their rise. But great is the care he takes of his people in this world, where they are but *few*, and *strangers*. He that touches them touches the apple of his eye. And apparent difficulties easily vanish before the power of a promising God. But how mysterious are his ways of providence! When things seem most against us, they are often strongly working for our good. Even calumnies and sufferings are made to try and prepare men for and advance them to honour. His church shall never want a friend in time of need. He can raise them up protectors where they least expect to find favour. And if God advance us, our duty is to discern his hand, and to adorn our station, by making it subservient to his glory. No danger or difficulty must deter us when his work is to be done.—All creatures concur in executing God's will of judgment or mercy. His protection, deliverance, and care of his people are wonderfully connected with the most fearful plagues and ruin of the wicked. And through trials unnumbered, and of long continuance, God's

16 Moreover, he [u]called for [v]a famine upon the land: he brake the whole [x]staff of bread.

17 He[y] sent a man before them, *even* Joseph, *who* was sold for a servant;[7]

18 Whose[z] feet they hurt with fetters: he was laid in iron;[8]

19 Until the time that his [a]word came: the word of the LORD tried him.

20 The[b] king sent and loosed him; *even* the ruler of the people, and let him go free.

21 He[c] made him lord of his house, and ruler of all his substance;[9]

22 To bind his princes at his pleasure, and teach his senators wisdom.

23 Israel[d] also came into Egypt, and Jacob sojourned in the land of Ham.[1]

24 And[e] he increased his people greatly, and made them stronger than their enemies.

25 He[g] turned their heart[2] to hate his people, to deal subtilely with his servants.

26 He[h] sent Moses his servant, *and* Aaron whom he had chosen.

27 They[i] showed his signs[3] among them, and wonders in the land of Ham.

28 He[j] sent darkness, and made it dark; and they[4] rebelled not against his word.[5]

29 He[k] turned their waters into blood, and slew their fish.

30 Their[l] land brought forth frogs in abundance in the chambers of their kings.

31 He[m] spake, and there came divers sorts of flies, *and* lice in all their coasts.

32 He[o] gave them hail for rain,[6] *and* flaming fire in their land.

33 He smote their vines also, and their fig-trees; and brake the trees of their coasts.

34 He[p] spake, and the locusts came, and caterpillars, and that without number,

35 And[q] did eat up all the herbs in their land, and devoured the fruit of their ground.

36 He[r] smote also all the first-born in their land, the chief of all their strength.

37 He[s] brought them forth[7] also with silver and gold: and *there was* not one feeble *person* among their tribes.[8]

38 Egypt[t] was glad when they departed: for the fear of them fell upon them.

39 He[u] spread a cloud for a covering; and fire to give light in the night.

40 *The*[v] *people* asked, and he brought quails, and satisfied them with the bread of heaven.

A.M. cir. 2959.
B.C. cir. 1045.

u Mat.8.9.Ps.33.9.
v Ge.41.54;45.6.
x Le. 26. 26. Is. 3. 1. Eze.4.16.Ps.104.15.
y Ge.45.5; 50. 20; 37. 28;39.1,20.
7 God sent Joseph by his foresight in mercy, and for that end overruled the jealousy of his brethren—being able with equal ease and equal holiness to make either the good or the bad passions of men effect his gracious purposes.—*C.*
z Ge.39.20;40.15.
8 Heb. *his soul came into iron.*
a Ge.41.1–44, with 1 Pe.1.7.Ac.7.10.
b Ge.41.14,40. Ac.7. 10.
c Ac.7.10. Ge.41.40–44.
9 Heb. *possession.*
d Ge.46.6,7. Jos.24.4. Ps.78.51.Ac.7.15.
1 Egypt was so called because Mitzraim, the progenitor of the Egyptians, was a son of Ham.—*P.*
e Ex.1. 7, 12, 20. He. 11. 12. De. 26. 5. Ac. 7. 17.
1590.
g Ex.1.8–22;2.23;5.4–19.Ac.7.19.
2 God was not the author of this sinful hatred, but by his righteous demand of his people's liberation he gave occasion for its production. See note on Ex. 4.21.—*C.*
h Ex.3.10;4.12;6.26, 27. Ps. 77. 20. Mi. 6. 4. Ac.7.35,36.
i Ex. vii.–xii. Ps. 78. 43–51;135.8,9. Ac.7.36. Je.32.20.
3 Heb. *words of his signs.*
j Ex.10.21–23.
4 Moses and Aaron, ver.26.Ex.10.9,26.
5 That is, Moses and Aaron rebelled not at all, and the people not yet. The rebellions of the people commenced in the wilderness. The seed was sown in stony ground—it grew for a little, but in the blast of affliction their greenest professions soon withered away.—*C.*
k Ex.7.20,21. Ps. 78. 44.
l Ex.8.5,6.Ps.78.45
n Ex.8.17,24. Ps.78. 45.
o Ex.9. 23–25. Ps.78. 47.
6 Heb. *He gave their rain hail.*
p Ex.10.12–14. Ps.78. 46.
q Ex.10.14,15. Joel.2. 3–11,20.
r Ex.12.29. Ps. 78.51; 135.8;136.10. He.11.28. Ge.49.3.
s Ex.12.35,36.Ge.15. 14.Ac.13.17.
7 1491.
8 This is a remarkable statement. The fact is not expressly mentioned in the narrative of the exodus, but it is manifestly implied. Not a single Israelite, old or young, was left behind. All of them therefore were, by a miracle of providence, enabled to set out on that eventful journey.—*P.*
t Ex.12.33.
u Ex.13.21,22.Nu.9. 15–22.Ne.9.12,19.
v Ex. 16. 12–18. Ne. 9.15,20. De.8.3. Ps. 78. 18,24–29. Jn.6.31,49.

A.M. cir. 2959.
B.C. cir. 1045.

x Ex.17.6. Ps. 78.15, 16. Nu.20.11. 1 Co.10.4. Is.48.21.
9 cir. 1444.
y Ex.2.24. Ge.15.14; 46.4.
z Ex. 6. 6. Je. 32.21, with Is.35.10;51.11.
1 Heb. *singing.*
cir. 1444.
a De.6.10, 11. Jos.3. 10;vi.–xxi. Ne.9.22–25. Ps.44.2,3;78.55;135.12; 136.21,22.
b De.4.1,40; 6.21, 24, 25;12.32.
2 Heb. *Hallelujah,* Ps.104.35. Re.19.1,3.

PSALM CVI.

B.C. cir. 1044.

1 Heb. *Hallelujah,* 1 Ch.16.34.
a Ps.1.1;118.1;136. 1.1 Th.5.18.
b Ps.119.68. Mat.19. 17. Is.63.7,9. Ro. 5.20, 21. Ep.2.7.
c Ps. 40. 5; 139.17, 18; 145.4–7. Job 5.9.
d Ps.119. 1,2,106; 15. 2. Mat.22.37,38.2 Co.1. 12. Ac.24.16.Ga.6.9.
2 *He that doeth righteousness at all times.* No one can mistake these words for anything short of a description of the holy Son of God. To no other will they, through any tortures of accommodation, be found to apply.—*C.*
e Ps.25.6;119.132,41, 82,174, 175. Ne. 13. 29. He.4.16. Is.63.7–15.
g Ps. 105.42, 44. Je.3. 19. Ep.1.3–9,18; 2.4–10. Is.35.10;66.10–14; 12.6; xxv.xxvi. Jn.16.22.
h Da. 9. 5. Ezr. 9.7. Ne. 9. 16–34. Eze. xvi. xx. xxiii.
3 Here commences the confession of national sins in name of the entire Jewish church. The first point of confession seems to be ignorance. They saw the miracles, but they understood not either the nature or objects of Jehovah, by whom they were wrought.—*C.*
i Is.1.3;5.12. Je.2.32. De.32.15,18.
j Ex.14.11,12.
k Eze. 20. 8, 9, 14,44; 36.32. Nu.14.13–20.
4 See note on Ex. 34.6.—*C.*
l Ex.9.16.
m Ex.14.21. Ne.9.11. Ps.66. 6; 136. 11–15; 78. 52,53. Na. 1. 4. He. 11. 29.
n Ex.14.13,30. Is.63. 8–14. De.11.2–7.
o Ex. 14.27; 15. 5, 10, 12. Ps.74. 13, 14; 78. 53; 136.15.
p Ex.14.31;15.1.
q Ex.xv.–xvii.
5 Heb. *They made haste, they forgat.* —That is, *soon,* even in three days after their murmuring at the Red Sea, they again provoked God at the waters of Marah, Ex.15. 24.—*C.*]
6 They waited not for God's directions, but listened to the clamours of their own appetites.—*C.*
r Nu.11.4,33. Ps. 78. 78.1 Co.10.6.
7 Heb. *lusted a lust.*
s Nu.11.31–33. Ps.78. 29,31. Is.10.16.
8 *Leanness,* 'Loathing' *Lowth*).—*Note,* Dissatisfaction with such food and other mercies as God may please in providence to bestow, is among the heaviest judgments that he inflicts upon ungrateful sinners.—*C.*

41 He[c] opened the rock,[9] and the waters gushed out; they ran in the dry places *like* a river.

42 For[y] he remembered his holy promise, *and* Abraham his servant.

43 And[z] he brought forth his people with joy, *and* his chosen with gladness;[1]

44 And[a] gave them the lands of the heathen: and they inherited the labour of the people;

45 That[b] they might observe his statutes, and keep his laws. Praise ye the LORD.[2]

PSALM CVI.

1 *The psalmist exhorteth to praise God for his goodness.* 4 *He prayeth to share in his people's joy:* 6 *he rehearseth Israel's rebellions and God's mercies:* 47 *He concludeth with prayer and blessing.*

PRAISE ye the LORD.[1] O [a]give thanks unto the LORD; for *he is* [b]good: for his mercy *endureth* for ever.

2 Who [c]can utter the mighty acts of the LORD? *who* can show forth all his praise?

3 Blessed *are* they that [d]keep judgment, *and* he that doeth righteousness at all times.[2]

4 Remember[e] me, O LORD, with the favour *that thou bearest unto* thy people: O visit me with thy salvation;

5 That I may see [g]the good of thy chosen, that I may rejoice in the gladness of thy nation, that I may glory with thine inheritance.

6 We[h] have sinned with our fathers; we have committed iniquity; we have done wickedly.[3]

7 Our fathers [i]understood not thy wonders in Egypt; they remembered not the multitude of thy mercies; [j]but provoked *him* at the sea, *even* at the Red sea.

8 Nevertheless[k] he saved them for his name's sake, [4]that [l]he might make his mighty power to be known.

9 He[m] rebuked the Red sea also, and it was dried up: so he led them through the depths, as through the wilderness.

10 And[n] he saved them from the hand of him that hated *them,* and redeemed them from the hand of the enemy.

11 And[o] the waters covered their enemies, there was not one of them left.

12 Then[p] believed they his words; they sang his praise.

13 They[q] soon forgat[5] his works; they waited not for his counsel;[6]

14 But[r] lusted exceedingly[7] in the wilderness, and tempted God in the desert.

15 And[s] he gave them their request; but sent leanness[8] into their soul.

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promises are at last perfectly accomplished in all who believe in Christ.

PSALM CVI. REFLECTIONS.—Wonderful and thank-worthy are all the deeds, the gracious deeds, of our God. Blessed are they who make his word their rule, and his compassion the ground of their acceptance, and the example of their holy practice! Happy are they who enjoy intimate fellowship with him in his saving works and benefits. But how horrid is sin, which seeks to trample him, and all his kindness, under foot! And awful is the reflection, that one generation should follow another in adding sin to sin. We need not upbraid the sinners who went before us, as we are involved in the same fearful crimes. Notwithstanding both mercies and judgments, how stupidly insensible, how strangely forgetful, how discontented with God's marvellous provision, how rebellious against his deputies and government—what distinguished idolaters, murmurers, infidels, adulterers, and how perversely disobedient—does sin make God's professed people! Often they proceed from evil to worse, till his indignation break forth against them without remedy. But great is the mercy, when sinful nations and churches have any among them who, by their prayers and their zeal, stand in the gap, and avert the Lord's indignation. With pleasure he looks upon such, and highly honours them on that account. But infinite is the goodness of our God, who, when provoked to add one stroke to another, and to make wicked tempters to sin cruel tormentors for it, is so ready to step in for our relief, and to rebuke, or even turn the hearts of them that destroyed us. Never is a penitent prayer poured out into his bosom but it returns in gracious preservation and deliverance. Let then all our troubles drive us to the throne of grace; and all our mercies, bestowed

16 They[t] envied Moses also in the camp, and Aaron the saint of the LORD.

17 The[u] earth opened and swallowed up Dathan, and covered the company of Abiram.

18 And[v] a fire was kindled in their company; the flame burnt up the wicked.

19 They[z] made a calf in Horeb, and worshipped the molten image.[9]

20 Thus[y] they changed their glory into the similitude of an ox that eateth grass.

21 They[z] forgat God[1] their saviour, which had done [a]great things in Egypt;

22 Wondrous works in the land of Ham, *and* terrible things by the Red sea.

23 Therefore[b] he said that he would destroy them, had not Moses his chosen stood before him in the breach, to turn away his wrath, lest he should destroy *them*.

24 Yea, [c]they despised the pleasant land;[2] they[a] believed not his word;

25 But[e] murmured in their tents, *and* hearkened not unto the voice of the LORD:

26 Therefore he [g]lifted up his hand against them, to overthrow them in the wilderness:

27 To overthrow[3] their seed also among the nations, and to [h]scatter them in the lands.

28 They[i] joined themselves also unto Baal-peor, and ate the sacrifices of the dead.[4]

29 Thus[k] they provoked *him* to anger with their inventions; and the [l]plague brake in upon them.

30 Then[n] stood up Phinehas, and executed judgment; and *so* [o]the plague was stayed:

31 And that was [p]counted unto him for righteousness unto all generations for evermore.

32 They[q] angered *him* also at the waters of strife, so that it went ill with Moses for their sakes:

33 Because they provoked his spirit, so that he [r]spake unadvisedly with his lips.[5]

n Nu.25.7–15.Da.9.24.2 Co.5.21. *o* Nu.25.9.Jonah 1.15. *p* De.24.13.Nu.25.13.
q Nu.20.3,13.De.3.26.Ps.81.7. *r* Nu.20.10, with Ja.3.2.Ps.39.1.

A.M. cir. 2960.
B.C. cir. 1044.

t Nu.16.1, &c., with Le.27.6–8.
u Nu.16.31;26.10,11. De.11.6.
v Nu.16.35,46;26.10; 27.3.
x Ex. 32. 4–6. De. 9. 12,16.Ne.9.18.
[9] 1491.
y Je.2.11.Ro.1.23.
z De.32.15,18. Je.2. 32.ver.13.
[1] *They forgat God.* If the forgetfulness of spirit here charged upon Israel appear strange or incredible to any one, let him only look at the world around him, and in all ranks and conditions of men he will discover examples of a forgetfulness of baptism and the Lord's Supper, with all their holy obligations and privileges, not only as glaring as those of Israel in the desert, but many times more strange and criminal, because of the greater light of the knowledge of God which now shines in the face of Jesus Christ—of Christ, not in types and shadows, but visibly set forth as crucified amongst us.—*C.*
a Ex.vii.xii.xiv.De. 4.34; 7.18,19. Jos.24.5–7.Ne.9.9–11.Ps.74.12–15,77. 78.43; 105.27, 30
b Ex.32.10–32.De.9. 19;10.10, with Eze.20. 13; 22.30; 13.5. Je.5.1. Is.59.16.
c Nu.14.3,4.
[2] Heb. *a land of desire*, De.8.7; 11.11, 12.Eze.20.6.
d He.3.19.
e Nu.14.2,4.
g Nu. 14, 12, 27–37. Ps. 95. 11. Eze. 20. 15. He.3.11,18.
[3] Heb. *to make them fall.*
h Le.26.33.Ps.44.11. Eze.20.23.
i Nu. 25. 3.Ps.131.16. Ho.9.10. Jos.22.17. 1 Co.10.20, with Ps 115. 4–8.
[4] Or, dead idols, in opposition to the living God.—*C.*
k De.32.16,17,21,22. Is.42.8.
l Nu. 25.3,9. Jos.22. 17.
[5] The Israelites sinned grievously in thus provoking Moses; but Moses himself was not, therefore, excused. This teaches an important lesson. Moses 'spake unadvisedly,' *i.e.* rashly and therefore sinfully. Moses ought to have borne patiently with his people. Instead of doing so he exclaimed passionately:—'Hear now, ye rebels, must we fetch you waters out of the rock?'—*P.*

A.M. cir. 2960.
B.C. cir. 1044.

s Ju.1.21–36;2.1–3.
t De.7.2,16;20.16–18. Nu. 33.52.
u Ju.1.21–36;2.2;3.5, 6.Is.2.6.
v Ju.2.3,11–13,19; 3. 6, 7. 2 Ki. 17. 8, 11, 15. Ex.23.33,33; 34.12–16. Nu.33.55,56. De.7.1–5, 16;20.18.Jos.23.12,13.
x 2 Ki.16.3; 21.6. Is. 57.5. Je.7.31. Eze.16. 20. Le.17.7. De.32.17. 1 Co.10.20. Ke.9.20.ver. 38.
[6] To *demons*—the spirits of dead men raised by the heathen to imaginary deity. To several of these human sacrifices were constantly offered.—*C.*
y Nu.35.33. Is.1.15. Eze.7.23.24.
z Eze.20.18.
a Ex.34.16. Le.17.7; 20.5,6. Ho.2.1. Eze. xvi. xxiii. Nu. 15. 39. Je.3.1,6,9.
b Is 42.8. Ex.20.5. De. 32.16,17,21. Ju.2. 11–15. 2 Ki. 17. 7–23. Ne.9.27. Ps.78.59.La. 2.7.
c Ju.3.8,12; 4.1–3; 6. 1; 10.7–14; 13.1. 1 Sa. iv. xi. viii. xxxi. 2 Ki. xv. &c.
d Ju 2.16–19; iii. iv. vi. x. xiii. Ne.9.28,30.
[7] Or, *impoverished* or *weakened.*
[8] The book of Judges is replete with oppressions and deliverances; and may, on that account, be studied, not merely as the most suitable commentary upon this part of the psalm, but as one of the clearest discoveries of the moral government of God over churches and nations.—*C.*
e Ju.2.3,14–23.
f Ju.3.9,15; 4.3; 6.7; 10.10. 1 Sa.12.10.
h De.4.27; 28.64. Le.26.33. 2 Ki 17.6. Ps 44.11.
i Ps 78.59.
[9] For the import of repentance when applied to God, see on Ex.32.14. Boothroyd translates it 'relented.'—*C.*
j 2 Ki.8.50. Je.15.11; 50.12.Ezr.9.9.
1 Within a few past years, the Lord seems in mercy again to have turned the hearts of Christians toward the Jews, in pity for their sufferings, and efforts for their conversion. It is one of the *signs of the times*, both in and to the church. That the Lord turn the hearts of men into this channel of mercy, till Jacob be delivered, and Israel again dwell safely!—*C.*

34 They[s] did not destroy the nations, [t]concerning whom the LORD commanded them;

35 But[u] were mingled among the heathen, and learned their works.

36 And[v] they served their idols; which were a snare unto them.

37 Yea,[x] they sacrificed their sons and their daughters unto devils,[6]

38 And shed innocent blood, *even* the blood of their sons and of their daughters, whom they sacrificed unto the idols of Canaan: and the land was [y]polluted with blood.

39 Thus[z] were they defiled with their own works, [a]and went a whoring with their own inventions:

40 Therefore [b]was the wrath of the LORD kindled against his people, insomuch that he abhorred his own inheritance.

41 And[c] he gave them into the hand of the heathen; and they that hated them ruled over them.

42 Their enemies also oppressed them, and they were brought into subjection under their hand.

43 Many[d] times did he deliver them: but they provoked *him* with their counsel, and were [7]brought low for their iniquity.[8]

44 Nevertheless[e] he regarded their affliction, [g]when he heard their cry:

45 And[h] he remembered for them his covenant, and [i]repented according to the multitude of his mercies.[9]

46 He[j] made them also to be pitied of all those that carried them captives.[1]

47 Save[k] us, O LORD our God, and gather us from among the heathen, [l]to give thanks unto thy holy name, *and* to triumph in thy praise.

48 Blessed[n] *be* the LORD God of Israel from everlasting to everlasting: and let all the people say, Amen. Praise ye the LORD.

s 1 Ch.16.35,36.Ps.68.22;78.65,66;60.4;14.7;126.1–4. *t* Ps.107.1–3;115.1.Lu.1. 74.75.2 Co.5.14,15. *n* Ps.41.13;72.18,19;89.52.1 Ch.29.11.

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or promised, encourage our prayers, and animate our praise.

PSALM CVII. Ver. 3. There is no characteristic mark by which the speaker can be identified; but from ver. 3, 16, compared with Is. 45. 2, it appears to have been written after the return from the Babylonish captivity. *South*, in the Hebrew, signifies sea, which evidently points to the Persian Gulf, lying south of Babylon. *C.*

Ver. 4. This cannot refer to the first wandering in the wilderness; for then the people were all gathered out of one land; on the return from Babylon, out of the many provinces of a vast empire. *C.*

Ver. 11. This verse develops most of the causes of national calamities; and whilst the wise men of the world are ascribing them to every cause but the true one, it traces them at once to rebellion against the words and contempt of the counsels of God. *C.*

Ver. 14. By comparing this verse with Mat. 4. 15, 16, where a similar description is applied to the rising of the light of Jesus, 'the Sun of Righteousness,' upon the earth, the psalm will be found, under natural emblems, to veil spiritual realities. *C.*

Ver. 24. Not even the earthquake is so terrible an example of the divine power, or emblem of the divine wrath, as the sea-storm; the earthquake soon passes over, and is generally confined to a few spots of an island or continent; but the sea-storm continues unabated or increasing for days, and rages over the vast expanse of an ocean, dispersing navies as the light foam upon its waves, and swallowing into its deep recesses the collected riches of distant lands. Yet this terrible storm is the Lord's voice to his children; and, when all other help is vain, 'they cry unto him, and he bringeth them out of their distresses.' Ah! Britain! Britain! remember the sailor boy! he is the trustee of all thy wealth, the right arm of all thy power. Instruct him when on land—save him from the misguidance of his own untutored simplicity; and follow him with thy prayers amid the perils of the great deep: so shall he return to bless thee in the calm of his 'desired haven.' *C.*

Ver. 33. *Rivers.* 'Well-watered ground.' That such terrible changes have frequently taken place, by the operation of natural causes, geological observation abundantly testifies. Moral causes also operating upon the peace, security, and industry of a country, have often produced similar effects. Both causes, however, are alike the judgments of God, intended to teach man his dependence, and humble him before his Maker. *C.*

REFLECTIONS.—Behold the effects of sin in forms unnumbered! in wanderings, in imprisonments, sickness, storms, barrenness, poverty, &c. Behold also the power of effectual fervent prayer!—it brings speedy relief in every case. The holiness and equity, the goodness, mercy, and tenderness of God, are connectedly displayed in his providence to men. With exact and humble care ought we then to consider the doing of the Lord, and to compare it with his word, and with our prayers, and one part of it with another; so shall we understand the loving-kindness of the Lord. And, were we accurate observers of providence, constantly would our heart, our lips, and life, be filled with the high praises of his kindness, and of his wonderful works towards the children of men.

PSALM CVIII. REFLECTIONS.—Quickly God can change the lot, can change the frames, and change the songs of his people; and put high praises in the room of bitter wailings. How confidently then may saints expect to see the salvation of God! What he has promised faith can rejoice in as if already performed: and whatever difficulties be in the way, nothing is too hard for the Lord. However strong their enemies, if they are true, they shall prove more than conquerors through him that loveth them.

PSALM CIX. Ver. 6. This is one of those psalms against which, like its subject, the wicked infidel, and the uninstructed believer, have unhappily concurred to 'open their mouth.' To evade the imaginary impropriety of its heavy curses, some have imagined ver. 6–17 to be uttered by David's enemies. But how come they, in so imagining, to overlook Ac. 1. 16–20, where Judas, and not David, is declared to be its prophetical object? *C.*

Ver. 8. To vindicate these curses, for they are literally such, will be easy, before those who read and believe, and tremble as they read, De. 27. 15–26, and who fully comprehending Ga. 3. 10, do acknowledge and feel that 'Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things that are written in the book of the law to do them.' *C.*

Ver. 14. Most probably the sin of early training Judas up to the love of money, pilfering, and malignant cursing, and, so far from repenting of this perverted education, or seeing its bitter fruits, only gnawing her spirit with grief at its want of a successful issue. *C.*

Ver. 22. *Poor and needy.* On comparing these epithets with Ps. 40. 17, and remembering that He. 10. 5 proves Ps. xl. to be descriptive of Christ, no doubt can reasonably remain that, in this, he is the speaker likewise. *C.*

Ver. 23. The shiftings and currents of the wind toss the dense swarms of locusts in a very extraordinary manner. Even so was our Lord tossed up and down—at one time borne over palm-leaves and garments, and hailed with loud hosannas!—at another followed with deepest execrations—Away with him; away with him! Crucify him; crucify him! *C.*

Ver. 30. The comparison of this verse with Ps. 18. 49 and Ro. 15. 9, affords another unquestionable parallel proof that he who speaks in the first person is Christ. *C.*

REFLECTIONS.—Dreadful must be the nature of sin, which makes men so desperate and outrageous enemies

PSALM CVII.

1 The psalmist exhorteth the redeemed, in praising God, to observe his manifold providence, 4 over travellers, 10 over captives, 17 over sick men, 23 over seamen, 33 and in divers varieties of life.

A.M. cir. 2959. B.C. cir. 1045.

O GIVE[a] thanks unto the LORD; for *he is* good: for his mercy *endureth* for ever.[1]

2 Let the [b]redeemed of the LORD say *so*, whom he hath redeemed from the hand of the enemy;

3 And [c]gathered them out of the lands, from the east, and from the west, from the north, and from the south.[2]

4 They[d] wandered in the wilderness in a solitary way; they found no city to dwell in.

5 Hungry[e] and thirsty, their soul fainted in them.[3]

6 Then[g] they cried unto the LORD in their trouble, *and* he delivered them out of their distresses.

7 And he [h]led them forth by the right way, that they might go to a city of habitation.

8 Oh[i] that *men* would praise the LORD *for* his goodness, and *for* his wonderful works to the children of men!

9 For[j] he satisfieth the longing soul, and filleth the hungry soul with goodness.

10 Such[k] as sit in darkness, and in the shadow of death, *being* bound in affliction and iron;

11 Because[l] they rebelled against the words of God, and contemned the [m]counsel of the most High:

12 Therefore[o] he brought down their heart with labour: they fell down, and *[p]there was* none to help.

13 Then[q] they cried unto the LORD in their trouble, *and* he saved them out of their distresses.

14 He[r] brought them out of darkness and the shadow of death, and brake their bands in sunder.

15 Oh[s] that *men* would praise the LORD *for* his goodness, and *for* his wonderful works to the children of men!

16 For[t] he hath broken the gates of brass, and cut the bars of iron in sunder.

17 [u]Fools [v]because of their transgression, and because of their iniquities, are afflicted.

18 Their[x] soul abhorreth all manner of meat; and they draw near unto the gates of death.

19 Then[y] they cry unto the LORD in their trouble, *and* he saveth them out of their distresses.

20 He[z] sent his word, and healed[4] them, and delivered *them* from their destructions.

21 Oh[a] that *men* would praise the LORD *for* his goodness, and *for* his wonderful works to the children of men!

22 And[b] let them sacrifice the sacrifices of thanksgiving, and declare his works with [5]rejoicing.

23 They[c] that go down to the sea in ships, that do business in great waters;

24 These see [d]the works of the LORD, and his wonders in the deep.

25 For[e] he commandeth, and [6]raiseth the stormy wind, which lifteth up the waves thereof.

26 They[g] mount up to the heaven, they go down again to the depths; [h]their soul is melted because of trouble.

27 They reel to and fro, and stagger like a drunken man, and are at their wit's end.[7]

28 Then[i] they cry unto the LORD in their trouble, and he bringeth them out of their distresses.

29 He[j] maketh the storm a calm, so that the waves thereof are still.

30 Then are they glad, because they be quiet; so he bringeth them unto their desired haven.

31 Oh[k] that *men* would praise the LORD *for* his goodness, and *for* his wonderful works to the children of men!

32 Let[l] them exalt him also in the congregation of the people, and praise him in the assembly of the elders.

33 He [n]turneth rivers into a wilderness, and the water-springs into dry ground;[8]

34 A fruitful land into barrenness,[9] for the wickedness of them that dwell therein.

35 He[o] turneth the wilderness into a standing water, and dry ground into water-springs:

36 And[p] there he maketh the hungry to dwell, that they may prepare a city for habitation;

37 And[q] sow the fields, and plant vineyards, which may yield fruits of increase.

38 He[r] blesseth them also, so that they are multiplied greatly, and suffereth not their cattle to decrease.

39 Again,[s] they are minished, and brought low through oppression, affliction, and sorrow.

40 He[t] poureth contempt upon princes,[1] and causeth them to wander in the [2]wilderness, *where there is* no way.

41 Yet[u] setteth he the poor on high [3]from affliction, and maketh *him* families like a [4]flock.

42 The[v] righteous shall see *it*, and rejoice; and all iniquity shall stop her mouth.

43 Whoso[x] *is* wise, and will observe these *things*, even they shall understand the lovingkindness of the LORD.[5]

PSALM CVIII.

1 David encourageth himself to praise God. 5 He prayeth for God's assistance according to his promise. 11 His confidence in God's help.

A song *or* psalm of David.

O GOD, my[a] heart is fixed;[1] I will sing and give praise, even with my [b]glory.[2]

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a Ps.106.1;118.1;136.1;119.68. Mat.19.17. Is.63.7

1 This beautiful psalm was probably composed to celebrate the return of the Jewish exiles from Babylon, and designed to be sung at the dedication of the temple. It is *antiphonal* in construction—the chorus commencing with the stanza of general thanksgiving: — 'O give thanks unto Jehovah, for he is gracious, and his mercy endureth for ever!' Then the leader chants the special causes of thanksgiving; the chorus breaking in at intervals (see ver. 8,15,21,31). Probably the concluding verse (43) may have been uttered by the high-priest, as a solemn exhortation to the whole people.—*P.*

b De.7.8; 9.26; 21.8. Is.44.23. Re.5.9; 14.4.

c Ps.106.10,47;68.22. Is.43.5,6; 49.12. Je.29.14. Eze.39.25,&c.

2 Heb. *sea.*

d Ge.21.14. De.8.15; 32.10. Nu.14.33. Re.12.6.

e Ge.21.15. Ju.15.18. La.4.9.

3 The desert between Babylonia and Palestine is parched and barren, and with the exception of one or two spots, entirely destitute of water. Even under the most favourable circumstances, a large caravan has very great difficulty in crossing it. When exposed to the attacks of hostile tribes, the difficulty is vastly increased. The dangers to which the returning exiles were exposed, and the providences of God on their behalf, may be seen in Ezr.9.21-36.—*P.*

g ver.13,19,28. Ho.5.15. Ps.50.15; 91.15. Is.58.9. He.4.16. Phi.4.6. Ja.5.13,16.

h Ps.136.16;77.20. Is.30.21; 63.12-14; 49.10, 11. Ezr.8.21. Je.31.9.

i ver.15,21,31. Ps.66.1,4; 117.1,2; 72.18,19. Is.xii.xxv.xxvi.; 63.7-14.

j Ps. 145. 16, 19; 132. 16; 68.10; 103.5. Je.31. 25. Lu.1.53,79. Mat.5. 6. Ac.14.17.

k Ps. 79. 11; 105. 18. Job 3.5;36.8,9.

l Le. 3. 28; 5. 16, 17. Ps.68.6. Lu.7.30. Ro.1. 28-32;2.12-15.

m Ps.73.24;119.24.

n Ex.18.11. Job 40. 11,12. Is.10.4. Ps.142.4; 18.27.

o Job 9.13.

p ver.6,19,28. Ps.18. 6; 55.16;116.1-7;102.17, 20;12.5.

q Ps. 68.6;146.7;44.4. Ac.5.19;12.7.

r ver.8,21,31.

s Is.45.2; 27.4. Mi.2. 13. Ac.12.7. Ps.147.7.

t Ps.14.1;92.6;94.8.

u Ps.38.1-8. La.1.8. He.3.10,11. Je.2.19. Is. 3.11.

x Job 33.19,20. Ps.9. 13;88.3;147.3. Is.38.10-12.

y Ps. 78. 34, 35; 78. 6, 15,19;34.4,6;50.15.

z Ps.147.15,20; 103. 4;30.2,3. Mat.8.8. 2 Ki. 20.4,5. Job 33.28.

4 For that sickness of the heart described (ver.18) there is no remedy but the written word that reveals Jesus, or Jesus, the incarnate Word; the end and object of the law for righteousness.—*C.*

a ver. 1, 8, 15, 31. Is. xii.xxv.xxvi.xxxv.;44. 23; 49.13; 42.10-12. Ps. 66.5.

b Ps. 50. 14; 116. 17; 105.1,2;145.5-7. He.13. 15. Le.7.12.

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* This was exemplified in Palestine during times of severe and long-continued drought, as in the days of Elijah, 1 Ki. xvii. Then the streams ceased to flow, the pools were empty, the fountains failed, and the whole land became a desert.—*P.*

5 Heb. *singing.*

c Eze. 27, 8, 29. Re. 18.17.

d Ps.104.25,26. Job 41.1-32.

e Jonah 1.4. Ps.135.7.

6 Heb. *maketh to stand.*

g Jonah 1.11. Mat.8. 24. Ac.27.14,15,18.

h Ps. 22. 14; 119. 28. Na.2.10. Is.13.7.

7 Heb. *all their wisdom is swallowed up.*

i ver.6,13,19. Ps. 50. 15;91.15;55.16;65.2; 18. 6;34.4,6. Job 5.19.

j Ps.29.10; 93.3,4; 65. 7;89.9. Mat.8.25,26; 14. 32.

k ver.8,15,21. Ps.136. 1-26; 145. 1-21; 146. 1-10;147.1-20;149.1-9.

l Ps. 22. 22, 25; 40. 9, 10;66.16;119.46;111.1.

m 1 Ki.17.1,7. Ge.13. 10,13; 19.25. De. 29.22, 23. Is.13. 19-22,9. Zep. 2.9.

8 See note * in first column.

9 Heb. *saltness*, Eze. 47.11. Ju.9.45.

n Is.41. 17, 18; 32. 15; 35.1-6. Ps. 114.8.

p Ps. 146.7. Lu. 1. 53. Ac.17.26. ver.7.

q Je. 29. 5. Is. 37. 30. Ps.65.9-13. Ac.14.17.

r Ge.1.22, 28. Ex. 1. 7. Pr.10.22. Ps. 144.12-14.

s Le. 26. 15-39. De. 28.15-68. Ps.106.41-43. 2 Ki.17.20,32; 17.7-23. Je. xxxli.

t Job 12. 18-21, 24. Jos. 10. 16, 24, 26. Ju.1. 6,7;4.9,21.

1 Every man is disposed at some time to say, 'My mountain standeth strong,' 'I shall neverbe moved.' God therefore appoints remarkable *reverses* and alternations of riches and poverty, that the rich may learn grateful humility, the poor prosecute hopeful industry, and both fear the Lord.—*C.*

2 Or, *void place.*

u 1 Sa.2.5-8. 2 Sa.7. 8. Ps. 113. 7-9; 144. 12; 128.3;37.5.

3 Or, *after.*

4 That is, while the proud rich men are humbled by the omnipotent hand of God, the poor pious man is blessed with temporal prosperity, and with the greatest of eastern blessings—an abundant offspring.—*P.*

v Job 22.19; 5.15, 16. Pr.10.11. Ps. 58. 10; 63. 11;92.11;91.8;112.8,10.

x Ps.25. 12, 14; 64. 9. Je.9.12. Da.12.10. Ho. 14.9, with Is.5.12;26.9, 11. Ps.28.5.

5 This is the great lesson of the whole psalm. The thoughtful, philosophical observers of God's ways and works in providence and grace will obtain a knowledge of his infinite love such as will cheer their souls, and draw out their hearts in gratitude and thankful adoration to the great Ruler of the universe.—*P.*

PSALM CVIII.

B.C. cir. 1036.

1 *My heart is fixed.* Independent of the apostolic quotation (Ro. 15. 9), which determines the application, this very characteristic of a *fixed heart* would prove the speaker either to be a self-deceiver (see Je. 17. 9), or Christ. The former he cannot be —for the Spirit hath approved him; the latter he must be—for the Spirit hath so pointed him out to our discovery and confidence.—*C.*

2 'My glory,' *i.e.* the noblest part of me —my intellect, my soul.—*P.*

a Ps.57.7-11;103.1,2;34.1-3;104.34;92.1,2. b Ps.30.11;138.1;71.8,15,23,24;145.1,5,21. Lu.1.47.

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to Christ and his people. But terrible, spreading, and extensive, lasting and yet most righteous, are the judgments which overtake them from heaven, from earth, and from hell! Deep marked was this truth on the enemies of David, on Judas the traitor, and his Jewish brethren, the murderers of our Lord and his saints; and on heathenish and popish Romans. But if men spitefully abuse us, let us give ourselves unto prayer. Though our God be long silent, he will

2 Awake, [c]psaltery and harp; I *myself* will awake early.

3 I [d]will praise thee, O LORD, among the people; and I will sing praises unto thee among the nations.

4 For[e] thy mercy *is* great above the heavens; and thy truth *reacheth* unto the clouds.[3]

5 Be[g] thou exalted, O God, above the heavens, and thy glory above all the earth;[4]

6 That[h] thy beloved may be delivered: [i]save *with* thy right hand, and answer me.

7 God[j] hath spoken in his holiness; I will rejoice, I will [k]divide Shechem, and mete out the valley of [l]Succoth.

8 Gilead[n] *is* mine; Manasseh *is* mine; Ephraim also *is* the [o]strength of mine head; [p]Judah *is* my lawgiver;

9 Moab[q] *is* my wash-pot; over Edom will I cast out my shoe; over Philistia will I triumph.

10 Who[r] will bring me into the strong city? who will lead me into Edom?

11 *Wilt* not *thou*, O God, *who* [s]hast cast us off? and wilt not thou, O God, [t]go forth with our hosts?

12 Give[u] us help from trouble; for [v]vain *is* the help of man.

13 Through[x] God we shall do valiantly: [y]for he *it is that* shall tread down our enemies.

PSALM CIX.

1 *David, complaining of his slanderous enemies, under the person of Judas, devoteth them.* 16 *He showeth their sin.* 21 *Complaining of his own misery, he prayeth for help.* 30 *He promiseth thankfulness.*

To the chief musician, A psalm of David.

HOLD [a]not thy peace, O [b]God of my praise;
2 For[c] the mouth of the wicked, and the mouth of the deceitful,[1] are opened against me;[2] they[d] have spoken against me with a lying tongue.

3 They compassed me about also with words of hatred; and fought against me [e]without a cause.

4 For[g] my love they are my adversaries: [h]but I *give myself unto* prayer.[3]

5 And[i] they have rewarded me evil for good, and hatred for my love.

6 Set thou a wicked man over him; and let Satan[4] stand[j] at his right hand.[5]

7 When he shall be judged, let him be condemned;[6] and [k]let his prayer become sin.

8 Let[l] his days be few; *and* let another take his office.[7]

9 Let[n] his children be fatherless, and his wife a widow.

10 Let[o] his children be continually vagabonds, and beg; let them seek *their bread* also out of their desolate places.

A.M. cir. 2968.
B.C. cir. 1036.

c Ps. 33.2;43.4;5.3. Is. 64.7.

d Ju. 5.14. Ps. 22. 22, 25. Zep. 3.14–20. Is. 11. 9. Zec. 8.18–23.

e Ps. 36.5; 89.2;85.10. Mi. 7. 18–20. Ro. 5. 20, 21. Ep. 2.4–7.

3 Or, *skies.*

g Ps. 8. 1; 110. 1. Re. 11.15,17.

4 Ver. 1–5 are taken from Ps. 57. 7–11, the remainder from Ps. 60.5–12, and the whole is evidently intended to show how easily God can extract the song of joy and triumph from the strain of lamentation and complaint; for truly to him that believeth a promising God all things are possible.—*C.*

h Ps. 60.5–12. Ex. 19. 5,6. De. 32.9.

i Ps. 54.1; 35. 1–3, 23; 119.17; 144.7.

j Ps. 89. 35, 36. 1 Sa. 13. 14; 15. 28. 2 Sa. 7.8–16.

k Jos. 1.6; 13.7.

l Ge. 33.17. Ju. 8.5.

n 2 Sa. 2. 8, 9, with 5. 1, 3.

o De. 33. 17. Ge. 49. 24.

p Ge. 49.10. Ps. 122.5.

q 2 Sa. v. viii. Ps. 60. 8. 1 Ch. xiv. xviii. xx.

r Ps. 14.7; 20.1–9; 33. 16–22. 2 Ch. 14. 11; 20. 12; 13.14.

s 1 Sa. xxxi. Ps. 44.9. Is. 12.1.

t Ex. 17.11, 12. De. 20. 4. Nu. 21.2, 3. 1 Sa. 17.45.

u Ps. 142.4, 5; 20.1–9.

v Job 16. 2. Is. 2. 22; 30.3, 5, 7; 31.1, 3. Ps. 33. 16, 17; 118.8, 9.

x 2 Ch. 20. 12. Is. 45. 24. Nu. 24.18. Ps. 18. 28–48; 118. 10–16.

y 2 Sa. v. viii. x. Is. 63. 1–4. Ro. 16. 20. 2 Co. 2. 14.

PSALM CIX.

B.C. cir. 1058.

a Ps. 83.1; 28.1; 35.22, 23.

b Je. 17.14. Ex. 15. 2. Ps. 65.1; 47.5–7; 118.28. Ro. 2.29. 2 Co. 10.18.

c 1 Sa. 24.9. Ps. 31.13; 41.7; 56.5, 6; 57.4; 64.3, 4; 140.2, 3; 22.13.

1 Heb. *mouth of deceit.*

2 Heb. *have opened* themselves.

d Mat. 26. 60. Ac. 6. 13.

e Ps. 37.7; 69.4. Jn. 15. 24, 25.

g ver. 5. Ps. 35. 12; 38. 20. Jn. 10. 32; 15. 18. Lu. 19. 10, 14. 2 Co. 12. 15.

h Ps. 35. 13; 69. 13. Lu. 6. 11, 12; 23. 34.

3 Brief, but most expressive and pregnant of meaning, are the words here:—'For my love (my love and devotion to Thee) they are my adversaries; but I (am) prayer.' I am all prayer; I pray without ceasing; prayer is my sole resource; prayer makes me confident. What a noble principle is embodied here, and what a noble lesson does it teach!—*P.*

i Ps. 35. 7, 12.

4 Or, *an adversary.*

j Zec. 3. 1. Jn. 13. 2, 27.

5 See note * below.

6 Heb. *go out guilty* or *wicked*, Ro. 3. 19. Ga. 3. 10. Jn. 3. 18, 19. Mat. 27. 3, 4. Ac. 1. 25.

k Pr. 15. 8; 28. 9. Is. 1. 15; 66. 3.

l Ps. 55. 23. Ac. 1. 18, 20. Mat. 27. 5.

7 Or, *charge.*

n Ex. 22. 24. Is. 9. 17. La. 5. 3.

o Ge. 4. 12, 14. Is. 16. 2. Job 24. 8; 30. 3–8. Ps. 37. 25.

* It ought not to be overlooked that the remaining portions of this psalm are prophetical rather than imprecatory; yet it is still quite true that the writer desires the punishment of those who had persecuted him with such intense bitterness. 'The first thing the psalmist asks is, that his foe might be subjected to the evil of having a man placed over him like himself—a man regardless of justice, truth, and right; a man who would respect character and propriety no more than he had himself done. It is in fact a prayer that he might be punished in the line of his offences. It cannot be wrong that a man should be treated as he treats others; and it cannot be in itself wrong to desire that a man should be treated according to his character and deserts; for this is the object of all law, and this is what all magistrates and legislators are endeavouring to secure.' There is much force in these words of Albert Barnes; yet still the spirit and real bearing of this psalm must be in a great measure lost if we lose sight of its *prophetic* character, and of the fact that it is the direct utterance of the divine and omniscient Spirit of God.—*P.*

A.M. cir. 2946.
B.C. cir. 1058.

p Job 5.5; 18.9, 19; 20. 18. 2 Ki. 4.1, 2. Mat. 18. 25.

q Job 18.19. Ps. 37.28, 36. 1 Ki. 14. 10; 21. 21. Is. 14.20–22. Pr. 10.7.

r Ex. 20.5. Le. 26.39. 1 Ki. 14.10; 21.21. 2 Ki. 9.22, 36. Mat. 23.31, 32. Is. 43.25.

s Je. 2.22. Ps. 90.8; 50. 21.

t Job 18.17. Ps. 34.16. ver. 13.

u Ps. 69. 26; 10.2, 14. Zec. 1.15. Pr. 24. 11, 12. Jn. 12.6. Mat. 23.23.

v Ps. 34.18; 69.20. Is. 57.15, 16, 2 Co. 8.9.

x Mat. 7. 1, 21; 27. 5. Eze. 35.6. Joel 3. 4. Pr. 14.14. 1 Th. 2. 16. 2 Th. 2.10. Nu. 5.22. Zec. 5.4. Job 20.11.

8 Heb. *within him.*

y Is. 66.24. ver. 29.

z Le. 19.16. Is. 3. 11. Ps. 21.8–12; 35.26; 40.14, 15; 69.22–28; 110. 1, 5, 6. Pr. 1.24–31. 1 Th. 2. 15, 16. Lu. 19.27, 43, 44.

a Ps. 25. 11; 7. 1, 6; 27. 9; 31. 1, 16; 54. 1; 142. 4–7; 143. 7–9; 86. 13 17; 106. 8.

9 That is, exercise thy power for me, act for me, plan for me, save and succour me.—*P.*

b Ps. 9. 18; 40. 17; 72. 12–14; 102. 2–11, 17, 20; 77. 1–9; 62–7; 143. 7.

c Ps. 102. 11; 144. 4. Job 14. 2. 1 Ch. 29. 15.

d Ps. 102. 10. Mat. 8. 20.

e He. 12. 12. Ps. 69. 10; 22. 15; 35. 13, 14; 38. 3–8.

g Ps. 22. 6, 7; 31. 11, 13; 35. 25; 40. 15; 69. 7, 9–12, 19, 20. Job 16. 4. Mat. 27. 39.

h Ps. 22. 19; 40. 13; 59. 4; 119. 86, 173, 175.

i ver. 21. Ps. 40. 11; 57. 1; 59. 16; 69. 13, 16.

j Ps. 17. 13, 14; 41. 11; 58. 10, 11; 64. 9; 118. 23; 112. 10.

k 2 Sa. 16. 11, 12. Is. 65. 13, 14. Job 22. 29.

l Ps. 6. 10; 35. 26; 40. 14; 140. 9, 9. 10; 7. 16.

n Ps. 7. 7; 9. 1; 22. 22, 25; 138. 1; 108. 3; 107. 32; 116. 12–18; 111. 1.

o Ps. 16. 8; 73. 23; 121. 5, with ver. 6. Is. 45. 17, 22–25; 49. 26; 54. 17.

11 Let[p] the extortioner catch all that he hath; and let the stranger spoil his labour.

12 Let there be none to extend mercy unto him; neither let there be any to favour his fatherless children.

13 Let[q] his posterity be cut off; *and* in the generation following let their name be blotted out.

14 Let[r] the iniquity of his fathers be remembered with the LORD; and let not the sin of his mother be blotted out.

15 Let[s] them be before the LORD continually, that he may [t]cut off the memory of them from the earth:

16 Because[u] that he remembered not to show mercy, but persecuted the poor and needy man, that he might even slay [v]the broken in heart.

17 As[w] he loved cursing, so let it come unto him; as he delighted not in blessing, so let it be far from him.

18 As he clothed himself with cursing like as with his garment, so let it come into his bowels[8] like water, and like oil into his bones.

19 Let[y] it be unto him as the garment *which* covereth him, and for a girdle wherewith he is girded continually.

20 *Let*[z] this *be* the reward of mine adversaries from the LORD, and of them that speak evil against my soul.

21 But[a] do thou for me,[9] O GOD the Lord, for thy name's sake: because thy mercy *is* good, deliver thou me.

22 For[b] I *am* poor and needy, and my heart is wounded within me.

23 I[c] am gone like the shadow when it declineth; I am [d]tossed up and down as the locust.

24 My [e]knees are weak through fasting; and my flesh faileth of fatness.

25 I[g] became also a reproach unto them: *when* they looked upon me they shaked their heads.

26 Help[h] me, O LORD my God: [i]O save me according to thy mercy:

27 That[j] they may know that this *is* thy hand; *that* thou, LORD, hast done it.

28 Let[k] them curse, but bless thou: when they arise, let them be ashamed; but let thy servant rejoice.

29 Let[l] mine adversaries be clothed with shame, and let them cover themselves with their own confusion, as with a mantle.

30 I[n] will greatly praise the LORD with my mouth; yea, I will praise him among the multitude.

31 For[o] he shall stand at the right hand of

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speak at the last. If he help, we need not regard who harass us. If he bless, we need not care who curse us. If all our hopes be placed on his boundless mercy and grace, no matter how we be loaded with poverty, wounds of spirit, decay of body, or revilings of men. He can quickly help and save us. The more shame we take to ourselves for our sins, we are in the less danger of suffering for them. And God's support and salvation shall quickly fill our mouths with high and everlasting praise.

PSALM CX. Ver. 1. The prophetic references in this psalm to the person, work, and kingdom of our Lord are placed beyond all doubt by the frequent quotations from it in the New Testament. Our Lord himself appropriates the words of the first verse, Mat. 22. 44; Mar. 12. 36; and Lu. 20. 42. They are so interpreted by Peter in Ac. 2. 34. In He. 5. 6, Paul applies the words of ver. 4 to Christ; so also in He. 7. 17–21. It is clear from these quotations that the Messianic interpretation of the psalm was universal among the Jews in ancient times. *P.*—The

the poor, to save him from those that condemn his soul.[1]

PSALM CX.

1 A prediction of the kingdom, 4 priesthood, 5 triumphs, 7 and sufferings of Christ.

A psalm of David.

THE LORD[a] said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool.

2 The LORD shall send [b]the rod of thy strength out of Zion: [c]rule thou in the midst of thine enemies.

3 Thy[d] people *shall be* willing in the day of thy power, [e]in the beauties of holiness from the womb of the morning:[1] thou hast [g]the dew of thy youth.[2]

4 The LORD [h]hath sworn, and will not repent, [i]Thou *art* a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek.

5 The[j] LORD at thy right hand shall strike through kings in the day of his wrath.

6 He shall judge among the heathen, he shall fill *the places* with the dead bodies; [k]he shall wound the heads over many[3] countries.

7 He[l] shall drink of the brook in the way: therefore shall he lift up the head.[4]

PSALM CXI.

1 The psalmist by his example inciteth others to praise God for his glorious and gracious works. 10 The fear of God is the source of true wisdom.

PRAISE ye the LORD.[1] I[a] will praise the LORD with *my* whole heart, in the assembly of the upright, and *in* the congregation.

2 The[b] works of the LORD *are* great, [c]sought out of all them that have pleasure therein.

3 His[d] work *is* honourable and glorious; and his[e] righteousness endureth for ever.

4 He[g] hath made his wonderful works to be remembered: [h]the LORD *is* gracious, and full of compassion.

5 He[i] hath given meat[2] unto them that fear him: he [j]will ever be mindful of his covenant.

6 He[k] hath showed his people the power of his works, that he may give them the heritage of the heathen.

7 The[l] works of his hands *are* verity and judgment; [m]all his commandments *are* sure.

8 They [3]stand fast[4] for ever and ever, *and are* done [o]in truth and uprightness.

9 He[p] sent redemption[5] unto his people; [q]he hath commanded his covenant for ever: [r]holy and reverend *is* his name.

10 The[s] fear of the LORD *is* the beginning of wisdom: [t]a good understanding[6] have all they that do *his commandments:*[7] his [u]praise endureth for ever.[8]

PSALM CXII.

1 Godliness hath the promises of this life, 4 and of the life to come. 10 The prosperity of the godly shall be despised by the wicked.

PRAISE ye the LORD.[1] Blessed[a] *is* the man *that* feareth the LORD, *that* delighteth greatly in his commandments.

2 His[b] seed shall be mighty upon earth: the generation of the upright shall be blessed.

3 Wealth[c] and riches *shall be* in his house; [d]and his righteousness endureth for ever.

4 Unto[e] the upright there ariseth light in the darkness: [g]*he is* gracious, and full of compassion, and righteous.

5 A[h] good man showeth favour, and lendeth: he will guide his affairs with discretion.[2]

6 Surely[i] he shall not be moved for ever: [j]the righteous shall be in everlasting remembrance.

7 He[k] shall not be afraid of evil [3]tidings: [l]his heart is fixed, trusting in the LORD.

8 His heart *is* established, he shall not be afraid, until [n]he see *his desire* upon his enemies.

9 He[o] hath dispersed; he hath given to the poor; [p]his righteousness endureth for [4]ever; [q]his horn shall be exalted with honour.

10 The[r] wicked[5] shall see *it*, and be grieved; [s]he shall gnash with his teeth, and melt away: [t]the desire of the wicked shall perish.

[r] Is.65.13,14. Job 5.2. [s] Lu.13.28. Ps.58.7,8. Mat.22.13.
[t] Pr.10.28; 11.7; 13.9. Mi.1.12. Je.14.19. Is.59.11.

A.M. cir. 2946.
B.C. cir. 1058.

1 Heb. *from the judges of his soul.*

PSALM CX.

B.C. cir. 1058 or 1021.

a Ps. 2.6,9; 21. 1–12; 91. 13–16. Mat. 22. 44. Mar. 12. 36. Lu. 20. 42; 19.14. Ac. 2.34,36. 1 Co. 15.25,26. He. 1.3,13; 8.1.

b Ro. 1.16,17. 1 Co. 1. 23,24. 1 Th. 2.13. Is. 2.3. Mi. 4.2. Ac. 3.26; 13.46. ver. 3.

c Ps. 45.5; 2.7–12; 22. 27–29.

d Ju. 5.2. Ga. 1.15,16. Ps. 22.27,31. Ac. 2.41.

e Ps. 93.5; 96.9. Ac. 2. 41; 4.4; 5.14. Lu. 1.74,75. Eze. 43.12.

1 Or, *more than the womb of the morning thou shalt have.*

g Re. 7.4,9. Mi. 5.7.

2 *Youth.* — 'Thy progeny as dew from the womb of the morning.'—*Boothroyd.* —The general sense is clear, though the imagery is somewhat obscure:—'In the season of Christ's great power, when his kingdom would be fully established, his people would joyfully offer their services to him, clothed in robes of purity (*viz.* in good works) which would shine like the diamond dew of the morning.'—*P.*

h Ps. 89.36. He. 7.21, 28; 6.17,18.

i He. 5.6,10; 6.20; 7.3, 17,21,24,25,28; 8.6. Ge. 14.18–20.

j Ro. 2.5. Ps. 2.5,9; 18. 32–48; 21. 8–12; 45. 4, 5; 69.22–28; 68.21, 30. Zec. xi. xiv. Re. vi. viii. ix. xi. xiv. xvi. xix. xx.

k Hab. 3.13.

3 Or, *great.*

l Ju. 7.5,6. Jn. 3.34. Is. 61.1–3. Phi. 2.6–11. Lu. 24.26. Jn. 18.11; 20.17, with Ps. 3.4; 27.6. Je. 52. 31.

4 Because of his humiliation he shall be exalted. See Phi. 2.7–9.—*C.*

PSALM CXI.

1 Heb. *Hallelujah.*

a Ps. 9.1,14; 138.1; 109.30; 40.9,10; 22.22; 32.11; 33.1; 108.3.

b Ps. 86.8; 72.18; 92.4, 5. Job 5.9; 38.41. Je. 32. 17,19. Re. 15.3

c Ps. 111.2,43; 64.9; 28. 5. Is. 5.12.

d Ps. 145.4,10,17. Je. 33.3.

e Da. 9.24. Is. 51.6,8. Ps. 119.142,144.

g Ps. 145.4–7. Re. 15. 3,4. Is. 63.7.

h Ex. 34.6,7. Ps. 86.5, 15. Ho. 11.8. Mi. 7.18, 19.

i Ps. 34.9,10; 23.1. Is. 33.17; 62.8,9. Mat. 6.11, 26–33.

2 Heb. *prey.*

j Ps. 105.8. Ne. 1.5. Lu. 1.54, 1.1.72.

k Je. 33.3. Ps. cv. cxxxvi.; 2.8; 22.27–30. Re. 2.26.

A.M. —
B.C. —

l ver. 3. Re. 15.3. Mi. 7.20. Nu. 23.19. De. 32. 4.

m Ps. 19.7,8; 105.8.

3 Heb. *are established.*

4 *Stand fast*—are supported, sustained. —*C.*

o Ps. 25.8. De. 32.4. Mi. 7.20. La. 3.22,23.

p Ex. vii.–xiv. Is. 63. 7–13. Ps. 130.7,8; 25.22.

5 Deliverance from Egypt; the emblem and foretaste of Christ's redemption from the slavery of sin.—*C.*

q 1 Ch. 16.15. Ps. 42.8.

r Ex. 15.11. Ps. 99.1, 5; 89.7. De. 28.58. Re. 15.3,4. Je. 10.6,7.

s Job 28.28. Pr. 1.7; 9. 10. Mat. 6.33. Lu. 10.42. Ps. 130.4. Ec. 12.13.

t De. 4.6. 2 Ti. 3.15–17.

6 Or, *good success,* Pr. 3.4.

7 Heb. *that do them.*

u Ps. 45.17; 145.2,4.

8 Filial fear is the source of love, reverence, and obedience. It inspires respect for God in his paternal character, for his will as revealed in Scripture, for his government in the church and in the world.—*P.*

PSALM CXII.

1 Heb. *Hallelujah.*

a Ps. 128.1; 1.1–3; 119. 1, 16, 45, 47, 70, 72, 127, 128, 165; 111.10.

b 1 Ti. 4.8. Ps. 37. 26; 128.3,6; 127.3,5; 102.28; 69.36; 90.16. Is. 65.13

c Pr. 3.16; 10.22. Mat. 6.33. Phi. 4.19.

d ver. 9. Is. 32. 17. 1 Co. 15.58. 2 Ti. 4.7,8.

e Job 11.17. Ps. 97.11. Is. 58.10. Es. 8.16. Zec. 14.7. De. 32.36. Mi. 7.7–9.

g Ja. 4.17. Ep. 4.32; 32. Tit. 2.11, 12; 3.8.

h Ps. 37.26. Lu. 6.35.

2 Heb. *judgment,* Pr. 13.16. Ep. 5.15.

i Ps. 15.5; 125.1.

j Pr. 10.7. Mal. 3.16. He. 6.10. Mat. 25.35,36.

k Pr. 1.33; 3.25,26. Is. 26.3.

3 Evil reports, such as of 'wars, and rumours of wars;' more especially of the 'calumnies' of evil tongues, by which he was constantly assailed.—*C.*

l Ps. 57.7; 62.2,6; 27. 13,14; 118.6. Is. 26.4; 50. 10.

n Ps. 59.10; 110.1,5,6; 118.7; 92.11.

o 2 Co. 9.9. Ec. 11.1,2. Pr. 11.24,25; 19.17.

p De. 24.13. Lu. 16.9; 6.35,36. Re. 22.11.

4 See note on ver. 3.—*C.*

q Ps. 75.10; 92.10. 1 Sa. 2.30.

5 'The wicked one,' Satan, or his representative, Antichrist. —*C.*

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speaker here is David, who in spirit calls Jesus LORD, and thereby enabled him, in the days of his flesh, to establish unanswerably his superiority to David, Mat. 22. 43. *C.*

Ver. 3. *Willing.* To hear, search, judge, believe, love, deny themselves, take up their cross, follow, suffer, pray, praise; yea, utterly to devote themselves, with all they have and are, to the advancement of the kingdom of their great Priest and King. *C.*

Ver. 5. *The* LORD *at thy right hand.* It is distinctly to be remarked, that he who is called *Adon, Lord,* ver. 1, is placed at the right hand of JEHOVAH, God supreme. But now, ver. 5, he is distinctly called Jehovah—a mode of speech clearly evincing the Godhead equality of Father and Son, with the office-subordination of the Son to the Father. *C.*

REFLECTIONS.—How high is the dignity of our Redeemer! Glorious is his reward for his work of obedience and suffering. And all his enemies—sin, Satan, the world, and death—are made to bow under his feet. The everlasting gospel, sent forth into all the world, becomes powerful to men's salvation, and his kingdom is established, in despite of all opposition. Multitudes of his enemies surrender in the day of his power, cheerfully enlist themselves in his service, and worship him in the beauties of holiness. In the morning of the gospel period, through the heavenly influence of the blessed Spirit, multitudes, fresh and flourishing in heart, surrendered themselves to this Lord. And upon the most solid ground are believers' hopes and comforts founded—the all-sufficiency of Jesus Christ, and the oath of the eternal JEHOVAH. With confidence then ought we always to expect pardon, peace, and all the blessings of salvation, from this great High-priest of our profession. Horrid is the crime, if for a moment we dare question his power and grace, and stagger at promises confirmed by two immutable things—the word and oath of that God who cannot lie. And while Jesus, finishing his obedience, and strengthened by the Holy Ghost, lifts up his head in everlasting triumph, dreadful is the ruin of his malicious and powerful opposers, Jews, heathens, antichristians, and others.

PSALM CXI. Ver. 1. On comparing this ver. with Ps. 18. 49, explained by Ro. 15. 9, there can be no question that both are the words of Christ. But were this proof wanting, the confident dedication of the *whole heart,* would prove the speaker to be either an ignorant self-deceiver (see Je. 17. 9), or Christ, who can neither deceive nor be deceived. *C.*

REFLECTIONS.—Praising of God ought to be hearty, candid, and avowed: and they who inculcate it upon others should carefully exemplify it in their own practice. How extensive are the grounds of it! A God infinitely gracious and faithful, ever mindful of his new relation, and every promise thereof; holy and reverend in nature and in name. His works are unsearchably glorious, memorable, powerful, just, and true; and all of them communicating provision and riches to them that fear him. Fixed, everlasting, true, and candid are all his counsels and words, exactly conformable to his righteous nature, and must be obeyed in simplicity by them that serve him. Everlasting, ordered in all things and sure, is his word, and all the redemption it offers and communicates to men. And they are the only wise persons who fear him and keep his commandments; everlasting shall be their honour and reward.

PSALM CXII. Ver. 3. Every torture of *accommodation* has been exhausted in applying this psalm to every believer, at least to every one of high attainments. But surely a comparison of this single verse with Ro. 3. 10, 21, 22, should have convinced every interpreter, that, though not altogether a prophecy, it was still a description, a spiritual picture of Messiah, whereby the church might recognize him at his coming. *C.*

Ver. 9. *He hath dispersed.* This is explained by what follows. It means he is liberal and benevolent. He scatters with a bountiful, and yet wise and prudent hand, whatever God commits to his stewardship. *P.*

REFLECTIONS.—What holy awe of God, delight in spiritual things, candour, kindness, and equity, are necessary in our obedience to God's law! And great profit, stability, honour, safety, quietness of mind, and victory over all our enemies, are secured for its reward. But how unhappy are the wicked, whose wishes shall be either cursed or denied: and to whom even the happiness of the godly is an insupportable vexation.

PSALM CXIII. REFLECTIONS.—O what an eter-

PSALM CXIII.

An exhortation to praise God for his merciful condescension to his creatures.

PRAISE ye the LORD.[1] Praise, [a]O ye servants of the LORD, praise the name[2] of the LORD.

2 Blessed[b] be the name of the LORD from this time forth and for evermore.

3 From[c] the rising of the sun, unto the going down[3] of the same, the LORD's name *is* to be praised.

4 The[d] LORD *is* high above all nations, *and* his glory above the heavens.

5 Who[e] *is* like unto the LORD our God, who dwelleth on high;[4]

6 Who[g] humbleth *himself* to behold *the things that are* in heaven, and in the earth!

7 He[h] raiseth up the poor out of the dust, *and* lifteth the needy out of the dunghill;

8 That[i] he may set *him* with princes, *even* with the princes of his people.

9 He[j] maketh the barren woman [5]to keep house,[6] *and to be* a joyful mother of children. Praise ye the LORD.

PSALM CXIV.

The miracles of God's power, when he brought his people out of Egypt, are a just ground of fearing him.

WHEN Israel[a] went out of Egypt, the house of Jacob from a people of [b]strange language,[1]

2 Judah[c] was his sanctuary,[2] *and* Israel[3] his dominion.

3 The[d] sea saw *it,* and fled; Jordan was driven back.

4 The[e] mountains skipped like rams, *and* the little hills like lambs.

5 What[g] *ailed* thee, O thou sea, that thou fleddest? thou Jordan, *that* thou wast driven back?

6 Ye mountains, *that* ye skipped like rams; *and* ye little hills, like lambs?

7 Tremble,[h] thou earth, at the presence of the LORD, at the presence of the God of Jacob;

8 Which[i] turned the rock *into* a standing water, the flint[4] into a fountain of waters.

PSALM CXV.

1 *Because God is truly glorious,* 4 *and idols are vanity,* 9 *the psalmist exhorteth to confidence in God.* 12 *God is to be praised for his blessings.*

NOT unto[a] us, O LORD, not unto us, but unto thy name[1] give glory, for thy mercy,[2] *and* for thy truth's sake.

2 Wherefore should the heathen say, [b]Where *is* now their God?

A.M. — B.C. —

PSALM CXIII.

1 Heb. *Hallelujah,* Ps.104.35;111.1.
a Ps.33.1;103.21;134.1;145.10.
2 See note on Ex. 34.6.—*C.*
b Da.2.20. Lu.1.68. Ps.72.17–19;106.48.
c Mal.1.11. Is.59.19; 24.15, 16; 42.10–12; 49.12. Ps.22.27–31;72.19.
3 When the words *rising* and *going down* are applied to the sun, they do not merely signify from east to west, but also from north to south. For from east to west the sun has a daily rising, and from north to south an annual rising.—*C.*
d Ps.97.9; 8.1, 9; 57.11. Is.57.15.
e Ex.15.11. Ps.35.10; 89.6, 8. De.33.26. Is.40.12–26; 46.5. Je.10.6.
4 Heb. *exalteth* himself *to dwell,* Is.57.15; 66.1.
g Ps.138.6. Is.57.15, 16.
h 1 Sa.2.8. Ps.107.41; 72.12–14; 75.7. Eze.17.24.
i Ps.45.16. 2 Sa.7.8. Job 36.6, 7. Eze.17.24; 21.26.
j 1 Sa.2.5. Ps.68.6. Is.54.1; 49.17–22.
5 Heb. *to dwell in an house.*
6 Literally in the case of Sarah, Rachel, and Hannah; and emblematically, in the case of the barren Gentiles, who, by thousands in a day, were born of water and of the Spirit.—*C.*

PSALM CXIV.

B.C. cir. 1491.
a Ex.13.3; 12.31, 41, 42. De.16.1; 26.8.
b Ps.81.5. Ge.42.23.
1 *Strange language*—'A tyrannous people.'—*Horsley.*
c Ex.19.5, 6; 6.7; 25.8. De.27.9, 12; 29.9.
2 *Sanctuary*—his separated people, to bear the foremost standard of the camp. *C.*—A reference appears to be made to the choice of Jerusalem, the capital of the tribe of Judah, as the place of God's permanent abode. There the temple was built, and there God ruled as a visible—visible in the *Shekinah*—as well as an omnipotent Monarch.—*P.*
3 *Israel.* All the tribes, his dominion in which to display 'the goodness and severity' of his government.—*C.*
d Ex.14.21. Ps.77.16; 66.6; 74.15; 106.9. Jos.3.13, 15, 16. Is.63.12–14.
e Ex.19.18. Ps.68.8; 29.6. Hab.3.6, 8, 10. Ju.5.4, 5.
g Hab.3.8.
h Mi.6.1, 2. Ps.97.4, 5; 77.18; 144.5; 18.7–15; 104.32; 68.8. Hab.3.6. Je.10.10; 4.23–26. Is.64.3.
i Ex.17.6. Nu.20.11. De.8.15. Ps.74.15; 78.15, 16; 105.41; 107.35. Ne.9.15. Is.48.21.
4 The kind of stone is not specified by the original. It merely signifies any very hard stone.—*C.*

PSALM CXV.

a Is.48.11. Eze.36.32. 1 Co.15.10. Mi.7.20. Ep.2.1–7. Tit.3.3–7.
1 See note on Ex. 34.6.—*C.*
2 *For thy mercy*—and not for our merit. *And for thy truth*—that has fulfilled all thy gracious promises.—*C.*
b Ps.42.3, 10; 79.10. Joel 2.17. Mi.7.9, 10.

A.M. — B.C. —

c Ps.135.6. Is.46.10. 1 Ch.16.26. Da.4.35. Mat.6.9, 14. Ep.1.11. Re.4.11.
3 Not in the *heavens,* as exclusive of the *earth;* but in the *heavens,* in opposition to idols, which are exclusively confined to their sinful temples.—*C.*
d Ps.135.15–18. De.4.28. Re.9.20. Is.46.6, 7; 44.9–20; 40.19, 20. Je.10.3–9. Hab.2.18, 19. Ho.8.6.
e Hab.2.18. Je.10.5. 1 Ki.18.26, 29. Da.5.23. De.4.28.
g Is.44.10, 11, 18–20. Hab.2.18, 19. Ps.97.7.
h Ps.118.2–4; 135.19, 20. Ex.19.5, 6. Je.10.16. De.4.1; 26.17.
i De.33.27, 29. Ps.33.20; 91.2, 4; 5.12; 18.35. Pr.30.5. ver.10, 11.
j Mal.2.7. Ex.xxviii. xxix. Le.viii. Ps.84.11. Pr.30.5.
k Ac.2.5; 10.35. Ep.6.16. Is.59.21.
l Ps.25.7; 136.23. Ne.13.14, 22, 30. Is.44.21; 49.14–16.
m Ps.72.17; 67.7. Ep.1.3. Phi.4.19. 1 Ti.4.8.
o Ps.29.11.
4 Heb. *with,* Ga.3.28. Col.3.11. Re.11.18.
p Ge.13.16; 15.5; 22.17. Is.49.16–23. Zec.8.20–23; 10.6, 8. 2 Pe.1.2, 3. Jude 2.
5 This was counted one of the greatest blessings, whether applied to the nation or to separate families. 'Be fruitful and multiply' was the first blessing pronounced on man. A posterity like the sand of the sea for multitude was part of Abraham's great blessing. The nation had, at the time of the composition of this psalm, been greatly diminished by the captivity and its attendant evils, and now the Abrahamic blessing was renewed that the people might be cheered.—*P.*
q Ps.3.8. Ep.1.3, 4. Ge.14.19; 27.33.
r Is.57.15; 66.1. Mat.13.43. Ju.14.2.
s De.32.8. Ac.17.26.
t Ps.6.5; 88.10–12; 30.9; 94.17. Is.38.18, 19. Ec.9.4–6.
6 *The dead praise not.* That is, with their voice and testimony, as the living do.—*C.*
u Da.2.20. Ps.145.2, 10; 72.17.

PSALM CXVI.

B.C. cir. 1020.
a Ju.21.17. Ps.18.1–6. 1 Jn.4.19.
b Ps.3.4; 6.9; 10.17; 18.6; 20.1, 3, 1; 22; 40.1, 2.
c Ps.65.2; 55.16, 17. 2 Co.1.10. Is.46.3, 4. He.5.7.
1 Heb. *in my days.*
d Ju.2.2, &c. Ps.18.4, 5; 88.3, 18; 77.2–9; 6.3, 4; 38.2–12; 41.8. Ac.2.24.
2 Heb. *found me,* Ps.119.143.
e Ps.18.6; 34.4–6. Eze.36.37. Pr.18.10.
g Ps.6.4; 31.5; 142.4–7; 141.8.
h Ps.103.8. Ex.34.6, 7. Is.63.7. Nu.14.18, 19. Ro.5.21.
i Ezr.9.15. Ne.9.8. Da.9.7.
j Ps.31.23; 33.18; 72.12–14; 25.21. Mat.11.25.
k Ps. xl. xliii. xviii. xxii. xxxi. xl. xxxiv. ciii. lxxiii. lxxvii.

3 But[c] our God *is* in the heavens; he hath done whatsoever he hath pleased.[3]

4 Their[d] idols *are* silver and gold, the work of men's hands.

5 They[e] have mouths, but they speak not; eyes have they, but they see not;

6 They have ears, but they hear not; noses have they, but they smell not;

7 They have hands, but they handle not; feet have they, but they walk not; neither speak they through their throat.

8 They[g] that make them are like unto them; *so is* every one that trusteth in them.

9 O[h] Israel, trust thou in the LORD: [i]he *is* their help and their shield.

10 O[j] house of Aaron, trust in the LORD: he *is* their help and their shield.

11 Ye[k] that fear the LORD, trust in the LORD: he *is* their help and their shield.

12 The[l] LORD hath been mindful of us: [m]he will bless *us;* he will bless the house of Israel; he will bless the house of Aaron.

13 He[o] will bless them that fear the LORD, *both* small and[4] great.

14 The[p] LORD shall increase you more and more, you and your children.[5]

15 Ye[q] *are* blessed of the LORD, which made heaven and earth.

16 The[r] heaven, *even* the heavens, *are* the LORD's: but [s]the earth hath he given to the children of men.

17 The[t] dead praise not[6] the LORD, neither any that go down into silence.

18 But[u] we will bless the LORD from this time forth and for evermore. Praise the LORD.

PSALM CXVI.

1 *The psalmist professeth his love and duty to God for his deliverance.* 12 *He studieth to be thankful.*

I LOVE the[a] LORD, because [b]he hath heard my voice *and* my supplications.

2 Because[c] he hath inclined his ear unto me, therefore will I call upon *him* as long as I live.[1]

3 The[d] sorrows of death compassed me, and the pains of hell gat hold upon me:[2] I found trouble and sorrow.

4 Then[e] called I upon the name of the LORD; [g]O LORD, I beseech thee, deliver my soul.

5 Gracious[h] *is* the LORD, and [i]righteous; yea, our God *is* merciful.

6 The[j] LORD preserveth the simple: [k]I was brought low, and he helped me.

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nity it will require for the redeemed servants of the Lord sufficiently to praise their high, their unparalleled, their condescending Redeemer, who, by his own debasement, raises faithful believers from the pit of corruption to the loftiest thrones of bliss; and now makes the Gentile world, after long barrenness, to bring forth millions of true converts to himself in his gospel church!

PSALM CXIV. REFLECTIONS.—In infinite tenderness God chooses all who accept Christ to be his peculiar people, and to be blessed with the Spirit's witness, and gracious influences. And nothing can detain his people in their spiritual bondage if they are faithful. Nothing, no not seas of tribulation, nor mountains of unbelief and corruption, can stop their passage to the heavenly Canaan. Nor while Jesus, our smitten Rock of ages, continues a *fountain open,* shall they want refreshment by the way. Tremble then, my carnal heart, at the presence of a God in Christ as my own. And let all my hardened powers be melted by his love.

PSALM CXV. Ver. 8. As really destitute of the use of eyes, &c., as the idols are of the possession of these organs. No man can have the use of his eyes who looks up to the heavens and attributes their formation to unintelligible and unintelligent chance, or a carved block of marble or wood. Indeed, did idolatry live merely in history, and were it not still an extensive and powerful system, it would be scarcely possible to conceive it ever had existed as described. But it lives, while Satan, its inventor, rules; and will not fall till his kingdom is overturned. *C.*

REFLECTIONS.—Let us be always nothing in our own eyes, and let Christ be all and in all. To his grace every good thing in us, or done by us, must be ascribed. But disgracing to human nature, as well as

7 Return[l] unto thy rest, O my soul; for the LORD hath dealt bountifully with thee.[3]

8 For[n] thou hast delivered my soul from death, mine eyes from tears, *and* my feet from falling.[4]

9 I[o] will walk before the LORD in the land of the living.

10 I[p] believed, therefore have I spoken: I was greatly afflicted:[5]

11 I[q] said in my haste, All men *are* liars.

12 What[r] shall I render unto the LORD *for* all his benefits toward me?

13 I[s] will take the cup of salvation, and call upon the name of the LORD.

14 I[t] will pay my vows unto the LORD now in the presence of all his people.

15 Precious[u] in the sight of the LORD *is* the death of his saints.

16 O LORD, [v]truly I *am* thy servant; I *am* thy servant, *and* the son of thine handmaid: thou hast loosed my bonds.

17 I[w] will offer to thee the sacrifice of thanksgiving, and will call upon the name of the LORD.

18 I[y] will pay my vows unto the LORD now in the presence of all his people,

19 In[z] the courts of the LORD's house, in the midst of thee, O Jerusalem. Praise ye the LORD.

PSALM CXVII.

An exhortation to praise God for his mercy and truth.

O PRAISE [a]the LORD, all ye nations:[1] praise him, all ye people.

2 For[b] his merciful kindness is great toward us: [c]and the truth of the LORD *endureth* for ever. Praise ye the LORD.

A.M. cir. 2984.
B.C. cir. 1020.

l Mat.11 29. Ps.13.6; 34.8. Je.6.16; 31.11–14. Jude 24.

3 What comfort and joy does a psalm like this give the troubled soul! It is the record of a painful and yet glorious experience. Amid severe bodily suffering, and deep mental anguish, when earthly comfort would have been vain, and he was able to speak of God's love and mercy. These words are quoted by the apostle in 2 Co. 4. 13, to express his confidence in the truth of Christ's gospel, and the effect that confidence had upon him, causing him to proclaim the truth.—*P.*

m He.4.3. Ps. 56. 13; 103.4.40.1–3.94.17,18.

4 Surely Ps. 16. 10, 11, comp. with Ac. 2. 31, cannot more clearly point to the resurrection of Jesus than the words of this verse. Their perfect parallelism of meaning must be obvious to every one that compares the passages.—*C.*

n Ps.16.8;61.7. Tit.2. 11–14.1 Co.15.58.

o 2 Co.4.13, 14. 1 Jn. 1.1–3. Ps.66.16.

5 See note [*] below.

p 2 Co.4.13, 14. 1 Jn. 1.1–3. Ps.66.16.

q Ps.27.1. Ps.31.22. Eze.37.11. Ro.3.4.

r Ps. 103. 1–5. 2 Co. 5.14–21. 1 Ti.1.13–16.

s 40.1. 17. 1 Ch.16.1–3. 1 Co. 10.16. Lu. 22. 17, 20.

t Jonah 2. 9. ver. 18. Ps.56.12;66.13–15; 119. 106;22.22,25;109.30.

u Ps.72.14; 37.32,33. Re.14.13. Is.43.4.

v Ps. 86. 16; 119. 32. Lu.1. 74, 75. Tit. 2. 11–14. 2 Co.5.14–21.

w Le.7.12. Ps. 50.14; 66.13–15. He.13.12–16. 1 Pe.2.5. Ro.6.17.

y Ec.5.5, ver.14. Ps. 76.11;61.5. Is.19.21.

z Ps.96. 8; 100. 4; 22. 25; 122. 1–4. 2 Ch.6.6. 1 Ch.xv.xvi.

PSALM CXVII.
B.C. cir. 1020.

a Ro.15.11. Ps.47.1; 66.1,4;67.4;68.32;xcv.-c.

1 The quotation of this brief but emphatic psalm, Ro. 15. 11, clearly proves that it is uttered by Christ, as the Prophet of the church.—*C.*

b Lu.2.10,14. Is.11.9. Re.11.15. Mi.7.20. Ps. 85.10.

c Is. 25. 1. Jn.14.6. 1 Jn.5.6.

[*] In the hour of his sorest trial and deepest affliction, when, humanly speaking, hope had vanished, he still had faith in God, in his promises and in his faithfulness. As a result, he realized divine sustaining grace, and therefore he was able to speak of God's love and mercy.

A.M. cir. 2984.
B.C. cir. 1020.

PSALM CXVIII.

1 *An exhortation to praise God for his mercy.* 5 *The psalmist by his own experience showeth how good it is to trust in God.* 19 *Under the type of the psalmist the coming of Christ in his kingdom is expressed.*

O GIVE [a]thanks unto the LORD; for *he is* good: [b]because his mercy *endureth* for ever.

2 Let[c] Israel now say, that his mercy *endureth* for ever.

3 Let[d] the house of Aaron now say, that his mercy *endureth* for ever.

4 Let[e] them now that fear the LORD say, that his mercy *endureth* for ever.

5 I[g] called upon the LORD in distress:[1] the LORD answered me, *and set me* in a large place.

6 The[h] LORD *is* on my side;[2] I will not fear: what can man do unto me?

7 The[i] LORD taketh my part with them that help me; [j]therefore shall I see *my desire* upon them that hate me.

8 *It*[k] *is* better to trust in the LORD than to put confidence in man.

9 *It*[l] *is* better to trust in the LORD than to put confidence in princes.

10 All[n] nations compassed me about: but in the name of the LORD will I destroy them.[3]

11 They compassed me about; yea, they compassed me about: but in the name of the LORD I will destroy them.

12 They[o] compassed me about like bees; they are quenched as the fire of thorns: for in the name of the LORD I will [4]destroy them.[5]

13 [p]Thou[6] hast thrust sore at me that I might fall; but the LORD helped me.

14 The[q] LORD *is* my strength and song, and is become my salvation.

PSALM CXVIII.
B.C. cir. 1047.

a 1 Ch. 16. 8, 34. Ps. 106.1; 107.1; 136.1–26. 2 Ch.20.21.

b Ps.103.17.

c Ps.115.9–11;135.19, 20. Ga.6. 16. He. 13. 7, 17.

d Ps.124.1,2. Is.62.1, 6,7.

e Ps.32. 1; 33. 1; 97.8; 103.11,17.

g Ps.120. 1; 18. 6, 19; 40.1–3;31.8.

1 Heb. *out of distress.*

h Ps.56.4,9,11;27. 1–3. He.13.6. Ro.8.31. Is. 51.12.

2 Heb. *for me.*

i Ps.54.4,7. He.13.6.

j Ps.59.10;112;54.7; 110.1,5;92.11.

k Ps.40.4;62.8,9;39.5, 6. Je. 17.5,7. Mi. 7.2–5. Is.2.22.

l Ps. 146. 3. 2 Ch. 28. 20, 21. Is. 30. 1–3; 31. 1; 36.6. Eze.29.7.

n 2 Sa.v.viii.x.xviii. Ps.18.30–45;27.3;60.12; 22. 12, 16. Ac.4. 27, 28. Re.16.14;20.8,9.

3 Heb. *cut them off.*

4 Heb. *cut down.*

5 The first clause of the verse brings out the vast number of the writer's enemies, and galling and unceasing character of their attacks made upon him. The second clause adopts another figure, designed to show the rapidity and quickness with which they were destroyed. As the flames burn up the dry, sunscorched brambles and thorns during the heat of an eastern summer, so these wanton persecutors are swept away.—*P.*

o 2 Sa.23.6,7. Sa.23.26. De.1.44. Ps.58.9; 83.14. Is.27.4. Ec.7.6. Na.1.10.1 Ch.xiv.xviii.–xx.

6 *Thou.*—Satan, the adversary, from the wilderness to the cross.—*C.*

p Ps.22.12,16,19–21;39.6. Is.50.5–9. Mi.7.8,9.

q Ex.15.2,6. Is.12.2;61.10;45.24,25.

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dishonouring to God, is the worshipping of idols. And how absurd it is for idolaters to upbraid the saints with their all-present, all-creating, and all-governing JEHOVAH. Great is their encouragement to trust in a God, who is so much, and gives so much to his people; nay, gives so much to men! They can never fail whose faith stands firm. And greatly then should we exert ourselves in praising and serving God here, as in death we shall have no such opportunities for it.

PSALM CXVI. Ver. 3. Can this be true of any but the 'Man of Sorrows, acquainted with grief?'—of him who was exceeding 'sorrowful even unto death;' which death lies within the dominion of Satan, by whom its power is still vindictively exercised? See He. 2. 14. *C.*

Ver. 10. Were there yet any question that Jesus, in his sorrows, is the speaker, the quotation of this verse by Paul (2 Co. 4. 13) would put the matter beyond controversy. 'The same spirit of faith' spoken of, ver. 13, cannot possibly have a correspondent, but 'the life of Jesus,' referred to in ver. 11. *C.*

Ver. 11. *In my haste.* 'In my ecstasy.'—*Sept.* 'My agitation.'—*Horsley. All men are liars*—'are deceitful.'—*Green.* The very fact which our Lord, returning from his agony in Gethsemane, implied, 'when he came to his disciples, and found them asleep,' and said, 'What! could ye not watch with me one hour?' *C.*

Ver. 15.-As the eye of man gazes with delight on a precious gem, so the most lovely, the most precious of all things in the sight of God, is the patient and triumphant death of his saints. *C.*

REFLECTIONS.—Happy are they who love the Lord! They are every moment laid under fresh obligations to this delightful exercise. Prayers heard by God should always make us love him more, and praise him more. And if we are in Christ, our troubles may be very sore, but our victory and deliverance are sure and near. Delightful consolation and rest succeed the bitterest tribulations to his saints. And pleasant is that rest which is enjoyed in a Saviour's arms, and under the covert of his blood. It is honourable, as well as dutiful, to walk always as under his eye, and in conformity to him; in subjection to his will as our Father, and in dependence on him as our all-sufficient portion. The consideration that we are in the land of the living should quicken us to it. And it is delightful to speak and practise that which our heart believes upon God's testimony, ratified by the blood of his Son. But often, under strong temptations and in deep afflictions, the strongest believers have had their faith shaken, and have been surprised into thoughts and words extremely dishonourable to God. Yet he upholds all believers, and makes them quickly to change their voice. And O how pleasant it is to be so overwhelmed with a sense of God's love, that we scarcely know what praise, what vows, or what service to return him in gratitude! But while we praise him for what we have received, we must eagerly drink more and more of his cup of salvation, and receive more and more out of his fulness, and grace for grace. How precious and delightful to God is the death of his saints for, or in, the Lord! But much more that unparalleled death of Jesus Christ for the world, who loosed all our bonds and secured all our blessings.

PSALM CXVII. REFLECTIONS.—Thrice happy is the Gentile world when blessed with the fulness of Christ! Behold mercy preached, offered, and given to us! mercy abounding to the chief of sinners; mercy extending to millions of lost souls, and securing to all who believe, purity, strength, comfort, and glory! Behold also the unchangeable faithfulness of God, confirmed by his oath and blood, and engaged to make good to us all the promises of his everlasting word!

PSALM CXVIII. Ver. 5. *I called.* There are sufficient characteristics in this psalm to demonstrate that Christ is the speaker. But it is unnecessary to examine them, as the psalm is thrice in the New Testament directly applied to Christ; and, on one of these occasions, in his own presence, see ver. 26, compare with Mat. 21. 9; on another by his own lips, Mat. 23. 39; and again, ver. 22 is applied to our Lord by Peter, Ac. 4. 11. *C.*

Ver. 10. *All nations,* &c. This was literally fulfilled when the Jews in the persons of the congregated multitude, and the Romans in the persons of Pilate and the soldiers, encompassed our Lord at his trial and crucifixion. *C.*

Ver. 12. *Destroy them.* This has been fully verified in the dispersion of the Jews, and the utter dismemberment of the Roman empire; nay, in the literal destruction of the effeminate emperors, their profligate legions, and idolatrous subjects—by the irruption of those northern nations that now occupy their fields, their cities, and adopt their name. *C.*

Ver. 19. Surely none but Christ ever entered by the gates of *righteousness,* presenting himself 'without spot' before God. Others follow, only because washed by his blood, and accepted in him. *C.*

REFLECTIONS.—Animated are the saints' praises to their God, when the mercy that is in his nature and relation to all is clearly discerned; the mercies he hath granted are kindly reviewed; and the mercies he hath in store and in promise are firmly believed! No wonder that such invite all around them to sing of his everlasting mercy and grace! No wonder they pour contempt on all created confidences, and disregard all opposition from earth and hell! No wonder they ascribe the glory of all to God; that they ask all from God; that they gratefully dedicate themselves, and all that they have, to his service; and exert all their powers to exalt his honour and spread his renown!—But chiefly let us here behold Jesus and his sure mercies.—He was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death. Terrible was his distress, innumerable his conflicts with the enemies of our salvation! But, trusting in God, complete was his victory, and glorious his deliverance! Solemn was his ascen-

15 The[r] voice of rejoicing and salvation *is* in the tabernacles of the righteous: [s]the right hand of the LORD doeth valiantly.

16 The right hand of the LORD is exalted; the right hand of the LORD doeth valiantly.

17 I[t] shall not die, but live, and declare the works of the LORD.

18 The[u] LORD hath chastened me sore; but he hath not given me over unto death.[7]

19 Open[v] to me the gates of righteousness: I will go into them, *and* I will praise the LORD:

20 This gate of the LORD, [w]into which the righteous shall enter.

21 I [x]will praise thee; for thou hast heard me, and art become my salvation.

22 The[z] stone *which* the builders refused is become the head-*stone* of the corner.[8]

23 This is the LORD's doing:[9] it [a]*is* marvellous in our eyes.

24 This[b] *is* the day *which* the LORD hath made; we will rejoice and be glad in it.

25 Save[c] now, I beseech thee, O LORD: O LORD, I beseech thee, send now prosperity.

26 Blessed *be* he that cometh in the name of the LORD: [d]we have blessed[1] you out of the house of the LORD.

27 God[e] *is* the LORD, which hath showed us light: [f]bind the sacrifice with cords, *even* unto the horns of the altar.

28 Thou[h] *art* my God, and I will praise thee: *thou art* my God, I will exalt thee.

29 O[i] give thanks unto the LORD; for *he is* good: for his mercy *endureth* for ever.

PSALM CXIX.

This psalm containeth sundry prayers, praises, and professions of obedience.

[For analysis of this psalm see comment at foot of page.]

ALEPH.

BLESSED *are* [a]the undefiled[1] in the way, who walk in the law of the LORD.

2 Blessed *are* they that [b]keep his testimonies, *and that* [c]seek him with the whole heart.

3 They[d] also do no iniquity: they walk in his ways.

A.M. cir. 2957.
B.C. cir. 1047.

r Ps.32.11;33.1. Re.iv.v.;7.9,12;18.20;19.1-7;15.2-4;14.2,3.

s Ps 60.12; 108 13; 118; 145.4-6;89.13;74 11, 12; 44.3. Is.51.9,10;52 9,10.

t Hab.1.12. Mi. 7.8-10. Ps.39.13;73.28. Job 33.16-31. 1 Co.10. 13. 2 Co.1.9,10. He.12.6-11.

u 2 Co.6.9.

7 This is in perfect accordance with Ps. 16. 10, compared with Ac. 2. 31, and sufficiently demonstrates that the speaker is Christ.—*C.*

v Is.26.2. Ps. 24. 7,9; 26. 6-8; 43. 4; 66. 13-15; 116.17,18.

w Is.26.2. Ps. 24. 3,4. Re.21.27;22.14,15.

x Ex.xv. Ju.v.1 Sa.2. 1-10. 2 Sa.xxii. Ps.9.1, 14;103.1-5.

z Mat. 21. 42. Mar. 12.10. Col.1.18. Lu.20. 17. Ac.4.11. Ep.2.20;1. 20-23.1 Pe.2.4,7.

8 In the great buildings erected by Phœnician and Jewish architects, the corner-stones were of colossal magnitude, and were squared and hewn with great care and precision. Noble specimens of corner-stones may still be seen at the angles of the massive wall of the temple inclosure in Jerusalem. The 'head-stone' signifies not the *top*-stone, but the chief stone. We would now term it the foundation stone.—*P.*

9 Heb. *this is from the LORD*

a Job 5.9. Ps.72.18.

b Is.49.8;63.4. Zec.3. 9;14.7. 1 Co.15. 3,4. 2 Co. 6.2.

c Mat. 21, 9; 23. 39. Mar. 11. 9. Lu. 19. 38. Jn.12.13. 1 Ti.1.17. Re. 7.10,12.

d Nu.6.23-26. De.10. 8. 1 Ch.16.2. Ps.134.3.

1 *We have blessed.* That is, the believing multitude who received Christ, calling him *blessed*, and the children shouting Hosanna in the very temple! Mat.21.9-15.—*C.*

e Es. 8. 16. 1 Pe. 2. 9. Jn.3.16, with 8.12. 2 Co. 4.6.

f Ps.51. 18, 19. 1 Ch. 16. 1; 29. 21. 1 Ki. 8. 63, 64. He. 13. 12-16.

h Ex.15.2. Ps.18.1-3; 145.1; 146.1,2; 147.1,12; 149.2. Is.12.2;25.1.

i ver. 1. Is. 63. 7. Ps. 36.7;31.19;86.5,15;89.1, 2;103.17;140.5.

PSALM CXIX.
B.C. cir. 1015.

a Ps.1.1,3;112.1;128. 1. Jn. 1. 47. Ac.24.16. 2 Co.1.12. Tit.2.11,12.

1 Or, *perfect* or *sincere.*

b ver.3-11,112,115.

c Pr.23.26. 1 Jn. 3.20. ver. 10. De.4.29. Je.29. 13.

d 1 Jn.3.9;5.18. Ro.7. 16,17.

A.M. cir. 2989.
B.C. cir. 1015.

e De.4.9; 6. 5, 17; 11. 13,22,32;12.32;30.16.

g 2 Co.3.5. Ro.7.24,2 Th.3.5. Je.10.23. Ps.37. 23. Pr.3.6. Ezc.36.27.

h ver.80. 1 Jn.2.28;4. 17. Da.12.2,3. Lu. 1. 6. Ac.24.16. Tit.2.12.

2 All orders impulsive or prohibitory.—*C.*

i ver.171. Ps.9.11;25. 21. 2 Co. 1. 12. Je. 7.23; 19.5.

3 Heb. *judgments of thy righteousness.*

4 The decisions of God, for good or evil, concerning individuals, nations, or churches.—*C.*

j Zec.10.12. Is.45.24. Phi.4.13. Job 34. 31,32. ver.106,166.

k Pr. 1. 4. Ec. 11. 9. Lu. 15. 13. ver. 11. Ps. 37.31. Jn.15.3;17.17. Is. 8.20. Ro.15.16. 2 Ti. 3. 15-17.

5 Those who neglect the word, depending upon the spirit; and those who forget the spirit, depending upon the letter, are here alike instructed and reproved. The word is the instrument, the spirit is the power, as is clear from the prayer, ver. 12, 'Teach me thy statutes.'—*C.*

l 2 Ch.15.ver.2,34, 58,69,5.8.

n ver. 176. Ps.141.3. Mat.6.13. Is.63.17.

o Ps. 1. 2; 37. 31. Ex. 25. 21. Jos. 1. 8. Job 22. 22. Pr.2.1,10. Col.3.16. He.4. 2. ver. 97, 72, 15. Tit.2.12.2 Co.7.1.

p ver.26,27,33,64,68, 108,124,135. Ps. 25.4,5; 27.11; 86.11.

q Ps.34.11; 22.22; 40. 9,10.

r ver. 30,72,162.

s ver. 6, 8, 14, 23, 48, 97. Ps.1.2. Je.6.16.

t ver.24,47,77,92. Ps. 1.2;40.8. Ro.7.22.

u ver. 11, 83, 93, 109, 141, 157, 176.

v Ps.13.6;116.7. Phi. 4.13,19. Jn.1.16.

6 Heb. *reveal*, Ep. 1.17,18.

y 1 Co. 2. 11, 14, ver. 27. Mat. 13. 11. 1 Ti. 3. 16.

z Ge. 47. 9. 1 Ch. 29. 15. Ps. 39. 12. Mat. 11. 25. 2 Co. 5. 6. He. 11. 13. 1 Pe. 2. 11.

a ver.40, 131. Ps. 42. 1; 63. 1. Pr. 13. 12.

b 1 Pe. 5. 5. Job 40. 11, 12. ver. 69, 78, 85, 122. Ps. 10. 2; 40. 4. Ex. 18. 11. Mal. 3. 15; 4. 1. Ne. 9. 16, 29. Je. 13. 15, 17.

c Ps. 39. 8; 123. 3, 4; 22. 6; 69. 9-11, 19, 20. Je. 20. 8. 1 Pe. 4. 3, 4.

d Ps. 2. 1, 2. Eze. 33. 30. 1 Sa. 29. 4.

7 As a psalm of devotional instruction, the first part of ver. 22 would be totally without meaning on the lips of many; and the first of ver. 23 almost on the lips of all. As memorials of the trials of our Lord, they are true, and sweet on the lips, and dear to the hearts of all his people.—*C.*

4 Thou[e] hast commanded *us* to keep thy precepts diligently.

5 Oh[g] that my ways were directed to keep thy statutes!

6 Then [h]shall I not be ashamed, when I have respect unto all thy commandments.[2]

7 I [i]will praise thee with uprightness of heart, when I shall have learned [3]thy righteous judgments.[4]

8 I[j] will keep thy statutes: O forsake me not utterly.

BETH.

9 Wherewithal[k] shall a young man cleanse his way? by taking heed *thereto* according to thy word.[5]

10 With[l] my whole heart have I sought thee: [m]O let me not wander from thy commandments.

11 Thy[o] word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee.

12 Blessed *art* thou, O LORD: [p]teach me thy statutes.

13 With[q] my lips have I declared all the judgments of thy mouth.

14 I[r] have rejoiced in the way of thy testimonies, as *much as* in all riches.

15 I[s] will meditate in thy precepts, and have respect unto thy ways.

16 I[t] will delight myself in thy statutes: [u]I will not forget thy word.

GIMEL.

17 Deal[v] bountifully with thy servant, *that* I may live, and keep thy word.

18 Open[6] thou mine eyes, that I may behold [y]wondrous things out of thy law.

19 I [z]*am* a stranger in the earth: hide not thy commandments from me.

20 My[a] soul breaketh for the longing *that it hath* unto thy judgments at all times.

21 Thou hast rebuked the [b]proud *that are* cursed, which do err from thy commandments.

22 Remove from me [c]reproach and contempt; for I have kept thy testimonies.

23 Princes[d] also did sit *and* speak against me: *but* thy servant did meditate in thy [7]statutes.

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sion into heaven. And, crowned with glory and honour, invested with all power in heaven and on earth, and furnished with all gifts, all blessings, for men, he reigns upon his throne above. Encouraged by these views, let us welcome him into our hearts, families, and churches, and devote ourselves to his service. And believingly claiming him and his Father as our God, our all in all, let us ever exult in his praise.

PSALM CXIX. As in the works of God 'one star differeth from another star in glory,' it is not surprising if, in the Word of God, one portion is found to surpass another in the preciousness of its sacred contents. All parts of Scripture are alike true; yet are there various ways in which one portion may surpass another. Some parts surpass others because they concentrate truths of deeper interest; point the finger of their light towards fairer objects; stir up the weary spirit to higher aspirations; and minister to the sick soul the air and the sun of a brighter climate—and all this because they contain more than other portions do of the person, the humiliation, the sorrows, the fervent prayers, the strong cries, the flowing tears, and earnest supplications—and more of the death, the sacrifice, the resurrection, the righteousness, the intercession, and glory of Jesus!

Of Ps. cxix. all this is specially true; other psalms shine as suns in the firmament; this is a constellation of suns—a galaxy of divine light and glory—Jesus its 'all and in all.' That this may appear, the attention of the unprejudiced and godly reader is humbly solicited to the following facts: (1) One speaker, whoever he be, speaks of himself throughout the whole psalm. (2) The following is the speaker's character, drawn by himself, under the sure guidance of the Spirit of God: 'With my whole heart have I sought thee, ver. 10.—Thy word have I hid in my heart, that I might not sin against thee, 11.—With my lips have I declared all the judgments of thy mouth, 13.—I will not forget thy word, 16.—My soul breaketh for the longing that it hath unto thy judgments at all times, 20.—I have kept thy testimonies, 22.—Teach me, O Lord, the way of thy statutes, and I shall keep it unto the end, 33.—I shall keep thy law; I shall observe it with my whole heart, 34.—I shall keep thy law continually, for ever and ever, 44.—I have not declined from thy law, 51.—I have kept thy law, 55.—I kept thy precepts, 56.—I will keep thy precepts with my whole heart, 69.—I forsook not; I will never forget thy precepts, 87, 88.—Thou, through thy commandments, hast made me wiser than all mine enemies: for they (the commandments) are ever with me, 98.—I understand more than the ancients, because I keep thy precepts, 100.—I have refrained my feet from every evil way, 101.—I have not departed from thy judgments, 102.—I have sworn, and I will perform it, that I will keep thy righteous judgments, 106.—I do not forget thy law; I erred not from thy precepts; I have inclined my heart to perform thy statutes always, 109-112.—I will keep the commandments of my God, 115.—I will have respect unto thy statutes continually, 117.—I have done judgment and justice, 124.—Thy testimonies are wonderful, therefore doth my soul keep them, 129.—My zeal hath consumed me, 139.—I cried with my whole heart; hear me, O Lord, I will keep thy statutes, 145.—I do not decline from thy testimonies, 157.—I have hoped for thy salvation, and done thy commandments; I have kept thy precepts and thy testimonies, for all my ways are before thee, 166-168.—I have chosen thy precepts; I do not forget thy commandments,' 173-176.

Now, that David never imagined such a character for himself is historically unquestionable. The finger of the Spirit of truth ever pointing to his sin renders the supposition impossible. Would Paul have mistaken the portrait for his own? When he dipped his pencil in colours of truth and light, he produced a portrait of himself, inscribed as 'the chief of sinners.' Who then is this? Say, is not this Jesus, the chiefest among ten thousand, and altogether lovely? Yes, this is unquestionably the guileless, the spotless Lamb, who magnified the law and made it honourable; who knew no sin, yet was made sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.

In face of this inevitable conclusion, three difficulties present themselves: (1) In ver. 67 the speaker admits, 'Before I was afflicted, I went astray;' and does not this seem to imply an acknowledgment of personal error and sin? Not so, the difficulty arises from the translation. The word here translated 'went astray,' signifies *to wander*, either naturally or morally. Thus it is translated in a natural and not a moral sense, Ge. 21. 14; 37. 15. Now, if the natural sense explain the passage, and if the moral sense of *wandering* be utterly inconsistent with the as-

24 Thy[e] testimonies also *are* my delight, *and* my counsellors.[8]

DALETH.

25 My[g] soul cleaveth unto the [9]dust: [h]quicken thou me according to thy word.

26 I[i] have declared my ways,[1] and thou heardest me; [j]teach me thy statutes.

27 Make me to understand the way of thy precepts: [k]so shall I talk f thy wondrous works.

28 My soul melteth[2] for heaviness: [l]strengthen thou me according unto thy word.

29 Remove[m] from me the way of lying;[3] and grant[o] me thy law graciously.

30 I[p] have chosen the way of truth: thy judgments have I [q]laid *before me*.

31 I[r] have stuck unto thy testimonies: O LORD, [s]put me not to shame.

32 I[t] will run the way of thy commandments, when thou shalt enlarge[4] my heart.

HE.

33 Teach[u] me, O LORD, the way of thy statutes; and [v]I shall keep it *unto* the end.

34 Give[x] me understanding, and I shall keep thy law; yea, I shall observe it [y]with *my* whole heart.

35 Make[z] me to go in the path of thy commandments; for therein do I delight.

36 Incline[a] my heart unto thy testimonies, and[b] not to covetousness.

37 Turn away[5] mine eyes [c]from beholding vanity; *and* [d]quicken thou me in thy way.[6]

38 Stablish[e] thy word unto thy servant, who *is devoted* to thy fear.

39 Turn[g] away my reproach which I fear: for thy judgments *are* good.

40 Behold, [h]I have longed after thy precepts: [i]quicken me in thy righteousness.

VAU.

41 Let[j] thy mercies come also unto me, O LORD, *even* thy salvation,[7] according to thy word.

42 So shall I have wherewith to answer him that reproacheth me:[8] for I trust in thy word.[9]

43 And[k] take not the word of truth utterly out of my mouth: for [l]I have hoped in thy judgments.

44 So[n] shall I keep thy law continually for ever and ever.[1]

45 And I will walk at liberty:[2] for I seek thy precepts.

A.M. cir. 2989. B.C. cir. 1015.

e See ver.16,77,92.

8 Heb. *men of my counsel*. De. 17. 19. Jos.1.8.Pr.6.22,2317. 1-4.

g Ps.22.15;44.25.

9 My soul clings to the body, benumbed by its torpidity, overwhelmed by its sorrows, sinking beneath its burden, borne down by that brotherhood of sin and death into which I have entered.—*C.*

h ver.37.40.50, 88,3. 107, 149, 154, 156, 159. Ps.71.20;80.18;85.6.

i Ps.32.5; 38.18. ver. 106.

1 That is, I have fully explained my doubts, fears, troubles, and plans. I have laid bare to thee my whole soul and conduct; and now I cast myself wholly and unreservedly upon thy care and mercy.—*P.*

j Ps. 25. 4; 27. 11; 86. 11. ver. 12, 33, 34.

k ver. 18. Ps. 145. 5; 105.2.

2 Heb. *droppeth*, Ps.22.14;107.26.

l Is.40.29,31. Zec.10. 12. Ep.3.16. Phi.4.13.

m Pr.30.8. Ps. 141. 3, 4.

3 Not as if he had fallen into this sin (see ver. 30), but he prays to have liars removed from his companionship and counsels.—*C.*

o He.8.10. Ps.37.31.

p ver.173. 1 Ki.8.36. 1 Pe.2.2.

q De.17.19.ver.6-8.

r 2 Ti.1.13. Pr.23.23.

s Is. 49. 23. Ps. 25. 2; 123.3,4.

t Ca.4.16; 1.4. Ps. 51. 12; 116.16. 2 Co.5.14,15; 6.11. Is. 60. 5. Lu.1.74, 75. 1 Jn.4.19.

4 The great command of the Father to the Son was to 'lay down his life, and take it up again, Jn.10.17,18. To meet this commandment his heart was *enlarged*, exhilarated by the 'joy set before him,' He. 12. 2.—*C.*

u ver.12,26,27, &c.

v ver. 8. Re. 2. 26. Mat. 24. 13; 10. 22. Job 17.9. Is.3.10. Ps.19.10.

x Pr. 2. 6. ver. 12, 33, 64,68, &c. De.4.6.

y ver. 10, 58, 69. Je. 29.13. 1 Ti.1.5. Ep.6.6, 7.

z Ca.1.4. Eze.36.27.

a Eze.33.31.ver.112; Ps.141.4.

b 1 Ti. 6. 9, 10. Mat. 13.22. Lu.12.15; 16. 14; 21.34. Ex.18.21. He.13. 5.

5 Heb. *make to pass*.

c Nu.15.39. Is.33.15. 2 Sa.11.2. Job 31.1. Pr. 4.25; 23.5. Mat.5.28; 6. 13. 1 Jn.2.16.

d See ver.25.

6 That is, from viewing the world, which Solomon, by the Spirit, pronounces 'all vanity'—idols of the eye, of the flesh, or of pride, 1 Jn.2.15-17.—*C.*

e 2 Sa.7.25. 2Co.1.20. Ge.17.7.

g ver.22,31; Ps. 57.3; 31.18,20.

7 *Salvation* implies the cure of a disease, either bodily or mental; and deliverance from enemies, temporal or spiritual.—*C.*

8 Or, *So shall I answer him that reproacheth me in a thing*, Ps.3.2; 42. 10. 2 Sa.6.21.

9 Christ, apparently forsaken on the cross, was *reproached* with his declared faith in his Father, Mat. 27. 39-43. His resurrection was the irresistible answer to all this reproach, and the undeniable evidence of his Father's love.—*C.*

1 This verse contains a resolution so broad, so unreserved, and so unlimited, that surely it is impossible to read it without acknowledging that the speaker must be the Christ.—*C.*

o Ps. 138. 1. Mat. 10. 18, 19, 26. Da. 3. 16, 25. Ac.26.1,2.

p See ver. 16, 24, 50, 72, 92, 97, 103, 111, 127, 128, 165, 166.

q Mat.7.21. Jn.13.17; 15.14. Ja.1.22,25. 1 Co. 15.58.

r See ver. 15. Ps.1.2.

s Ps. 105.8,42; 106.45. 2 Sa.7.25.

t 1 Pe. 1. 13, 21. See ver.43: Ps.lxii.7;1.14.

u ver.143. Je. 15. 16. Job 23.12 Ro.15.4.

v See ver. 25, Jn. 6. 63; 5.25. Eze. 37.10.

x ver. 27; Ps.69.11,12; 123.3,4.

y Job 23.11. Is. 58.3. ver.31, 48. De. 4. 2; 12. 32.

z Ps.77.5, 11,12; 143. 5; 105.5.

a ver. 120, 136, 158. Ezr.9.3; 10.6. Is. 24.16. Je. 13. 17. Da. 4. 19. Hab. 3. 16. 2 Pe. 2. 8. Mar.3.5. Lu. 19. 41, 42. 2 Co. 12. 21. Phi. 3. 18. He.10.26-29.

3 This word occurs three times in Scripture, Ps.11.6, and La. 5.10. The idea seems to be that of a *scorching tornado*, and here shadows out that indescribable mental agony with which our Lord contemplated sin and death.—*C.*

b Ps.42.8; 89.1; 101.1. Ep.5.19.

c Ps. 69. 6; 77. 6; 139. 17, 18. Is.26.8,9.

d ver. 54, 55, 165. Is. 64.5. Ps.138.5.

e Je. 10. 16. Ps. 16. 5; 73.26; 142.5. La.3.24.

4 The true test of the spirit of man lies not in its knowledge, but in its tastes, choices, and habits; the portion, the share, the endowment, which it selects out of the world. The choice of the true believer is the Lord alone.—*C.*

g Job 11.19. Ps.27.8; 51. 1; ver. 10, 41, 134. 2 Sa.7.25. He.10.22.

5 Heb. *face*.

h Lu.15.17,18. La.3. 40,41. Joel 2.13.

6 Not because he had ever forsaken the *testimonies* of the Father (see ver. 23, 24, 31), but he thinks on his ways, and every new discovery of its difficulties and dangers leads him to a corresponding adoption of the light of the divine *testimonies* by which the Spirit guides the children of God.—*C.*

i Pr. 27. 1. Ec. 9.10. Ga.1.16. Ac. 2. 41; 16. 33.

j Ps.3.1;118.19;18.4. 1 Sa.30.3,5. 2 Sa.16.22. Ho.6.9.

7 Or, *companies*.

k Ac. 16. 25. ver. 7, 164; Ps.71.8.

l Ps.19.9. Pr.8.20, or Ex.12.29;14.20,21.

n Pr. 13. 20. ver. 79; Ps.16.3;142.7;122.8.

o Ps.33.5;145.9.

p ver.12,26,27,33, 68, 108,124,135; Ps. 25.4,5; 27.11;86.11.

q Ps.13.6;103.1-5;40. 1-5; 18. 32-48; 23. 1-6; 116.7.

r Je.3.15. See ver.12. Is.48.17. Mat.13. 11. 2 Ti.3.15-17.

s De.32.15. Pr. 1. 32. Je.22.21. Ps.30.6.

t ver.71,75. Je.31.18, 19. He.12.6-11. Ho.2.7.

u Mat. 19. 17; 5. 48. Ex.34.6,7. Ps. 145. 7-9; ver.67,71.

v Ps.25.8, 9; ver. 12, &c.

x See ver.21: Ps.109. 2,3; 35. 11; 64.3; 56. 5.

46 I[o] will speak of thy testimonies also before kings, and will not be ashamed.

47 And[p] I will delight myself in thy commandments, which I have loved.

48 My [q]hands also will I lift up unto thy commandments, which I have loved; [r]and I will meditate in thy statutes.

ZAIN.

49 Remember[s] the word unto thy servant, [t]upon which thou hast caused me to hope.

50 This[u] *is* my comfort in my affliction: [v]for thy word hath quickened me.

51 The[x] proud have had me greatly in derision; [y]*yet* have I not declined from thy law.

52 I[z] remembered thy judgments of old, O LORD, and have comforted myself.

53 [a]Horror[3] hath taken hold upon me because of the wicked that forsake thy law.

54 Thy[b] statutes have been my songs in the house of my pilgrimage.

55 I[c] have remembered thy name, O LORD, in the night, and have kept thy law.

56 This[d] I had, because I kept thy precepts.

CHETH.

57 *Thou*[e] *art* my portion,[4] O LORD: I have said that I would keep thy words.

58 I[g] entreated thy favour[5] with *my* whole heart: be merciful unto me according to thy word.

59 I[h] thought on my ways, and turned my feet unto thy testimonies.[6]

60 I[i] made haste, and delayed not to keep thy commandments.

61 The[j] bands[7] of the wicked have robbed me: *but* I have not forgotten thy law.

62 At[k] midnight I will rise to give thanks unto thee because of thy [l]righteous judgments.

63 I[n] *am* a companion of all *them* that fear thee, and of them that keep thy precepts.

64 The[o] earth, O LORD, is full of thy mercy: [p]teach me thy statutes.

TETH.

65 Thou[q] hast dealt well with thy servant, O LORD, according unto thy word.

66 Teach[r] me good judgment and knowledge: for I have believed thy commandments.

67 Before[s] I was afflicted I went astray: [t]but now have I kept thy word.

68 Thou[u] *art* good, and doest good: [v]teach me thy statutes.

69 The[x] proud have forged a lie against me:

A.M. cir. 2989. B.C. cir. 1015.

h See ver.20,30. He.13.18.

i Jn.10.10.ver.25,88,107,149,156,159. Ro.4.17.1 Co.15.45.

j Ps.106.4;69.13,16;ver.76,132.1 Pe.1.13.

k Is.59.21. Da.10.21. Ep.1.13. Ja.1.18.

l ver.49,74,81,147; Ps.130.5. Jn.13.15, Jn.8.32,36. 2 Co.3.17. ver.96,135. Ga.5.1,13.

n ver.43,166,23.

2 Heb. *at large*, Ps.1.4.

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serted character of the speaker—a character, be it remembered, every word of which has passed the testing fire of the Holy Spirit, then surely there can be no doubt, that in the natural, and not in the moral sense, the word *wandered* is here to be taken. (2) A second obstruction to the acknowledgment of Jesus in this psalm, arises from the frequent prayers of the speaker for *teaching* and guidance. But this obstruction arises merely from allowing the brilliancy of the Son's Godhead to dazzle and confuse the eyes in contemplating his manhood. Christ was truly God, Jn. x. 1. 24; he was as truly man, made in all things like unto his brethren, yet without sin. Now, in this humbled condition he appeared not in 'the form of God,' but 'the form of a servant.' And hence, 'though he were a Son, yet (being in servant form) learned he obedience by the things that he suffered,' He. 5. 8. And, as the teaching Spirit descends to us only by the prayer of Christ to the Father, Jn. 14. 16, so we behold our Lord, in the days of his flesh, call upon the Father for the same heavenly instruction. (3) The third obstruction to the acknowledgment of Jesus in this psalm is found in ver. 176, 'I have gone astray like a lost sheep.' This obstruction, however, is but another mistranslation. The word here translated 'gone astray,' is not the same that occurs in ver. 67. The word here used signifies to *pant*, and is so translated, Is. 21. 4. A more correct rendering is unquestionably as follows:—'I have *panted* as a sheep *perishing*,' and this is in perfect keeping with the life, toils, and condition of our Lord in the sorrowful days of his flesh. *C.*

This is the most perfect specimen of an acrostic or alphabetical psalm in the whole book. Its peculiarity lies in this, that each letter of the Hebrew alphabet in regular succession begins eight consecutive verses. Though it might be thought that such a

but I will keep thy precepts [v]with *my* whole heart.

70 Their[w] heart is as fat as grease: *but* [a]I delight in thy law.

71 *It*[b] *is* good for me that I have been afflicted, that I might learn thy statutes.

72 The[c] law of thy mouth *is* better unto me than thousands of gold and silver.

JOD.

73 Thy[d] hands have made me, and fashioned me:[8] give[e] me understanding, that I may learn thy commandments.

74 They[g] that fear thee [h]will be glad when they see me; because I have hoped in thy word.

75 I[i] know, O LORD, that thy judgments *are* right,[9] and *that* thou [j]in faithfulness hast afflicted me.[1]

76 Let, [k]I pray thee, thy merciful kindness be for my comfort,[2] according to thy word unto thy servant.

77 Let[l] thy tender mercies come unto me, that I may live: for [m]thy law *is* my delight.

78 Let[o] the proud be ashamed; for they dealt perversely with me without a cause:[3] *but* I[p] will meditate in thy precepts.

79 Let[q] those that fear thee turn unto me,[4] and those that have known thy testimonies.

80 Let[r] my heart be sound in thy statutes, that[s] I be not ashamed.

CAPH.

81 My[t] soul fainteth for thy salvation: *but* I hope in thy word.

82 Mine[u] eyes fail for thy word, saying, When wilt thou comfort me?

83 For[v] I am become like a bottle in the smoke; *yet* do [z]I not forget thy statutes.

84 How[y] many *are* the days of thy servant? when wilt thou execute judgment on them that persecute me?

85 The[z] proud have digged pits[5] for me, which *are* not after thy law.

86 All[a] thy commandments *are* faithful:[6] they[b] persecute me wrongfully; [c]help thou me.

87 They[d] had almost consumed me upon earth: but [e]I forsook not thy precepts.

88 Quicken[g] me after thy loving-kindness; so shall I keep the testimony of thy mouth.

A.M. cir. 2989.
B.C. cir. 1015.

y ver. 10, 34, 58, 69. Mat. 22. 37. De. 6. 5.
z Ps. 17. 10. Is. 6. 10. Ac. 28. 27.
a ver. 16, 47.
b ver. 67, 75. He. 12. 10, 11. Is. 27. 9.
c Ps. 19. 10. Pr. 8. 10, 11, 19; 3. 14; 16. 23. ver. 14, 111, 127, 140, 160, 162.
d Job 10. 8. Ps. 100. 3; 139. 15, 16. Is. 64. 8.
8 Equivalent to (He. 10. 5) 'a body hast thou prepared me;' and in this body Christ prays for his Father's Spirit that (He. 5. 8) he may *learn* his great commandment of laying down 'his life for the sheep,' Jn. 10. 11-18. —*C.*
e See ver. 12, 34, 144. Ep. 1. 17, 18. Mat. 13. 11. Is. 48. 17. 1 Co. 2. 10, 12. Ps. 111. 10.
g ver. 79. Mal. 3. 16. Ps. 34. 2; 89. 7.
h Ps. 34. 2; 142. 7.
i De. 32. 4. Job 34. 23. Is. 5. 8. Je. 30. 11. 1 Co. 10. 13.
9 Heb. *righteousness.*
j Re. 3. 19. Ps. 25. 10.
1 So rejoiced the church of old when saints saw his day afar off: so when they saw himself in the flesh, Lu. 2. 30-32; but louder will be the song of joy when they shall see him 'come the second time without sin unto salvation.'—*C.*
k See ver. 41; Ps. 106. 4; 103. 3-5.
2 Heb. *to comfort me.*
l ver. 76; Ps. 86. 5, 15. Is. 63. 7.
m ver. 16, 24, 47, 92, 143, 174; Ps. 1. 2; 40. 8. Ro. 7. 22.
o ver. 21, 23, 86, 51, 161; Ps. 25. 3; 35. 7, 9; 69. 4; 109. 3. Job 40. 11. 1 Pe. 2. 20.
3 See the parallel of this passage (Jn. 15. 25), and surely none other than Christ was ever persecuted altogether 'without a cause.'—*C.*
p See ver. 15; Ps. 1. 2.
q See ver. 73, 74, 63; Ps. 142. 7; 16. 3; 66. 16.
4 Turn unto *me*, the Son — the only way unto the Father, Jn. 14. 6.—*C.*
r De. 26. 16. Eze. 11. 19. Jn. 1. 47. Ps. 25. 21. 2 Co. 1. 12. Ac. 24. 16.
s See ver. 6.
t Ps. 42. 1; 73. 26; 84. 2. Job 35. 14.
u ver. 123; Ps. 69. 3; 77. 8. Is. 38. 14. De. 28. 32.
v Job 30. 30. Ps. 102. 3, 4; 22. 15; 32. 4. Jos. 9. 13. Mat. 9. 17.
x See ver. 16.
y Ps. 89. 47; 37. 13; 39. 4. 2 Th. 1. 6. Re. 6. 10, 11.
z See ver. 21, 23, 51, 78; Ps. 35. 7. Pr. 16. 27.
5 The Pharisees, Sadducees, lawyers, and Herodians were constantly employed in endeavours to entangle our Lord in his words, or discover him in some act that might expose him to accusation. Mat. 12. 10; 22. 15.—*C.*
a ver. 43, 138, 142, 151, 160; Ps. 19. 9. Ro. 7. 12.
6 Heb. *of faithfulness.*
b See ver. 78.
c Ps. 40. 16, 17; 143. 7; 140. 7; 142. 6, 7.
d Mat. 10. 28.
e ver. 11, 31, 44, 48, 51, 61, 173.
g ver. 25, 40, 50, 32. 2 Co. 5. 14, 15. 1 Jn. 4. 19. Ep. 5. 1, 2.

A.M. cir. 2989.
B.C. cir. 1015.

h ver. 152, 160. 1 Pe. 1. 25. Mat. 5. 18; 24. 34, 35.
7 Therefore far above all human attempts to contradict, resist, or annul. As easily may puny man disarrange the planetary system as evade one threatening of divine justice, or make void one jot of God's gracious promises.—*C.*
i Ps. 100. 5; 89. 1, 2, 33. La. 3. 23.
8 Heb. *to generation and generation.*
9 Heb. *standeth*, Ps. 24. 2; 104. 5. Ec. 1. 4.
j Je. 33. 25. Ps. 148. 6, 8; 135. 6. Is. 48. 13. Jos. 10. 13. Ju. 5. 20. Mat. 8. 9.
1 The meaning is, that at creation God established those great natural laws by which the physical universe is governed. These laws were the products of the divine will, and they are sustained in operation by the direct exercise of divine power. They are *the servants* of God, acting in obedience to his commands, and subject to be regulated and changed at his pleasure. Law is not above God; on the contrary, God is the author of all law, as well that which regulates the physical, as that which regulates the moral world.—*P.*
k Ro. 15. 4. ver. 76, 47, 49, 50, 77, 143; Ps. 27. 13; 14; 94. 18, 19, 107. 20.
l See ver. 16, 50. Jn. 6. 63.
n Zep. 3. 17. Ca. 2. 16. Ho. 2. 7, 16. Is. 44. 5; 64. 8 -10. 1 Pe. 4. 19.
o ver. 23, 61, 69, 78, 85, 86. Ps. 10. 8-10. Ac. 12. 11; 23. 20.
p Ps. 1. 2; ver. 49, 52, 54.
q Is. 40. 8. Ec. 1. 2, 14. 1 Pe. 4. 7.
r Mat. 22. 37-39; 5. 18; 24. 35.
s ver. 16, 127, 159, 163, 167.
t See ver. 15; Ps. 1. 2; 139. 17, 18. De. 6. 6, 7.
u De. 4. 6. 1 Sa. 18. 30. Is. 48. 17. 2 Ti. 3. 15-17.
2 For proof of this great truth we only require to look over the nations of the world. What are those which have made most progress, which possess greatest wealth, which enjoy greatest prosperity, whose people are freest and happiest? Are they not those in which God's law is best known, and most extensively observed?—*P.*
3 Heb. *it is ever with me*, ver. 97; Ps. 1. 2.
v De. 4. 6, 8. Mat. 11. 25; 13. 11. Ac. 23. 1 Co. 2. 10-16. 2 Ti. 3. 15.
x Job 32. 7-9; 28. 28. Ps. 111. 10. Pr. 1. 7.
y Pr. 1. 15. ver. 104, 128, 59, 60. 2 Co. 7. 1. 1 Pe. 2. 1, 2.
z See ver. 5, 7, 11, 34, 73.
a Job 23. 12. Ps. 19. 10. Pr. 8. 11. Je. 15. 16.
4 Heb. *palate.*
b ver. 98-102. 2 Ti. 3. 15, 17.
c ver. 128; Ps. 97. 10; 101. 3. Pr. 8. 13.
d Pr. 6. 23. 2 Pe. 1. 19. Ps. 43. 3; 19. 8; 23. 4. Ep. 5. 13.
5 Or, *candle.*

LAMED.

89 For[h] ever, O LORD, thy word is settled in heaven.[7]

90 Thy[i] faithfulness *is* unto all [8]generations: thou hast established the earth, and it [9]abideth.

91 They[j] continue this day according to thine ordinances: for all *are* thy servants.[1]

92 Unless[k] thy law *had been* my delights, I should then have perished in mine affliction.

93 I[l] will never forget thy precepts: for with them thou hast quickened me.

94 I[n] *am* thine, save me: for I have sought thy precepts.

95 The[o] wicked have waited for me to destroy me: *but* [p]I will consider thy testimonies.

96 I[q] have seen an end of all perfection: *but* [r]thy commandment *is* exceeding broad.

MEM.

97 O[s] how love I thy law! [t]it *is* my meditation all the day.

98 Thou, through thy commandments, [u]hast made me wiser than mine enemies;[2] for they *are* ever with me.[3]

99 I[v] have more understanding than all my teachers: for thy testimonies *are* my meditation.

100 I[x] understand more than the ancients, because I keep thy precepts.

101 I[y] have refrained my feet from every evil way, that I might keep thy word.

102 I[z] have not departed from thy judgments: for thou hast taught me.

103 How[a] sweet are thy words unto my taste![4] *yea, sweeter* than honey to my mouth!

104 Through[b] thy precepts I get understanding: therefore [c]I hate every false way.

NUN.

105 Thy[d] word *is* a lamp[5] unto my feet, and a light unto my path.

106 I[e] have sworn, and I will perform *it*, that I will keep thy righteous judgments.

107 I[g] am afflicted very much: quicken me, O LORD, according unto thy word.

108 Accept, I beseech thee, [h]the free-will offerings of my mouth, O LORD, and [i]teach me thy judgments.

e 2 Ch. 15. 13, 14. Ne. 10. 29. Is. 44. 5. 2 Co. 8. 5. Job 34. 31, 32. *g* Ps. vi. xiii. xxii. xxxi. xxxv. xxxviii. lxix. cii. cxliii. ver. 25. *h* Le. 22. 18. Nu. 29. 39. Ho. 14. 2. He. 13. 15. 1 Pe. 2. 5. *i* See ver. 12, 26, 130, 169.

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mode of construction would give a somewhat stiff and constrained formality to the whole poem; yet such is not the case. The genius of the Hebrew poet overcame all restraints, and produced a work, perfect in form, and yet free, beautiful, and inspiring. It has been well said by a recent writer,—'If we would fathom the depth of meaning in the written law of Israel, if we would measure the elevation of soul, the hope, the confidence, even before princes and kings, which pious Jews derived from it, we must turn to this psalm. Here is an epitome of all true religion as conceived by the best spirits of that time.' *P.*

Ver. 1. *Law.* From a root signifying *to teach.* It here signifies all divine instruction. *C.*

Ver. 2. *Testimonies.* From a root comprehending the idea of *futurity.* The witnessings of God concerning things to come. *C.*

Ver. 4. *Precepts.* From a word signifying *to visit, to inspect.* Those orders and institutions that continually remind the church of the *visitation* of her omnipresent Head. *C.*

Ver. 5. *Statutes.* From a root signifying *to engrave.* These significant divine institutions in which man is specially required neither to add nor diminish. *C.*

Ver. 13. Were there no other note of character in the whole psalm, this alone seems sufficient to identify the speaker as Christ. Who else ever declared *all* the judgments of God?—*Note, Law, testimonies, precepts, statutes, commandments, judgments*, having been explained in notes on ver. 1–7, will not again be noticed. *C.*

Ver. 18. Those *wondrous* things that lay in its holy constitution—unbending justice, awful penalties, and glorious end; its successful teachings, bringing souls to Christ; and its marvellous result, in entering, that sin might abound; but effecting, in divine wisdom, that grace did much more abound. *C.*

Ver. 33. That Christ, though a Son, learned obedience through the things that he suffered, is the testimony of the Holy Spirit, He. 5. 8. He accordingly prays for the teaching he requires, and thereon resolves, as none but he could resolve without self-ignorance and self-reliance, that he shall keep the statutes of his Father to the end; that is, to the full production of everlasting righteousness, Ro. 10. 4. *C.*

Ver. 49. Wishes, expectations, and even hopes may be generated and sustained without any solid foundation. Thus it is said, the hypocrite's hope shall perish, Job 8. 13; see also Pr. 11. 7. True Christian hope can rest upon no foundation but the revealed Word of God, the word of truth and of promise that can never mislead into error, or make ashamed by disappointment. *C.*

Ver. 67. *I went astray.* Whether these be taken as the words of Christ or of some of the prophets, they cannot be taken morally, for that would contradict ver. 22, 31, 51, 55, 56, 61. But these verses describe a character applicable to none but Christ. The translation, therefore, must be (see preface to this psalm), 'I wandered,' that is, as a stranger in a strange land, till by affliction, I *learned* the end and business of my incarnation, ver. 73, 'was made perfect,' He. 5. 8, as an example, 1 Pe. 2. 21, and as a High-priest and sacrifice, that my church might be saved, He. 8. 1–3; 9. 28. *C.*

Ver. 69. 'The word rendered *forged* means to patch together; and then it is applied to charges or accusations against any one, perhaps from their being made up (as they often are) of shreds and patches,—hints, small matters, things having no necessary connection in themselves, but brought together as if they pertained to the same transaction,—words dropped here and there in conversation, which, being artfully woven together, seem to make out a plausible case against a man. Most slanders are formed and sustained in this way; for it is rare that an absolutely forged slander is uttered against a man, or that a charge is brought which cannot be made to have plausibility from such circumstances as those referred to above' (*Barnes*). *P.*

109 My[j] soul *is* continually in my hand; yet[k] do I not forget thy law.

110 The[l] wicked have laid a snare for me; yet I erred not from thy precepts.

111 Thy[m] testimonies have I taken as an heritage for ever: °for they *are* the rejoicing of my heart.

112 I[p] have inclined mine heart to perform[6] thy statutes alway, [q]*even unto* the end.

SAMECH.

113 I[r] hate *vain* thoughts:[7] but[s] thy law do I love.

114 Thou[t] *art* my hiding-pläce[8] and my shield: I [u]hope in thy word.

115 Depart[v] from me, ye evil-doers: for I will keep the commandments of my God.

116 Uphold[x] me according unto thy word, that I may live: and let me not be [y]ashamed of my hope.

117 Hold[z] thou me up, and I shall be safe: and[a] I will have respect unto thy statutes continually.

118 Thou[b] hast trodden down all them that err from thy statutes: °for their deceit *is* falsehood.

119 Thou puttest away[9] all the wicked of the earth *like* dross: [d]therefore I love thy testimonies.

120 My[e] flesh trembleth for fear[1] of thee; and I am afraid of thy judgments.

AIN.

121 I[g] have done judgment and justice: [h]leave me not to mine oppressors.[2]

122 Be[i] surety for thy servant for good: let not the proud oppress me.

123 Mine[j] eyes fail for thy salvation, and for the word of thy righteousness.

124 Deal[k] with thy servant according unto thy mercy, and [l]teach me thy statutes.

125 I[n] *am* thy servant; °give me understanding, that I may know thy testimonies.

126 *It*[p] *is* time for *thee*, LORD, to work: *for* they have made void thy law.[3]

127 [q]Therefore[4] I love thy commandments above gold; yea, above fine gold.

128 Therefore[r] I esteem all *thy* precepts *concerning* all *things to be* right; *and* [s]I hate every false way.

PE.

129 Thy[t] testimonies *are* wonderful: therefore doth my soul keep them.[5]

A.M. cir. 2989.
B.C. cir. 1015.

j Ju.12.3, 1 Sa. 19. 5, Job 13. 14. Ro. 8. 36. 1 Co.15.31. 2 Co.11. 23.

k ver. 83, 106, 117, 153.

l Ps. 1.11, 12. ver. 85; Ps.140.5; 141.9; 35.7.

m ver. 2, 14, 72, 127, 162. De.33.4. Is.59.21.

o ver. 77, 92, 174. Je. 15.16.

p 2 Ch.19. 3. ver. 36, 59, 97; Ps.19.10.

6 Heb. *to do.*

q Re.2.10.

r Jc.4.14. ver.104.

7 *Vain thoughts.*—*Vain* is not in the Hebrew. The word may be better translated *evil-thinkers*, uncharitable spirits. See 1 Co.13.5.—*C.*

s See ver.97, 103, 111, 112.

t Ps.18.2, 3; 32. 7; 31. 20; 91.1, 2, 4, 9, 10; 5.12; 84.11; 91.4. Is.26.20; 25. 4; 32.2.

8 See the nature of this *hiding-place*, Col. 3. 3, where the covenant life of every believer is secured as a jewel in the casket of a Redeemer's bosom. —*C.*

u ver.81; Ps.130.5, 6.

v Ps.6.8; 26.4, 5, 9; 28. 3; 139. 19. 1 Co. 15. 33. Mat.7.23.

x Ps. 17. 5; 94. 18; 37. 24; 18.35. De.33.27.

y Ro.5.5. Ps. 25. 2, 3. Is.28.16.

z Ps.16. 1. 1 Pe. 1. 5. Jn.10.28, 29. Jude 1, 24.

a ver.6, 31, 32, 48, 111, 112, 129, 131.

b Ps.68.21. Mal. 4.1, 3. Is.28.18; 63.3, 4.

c 1 Jn.2.21.

9 Heb. *causest to cease*, Mat. 3. 10, 12. Eze.22.18.

d Ps.58.10, 11. Tit.2. 11, 12. Re.15.4.

e Job 4.14, 15. Hab.3. 16. ver. 53, 158, 139.

1 If any think this confession inconsistent with the character of Christ, let him read He.5.7.—*C.*

g 2 Sa.8.15. Ps. 75.2. Is.38.3. Ac.24.16.

h Ps.37. 32, 33. 2 Pe. 2.9.

2 How strange that such a spotless character, one who had done justice as a man and judgment as an office-bearer, should yet be the subject of oppression, and find no advocate amongst men, no refuge but a pure conscience, and a prayer-hearing God! Yet how true a picture of the meek and lowly and spotless Jesus!—oppressed, afflicted, buffeted, scourged, and crucified.—*C.*

i He.7.22. Is. 38. 14. See ver.21; Ps.10.2; 12. 5.

j Ps.69.3; 27. 13; 143. 7; ver.81, 82.

k Ps.103.10; 106.4; 69. 13, 16; ver. 41, 76, 132. 2 Ti.1.16, 18. Da.9.18.

l See ver. 12, 26; Ps. 43.3.

n Ps.116.16; ver.94.

o See ver.34, 66.

p Ps. 102. 13. Is. 41. 17. De.32.36. Ac.7.17.

3 That is, the Jewish priests, elders, scribes, and lawyers have made *void the law* by their *traditions*, Mar.7.13.—*C.*

q Ps.19.10. Pr. 8. 11. See ver.72, &c.

4 It is not easy to see from what *therefore* is a conclusion. The original may be translated *moreover indeed.*—*C.*

r Ps.19.7–9. Ro.7.12, 14. Pr.30.5.

s See ver.104.

t See ver.18. Is.25.1.

1 Ti.3.16.

5 I keep them as a record of God's revelation of future things —as a *lamp* to guide my steps in a dark world—as a way in which I must guide my steps—and as a sacred *deposit* which I must never lose. Surely he who inviolably keeps all these can be no other than the spotless Son of God.—*C.*

u 2 Co.4.4, 6. 2 Pe. 1. 19. Ps.19.7. 2 Ti. 3. 15–17. Pr.1.1–6; 6.23; 9.4–6. M.t.11.25.

y See ver.20. 1 Pe.2. 2. Ps.43.3; 42.1; 84.2.

x See ver.124. Is.63. 7, 9.

6 Heb. *according to the custom towards those*, &c.

y Ps.17.5; 121.3, 8; 32. 8. 1 Sa.2.9.

z Ps.19.13. Ro. 6.12, 14; 7.23, 24.

a ver.115, 122; Ps.56. 5; 57. 1; 12.5. Is. 38. 14. Lu.1.74, 75. Tit. 2. 11, 12.

b Nu.6.25, 26. Ps.4.6; 80.1, 3, 7, 19.

c See ver.12, 124.

d See ver.53. Je.9.1; 13. 17; 14. 17. Eze. 9. 4. Zep.3.18.

e Da.9.7. De.32.4. Je. 12.1. Re.16.7; 19.2.

g See ver.86, 144. Ro. 7.12, 14.

7 Heb. *righteousness and very faithfulness.*

h Ps.69.9. 1 Ki.19.10, 14. Jn.2.17.

8 Heb. *cut me off.*

9 Heb. *tried* or *refined*, Ps. 12. 6; 18. 30. Pr.30.5. 1 Pe.2.2. Ro.7. 12, 14, 22.

i Am. 7. 2. Ps. 22. 6; 40.17; 44.17; ver.83.

j ver.138, 144. Je. 33. 20, 21. De. 32.4. Mat. 5. 18. 1 Pe. 1.23.

k Jn.17.17. Ep.1.13.

l Ps.77.2–9; 88. 1–18; 18.4, 5; ver.107.

1 Heb. *found me*, Ps.116.4.

n See ver. 16. Jn. 4. 34.

o See ver.86, 138, 24, 47.

p See ver.34, 66, 125. Jn.17.3. 1 Jn.5.20. Pr.6. 23; 10.21. Ep.1.18.

q Ps.3.4; 5.2; 18.6; 130. 1, 2. Je.29.13. Mat.7.7.

r Job 34.31, 32. ver.2, 8.

2 Or, *that I may keep.*

s Ps.88.13; 5.3; 55.17; 63.7; 59.16; 130.6. Is.26. 9. Mar.1. 35. He. 4. 16; 10.19–22.

t Ps.63.6; 139. 17, 18; 104.34. Is.26.9.

u Ps.4.1; 69.13, 16. Is. 63.7.

v See ver.25, 40, 50.

3 The perfection of the law of God is set forth with great force and beauty in this psalm. It extends to the outward acts of man, to his words, and to the inmost thoughts and affections of his heart. 'It is exceeding broad' and comprehensive. The psalmist is fully conscious of this. Another great truth is brought out in connection with the perfection of the law—namely, man's natural weakness, and the necessity for spiritual quickening to enable him to keep the divine law. He therefore prays repeatedly for quickening power.—*P.*

x Ps.22.16, 20, 21. Pr. 11.27.

y Is.46.12; 5.24. Ps. 50. 17. Job 22.14. Ep. 2.12, 13, 17. Ro.8.7.

z Ps.139.2, &c.; 145. 18; 46. 1; 31.20; 148.14. De.4.7.

a ver.86, 138, 142; Ps. 145.18; 105.8. Jn.17. 17.

130 The[u] entrance of thy words giveth light; it giveth understanding unto the simple.

131 I[v] opened my mouth, and panted: for I longed for thy commandments.

132 Look[x] thou upon me, and be merciful unto me, as thou usest to do unto those[6] that love thy name.

133 Order[y] my steps in thy word; and let [z]not any iniquity have dominion over me.

134 Deliver[a] me from the oppression of man: so will I keep thy precepts.

135 Make[b] thy face to shine upon thy servant; °and teach me thy statutes.

136 Rivers[d] of waters run down mine eyes, because they keep not thy law.

TSADDI.

137 Righteous[e] *art* thou, O LORD, and upright *are* thy judgments.

138 Thy[g] testimonies *that* thou hast commanded *are* righteous and very faithful.[7]

139 My[h] zeal hath consumed me;[8] because mine enemies have forgotten thy words.

140 Thy word *is* very pure:[9] therefore thy servant loveth it.

141 I[i] *am* small and despised; *yet* do not I forget thy precepts.

142 Thy[j] righteousness *is* an everlasting righteousness, [k]and thy law *is* the truth.

143 Trouble[l] and anguish have taken hold on me;[1] *yet* [n]thy commandments *are* my delights.

144 The[o] righteousness of thy testimonies *is* everlasting: [p]give me understanding, and I shall live.

KOPH.

145 I[q] cried with *my* whole heart; hear me, O LORD: [r]I will keep thy statutes.

146 I cried unto thee; save me, and I shall keep[2] thy testimonies.

147 I[s] prevented the dawning of the morning, and cried: I hoped in thy word.

148 Mine[t] eyes prevent the *night*-watches, that I might meditate in thy word.

149 Hear[u] my voice according unto thy loving-kindness: O LORD, [v]quicken me according to thy judgment.[3]

150 They[x] draw nigh that follow after mischief: they [y]are far from thy law.

151 Thou[z] *art* near, O LORD; and [a]all thy commandments *are* truth.

152 Concerning thy testimonies, I have

Ver. 83. *A bottle in the smoke.* First the weary soul fainted for salvation, ver. 81; then the straining eyes failed for the comfort of the word of promise; lastly, the frame became as a skin-bottle, dried and blackened in the smoke—a mean and despised receptacle in such mean and uncomfortable dwellings as the smoky cottages of the East still continue to present, from the roofs of which the skin-bottles, both for solids and fluids, are still found suspended. *C.*

Ver. 96. *I have seen*, &c. (1) In the word and covenant, ver. 89, 90; (2) in the stability of the earth, and its ordinances of the seasons, ver. 90, 91; (3) in the holy precepts of life and testimonies to hope, ver. 93–95; (4) in the afflictions which Christ endured, ver. 92, 95; and in which the length and breadth of his love constantly filled up the length and breadth of the law, Ro. 10. 8. *C.*

Ver. 100. *I understand more than the ancients.* 'Thou hast made me wiser than mine enemies,' ver. 98. 'I have more understanding than all my teachers,' Lu. 2. 46, 47. 'I understand more than the ancients,' would surely in the lips of any mere man be nothing but great swelling words of vanity. Would either Moses, David, or Solomon so have spoken in their own names? None of them would have dared so to speak of himself; Christ alone, endowed with the sevenfold gifts of the Spirit, Is. 11. 2, 3, and learning obedience by the things that he suffered, He. 5. 8, could so speak, and of him alone could the assertions be true. *C.*

Ver. 106. *I have sworn.* The power of human promise when assailed, not by unexpected, but even by foreseen temptation, receives a full and melancholy illustration in the case of our Lord's disciples, Mat. 26. 33, 35. Nor is the instructed believer ever ready to promise, much less to swear what he will do, without a prayer for preventing and assisting grace; but here is one who has sworn without reservation in the *Amen* he has affixed to the holy law—and who promises, in full assurance of inherent ability, ver. 112, to perform and keep God's righteous judgments. Say, can this be any other than the Christ? *C.*

Ver. 115. *Depart from me.* Contrast these words with the prophetic anticipation of judgment, Mat. 7. 23—and then say, are not these the words of Him who is appointed Judge of the quick and the dead? *C.*

Ver. 130. All human instruction comes by words spoken to the ear, or exhibited to the eye, or touch; these bring the light (manifestation) of natural things to the understanding. But these words always require more or less the aid of a teacher. So God

known of old [b]that thou hast founded them for ever.

RESH.

153 Consider[c] mine affliction, and deliver me: for I do not forget thy law.

154 Plead [d]my cause, and deliver me: [e]quicken me according to thy word.

155 Salvation[g] *is* far from the wicked: for they seek not thy statutes.

156 [h]Great[4] *are* thy tender mercies, O LORD: quicken[i] me according to thy judgments.

157 Many[j] *are* my persecutors and mine enemies; *yet* [k]do I not decline from thy testimonies.

158 I[l] beheld the transgressors, and was grieved; because they kept not thy word.

159 Consider[m] how I love thy precepts: quicken[o] me, O LORD, according to thy loving-kindness.

160 Thy[p] word *is* true *from* the beginning:[5] and[q] every one of thy righteous judgments *endureth* for ever.

SCHIN.

161 Princes[r] have persecuted me without a cause: but my heart [s]standeth in awe of thy word.[6]

162 I[t] rejoice at thy word, as one that findeth great spoil.

163 I[u] hate and abhor lying: [v]*but* thy law do I love.

164 Seven[x] times a-day do I praise thee because of thy righteous judgments.

165 Great[y] peace have they which love thy law; and [7]nothing shall offend them.[8]

166 LORD, [z]I have hoped for thy salvation, and done thy commandments.

167 My[a] soul hath kept thy testimonies; and I love them exceedingly.

A.M. cir. 2989.
B.C. cir. 1015.

b ver.142,160. Lu.21. 33. Ps.111.8. Mat.5.18; 24.35. 1 Pe.1.23,25.

c La.3.1. Ps.25.18,19. Ex.3.7,8. ver.16.

d Mi.7.9. 1 Jn.2.1. Ps. 35.1,23; 43.1.

e ver.25,40,50.

g Lu.16.24. Job 5.4; 21.14. Ps.73.27. Is.3.11. Ro.2.8,9.

h Ps.86.13,15; 69.13, 16. Is.63.7.

4 Or, *many.*

i ver.25,40,149.

j Ps.3.1; 22.12,16.

k ver.110,141. Ps.44. 17. 1 Co.15.58. Pr.4.18. Job 17.9.

l ver.53,136. Eze. 9. 4. Je.9.1-4; 13.17.

m ver.97,127,128.

o ver.25,88.

p ver.86,138,142; Ps. 19.8,9.

5 Heb. *The beginning of thy word is true.*

q ver.96,142,144,152.

r 1 Sa.24.9, 11,15,17; 26.19-21, 23; 29.4. ver. 23.

s Ps.4.4. Is.66.2. Job 31.14,23.

6 No one can fail herein to recognize the spotless Jesus—persecuted by Herod, by the chief priests and council, and finally delivered over by Pilate, who had already pronounced him innocent.—*C.*

t Je.15.16. ver.72,111, 127.

u ver.29,104.

v ver.97.

x Ps.55.17,18.11; 97. 8; 58.10,11; ver.62. Re. 19.2. Ep. 5. 20. 1 Th.5. 18.

y Pr.3.2,17. Is.32.17. Jn.14.27. Phl.4.7. Ga.6. 16. Eze. 34.25.

7 Heb. *They shall have no stumbling-block,* 1 Pe. 2.8. 1 Jn.2. 10.

8 Peace springing from trust in God, the author of the law, and from a consciousness of the divine favour—peace of conscience, being no longer tormented by its warning and reproving voice—peace arising from the hope of the rich reward promised to those who obey. The last clause embodies the truth that those who love God and his law shall not stumble. God will preserve them from the power of temptation.—*P.*

z Ge.49.18. Ps.130.5, 7; ver.81. 1 Jn.3.2,3.

a ver.2-8,168,97,159. Ro.7. ...

A.M. cir. 2989.
B.C. cir. 1015.

b Job 34.21. Pr. 5.21. Ge.17.1. Ps.139.1-3.

c ver. 145-149, 170. Lu.11.8. Ja.5.16.

d Pr.2.6,7. Ja 1. 5. 2 Sa. 7. 25. ver. 144, 18. Ps.50.15; 91.15.

e Ps.71.8,15,23,24; 50. 23; 33.1; ver.7. Mat.12. 34,35.

g Ps.22. 22; 40. 9, 10; 78.2-8.

h Ps.12.6; ver.86,138, 144. 1 Jn. Ro.7.12,14.

i Ps.40. 17; ver. 116, 117.

j Jos. 24.22. Pr.1.29. ver. 30,111. Lu.10.42.

k Ge. 49. 18. ver. 81, 166.

l Ps. 1. 2; ver. 16, 47, 77,162,167.

m Ps.80.18; 71.23.

o Ro.8.28. Ps. 35.1; 43. 1. 2 Co.4.17.

p Is.53.6. Mat.18.12, 13. Lu. 15. 4, 5. 1 Pe. 2. 25.

9 This final appeal is very touching. The psalmist casts himself an humble, helpless, erring suppliant at the feet of his God. He confesses his inability even to aid himself. His only trust is in the divine goodness and mercy. —*P.*

PSALM CXX.

B.C. cir. 1058.

a Ps. cxx.-cxxxiv. titles.

b Ps.18.6; 34.6,15,19; 118.5. Jonah 2.2. He. 5. 7. Lu.22.42.

c Ps.52.2-4; 140. 1-11; 31.20. Is.54.17.

1 Heb. *added.*

2 Or, *What shall* the deceitful tongue *give unto thee?* or, *what shall it profit thee?*

d Ps.52.5; 7.13; 140. 10. De. 32. 23,24. Is. 3. 11; 30. 33; 33. 14.

3 Or, it is as *the sharp arrows of the mighty* man *with coals of juniper.*

e Mi.7.1-5. Ps.140.1-11; 142.4, with Ge.10.2; 25.13.

4 The idea is that he was exposed to as much danger and pain from vile slanders, as if he were living an exile among the barbarous Meschites, or in the black tents of the wild Arabs.—*P.*

g Ro.3.17. Tit.3.3.

5 Or, a man *of peace.*

6 The proper characteristic of Christ, the Prince of peace, Is.ix. But alas! how ungratefully is his love repaid by carnal minds—enmity against God! Ro.8.7. —*C.*

h Ps.109.4,5; 35.20.

168 I have kept thy precepts and thy testimonies: for all my ways *are* [b]before thee.

TAU.

169 Let[c] my cry come near before thee, O LORD: [d]give me understanding according to thy word.

170 Let my supplication come before thee: deliver me according to thy word.

171 My[e] lips shall utter praise, when thou hast taught me thy statutes.

172 My[g] tongue shall speak of thy word: [h]for all thy commandments *are* righteousness.

173 Let[i] thine hand help me: for [j]I have chosen thy precepts.

174 I[k] have longed for thy salvation, O LORD; [l]and thy law *is* my delight.

175 Let[n] my soul live, and it shall praise thee; and let thy judgments [o]help me.

176 I[p] have gone astray like a lost sheep; seek thy servant: for I do not forget thy commandments.[9]

PSALM CXX.

1 David, praying against Doeg, 3 reproveth his tongue, 5 complaineth of his necessary conversation with the wicked.

[a] A song of degrees.

IN my[b] distress I cried unto the LORD, and he heard me.

2 Deliver[c] my soul, O LORD, from lying lips, *and* from a deceitful tongue.

3 What shall be given unto thee? or what shall be done[1] unto thee, thou false tongue?[2]

4 Sharp[d] arrows of the mighty, with coals of juniper.[3]

5 Woe[e] is me that I sojourn in Mesech, *that* I dwell in the tents of Kedar![4]

6 My soul hath long dwelt with him [g]that hateth peace.

7 I *am for*[5] peace:[6] but[h] when I speak, they *are* for war.

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teaches by words; but his Spirit is the teacher that effects the entrance and diffuses the light of Jesus! *C.*

Ver. 139. *My zeal hath consumed me.* The quotation (Jn. 2. 17) from Ps. 69. 9, and, so far as it goes, its perfect parallelism to that in this verse, affords a farther evidence that this psalm is dictated by the Spirit in the person of Christ. *C.*

Ver. 142. The *righteousness of God* never means a rule of righteousness, any more than the *love of God* means a mere rule of love. The love of God means just the love of God; and the righteousness of God means just the righteousness of God, neither more nor less. It is the work which God the Father *gave the Son to do;* it is the work which *God the Son performed.* The creature righteousness was dissolved: the Godhead righteousness abideth for ever. *C.*

Ver. 148. Study, business, and piety alike court early and late hours. The student of nature, art, literature, or science awakes before the sun, outwatches the stars, and often disregards the sacrifice of health at the shrine of his beloved idol. The pursuit of *riches* claims votaries still more numerous and decided. And surely *piety* can claim no less. Wherefore, if its studies, privileges, and duties be shuffled into some mere corner of time and attention, what is it but a sure preparative for being speedily and finally cast away?—*Note,* The continuity of piety in thought, temper, reading, and prayer, is the only sufficient evidence of its sincerity and vitality. *C.*

Ver. 156. He that prays, 'O Lord, quicken me according to thy judgments,' must be one who has nothing to fear, because certain, when judged, to be justified in the Spirit, 1 Ti. 3. 16. *C.*

Ver. 157. Fear, favour, and covetousness are the three great causes of *declining* from a faithful adherence to the testimonies of God. Fear of suffering or loss begets base compliances with error. The favour of wicked men in power leads men away from truth by the influence of pride—while the 'love of money, the root of all evil,' bribes many to forsake what they believe to be true, follow what they know to be error, and practise what they feel to be sin. *C.*

Ver. 164. *Seven times a-day.* That *seven* signifies completeness is undoubted. It seems equally undoubted that here it signifies *seven* fixed and specific periods for secret prayer.—*Note,* Fixed times of prayer seem to many inconsistent with the freedom of Christianity and the circumstances of society. If piety were a restraint or a burden, this opinion might be true: but since it is a privilege and a blessing, it must be unfounded. *C.*

Ver. 169. *Let my cry.* A *cry* is the voice of a child in want or pain, or of man or woman in deep and poignant distress. Of the cries of our Lord in his distress we have no special record beyond that contained in Mat. 27. 46, 50. But Paul, by the Spirit, leads us more into the secret history of our Lord's heart, feelings, and sufferings, and declares, in accordance with all that is written of him in the Psalms, that, 'in the days of his flesh,' he 'offered up prayers and supplications, with strong crying and tears, unto him that was able to save him from death, and was heard in that he feared,' He. 5. 7. *C.*

REFLECTIONS.—Let this psalm be a touchstone by which I may try my heart and my life. Let me constantly inquire—Are these gracious tempers and holy exercises of faith, love, hope, humility, patience, and zeal, to be found in my soul? Has my heart, purged from an evil conscience in Jesus' blood, made these meditations, prayers, resolutions, and confessions truly my own? Is God's Word, his Testaments in Jesus' blood, the sole standard of all my faith and law of my practice? Is it the channel of Jesus' fulness of grace and comfort to my heart? Is it the instructor, the counsellor, the quickener, the medicine, the armour, the treasury, the wealth, the support, the guard, the joy, and the ALL of my soul? Do I receive it as a word to me from God, and use it as my plea with him for whatever I need? Happy is he that is thus living in these delightful exercises!

PSALM CXX. *Title.* This and the fourteen following psalms are entitled Songs of Degrees, or Ascending. Why or from whom they received this title, no man knows, and conjectures are manifold, but useless. *C.*

Ver. 1. *In my distress.* There can be no question that Ps. cxviii. is delivered in the name of Christ. See ver. 22. On comparing this verse with Ps. 118. 5, the identity of the speaker in the two psalms will scarcely be questioned. Comp. also Ps. lii. *C.*

Ver. 4. In ver. 3 a question is asked substantially as follows:—'What shall the deceitful tongue give thee—what will it do to thee?' Reference is made to the person who uses his tongue in this manner. What effect will it entail upon him—what punishment will it bring? The reply is given in ver. 4, in language highly figurative. It will entail such punishment as would be inflicted by the sharp arrows of the warrior; it will bring such exquisite pain as would be produced by the glowing coals of juniper, the heat of which is intense. *P.*

REFLECTIONS.—Inveterate malice against the saints never refuses the basest means of venting itself: and it is the saints' ordinary lot to be virulently reproached by the wicked. But dreadful, penetrating, destructive, furious, and lasting is the ruin of their reproachers at last! It is grievous for the lovers of God to be long removed from public ordinances, or to be forced by necessity into continued connections with the wicked. But every one born of God ought to be a child of peace. Envy and strife are all from hell. And though others continue inveterate, we ought to abound in charity, and follow the things which make for peace.

PSALM CXXI. Ver. 1. The margin, Boothroyd, and other high authorities, read this verse as two questions, and this sense seems preferable. *C.*

Ver. 3. Recollecting first that this, being a promise of the Spirit, must be true—then there will be little difficulty in concluding that such a promise could only be realized in Christ. See also ver. 7, 8. Here the church, by the Spirit, replies to Christ, and ministers to him promises nearly parallel to those in Ps. xci. *C.*

REFLECTIONS.—In every difficulty our eyes ought

DAMASCUS GATE—OPENING TOWARDS NAZARETH. [PSALMS, cxxii:2.]—"Our feet shall stand within thy gates, O Jerusalem." Damascus gate, or the gate of the column through which passes the north road to Galilee and Damascus, is the most ornamental of all the gates which stand in the walls of Jerusalem. It is made picturesque because of its many turrets and battlements. The Damascus gate, according to Bartlet, is a fine piece of Saracenic architecture. Other authorities claim that it dates back to a more remote antiquity than Bartlet supposes. This gate is not a great ways from the place supposed by many now to be the site of Mount Calvary. The tombs of the kings are about 1100 paces north of Damascus gate. Next to Jaffa gate, the Damascus gate is the one most frequently used of any in the Jerusalem walls.

PSALM CXXI.

The great safety of the godly, who put their trust in God's protection.

[a]A song of degrees.

I WILL lift[b] up mine eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my help.[1]

2 My[c] help *cometh* from the LORD, which made heaven and earth.

3 He[d] will not suffer thy foot to be moved: he that keepeth thee will not slumber.

4 Behold,[e] he that keepeth Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep.

5 The LORD *is* thy keeper: [g]the LORD *is* thy shade upon thy right hand.[2]

6 The[h] sun shall not smite thee by day, nor the moon by night.

7 The[i] LORD shall preserve thee from all evil: he shall preserve thy soul.

8 The[j] LORD shall preserve thy going out, and thy coming in, from this time forth, and even for evermore.

PSALM CXXII.

1 David expresseth his joy for the church, 6 and prayeth for the peace thereof.

[a]A song of degrees of David.

I WAS glad[b] when they said unto me, [c]Let us go into the house of the LORD.

2 Our[d] feet shall stand within thy gates, O Jerusalem.

3 Jerusalem[e] is builded as a city that is compact together;

4 Whither[g] the tribes go up, the tribes of the LORD, unto the [h]testimony of Israel, to give thanks unto the name of the LORD.

5 For there are set[1] thrones[i] of judgment, the thrones of the house of David.

6 Pray[j] for the peace of Jerusalem: they shall prosper that love thee.[2]

7 Peace[k] be within thy walls, *and* prosperity within thy palaces.

8 For[l] my brethren and companions' sakes, I will now say, Peace *be* within thee.

9 Because[m] of the house of the LORD our God I will seek thy good.

PSALM CXXIII.

1 The godly profess their confidence in God, 3 and pray to be delivered from contempt.

[a]A song of degrees.

UNTO thee[b] lift I up mine eyes,[1] O thou that dwellest in the heavens.

2 Behold, [c]as the eyes of servants *look* unto the hand of their masters, *and* as the eyes of a maiden unto the hand of her mistress; [d]so our eyes *wait* upon the LORD our God, until that he have mercy upon us.

3 Have[e] mercy upon us, O LORD, have mercy upon us: for we are exceedingly filled with contempt.[2]

4 Our[g] soul is exceedingly filled with the scorning of those that are at ease, *and* with the contempt of the proud.

PSALM CXXIV.

The church blesseth God for a miraculous deliverance.

[a]A song of degrees of David.

IF *it*[b] *had not been* the LORD who was [c]on our side, now[1] may Israel say;

2 If *it had not been* the LORD who was on our side, when [d]men rose up against us:

3 Then[e] they had swallowed us up quick, when their wrath was kindled against us:

4 Then[g] the waters had overwhelmed us, the stream had gone over our soul:

5 Then the proud waters had gone over our soul.

6 Blessed[h] *be* the LORD, who hath not given us *as* a prey to their teeth.

7 Our[i] soul is escaped as a bird out of the snare[2] of the fowlers: the snare is broken, and we are escaped.

8 Our[j] help *is* in the name of the LORD, who made heaven and earth.

PSALM CXXV.

1 The safety of such as trust in God. 4 A prayer for the godly, and against the wicked.

[a]A song of degrees.

THEY [b]that trust in the LORD *shall be* as mount Zion, *which* cannot be removed,[1] *but* abideth for ever.

2 *As*[c] the mountains *are* round about Jerusalem, so the LORD *is* round about his people from henceforth, even for ever.

3 For[d] the rod of the wicked[2] shall not rest upon the lot of the righteous; lest the righteous put forth their hands unto iniquity.

4 Do[e] good, O LORD, unto *those that be* good, and to *them that are* upright in their hearts.

5 As[g] for such as turn aside unto their

A.M. cir. 2983.
B.C. cir. 1021.

PSALM CXXI.

a Ps. cxx.-cxxxiv. titles.
b Ps.87.1; 76.2; 2.6; 3. 4; 9. 11; 123. 1.
1 Or, *Shall I lift up mine eyes to the hills? whence should my help come?* Je. 3. 23.
c Ho. 13. 9. Ps. 124. 8; 3. 8; 18. 32–48.
d 1 Sa. 2. 9. Pr. 3. 25, 26. De. 33. 3. Ps. 62. 2; 37. 24. 1 Pe. 1. 5. Jude 1. Jn. 10. 28, 29.
e Is. 27. 3. 1 Ki. 18. 27. Ps. 27. 1; 32. 7, 8; 44. 23. Ge. 28. 15. De. 32. 10.
g Is. 25. 4; 32. 2; 4. 6. Ex. 13. 21. Ps. 16. 8; 109. 31. Ca. 3. 3.
2 Long exposure to the direct rays of an eastern sun causes intense suffering, and often results in death. The image here is therefore expressive as it is beautiful. The Lord is a shade to his people. He preserves them from the greatest calamities, and defends them from all danger.—*P.*
h Ps. 91. 5, 10. Is. 49. 10. Re. 7. 16. Ge. 31. 40.
i 1 Ti. 4. 18. Is. 27. 3. Job 5. 19–23. Ps. 94. 18, 19. Re. 21. 3, 4; 22. 3. Jn. 17. 12, 15.
j De. 28. 6; 33. 3. Pr. 2. 8; 3. 6. 1 Sa. 2. 9. 1 Pe. 1. 5. Ps. 1. 3.

PSALM CXXII.

B.C. cir. 1021.
a Ps. cxx.-cxxxiv. titles.
b Ps. 84. 1, 2; 42. 4; 55. 14.
c Is. 2. 2, 3. Zec. 8. 21–23. Je. 31. 6; 50. 5.
d Ps. 84. 7; 87. 1–3. 2 Ch. 6. 6. Re. 22. 14.
e 2 Sa. 5. 9. Ep. 2. 21. Re. xxi.
g Is. 33. 20; 56. 7. Ex. 23. 17; 34. 23. De. 12. 5, 6, 11; 16. 16. Ps. 100. 4; 111. 1.
h Ark, Ex. 16. 34; 26. 33, 34.
1 Heb. *do sit.*
i 2 Ch. 19. 8. De. 17. 8, 9. Mat. 19. 28.
j Ps. 51. 18; 137. 5, 6; 35. 27; 69. 36; 102. 28. Is. 62. 6, 7. Je. 51. 50.
2 Or, 'May they have rest that love thee.' It is a prayer rather than a prophecy; but in the prayer there is involved the idea that the prayer will certainly be answered. Jerusalem was the representative of the Church of God. A prayer for its prosperity was a prayer for the church—it was equivalent to 'Thy kingdom come.' It is one of the great duties of man to promote the kingdom of God; and in doing so he is bringing upon himself the divine blessing.—*P.*
k Is. 2. 4; 9. 7; 54. 13; 66. 12. Jn. 16. 33.
l Ps. 16. 3; 119. 63, with Je. 29. 7. Phi. 2. 4.
m Ne. 2. 10. Ps. 26. 8; 51. 18; 138. 7–9; 137. 5, 6; 84. 1, 2, 10. Is. 62. 1, 6, 7.

PSALM CXXIII.

B.C. cir. 1021.
a Ps. cxx.-cxxxiv. titles.
b Ps. 121. 1; 25. 15; 115. 3. Is. 66. 1. Mat. 14. 19; 6. Jn. 11. 41; 17. 1. Ec. 5. 2.
1 The speaker is the same as in the former psalm—the Lord interceding for his church. Compare with Ps. cxxi.—*C.*
c Pr. 31. 15. Job 7. 2.
d Ge. 49. 18; 32. 26. Ps. 119. 81; 71. 14; 62. 1, 5. Lu. 18. 1, 7.
e Ps. 56. 1; 57. 1; 69. 13, 16; 88. 3; 89. 50, 51; 79. 4; 44. 13, 14.
2 'We have been scorned—men have treated us with contempt, because of our devotion to thee, and our attachment to thy worship.'—*P.*
g 2 Sa. 6. 20. Ne. 4. 2. Lu. 16. 14. Ps. 119. 21; 10. 2. Job 12. 5. Pr. 21. 24.

PSALM CXXIV.

B.C. cir. 1020.
a Ps. cxx.-cxxxiv. titles.
b Ex. 15. 1, &c.
c Ps. 54. 4; 118. 6. He. 13. 5. Ro. 8. 31.
1 This *now* is applicable in every period of the church; for there never was a time since the days of Cain when the sons of men did not rise up to destroy the children of God.—*C.*
d Ge. 3. 15. Ps. 37. 32; 2. 1, 2; 3; 120. 2, 18.
e Ps. 22. 12, 13, 16. Pr. 1. 12. Je. 51. 34. Jonah 1. 17. Nu. 16. 32.
g Job 38. 11. Ps. 18. 4; 69. 1, 2. Is. 8. 7, 8; 43. 2; 59. 19. Je. 46. 7, 8. Da. 9. 26; 11. 22, 40. 2 Ch. 20. 12. Re. 12. 16.
h Ps. 9. 2, 3; 18. 49, 50; 48. 3–11; 46. 6–11; 72. 18. 1 Sa. 17. 34, 35. Pr. 30. 14.
i Ps. 91. 3; 25. 15, 17; 119. 110. Pr. 6. 5. 2 Ti. 2. 26.
2 The snare of appetite, the snare of false doctrine, and the snare of covetousness, which Satan prepared for our Lord, Mat. 4. 3, 6, 9. The world also prepares the snare of smiles and frowns, but out of them all the Lord delivers his servants.—*C.*
j Ps. 121. 2; 20. 5, 7; 60. 12; 89. 19. Pr. 18. 10. Ho. 13. 9. 1 Pe. 4. 19. 2 Co. 1. 10.

PSALM CXXV.

B.C. cir. 1020.
a Ps. cxx.-cxxxiv. titles.
b Ps. 25. 2; 31. 1; 34. 22; 62. 2, 6. Pr. 10. 25. Mat. 16. 18. 1 Pe. 1. 5. Is. 45. 17.
1 The psalmist does not mean to assert the *physical* impossibility of removing Mount Zion, for mightier works have been accomplished by human perseverance; but the *moral* impossibility, because it is still providentially guarded by the deep-rooted conviction of its sacred character.—*C.*
c Zec. 2. 5. Ps. 91. 1–9. De. 33. 27. Jn. 10. 28, 29. Jude 1. Col. 3. 3.
d Pr. 22. 8. Is. 10. 5; 14. 5, 6. Ps. 103. 9, 14. De. 32. 35, 36. 1 Co. 10. 13. Re. 2. 10.
2 Heb. *wickedness.*
e Ps. 84. 11; 34. 9, 10; 51. 18; 73. 1. Ro. 8. 28. 2 Co. 4. 17, 18. La. 3. 25.
g Pr. 14. 14. Je. 2. 19. He. 10. 38. Mat. 24. 51; 25. 41, 46. 2 Th. 1. 8, 9.

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to be fixed on God, in his temple, his Christ, his heaven, as the author of our help, protection, and deliverance. He is a sure refuge to them who flee to him; and with him nothing is impossible. In him nothing good can be wanting, no direction, no preservation; and in him no troubles can hurt us.

PSALM CXXII. Ver. 1. *I was glad.* There is clearly but a single speaker in ver. 1, 8, 9, and this is the Prince of peace, who alone has power to grant true peace to his church. Jn. 14. 27. *C.*

Ver. 6. *Pray.* Intercession forms, at present, the great work of Christ in heaven, He. 7. 25; and if Christ be in us the hope of glory, Col. 1. 27, his power and presence will chiefly appear in the concurrence of our spirit with his. *C.*

Ver. 8. *For my brethren.* Can Christ ever call sinners *brethren?* The mystery is solved by their 'being born again of water and of the Spirit,' and therefore he is not ashamed to call them brethren. He. 2. 11, 12. *C.*

REFLECTIONS.—They who love God himself cannot but delight to draw near unto him in the ordinances of his worship; cannot but love his church, and be earnestly concerned in prayer and in practice for her real welfare. From regard to the saints, who are therein begotten and nourished up to eternal life, and especially from regard to the honour of her God, they will constantly seek her good.

PSALM CXXIII. Ver. 2. In several eastern countries, masters and mistresses call their servants by clapping the hands; and direct them in their work by signs, often imperceptible to strangers. Some interpreters think the verse refers to servants condemned to punishment, and watching for a sign of mitigation or forgiveness. *C.*

REFLECTIONS.—In what a humble, resigned, and obedient temper, and with what earnestness, ought we to look up to God for help and deliverance. While his great mercy encourages us, our great contempt and trouble should drive us to his throne of grace, and oblige us to wait upon him till he grant our requests.

PSALM CXXIV. REFLECTIONS.—How furiously the enemies of the church rage against her, and threaten to carry all before them! But power and policy in vain unite to destroy the souls faithful to our God. And when we are in appearance nearest to be overcome and perish, we then may be made more eminently to experience the salvation of God.

PSALM CXXV. Ver. 2. Jerusalem stands on the summit of a broad mountain ridge, which is broken into a wilderness of bare crowns of limestone, separated by deep ravines. Upon two of these crowns, Zion and Moriah, the ancient city was founded; and these two were bounded on the east by the valley of Kidron, and on the west and south by Hinnom. All around the site are loftier summits—nothing approaching to mountains, but rounded, irregular ridges, overtopping the buildings of the city from 50 to 200 ft. Thus it is that 'the mountains are round about Jerusalem.' *P.*

Ver. 3. *Righteous.* Those who, by faith of Jesus Christ, are endowed and clothed with 'the righteousness of God,' Phi. 3. 9. *C.*

REFLECTIONS.—Happy are they who trust in the Lord! Immovable is their spiritual state. They

MOUNT OF OLIVES — OVER WHICH CHRIST WALKED TO THE HOME OF MARY AND MARTHA. [PSALMS, CXXV: 2.]—"As the mountains are round about Jerusalem, so the Lord is round about his people from henceforth even for ever." East of the valley of Jehoshaphat rises the Mount of Olives. This is one of the mountains which the Psalmist refers to as standing round about Jerusalem. There are a number of olive trees still found upon the mountain, and upon its western base is a cluster of ancient ones known throughout the world to indicate the Garden of Gethsemane. The top of this mountain is held by many to be the place where the Savior left the earth, and his footsteps are still shown to those who are willing to believe extraordinary things. According to the Scripture, Christ ascended from Bethany. From the top of the Mount of Olives we have the most commanding view of the city of Jerusalem.

crooked ways, the LORD shall lead them forth with the workers of iniquity: [h]*but* peace *shall be* upon Israel.

PSALM CXXVI.

1 The church, celebrating her incredible return out of captivity, 4 prayeth for, and prophesieth her own future joyfulness.

[a]A song of degrees.

WHEN the LORD turned again the captivity of Zion,[1] we[b] were like them that dream.

2 Then[c] was our mouth filled with laughter, and our tongue with singing: then [d]said they among the heathen, The LORD hath done great things for them.[2]

3 The[e] LORD hath done great things for us, *whereof* we are glad.

4 Turn[g] again our captivity, O LORD, as the streams in the [3]south.[4]

5 They[h] that sow in tears shall reap in joy.[5]

6 He[i] that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed,[6] shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves *with him.*

PSALM CXXVII.

1 The vanity of human endeavours without God's blessing. 3 Children are God's gift.

[a]A song of degrees for Solomon.[1]

EXCEPT [b]the LORD build the house, they labour in vain that build it: except the LORD keep the city, the watchman waketh *but* in vain.

2 *It is* vain for you to [c]rise up early, to sit up late, to eat [d]the bread of sorrows; *for* [e]so he giveth his beloved sleep.

3 Lo,[g] children *are* an heritage of the LORD; *and* the fruit of the womb *is his* reward.

4 As[h] arrows *are* in the hand of a mighty man; so *are* children of the youth.

5 Happy[i] *is* the man that hath his quiver full of[2] them: they[j] shall not be ashamed, but they shall speak[3] with the enemies in the gate.

PSALM CXXVIII.

The sundry blessings which follow them that fear God.

[a]A song of degrees.

BLESSED [b]*is* every one that feareth the LORD; that walketh in his ways.

2 For[c] thou shalt eat the labour of thine hands: [d]happy *shalt* thou *be*, and *it shall be* well with thee.

3 Thy[e] wife *shall be* as a fruitful vine by the sides of thine house; [g]thy children like olive plants round about thy table.

A.M. cir. 2984.
B.C. cir. 1020.

[h] Ps.128.6. Gal.6.16. Eze.34.25;37.26. Ho.2.18. Is.54.10,13;9.7.

PSALM CXXVI.
B.C. cir. 535.

[a] Ps. cxx.–cxxxiv. titles.
1 Heb. *returned the returning of Zion,* Ezr.i.Ps.53.6;85.1.
[b] Ac.12.9. Lu.24.11. Ge.45.26.
[c] Ps.14.7;53.6. Job 8. 21. Is. 35.10. Re. 14. 3; 19.1–7;18.20.
[d] Ps.58.10;64.9. Eze. 36.35,36;37.21,28.
[2] Heb. *hath magnified to do with them.*
[e] Ps.18.50, 51; 72.18. Re.19.18–20; 18.20; 12. 10.
[g] Ps. 85. 4. Ho.1.11. Je.3.18. Is.41.18; 43.19; 32.2.
[3] As the Nile in the south, which, when wasted to a narrow stream, receives fresh supplies from distant lands, and again overspreads and fertilizes as it flows.—*C.*
[4] Literally, 'Turn our captivity, O Jehovah, as the torrents in the Negeb.' *Negeb* was the proper name for that section of Palestine which embraced the southern slopes of the ange of Judea, and he border land of he great wilderness bout Beersheba. Its streams were all winter torrents. They flowed only whilst the winter rains were falling, and in early summer they became completely dry, remaining so till the early rains of autumn. The idea here is—The stream of exiles returning to Palestine is now dry; let it become full like the streams of the Negeb at the time of the winter rains.—*P.*
[h] Ps.137.1;97.11. Je. 31.5–26. Ho.6.1,2.
[5] Or, *singing.*
[i] Ps. 30. 5. Mat. 5. 4. Is.61.3. Je.50.4,5. Ho. 10.12.1 Co.15.58.
[6] Or, *seed basket.*

PSALM CXXVII.
B.C. cir. 1015.

[a] Ps. lxxii. cxx.–cxxxiv. titles.
1 Or, *of Solomon.*
[b] Ps.33.16,17; 121.3–5. Pr.16.3;20.24;21.31. Ec.9.11.1 Co.3.6,7. Je. 5.10;10.23.
[c] Ps.104.23. Pr.31.15, 18. Ec.9.10,11.
[d] Ge.3.17,19. Ec. 5. 17.1 Ki.22.27.
[e] Ps. 4. 8. Eze.34.25. De.33.12.
[g] Ge. 33. 5. 1 Sa.2.5; 30.2. Jos.24.3,4. De.28. 4. Is.53.10,11.
[h] Je.50.9.1 Ch.12.2.
[i] Job 1.2. Ps.128.3–6. Is.49.20,21.
[2] Heb. *hath filled his quiver with.*
[j] Pr.27.11. Job 5.4.
[3] Or, *shall subdue,* as Ps.18.47.

PSALM CXXVIII.
B.C. cir. 1015.

[a] Ps. cxx.–cxxxiv. titles.
[b] Ps. 112. 1; 115. 13; 119.1; 1.1–3. Ac. 10. 35. Job 1.1,8.
[c] Ge.3.19. Is. 65. 21–23;62.8.
[d] Is. 3. 10. Ps. 19. 11. Ro.2.7,10.1 Co.15.58.
[e] Eze.19.10. Pr.5.15, 16. Ps. 52. 8. Je. 11. 16. Ho.14.6,7.
[g] Ps.144.12.

A.M. cir. 2989.
B.C. cir. 1015.

[h] Ps.133.3; 134.3;20. 2;118.26. Is.2.3.
[i] Ps. 122. 6, 7. Is. 33. 20;54.13.
[j] Ge. 50. 23. Job 42. 16. Pr. 17. 6. Ps. 125. 5. Ga. 6. 16. Is. 66. 12; 59. 21.

PSALM CXXIX.
B.C. cir. 1045.

[a] Ps. cxx.–cxxxiv. titles.
[b] Or, *Much,* Ex. i. Ju.iii.iv.vi.x.xiii. 1 Sa. iv. xiii. xxii. 2 Ch. xi. xiii. xiv. xxi. xxviii. xxxii. xxxvi.Ezr.iv.v. La.1. 3.
[c] Je.2.2.Ho.2.15;11. 1.Eze.16.1–14;23.3.
[d] Jn.16.33. Job 5.19. Ps.34.19. Re.12.7,8.
[e] Is.51.23. He.11.36. ver.1,2. Job 4.8. Ho.10. 13.
[g] De.32.35,36. 2 Th. 1.6,7. Ps.140.5;124.7,8.
[1] The cords of bondage. He hath freed us from slavery —he did so in Egypt, and often in Palestine when our idolatries brought upon us the curse of Heaven and the slavery of man.—*P.*
[h] 1Co.16.22. Ps.6.10; 35.27; 21. 8–12; 48. 3–7; 83. 9–18. Is. 37. 34–38. Je.1.ii. Re.vi.xviii.xvi. Es.vii.ix.
[i] Ps.37.2;73.19;92.7; 58.9. Mat.13.6,21.
[2] The roofs of all eastern houses are flat, and covered with clay pressed down and carefully rolled. In early spring grass shoots up upon it luxuriantly; but as the season advances, and the rain ceases, the sun scorches it, and it withers more rapidly than it grew.—*P.*
[j] Ru.2.4. Ps.118.26.
[3] It is the universal practice in Palestine when passing a field of reapers, to address them with a blessing. The words usually employed at the present day are those in this verse. The meaning evidently is that such a blessing could never be given to those cutting the withered grass on the housetop. It would be a mockery.—*P.*

PSALM CXXX.
B.C. cir. 1058 or 1034.

[a] Ps.cxx.&c. titles.
[b] La.3.55. Jonah 2.2, 4. Ps.42.7;40.2;69.1,2; 18.16;88.6. Is.43.2.
[c] 2Ch.6.40. Ps.4.1;5. 17.1,6,7;18.6;40.1.
[d] Ps. 143.2. Job 9. 3. Ro. 3. 19–24. Na. 1. 6. Mal.3.2 Re.6.17.
[e] Ep.1.7. Is.55.7; 1 18. 43.25;44.22 Ex.34. 6,7. Da.9.9. Ro.8.1. Mi. 7.18,19.
[g] Tit.2.11,12. He.12. 28. Ho. 3. 5. 1 Ki. 8.40. Ps.2.11. Je.33.8,9. 2 Ti. 2.19.
[h] Ps.27.14;33.20;40. 1,4.
[i] Ps.63.6;119.147;62. 1,5. Ge.49.18. Is. 8. 17; 30.18;26.8,9. La.3.26.
[1] Or, *which watch unto the morning.*
[j] Ps. 71. 5; 42. 5, 11; 115. 9–11; 31. 24; 33. 22. Ro.8.24. He.10.35.
[k] Ex.34.6,7. Ps.103. 8;86.5,15. Is.55.7. Ro.5. 20, 21. Ep.1.7; 2.7.

4 Behold, that thus shall the man be blessed that feareth the LORD.

5 The[h] LORD shall bless thee out of Zion: and thou shalt see [i]the good of Jerusalem all the days of thy life.

6 Yea, [j]thou shalt see thy children's children, *and* peace upon Israel.

PSALM CXXIX.

1 An exhortation to praise God for saving Israel in their great afflictions. 5 The haters of the church are cursed.

[a]A song of degrees.

MANY [a][b] time have they afflicted me from my [c]youth, may Israel now say:

2 Many a time have they afflicted me from my youth; yet [d]they have not prevailed against me.

3 The [e]ploughers ploughed upon my back: they made long their furrows.

4 The[g] LORD *is* righteous: he hath cut asunder the cords of the wicked.[1]

5 Let[h] them all be confounded and turned back that hate Zion.

6 Let[i] them be as the grass *upon* the housetops, which withereth afore it groweth up;[2]

7 Wherewith the mower filleth not his hand, nor he that bindeth sheaves his bosom.

8 Neither do they which go by say, [j]The blessing of the LORD *be* upon you: we bless you in the name of the LORD.[3]

PSALM CXXX.

1 The psalmist, in distress, professeth his hope in prayer, 5 and his patience in hope. 7 He exhorteth Israel to hope in God.

[a]A song of degrees.

OUT of[b] the depths have I cried unto thee, O LORD.

2 LORD,[c] hear my voice: let thine ears be attentive to the voice of my supplications.

3 If[d] thou, LORD, shouldest mark iniquities, O LORD, who shall stand?

4 But *there is* [e]forgiveness with thee, [g]that thou mayest be feared.

5 I[h] wait for the LORD, my soul doth wait, and in his word do I hope.

6 My[i] soul *waiteth* for the LORD more than they that watch for the morning:[1] *I say, more than* they that watch for the morning.

7 Let[j] Israel hope in the LORD: [k]for with the LORD *there is* mercy, and with him *is* plenteous redemption.

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are established, guarded, and protected by God; and, in performance of his promise, he will supply them with everything good. But dreadful and lasting is their misery who apostatize from him to the paths of wickedness!

PSALM CXXVI. Ver. 1. *When.* The *when* in this verse, like the *now* in Ps. 124. 1, is confined to no special period; for the whole history of Israel, from the moment they became a people, has been a history of captivities in the hands of enemies, and merciful deliverances by the hand of their God. *C.*

REFLECTIONS.—God's church is often in great tribulation for a time: and no deliverance comes till God himself effect it. Noted deliverances make observers to wonder, and saints to rejoice. But the more his people are now exercised in spiritual mourning, the more remarkable shall be their fruits of holiness and joy.

PSALM CXXVII. Ver. 2. *So.* 'Surely' (*Horne*). The affections of God's children are set upon things above; and though not free from sorrow or anxiety, they are always able to cast their cares upon him that careth for them, 1 Pe. 5. 7. Therefore, while the world *waketh,* God's beloved *sleep;* yea, in hours of deepest calamity he sends them the repose that a purified conscience can alone confer. Argyle slept in calm composure the night before his martyrdom: his chief persecutor saw it, and never forgot this miracle of grace. *C.*

REFLECTIONS.—The less we depend upon our own schemes, or lean to our own understanding, and the more we look up to God for help and direction, the better shall we prosper. The most prudent projects and plans, the most anxious cares, and the most toilsome labours, are all to no purpose without God's blessing. But happy in their rest, and happier in their dutiful children, are they whom he blesses!

PSALM CXXVIII. Ver. 2. To many nothing appears more irksome or more degrading than labour. In the view of God it is blessed; and gratefully to enjoy the produce of a man's toil, is declared to be a special mark of the divine goodness. *C.*

Ver. 5. *Thou shalt see the good of Jerusalem.* The believer always sees the good, even of the natural Jerusalem; he sees it in her present converts to Jesus, and her future restoration. Of the spiritual Jerusalem, the good is visible to sense, as well as to faith. *C.*

REFLECTIONS.—How excellent and profitable is real and experimental godliness, issuing in a holy practice! It draws the blessing of God upon our labours, our families, on the church of God, and on our posterity.

PSALM CXXIX. Ver. 1. The *now* here, as in Ps. 124. 1, refers to no particular time in the history of Israel; but was true at all times since Israel was first persecuted by Esau. And surely till the end, 'all who live godly in Christ Jesus must suffer persecution,' 2 Ti. 3. 12. *C.*

Ver. 2. *Prevailed.* That is, they have not prevailed to lead

8 And[l] he shall redeem Israel from all his iniquities.

PSALM CXXXI.

1 David, professing his humility, 3 exhorteth Israel to hope in God.

[a]A song of degrees of David.

LORD, [b]my heart is not haughty, nor mine eyes lofty; neither do I exercise[1] myself in great matters, or in things too high[2] for me.

2 Surely I have behaved and quieted [3]myself, [c]as a child that is weaned of his mother: my soul *is* even as a weaned child.

3 Let[d] Israel hope in the LORD from henceforth[4] and for ever.

PSALM CXXXII.

1 David, in his prayer, commendeth unto God the religious care he had for the ark. 8 His prayer at the removing of the ark, 11 with a repetition of God's promises.

[a]A song of degrees.

LORD, remember [b]David, *and* all his [c]afflictions: 2 How[d] he sware unto the LORD, *and* vowed unto [e]the mighty *God* of Jacob;

3 Surely I [g]will not come into the tabernacle of my house, nor go up into my bed;

4 I will not give sleep to mine eyes, *or* slumber to mine eyelids,

5 Until I find out [h]a place for the LORD, an habitation[1] for the mighty *God* of Jacob.

6 Lo, we heard of it at Ephratah:[2] we found it in the [3]fields of the wood.[4]

7 We[i] will go into his tabernacles: we will worship at his footstool.[5]

8 Arise,[j] O LORD, into thy rest; thou, and the ark of thy strength.

9 Let[k] thy priests be clothed with righteousness; and let thy saints shout for joy.

10 For[l] thy servant David's sake turn not away the face of thine anointed.

j Ps.68.1; 78.61.Nu.10.35.2Ch.6.41,42.
k ver.16.Job 29.14.Is.61.10; 65.14.1 Ki.8.66. *l* ver.1 1 Ki.11.13;15.5.2Sa.7.21.Ho.3.5.

A.M. cir. 2946 or 2970.
B.C. cir. 1058 or 1034.

l Mat.1.21. 1 Jn.3.5, 8. Jn. 1. 29. Ps.103.3,4. Col.1.14.Ro.6.14.

PSALM CXXXI.
B.C. cir. 1058.

a Ps. cxx.–cxxxiv. titles.
b De.17.20; 9.19. Pr. 6.17;21.4;30.13. Job 42. 3.
1 Heb. *walk*.
2 Heb. *wonderful*.
3 Heb. *my soul*.
c Mat.18.3. 1 Co. 14. 20.
d Ps.130.7;71.14;146. 5–10. He.3.6. 1 Pe.1.13.
4 Heb. *from now*.

PSALM CXXXII.
B.C. cir. 1045.

a Ps. cxx.–cxxxiv. titles.
b Ge.8.1. Ps.25.7;89. 3,20,35.
c 1 Ch. xiii.xv.xxii.–xxvi., with 1 Sa. xvi.–xxx. Is.53.2–10.
d 2 Sa. 7. 1, &c. Ps. 76.11; 56.12; 61.5, 8; 66. 13; 116. 14, 18; 119. 106. Je. 30. 21.
e Ge.17.1; 28. 14; 49. 24.
f Hag. 1. 4. Pr. 6. 4. Ec.9. 10. Mat.3.15. Jn. 9.4.
g Ac.7.46.2 Sa.6.17. 1 Ch.22.1.
1 Heb. *habitations*.
2 Shiloh, Jos. 18. 1, or Bethlehem, Mi.5.2.
3 Kirjath-jearim, 1 Sa.7.1. 1 Ch.13.5,6.
4 The meaning of ver. 5, 6 is very obscure. Probably it is as follows:—The ark of the Lord was at a distance from the royal residence. When brought back from Philistia it had been deposited in a house near Kirjath-jearim. Whether it remained there stationary, or was occasionally carried about, does not appear. Eventually David prepared a splendid tabernacle on Mount Zion for it; and when he had completed the tabernacle he sent to bring the ark. The event is celebrated in this passage. The messengers sent to bring it, heard of it at *Ephratah*—not Bethlehem, but some other place of that name near Kirjath-jearim. The last clause of ver. 6 may be rendered, 'We found it in the fields of Jearim;' *i.e.* in a house within the territory of Jearim, though outside the town.—*P.*
h Ps 122.1; 84.1,2;99. 5;5.7. Is.2.3,5.
5 Ark.

A.M. cir. 2959.
B.C. cir. 1045.

m Ps.89.3, 4, 35. Nu. 23.19.1 Sa.15.29.
n 2 Sa. 7. 12. 1 Ki. 8. 25. Ch.6. 16. Lu.1.32, 69. Ac.2.30.
6 Heb. *thy belly*.
p Is.3.10. De.6.2. Ps. 19. 11; 115. 14; 102. 28. Ro.3.21.
q Ps.78.68,69; 48.1,2; 76.2; 87.1,2,5. Ep.2.22. 2 Co.6.16.
r Ps.68.16;76.2;87.1, 2.
s Ps. 147. 14; 68. 10. Ex.23.25;20.24.
7 Or, *surely*.
t Lu.1.53.
u ver.9.2Ch.6.41. Ps. 149. 4. Phi. 3.3; 4. 4. Is. 35.10;51.11;61.10,11.
v 1 Ki. 11. 36; 15. 4. Lu.1.69. Je.23.5. Is.11. 1.Zec.3.8;6.12.
8 Or, *candle*, 2 Ch. 21.7.
w Job 8.22. Ps.35.26, 27.Ke.19.17–20.
y Ps. 72. 8–10, 17. Is. 9.6,7; 32.1; 52.13;53.12. Mat.28.18. Lu.1.33,33. 1 Ti.1.17; 6.15. Re.11. 15;17.14.

PSALM CXXXIII.
B.C. cir. 1048 or 1021.

a Ps. cxx.–cxxxiv. titles.
b Ge.13.8.He.13.1. 1 Co.1.10. Ep.4.3,6. 1 Pe. 2.17;3.8.
1 Heb. *even together*.
c Ex. 30. 25, 30. Ps. 141.5. Pr.27.9.
2 (1) Because most precious in the sight of God is a meek and quiet spirit, 1 Pe. 3. 4. (2) Because the Mosaic oil anointed to the office of priesthood, while the spiritual anoints the brethren kings and priests to God.—*C.*
3 Heb. *mouth, hole*, or *collar*, Ex. 28. 32; 39.23. Job 30.18.
d De.4.48;3.9.
4 A mountain in the north of Judea, not Zion, but Sion; another name of Hermon (De. 4. 48), still remarkable for abundant dews.—*C.*
e Ps. 68. 8. Ps.42.8;44. 4;105.8. Ro.5.21.

PSALM CXXXIV.
B.C. cir. 1016.

a Ps.cxx. &c. titles.
b Ps.135. 1, 2. Le. 8. 35.1 Ch.9.33;23.30.
1 As the angels in heaven rest not day nor night in pouring out the ardent song of praise, Re.4.8; so, according to this heavenly pattern, the priests and Levites in their courses kept nightly as well as daily watch in the temple.—*C.*

11 The[n] LORD hath sworn *in* truth unto David; he will not turn from it; [o]Of the fruit of thy body[6] will I set upon thy throne.

12 If[p] thy children will keep my covenant and my testimony that I shall teach them, their children shall also sit upon thy throne for evermore.

13 For[q] the LORD hath chosen Zion; he hath desired *it* for his habitation.

14 This[r] *is* my rest for ever: here will I dwell; for I have desired it.

15 I[s] will abundantly[7] bless her provision; [t]I will satisfy her poor with bread:

16 I[u] will also clothe her priests with salvation; and her saints shall shout aloud for joy.

17 There[v] will I make the horn of David to bud: I have ordained a lamp[8] for mine anointed.

18 His[x] enemies will I clothe with shame: but [y]upon himself shall his crown flourish.

PSALM CXXXIII.

The blessedness of unity among brethren.

[a]A song of degrees of David.

BEHOLD, how[b] good and how pleasant *it is* for brethren to dwell together in unity![1]

2 *It is* like the [c]precious ointment[2] upon the head, that ran down upon the beard, *even* Aaron's beard; that went down to the [3]skirts of his garments;

3 As the dew of [d]Hermon, *and as the dew* that descended upon the mountains of [4]Zion: for [e]there the LORD commanded the blessing, *even* life for evermore.

PSALM CXXXIV.

An exhortation to God's servants to bless God.

[a]A song of degrees.

BEHOLD, bless[b] ye the LORD, all *ye* servants of the LORD, which by night[1] stand in the house of the LORD.

Israel into apostasy, as Midian, Nu. 25. 2, 3, and afterwards Antiochus, severally attempted—nor have they prevailed to extirpate the nation, as Haman sought, and several Gentile nations have since endeavoured. *C.*

REFLECTIONS.—In every age the seed of the serpent has raged in enmity against Jesus Christ and his church. There is no going honourably to heaven but through great tribulation. But let the wicked lay their plots, and execute them as they will, God will deliver all who accept Christ; and unbelievers shall plunge themselves at last into the most dreadful disappointment and ruin. The curse of God shall blast them, with all their schemes and attempts.

PSALM CXXX. Ver. 1. On comparing this verse with Ps. 40. 1, 2, &c., there can be no doubt of their parallelism: but that Ps. xl. is spoken in the person of Christ, is settled by the quotation, He. 10. 5, whence it follows that in this psalm the speaker also is Messiah. *C.*

Ver. 3. If thou shouldst mark down sins indelibly, instead of cleansing them away in the blood of the Lamb, who would dare to appear before thee under such innumerable and condemning stains? *C.*

REFLECTIONS.—In the most fearful manner God often corrects his own children in their way to his kingdom. But while there is a praying heart within them, and a prayer-hearing God above them, there is no ground of despair. Sense of guilt is the first thing that strikes the mind of a convinced sinner; and did not God manifest his forgiving mercy, it would drive him to despair. But the faith of God's forgiving our sins, for Christ's sake, bestirs a holy awe of, regard to, and earnest waiting for him. And the more we taste of God's forgiving and redeeming goodness, the more shall we encourage others to flee to him, and hope in him, in the time of great guilt and trouble. And not only is God ready to, but he certainly will, accomplish the perfect redemption of all his people from sin and all its consequences.

PSALM CXXXI. Ver. 1. *My heart is not haughty.* The true description of him who said, 'Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden,' 'learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart, and ye shall find rest unto your souls,' Mat. 11. 28, 29. *C.*

REFLECTIONS.—Humility is the ornament of every station. A child-like spirit, meek and weaned from the things of this world, is a good symptom of a gracious heart. But to wade out of our depth, either in religion, learning, or power, is dangerous. And proud looks show a proud heart. If we are in trouble, let us patiently hope and wait till God bring us out of it. They who hope in Jesus Christ, and wait for his salvation, shall partake of it in time and in eternity.

PSALM CXXXII. Ver. 1. (1) Some suppose this psalm was written on occasion of bringing the ark from Baale, 2 Sa. vi. (2) Others, from comp. ver. 8, 9 with 2 Ch. 6. 41, 42, suppose it written by Solomon for the dedication of the temple. (3) While A. Clarke supposes it written for the dedication of the second temple. On the first of these suppositions, it is impossible to reconcile ver. 2–5 with the history in 2 Sa. 6. 9–15. And as to the second and third, neither can be reconciled with ver. 18, in which David is presented alive; whereas, at the dedication of the first temple he was ten or eleven years dead. Are we not, therefore, to understand by 'David and his afflictions,' the beloved Son of God and his sufferings? with his covenant obligations not to enter into his rest until he had found, in the heart of every believer, a residence for the Father and the Son? Jn. 14. 23. *C.*

Ver. 6. *We heard of it.* That is, of a place for the Lord—*at Ephratah;* that is, Bethlehem Ephratah, where the prophet foretold that Jesus (the true and living temple) should be born, Mi. 5. 2; Mat. 2. 6.—*Fields of the wood.* Synonymous with Ephratah—an obscure village, situated in the midst of woods. *C.*

REFLECTIONS.—Great is the mercy to have fervent prayers of our own, or of our ancestors, lying before God's throne of grace. They shall receive a gracious answer at last. Lively and zealous saints can never be at ease till the ordinances of God be regularly and honourably settled, and his presence vouchsafed, to the comfort and edification of both ministers and people. However meanly the ark of God, or even Jesus Christ himself, reside for a time, its dwelling shall at last, and for ever, be glorious. Multitudes shall flock to it; and great fellowship with God shall be there enjoyed. Happy was David's family and kingdom on Christ's account: but infinitely happier in this is the family and church of God. In virtue of JEHOVAH'S new covenant with him, his people are blessed with his presence, and with spiritual dignity, provision, salvation, and joy; while Jesus himself triumphs in everlasting honours, and unbelievers are reduced to disappointment, misery, and shame.

PSALM CXXXIII. REFLECTIONS.—Scarcely anything more ruinous hath befallen the church of God than the manifold divisions, disputes, and animosities of her members. Since God's children have one Father, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, they ought to have one heart and mind; to be united in the same worship, and affectionate in their regards to bearing with, forbearing, and forgiving one another; and only jealous who shall show the most abundant meekness, charity, and kindness to each other: this would mark them as anointed by the Spirit of Christ; would be refreshing and fructifying to their hearts and lives; and prepare them for the eternal life and blessedness above.

PSALM CXXXIV. REFLECTIONS.—How constant and active ought ministers to be in their service

2 Lift[c] up your hands *in* the sanctuary,[2] and bless the LORD.

3 The LORD, that made heaven and earth, bless[d] thee out of Zion.

PSALM CXXXV.

1 An exhortation to God's servants to praise him for his goodness, 5 for his power, 8 for his judgments. 15 The vanity of idols. 19 An exhortation to bless God.

PRAISE ye[e] the LORD. Praise ye the name[1] of the LORD; praise *him*, O ye servants of the LORD.

2 Ye that [b]stand in the house of the LORD, in the courts of the house of our God,

3 Praise[c] the LORD; for the LORD *is* good: sing praises unto his name; [d]for *it is* pleasant.

4 For[e] the LORD hath chosen Jacob[2] unto himself, *and* Israel[3] for his peculiar treasure.

5 For I know that [g]the LORD *is* great, and *that* our LORD *is* above all gods.

6 Whatsoever[h] the LORD pleased, *that* did he in heaven, and in earth, in the seas, and all deep places.[4]

7 He[i] causeth the vapours to ascend from the ends of the earth; he maketh lightnings for the rain; he bringeth the wind out of his treasuries.

8 Who[j] smote the first-born of Egypt, both of man and beast.[5]

9 *Who*[k] sent tokens and wonders into the midst of thee, O Egypt, upon Pharaoh, and upon all his servants.

10 Who[l] smote great nations, and slew mighty kings:

11 Sihon king of the Amorites, and Og king of Bashan, and all the kingdoms of Canaan:

12 And gave their land *for* an [6]heritage, [n]an heritage unto Israel his people.

13 Thy[o] name, O LORD, *endureth* for ever; *and* thy memorial, O LORD, throughout all generations.[7]

14 For[p] the LORD will judge his people; and he will repent himself concerning his servants.[8]

15 The[q] idols of the heathen *are* silver and gold, the work of men's hands.

16 They have mouths, but they speak not; eyes have they, but they see not;

17 They have ears, but they hear not; neither is there *any* breath in their mouths.

18 They[r] that make them are like unto them: *so is* every one that trusteth in them.

A.M. cir. 2988.
B.C. cir. 1016.

c 1 Ti.2.8.Ps.28.2;63.4. 1 Ki. 8. 29, 30. La. 2. 19.

[2] Or, *in holiness*, 1 Ch.16.29.

d Ps.128. 5; 28. 9; 30. 11; 67. 1, 6, 7.

PSALM CXXXV.

B.C. cir. 1016.

a Ps.145.1; 32.11; 33. 1; 113.1, 2; 134.1; 149.1, 2; ver.19, 20. Ne.9.5.

b See on Ex. 34. 5. Ps. 8. 1.—*C.*

b Ps. 92. 13; 134. 1. 1 Ch.9. 33; 23. 30. 1 Ki.8. 14. Ne.9.5.

c Ps.92.1–4; 107. 1, 8, 15, 21; 118. 68. Mat.19. 17. Ex.34.6,7.

d Ps.147.1; 33.1.

e Ex.19.5,6. De. 7. 6, 7; 32.9. 1 Pe.2.9. Tit. 2. 14. Ep.1.3–6. Ro. 8.28–30.

[2] *Jacob*—the devoted believer going forth on his pilgrimage and exile.—*C.*

[3] *Israel*—the successful wrestler (Ge. 32. 24) returning to his Father's house surrounded by the 'children of promise' and enriched by the divine blessings.—*C.*

g Ps. 95. 3. Job 11.7. Ex.18.11. De. 10. 17. 1 Ti.6.15. Re.17.14.

h Ps.115. 3; 33. 9, 11. Da.4.35. Am.4.13. Ep. 1.11.

[4] The object of this enumeration is to testify the *universality* of Jehovah's government, contrary to the *local* jurisdictions which the heathens allotted to their idol deities.—*C.*

i Je.14.22; 10.13. Job 28. 25, 26; 38. 24. Is. 55. 10, 11. Zec.10.1. Jn.3.8.

j Ex.12.29. Ps.78.51; 136.10.

[5] Heb. *from man unto beast.*

k Ex.vii.–xiv. De.10. 3,4. Ne.9.10. Ps.78.43–51; 105.27–39. Je.32.20, 21. Ac.7.36.

l Nu. 21. 24–35. Ps. 136.17–22; 14.2, 3. Ne.9. 22. De.2.30–36; 3.1–17. Jos.vi.–xx.

[6] For vindication of the justice of this sentence, see notes on Ex. 17.14. Le.18. 28.—*C.*

m Jos.12.7. Ge. 17.8. Ex.3. 8, 17. Ps. 44.1–3; 105.11; 78.55.

o Ex.3.15. Ps.102.12; 72.17. Is.42.8.

[7] Heb. *to generation and generation.*

p De.32.36. Ps.7.7,8; 12.5;94.14,15.

q Ps.115. 4–8. Is. 40. 19, 20; 44. 9–20; 46. 6, 7. Je. 10. 3–5; 51. 17, 18. Hab. 2. 18. De. 4. 28. 1 Ki. 18. 26, 27, 29. Da.5. 23.

r Ps.115. 8; 97. 7. Is. 44.9, 18, 20. Je.10.8.

[8] The Lord will be himself the ruler of Israel. From the exodus to the captivity the government of Israel was a *theocracy*. Jehovah was their monarch. He gave them their laws, led them through the wilderness, gave them the victory over the Canaanites, and in after-times delivered them into and out of the power of their enemies. The second clause of the verse means that when the Israelites deserve punishment, when they are partially overthrown and

A.M. cir. 2988.
B.C. cir. 1016.

enslaved, the Lord will mercifully stay his judgments, and avert imminent dangers.—*P.*

s ver. 1, 2; Ps. 115. 9, 11; 118. 2–4; 34. 2; 148. 1–14; 149. 2.

t Ps.76.1, 2; 65. 2, 8; 48. 1, 9; 99. 9. 2 Ch.6.6.

PSALM CXXXVI.

B.C. cir. 1045.

a Ps.106.1; 107.1; 118. 1; 119. 68. 1 Ch.16. 34, 41. 2 Ch.7.3, 6; 20.21. Ep.5. 20. Col.3.17.

[1] This psalm was manifestly designed to be sung in the public service of the sanctuary, most probably on the occasion of one or other of the great national festivals. It is so constructed that the leader makes his short statement, embodying an act of divine power or mercy, and then the whole choir bursts forth into the grand chorus of praise—'For his mercy is for ever.'—*P.*

b De.10.17. Ps. 82.1; 97.9. Ex.18.11.

[2] *God of gods.*—God above all that the nations call gods, Ex.18.11.—*C.*

c 1 Ti.6.15. Re.17.14; 19.16. Ps.83.18.

d Ps.72.18; 92.5; 86.8, 10. Job 5.9.

e Ge. 1.1. Je.10.12. Ps. 104.24. Pr. 3.19.

g Ge 1.9, &c. Je. 10. 12. Job 6.7. Ps. 24. 2; 104.3,5.

[3] That is, God raised the earth above the seas, as the mountains rise above the hills, and the hills above the valleys—an arrangement from which are derived not merely the protection of the land from the overflow of the waters, but all the advantages of springs, rivers, &c.—*C.*

h Ge.1.14–16. De. 4. 19. Ps.104.19. Je.31.35.

[4] Heb. *for the rulings by day.*

i Ex.12.29. Ps.135.8, &c.; 78.51; 105.36.

[5] Wherein lay the mercy of smiting the first-born of Egypt? To the Egyptians the stroke was no doubt in one point of view a heavy judgment; yet even to them it was in another view mercy; for it was a lesson teaching them repentance. To Israel it was altogether mercy, for it compelled their tyrannical taskmasters to liberate them from bondage.—*C.*

j Ex.13.3, 9, 17–12 51; 6.6; 15. 6, 16. Je. 32.21. De. 11.3, 4. Jos.24.5–7. 1 Sa. 12. 6, 8. Ne.9. 10, 11. Is.51.9, 10. Ac.7.36.

k Ex. 14. 21, 22. Ps. 74.13; 78.13; 66. 4, 5. Is. 63.12, 13. He.11.29.

l Ex.14.28; 15.10, 12. Ne.9.11. Ps.78.53.

[6] Heb. *shaked off.*

n Ex. 23. 18; 15. 22. De.8.2, 15. Ne. 9.12, 19. Ps. 78.53; 54; 77. 20. Is. 63.11–14; 48.21.

o De.29.7. Ps.135.10, 11. Jos.xii.xiii.

p Nu.21.21, 23. De.2. 30–36.

q De.3.1–17. Nu. 21. 33.

[7] See note on De.3. 11.—*C.*

19 Bless[s] the LORD, O house of Israel: bless the LORD, O house of Aaron:

20 Bless the LORD, O house of Levi: ye that fear the LORD, bless the LORD.

21 Blessed[t] be the LORD out of Zion, which dwelleth at Jerusalem. Praise ye the LORD.

PSALM CXXXVI.

An exhortation to give thanks to God for his mercies particularly enumerated.

O GIVE [a]thanks unto the LORD; for *he is* good: for his mercy *endureth* for ever.[1]

2 O give thanks unto the [b]God of gods:[2] for his mercy *endureth* for ever.

3 O give thanks unto the [c]LORD of lords: for his mercy *endureth* for ever.

4 To him [d]who alone doeth great wonders: for his mercy *endureth* for ever.

5 To[e] him that by wisdom made the heavens: for his mercy *endureth* for ever.

6 To[g] him that stretched out the earth [3]above the waters: for his mercy *endureth* for ever.

7 To[h] him that made great lights: for his mercy *endureth* for ever:

8 The sun[4] to rule by day: for his mercy *endureth* for ever:

9 The moon and stars to rule by night: for his mercy *endureth* for ever.

10 To[i] him that smote Egypt in their first-born:[5] for his mercy *endureth* for ever:

11 And[j] brought out Israel from among them: for his mercy *endureth* for ever:

12 With a strong hand, and with a stretched-out arm: for his mercy *endureth* for ever.

13 To[k] him which divided the Red sea into parts: for his mercy *endureth* for ever:

14 And made Israel to pass through the midst of it: for his mercy *endureth* for ever:

15 But[l] overthrew[6] Pharaoh and his host in the Red sea: for his mercy *endureth* for ever.

16 To[m] him which led his people through the wilderness: for his mercy *endureth* for ever.

17 To[o] him which smote great kings: for his mercy *endureth* for ever:

18 And slew famous kings: for his mercy *endureth* for ever:

19 Sihon[p] king of the Amorites: for his mercy *endureth* for ever:

20 And[q] Og[7] the king of Bashan: for his mercy *endureth* for ever:

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of Christ and his church! how remarkably given to prayer and praise! And the more men wait upon God, the more they shall find the blessedness of his service. But it is only as enthroned in Zion, in his temple, in Christ, and his church, that God bestows his salvation.

PSALM CXXXV. Ver. 2. Those 'that stand in the house of the Lord' are the priests and Levites in office: those that 'stand in the courts' represent worshippers not in office.—*Note.* It is not visible office, but inward worship, that constitutes nearness to God. *C.*

Ver. 7. *He causeth the vapours*, &c. To the *vaporization* of water by heat, and its *solution* in the atmosphere, the earth and its inhabitants are indebted for the innumerable blessings derived from the clouds. The amount of *vaporization* is truly astonishing. The sacred Jordan flows into the *Dead Sea*—the mighty Wolga into the Caspian—the Atlantic flows into the Mediterranean—so does the Euxine with all its tributaries—so does the Nile, and so do many rivers from Asia Minor—yet none of these seas has any outlets, all their waters are *vaporized*, and carried in clouds either to veil or irrigate the most distant lands.—*He maketh lightnings*, &c. To restore the clouds to the state of water, electricity or lightning is necessary; and what philosophical observation has thus seemed to discover in modern times, Scripture has long since expressly revealed. *C.*

Ver. 18. *Are like unto them.* As blind intellectually as the idols are naturally; and as deaf to the voice that speaks to reason and conscience, as they to the voice that addresses the outward ear. *C.*

REFLECTIONS.—The people of God should be always exercised in the most solid, extensive, and lasting joys. Everything in God's purpose, promise, nature, and works is a delightful ground thereof. And the more he is to us, or does for us, and the more we are related to him, or trust in him, the more we ought to abound in his praise. Our view of the base and insignificant idols of others, and of the stupidity of their votaries, should stir us up the more to trust in, admire, and praise our God of unbounded perfection.

PSALM CXXXVI. Ver. 1. 'For his tender mercy is to the coming age;' which includes not merely the history of mercy in past deliverances and present blessings, but the (then) future mercies in the expected coming of Messiah, and the (now) future mercies and glories of his coming again 'the second time without sin to salvation.' *C.*

Ver. 4. *Great wonders.* Miracles, as in Egypt—at the Red Sea—and in the wilderness, where he fed his people with bread from heaven. *C.*

Ver. 25. When the extent of *animal life* is examined, and the amount of food for its support calculated—and when the living God, not unintelligent nature, is considered as the *giver* both of life and food, then will this verse suggest a most prolific source of praise. But when the sight is carried beyond the 'bread that perisheth,' to that which 'endures to eternal life; and when

21 And[r] gave their land[8] for an heritage: for his mercy *endureth* for ever:

22 *Even* an heritage unto Israel his servant: for his mercy *endureth* for ever.

23 Who[s] remembered us in our low estate: for his mercy *endureth* for ever:

24 And hath redeemed us from our enemies: for his mercy *endureth* for ever.

25 Who[t] giveth food to all flesh: for his mercy *endureth* for ever.

26 O [u]give thanks unto the God of heaven: for his mercy *endureth* for ever.

PSALM CXXXVII.

1 *The constancy of the Jews in captivity.* 7 *The prophet curseth Edom and Babel.*

BY the[a] rivers of Babylon, there we [b]sat down; yea, we wept when [c]we remembered Zion.[1]

2 We[d] hanged our harps upon the willows in the midst thereof.

3 For[e] there they that carried us away captive required of us a song;[2] and they that wasted us[3] *required of us* mirth, *saying,* Sing us *one* of the songs of Zion.

4 How[g] shall we sing the LORD's song in a strange land?[4]

5 If[h] I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget *her cunning.*

6 If I do not remember thee, let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth; [i]if I prefer not Jerusalem above my chief joy.[5]

7 Remember,[j] O LORD, [k]the children of Edom in the day of Jerusalem; who said, Rase[6] *it,* rase *it, even* to the foundation thereof.

8 O daughter[7] of Babylon, [l]who art to be destroyed;[8] happy *shall he be* that rewardeth thee as thou hast served us.[9]

9 Happy *shall he be* that taketh and [m]dasheth thy little ones against the stones.[1]

PSALM CXXXVIII.

1 *David praiseth God for the truth of his word.* 4 *He prophesieth that the kings of the earth shall praise God.* 7 *He professeth his confidence in God.*

A psalm of David.

I WILL praise[a] thee with my whole heart: before[b] the gods will I sing praise unto thee.

2 I[c] will worship toward thy holy temple, and[d] praise thy name for thy loving-kindness and for thy truth: for [e]thou hast magnified thy word above all thy name.

3 In[g] the day when I cried thou answeredst me, *and* [h]strengthenedst me *with* strength in my soul.

4 All[i] the kings of the earth shall praise thee, O LORD, when they hear the words of thy mouth.[1]

5 Yea, they shall sing in the ways of the LORD: for [j]great *is* the glory of the LORD.

6 Though[k] the LORD *be* high, yet hath he respect unto the lowly: but the proud he knoweth afar off.[2]

7 Though I walk in the midst of [l]trouble, thou wilt revive me: thou shalt stretch forth thine hand against the wrath of mine enemies, and thy right hand shall save me.

8 The[n] LORD will perfect *that which* concerneth me:[3] thy[o] mercy, O LORD, *endureth* for ever: [p]forsake not the works of thine own hands.

PSALM CXXXIX.

1 *David praiseth God for his all-seeing providence,* 17 *and for his infinite mercies.* 19 *He defieth the wicked.* 23 *He prayeth for sincerity.*

To the chief musician, A psalm of David.

O LORD, thou[a] hast searched me, and known *me.*

2 Thou knowest my [b]down-sitting, and mine up-rising; [c]thou understandest my thought afar off.[1]

3 Thou compassest[2] my path, and my lying down, and art [d]acquainted *with* all my ways.

4 For *there is* not a word in my tongue, *but,* lo, O LORD, [e]thou knowest it altogether.

5 Thou[g] hast beset me behind and before, and laid thine hand upon me.

6 *Such*[h] knowledge *is* too wonderful for me; it is high, I cannot *attain*[3] unto it.

7 Whither[i] shall I go from thy Spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence?

8 If[j] I ascend up into heaven, thou *art* there: if I make my bed in hell,[4] behold,[k] thou *art there.*

9 *If* I take the wings of the morning,[5] *and* dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea;

10 Even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me.

11 If I say, Surely the darkness shall cover me; [l]even the night shall be light about me.

12 Yea, the darkness [m]hideth[6] not from thee; but the night shineth as the day: the darkness and the light *are* both alike[7] *to thee.*

A.M. cir. 2959. B.C. cir. 1045.

r Nu.xxxii.Jos.xii.–xxi.Ps.44.2,3;66.12;78.55;105.44;135.12.Je.32.22.Ne.9.22,24.

8 See notes on Le. 18. 28 and Ex. 17. 14.—*C.*

s Eze. 16. 3–14. Ps. 106. 43–45; 72. 12–14; 102.17. Is.63. 9. De.32. 36. Tit. 2. 14. Lu. 1.48, 74.

t Ps. 104. 27; 145. 15, 16; 147.9; 111.5. Mat.6. 11,26. Ac.14.16,17.

u ver.1–3. Ps. 115.3; 123.1. Jonahi.9. Re.11. 13.

PSALM CXXXVII.

B.C. cir. 587.

a Ge.2.10–14. Eze.1. 1. Da.8.1.

b Job 2.12. La. 2.10. Je.15.17.

c Ps. 42. 4. Je. 51. 50. Zep.3.10.

1 This is a psalm written by some exile as he sat on the bank of the Euphrates. It is sweet, beauiful, and of deepest pathos. It exhibits a settled and almost gloomydespondency, an undying love for home and fatherland, and a bitter memory of cruelty and injustice.—*P.*

d La.5.15;1.16,17; 2. 5,10;3.1,49.

e Ps. 79. 1; 44. 13–16. Je.9.11. La.2.15,16.

2 Heb. *the words of a song.*

3 Heb. *laid us on heaps.*

g Am.8.3. La. 5. 15. Mat.7.6.

4 Heb. *land of a stranger.*

h Da.6.10,11. Je. 51. 50. Ne.1.3,4. Ps.cxxii. 2 Co.11. 28, 29. Phi. 2. 4, 21. Job 31.22.1 Sa.4.19, 21,22.

i Ps.84.10.

5 Heb. *the head of my joy.*

j 1 Sa.15.2.Ho.7.2.

k Ob.10–14. Je.49.7. Eze. 25. 12. La. 4. 22. Mal.1.4.

6 Heb. *make bare.*

7 *Daughter.*—The new city built by Nebuchadnezzar.—*C.*

l Is.xiii.xiv.xxi.xlvii. Je.l.li.Re.18.6.

8 Heb. *wasted.*

9 Heb. *that recompenseth unto thee thy deed which thou wistst to us.*

m Is.13.16. Ho.10.14; 13.16. Re.2.23;13.10.

1 Heb. *the rock.*

PS. CXXXVIII.

B.C. cir. 1048.

a Ps.9.1; 104.33,34. 1 Co.14.15.

b Ps. 119. 46; 82. 1, 6; 107. 32, or 1 Co. 11. 10. He.1.14.

c 1 Ki.8.29. Ps.28.2; 99.5,9; 11.4. Jonah 2.4. Hab.2.20.

d Is. 63. 7. Ps. 115. 1; 86.5,12–16;89.1.

e Is. 42. 21. Mi. 7. 20. Nu.23.19. Mat.5.18.

g Ps.18.6; 34.4–6. Is. 65.24.

* 'This psalm relates to the omnipresence of God, and contains such reflections as would recur to one meditating on that attribute of Deity. It is the most distinct and full statement of that doctrine which is to be found in the Hebrew Scriptures, and the doctrine is presented in language which has never been surpassed for sublimity and beauty. The leading idea in the psalm seems to be that of

A.M. cir. 2956. B.C. cir. 1048.

comfort from the fact that God is everywhere; that he knows all that pertains to us; that we can never be hidden from his view; that he has known us from the beginning; that as he fashioned and formed us—making us what we are—he knows all our necessities and can supply them' (*Barnes*).—*P.*

h 2 Co. 12. 9; 4. 16. Zec. 10. 12. Phi. 4. 13. Ep.3.16.

i Ps. 72. 11; 102. 15. Re.21.24. Is.52.15; 53. 12; 60.3,5,11,16; 49.23. Ac.8.39.

1 The word of promise, given and fulfilled; the word of mercy, pitying and pardoning transgressors; the word of salvation, saving a lost world by the gift of an only and beloved Son. The words of Scripture, if only thoughtfully read and considered, could not fail to elicit praise from every heart.—*P.*

j Ex.15.11. Is.6.3;11. 9. Mal.1.11. Re.11.15; 12.10.

k Is. 57. 15; 66.1, 2. 1 Pe.5.5. Ps.51.17; 113.4, 5. Pr.3.34. Lu.18.14;14. 11;1.51–53.

2 So that the holy God will not draw near to them; nor suffer them, in their pride, to draw nigh to him.—*C.*

l Job 23.15;19.25–27. Ps.23.4; 42.8; 76.10; 77. 13;20.6. Mi.7.8–10. De. 32.36. Is.41.10–16;43.1, 2. Ho.1.7.

n Is. 26. 12. Ps. 57.2. Phi.1.6. 1 Th.5.24.

3 He will perfect it in my sacrifice for sin, He. 10. 14, and in the salvation of his church, Ep.5.25–27.—*C.*

o Ps.100.5;103.17.

p Job 10.8. Ps.38.21; 71.9,18; 94.14. 1 Pe.1.5. Jude 1.

PSALM CXXXIX.

B.C. cir. 1058.

a Ps.17.3. Je.17.10; 12.3. He.4.13. Re.2.23. Jn.21.17,2 Ti.2.19.

b 2 Ki. 6. 12; 19. 27. La.3.63. De.6.7. Is.37. 28.

c Ps.94.11. Mat.9.3, 4. Jn. 2.24,25;21.17. He. 4.12.

1 See note * in first column.

2 Or, *winnowest,* Job 31.4.

d Ps.1.6. Re.2.2,19.

e He.4.13. Zep.1.12. Je.17.10. Is.65.24. Mal. 3.16. Lu.19.31–33.

g Job 23.10. De.33. 27.

h Job 42. 3; 11. 7, 8. Ps.40.5; 131.1. Pr.30.2, 3.

3 I cannot, in this state of humiliation in the flesh, overtake it.—*C.*

i Je.23.24. Jonah 1.3. 1 Ki.8.27.

j Am.9.2–4. Is.66.1.

4 According to Parkhurst, the original refers, not to the state of the dead, but to the lowest depths.—*C.*

k Pr.15.11. Job 26.6.

5 Rays of light, or rising sun.

l Job 26. 6; 34.21,22. Is.29.15. Je.23.24. He. 4.13.

m Da.2.22.

6 Heb. *darkeneth.*

7 Heb. *as* is *the darkness so* is *the light.*

Jesus is seen to be that 'Bread that cometh down from heaven,' how much more wonderful then the number and necessities of the claimants, and how much more wonderful the grace of the Provider! *C.*

REFLECTIONS.—Alas! how averse are mankind to the infinitely reasonable and delightful duty of praise and thanksgiving! They need repeated calls to it, even after it has been attended with remarkable blessings. God's mercy and goodness delightfully fill his nature and works, the most awful and tremendous not excepted. And stupid and careless observers must they be of creatures and events, who do not everywhere perceive the manifold and everlasting mercy and kindness of God. Past mercies ought never to be forgotten, nor present ones overlooked; and all should issue in repeated returns of grateful praise

PSALM CXXXVII. Ver. 1. The chief rivers of the Babylonian empire were, the united Euphrates and Tigris, which, dividing into several branches, form many rivers. See Eze. 1. 1; Da. 8. 2. Of the united Euphrates and Tigris, and the canals traversing the city to water its palaces, parks, and gardens, the psalm evidently seems to speak. *C.*

Ver. 2. Babylon was a square sixty miles in circuit; its streets fifteen miles in length. There will, therefore, be no difficulty in imagining how in so many squares as the city afforded, there would be a profusion of *willows* for the harps of the melancholy exiles. *C.*

Ver. 3. Want of sympathy with the feelings of others is one of the commonest forms of human selfishness—of human sinfulness. *C.*

Ver. 9. *Happy.* This implies no praise of deeds of horror, but the honour due to the judge who pronounces sentence against an incorrigible criminal. *C.*

REFLECTIONS.—The sins of God's people often reduce them to great misery on earth. They are often taught the worth of ordinances by the want of them: and their temple songs are turned into howlings and grief. But cruel are the tender mercies of the wicked to God's suffering saints. And it is base and blasphemous to insult them with their worshipping of God. Sacred songs ill suit the call or company of profane scoffers. That which is holy ought not to be given to dogs, nor pearls cast before swine. The interest of Jesus' church and kingdom must ever be dearer to us than our life: and if duty be once clear, nothing must deter us from it. Not selfish desire, but holy zeal, must dictate our requests for the blessings of God on the church. Malicious and inhuman is all wickedness, and tremendous and correspondent is the punishment of it!

13 For [c]thou hast possessed my reins: thou hast covered me in my mother's womb.

14 I will praise thee; for [p]I am fearfully *and* wonderfully made: [q]marvellous *are* thy works; and *that* my soul knoweth right well.[8]

15 My[r] substance[9] was not hid from thee, when I was made in [s]secret, *and* curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth.[1]

16 Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being unperfect; and in thy book all[2] *my members* were written, *which* in continuance were fashioned,[3] when[t] *as yet there was* none of them.[4]

17 How[u] precious also are thy thoughts unto me, O God! how great is the sum of them!

18 *If* I should count them, they are more in number than the sand: [v]when I awake, I am still with thee.

19 Surely[w] thou wilt slay the wicked, O God: depart[y] from me therefore, ye bloody men.

20 For[z] they speak against thee wickedly, *and* thine enemies take *thy name* in vain.

21 Do[a] not I hate[5] them, O LORD, that hate thee? and am not I grieved with those that rise up against thee?

22 I hate them with perfect hatred; I count them mine enemies.

23 Search[b] me, O God, and know my heart; try me, and know my thoughts;

24 And[c] see if *there be any* [6]wicked way[7] in me, and lead me in [d]the way everlasting.

PSALM CXL.

1 *David prayeth to be delivered from the mischief of his enemies.* 8 *He prayeth against them.* 12 *He comforteth himself by confidence in God.*

To the chief musician, A psalm of David.

DELIVER me,[a] O LORD, from the evil man: preserve me from the violent man;[1]

2 Which[b] imagine mischiefs in *their* heart: continually are they gathered together *for* war.

3 They[c] have sharpened their tongues like a serpent: adders' poison *is* under their lips. Selah.

4 Keep[d] me, O LORD, from the hands of the wicked; preserve me from the violent man, who have purposed to overthrow my goings.

5 The[e] proud have hid a snare for me, and cords; they have spread a net by the way-side; they have set gins for me. Selah.[2]

6 I[g] said unto the LORD, Thou *art* my God: hear the voice of my supplications, O LORD.

7 O GOD the Lord, [h]the strength of my salvation, thou hast covered my head in the day of battle.[3]

8 Grant[i] not, O LORD, the desires of the wicked: further not his wicked device,[4] *lest* they exalt themselves. Selah.

9 *As*[j] *for* the head of those that compass me about, let the mischief of their own lips cover them.[5]

10 Let[k] burning coals fall upon them: let them be cast into the fire; into [l]deep pits, that they rise not up again.[6]

11 Let not [7]an evil-speaker[8] be established in the earth: evil shall hunt the violent man to [o]overthrow *him*.[9]

12 I know [n]that the LORD will maintain the cause of the afflicted, *and* the right of the poor.

13 Surely the [o]righteous shall give thanks unto thy name: the upright shall [p]dwell in thy presence.

PSALM CXLI.

1 *David prayeth that his suit may be acceptable,* 3 *his conscience free from guilt,* 7 *and his life safe from the snares of the wicked.*

A psalm of David.

LORD, I[a] cry unto thee: make haste unto [1]me; give ear unto my voice, when I cry unto thee.

2 Let my prayer be set forth[2] before thee [b]*as* incense; [c]*and* the lifting up of my hands *as* the evening sacrifice.

A.M. cir. 2946. B.C. cir. 1058.

o Pr. 16. 1, 9. Job 10. 11. Zec. 12. 1.
p Ps. 104. 24. Ge. 1. 26.
q Re. 15. 3. Job 5. 9. Ps. 92. 4, 5; 111. 2; 94. 9.
8 Heb. *greatly.*
r Job 10. 8–10. Ec. 11. 5.
9 Or, *strength* or *body.*
s The womb, Ep. 4. 9.
1 The language is figurative, and signifies a dark obscure place which man cannot see, and to which he has no access.—*P.*
2 Heb. *all of them.*
3 Or, what *days they should be fashioned.*
t Ro. 4. 17. He. 11. 3.
4 While as yet none of them was perfected, as the reference to *imperfection* clearly proves.—*C.*
u Ps. 40. 5; 35. 10; 31. 19; 36. 7. Je. 29. 11. Is. 55. 8, 9. Zec. 9. 17.
v Ps. 16. 8; 63. 6. Ge. 5. 24; 6. 9. 1 Jn. 1. 3.
w Ps. 5. 6; 55. 15, 23; 59. 13; 64. 7; 94. 23; 28. 4. Is. 11. 4.
x Ps. 119. 115; 6. 8.
y Job 21. 14, 15. Ps. 73. 8, 9. Is. 37. 23; 57. 4. Re. 13. 6.
z 2 Ch. 19. 2. Ps. 15. 4; 31. 6; 119. 136, 158. Pr. 29. 27.
6 The word 'hate' must be interpreted in accordance with the analogy of Scripture. It means to disapprove strongly of a certain line of conduct.—*P.*
a Ps. 26. 1, 2; ver. 1. Job 31. 6.
b Ps. 7. 3, 4; 17. 3; 59. 3.
c Ps. 7. 3, 4; 17. 3; 59. 3.
6 Heb. *way of pain* or *grief,* 1 Ch. 4. 10.
7 'Any way of sorrow;' that is, of vanity, leading to vexation.—*C.*
d Ps. 81. 13; 143. 10; 119. 1, 32. Jn 14. 6. Col. 2. 6.

PSALM CXL.

a Ps. 43. 1; 59. 1–3; 71. 4; 64. 1, 2; ver. 4. 2 Th. 3. 2.
1 Heb. *man of violence,* Hab. 1. 2, 3.
b Ps. 38. 12; 21. 11; 2. 1, 2; 120. 7. Pr. 12. 20; 6. 18.
c Ps. 52. 2, 3; 55. 3; 57. 4; 64. 3; 58. 4. Is. 59. 3–8. Ro. 3. 13. Jude 15.

* This prayer against an *evil-speaker,* an incuicator of false doctrines and immoral practices, a calumniator, or a railer against lawful authorities, is usually so visibly fulfilled, that the influence derived from such practices has never, in the mercy of Heaven, been permitted to continue for many successive years.—*C.*

d Ps. 26. 1; 17. 8, 9; 25. 1; 55. 1–3, 18; 56. 5, 6; 59. 1, 2; 64. 4, 5. Mat. 22. 15–22.
e Ps. 119. 21, 85, 110; 35. 7; 57. 6; 141. 9; 142. 3. Je. 18. 22. 1 Sa. 19. 11–24. Pr. 29. 5.
2 See note on Ps. 3. 2.—*C.*
g Ps. 16. 2; 31. 14; 91. 2; 142. 5–7; 22. 1; 130. 1, 2. La. 3. 54, 55.
h Ps. 18. 32, 35, 50; 28. 8. Ge. 15. 1; 49. 24. De. 33. 27, 29. Is. 12. 2.
3 That is, Thou hast so guarded me by thy providences from the strokes of the enemy as if a shield had been held over my head. The psalmist realized to the full the divine protection.—*P.*
i Job 5. 12, 13. Ps. 33. 10; 112. 10; 37. 12.
4 Or, *let them not be exalted,* De. 32. 27.
j Ps. 7. 16; 64. 8; 94. 23. Pr. 12. 13; 18. 7.
5 *Cover them*—that is, with shame and confusion of face. Ps. 35. 26; 109. 29; alluding to some disgraceful robe worn by condemned criminals.—*C.*
k Ps. 11. 6; 18. 12; 120. 4; 21. 9; 59. 13. Ge. 19. 24.
l Ps. 55. 23. Pr. 28. 10, 17. Re. 21. 8.
6 In explanation and vindication of such prayers, not against enemies, as such, but against impenitent, rebellious sinners, see note on Ps. 5. 10; 35. 8.—*C.*
7 Heb. *a man of tongue,* ver. 9. Ps. 64. 7, 8.
8 See note * in first column
9 Or, *an evil-speaker, a wicked man of violence* be *established in the earth: let him be hunted to his overthrow.* Is. 3. 11. Ps. 9. 16; 34. 21; 7. 14–16; 52. 4, 5.
m Ps. 109. 31; 22. 24; 102. 17; 72. 4, 12–14; 9. 4. 1 Ki. 8. 45, 48.
o Ps. 32. 11; 33. 1.
p Ps. 23. 6; 16. 11; 73. 24. 1 Th. 4. 17.

PSALM CXLI.

a Ps. 130. 1, 2; 70. 1; 4. 1; 5. 1, 7; 18. 6; 31. 22; 6.
1 This is a sequel to the preceding psalm, wherein Messiah interposes his righteous advocacy in behalf of his afflicted but beloved church, 1 Jn. 2. 1.—*C.*
2 Heb. *directed.*
b Re. 5. 8; 8. 3, 4. Ex. 30. 7, 8. 1 Ju. 1. 10.
c 1 Ti. 2. 8. Ps. 28. 2; 63. 4; 134. 2. Ex. 29. 39–42.

PSALM CXXXVIII. Ver. 1. When it is considered (1) That the speaker is one; (2) That he promises unreservedly his whole heart; and (3) That these words are a distinct parallel to Ps. 18. 49; Ro. 15. 9, then there can remain little question that the speaker is Christ. *C.*

Ver. 2. *Magnified thy word.* Thy word of promise, in its actual fulfilment, has magnified thee beyond all that thy name had led thy people to expect. See notes on Ex. 34. 5; Ps. 8. 1. *C.*

REFLECTIONS.—The greatest on earth need not be ashamed of the public and regular worship of God. And the more he manifests his loving-kindness and faithfulness in the fulfilment of his word to us, the more high and hearty ought to be our notes of praise. If we trust to his truth, he will display every perfection, and make every creature to work together for the glorious accomplishment of his word. If we flee to God in prayer, he will not leave us destitute. And if he, by our afflictions, strengthen us inwardly in our souls, we are great gainers. The cheerful behaviour of saints in the ways of God engages their neighbours to join with them in it. And the more humble men are, the more God regards and exalts them. And nothing is more detestable to him than indulged pride. Whatever trouble God casts his people into, he will protect and preserve them in it. And the good works of grace or salvation which he begins, he will perfect at last. He will never leave nor forsake his own. Let us then trust in him at all times, and pour out our hearts before him.

PSALM CXXXIX. Ver. 1. The speaker is *one* throughout the whole psalm—one still with God, ver. 18—one who drives far from him all 'bloody men.' ver. 19, who hates them with 'perfect hatred;' and who, so far from shrinking from the eye of omniscience, boldly requests to be both 'searched' and 'tried.' Let any one read and study these characteristics, and say, Is not this the Christ? *C.*

Ver. 2. *Afar off*—'of old,' that date described, Pr. 8. 22–31; from 'before God's works of old—from everlasting—from the beginning—before the earth was.' *C.*

Ver. 7. *Spirit,* when contrasted with presence, literally *faces,* means the Holy Spirit, Jn. 14. 16, 17, 26. This passage asserts, in the strongest manner, the omnipresence of the Spirit: but whoever is omnipresent must be God. *C.*

Ver. 12. That darkness to one creature is light to another is beyond question. This consideration may help our infirmity in discerning how much more to the Creator darkness must be as light—for 'God is light, and in him is no darkness at all.' *C.*

Ver. 13. *Reins.* The *kidneys*—called the *reins,* from the governing and guiding power which the Hebrews attributed to them in the animal and mental economy—were primary parts of *the inwards,* offered in sacrifice to God. See Le. 3. 4, 10, 15. To 'possess the reins,' therefore, signifies to possess the whole internal powers, as a devoted sacrifice to the divine majesty. *C.*

Ver. 24. *Lead me,* &c. Lead me 'in the old way' in which believers have worshipped thee, in spirit and in truth, since the beginning. *C.*

REFLECTIONS.—In the faith of these things let me always live, and always act, whether in religious or in civil affairs, under the deepest impressions of God's eyes upon me, his perfect knowledge of my heart, my thoughts, and deeds; of his all-filling presence ever with me, to witness, support, or comfort me; of his marvellous formation of me in nature and grace; of his new-covenant marriage to me, and his everlasting redemption of my soul. Let my whole life, night and day, be filled up with precious, fixed, and delightful thoughts concerning these things, and with holy improvements of them. Let me never make the Lord's enemies my intimates. They who hate God hate his name and image wherever it appears. Let me therefore hate the ways of sinners, while I have true love and pity to their souls. And let a thorough cleansing from sin, and progress in holiness, be the earnest desire and ineffable delight of my soul.

PSALM CXL. Ver. 1. 'Of whom speaketh the prophet this? of himself, or of some other man?' Ac. 8. 34. Let the prayerful inquirer consult Ps. xl., interpreted by He. 10. 5; then compare Ps. 2. 4, interpreted by Ac. 4. 26, with Ps. 59. 8, and consider its prayer for deliverance, compared with the similar prayer of this psalm, see also Ps. xliii. lix. lxiv. lxxi.—and the parallelism, nay the identity of the descriptions and petitions must point to Messiah in the days of his flesh, as the speaker in this psalm. The chief object of the prayer is deliverance from Judas and his employers, the high-priest and Pharisees, and from Antichrist, that wicked one, 2 Th. 2. 8, and his persecuting followers in apostate Babylon. *C.*

REFLECTIONS.—Behold, as in a glass, how maliciously Jesus Christ was reproached and persecuted; how he gave himself to prayer on account of it; and how the judgment of God overtook his Jewish murderers and persecutors! Let us likewise observe, that sin turns men into a kind of devils, in deceit, malice, and diligence in evil, and in inveterate opposition to the people of God. But the saints may attain, even amidst their troubles, to the most pleasant prayers and praises; for God terribly resents the injuries done to his people; and kindly will he maintain their cause, and for their protection afford them his presence.

PSALM CXLI. REFLECTIONS.—A deep sense of

3 Set[d] a watch, O LORD, before my mouth; keep the door of my lips.

4 Incline[e] not my heart to *any* evil thing, to practise wicked works with men that work iniquity: [g]and let me not eat of their dainties.[3]

5 [h]Let[4] the righteous smite me;[5] *it shall be* a kindness: and let him reprove me; *it shall be* an excellent oil, *which* shall not break my head: for [i]yet my prayer also *shall be* in their calamities.

6 When[j] their judges are overthrown in stony places, they shall hear my words; [k]for they are sweet.

7 Our[l] bones are scattered at the grave's mouth,[6] as when one cutteth and cleaveth *wood* upon the earth.

8 But[n] mine eyes *are* unto thee, O GOD the Lord: in thee is my trust; leave not my soul destitute.[7]

9 Keep me from the [o]snares *which* they have laid for me, and the gins of the workers of iniquity.

10 Let[p] the wicked fall into their own nets, whilst that I withal escape.[8]

PSALM CXLII.

David showeth that in his trouble all his comfort was in prayer unto God.

Maschil of David;[1] A prayer when he was [a]in the cave.

I CRIED unto[b] the LORD with my voice; with my voice unto the LORD did I make my supplication.

2 I[c] poured out my complaint before him; I showed before him my trouble.

3 When[d] my spirit was overwhelmed within me, then thou knewest my path: in [f]the way wherein I walked [e]have they privily laid a snare for me.

4 I looked on *my* right hand, and beheld,[2] but[g] *there was* no man that would know me: refuge failed me;[3] no man cared for my soul.[4]

5 I[h] cried[5] unto thee, O LORD: I said, Thou *art* my refuge *and* [i]my portion in the land of the living.

6 Attend unto my cry; for [j]I am brought very low: [k]deliver me from my persecutors; for they are stronger than I.

7 Bring[l] my soul out of prison, that I may praise thy name: [m]the righteous shall compass me about; for thou shalt [o]deal bountifully with me.

PSALM CXLIII.

1 David prayeth for favour in judgment. 3 He complaineth of his griefs. 5 He strengtheneth his faith by meditation and prayer. 7 He prayeth for grace, 9 for deliverance, 10 for sanctification, 12 and for the destruction of his enemies.

A psalm of David.

HEAR my[a] prayer, O LORD; give ear to my supplications: [b]in thy faithfulness answer me, *and* in thy righteousness.[1]

2 And[c] enter not into judgment with thy servant: for [d]in thy sight shall no man living be justified.

3 For[e] the enemy hath persecuted my soul; he hath smitten my life down to the ground; he hath made me to dwell in darkness, as those that have been long dead.

4 Therefore[g] is my spirit overwhelmed within me; my heart within me is desolate.

5 I[h] remember the days of old; I meditate on all thy works; I muse on the work of thy hands.

6 I [i]stretch forth my hands unto thee: [j]my soul *thirsteth* after thee, as a thirsty land. [2]Selah.

7 Hear[k] me speedily, O LORD; my spirit faileth: hide not thy face from me, lest I be like[3] unto them that go down into the pit.

8 Cause[l] me to hear thy loving-kindness in the morning;[4] for in thee do I trust: [n]cause me to know the way wherein I should walk; [o]for I lift up my soul unto thee.

9 Deliver[p] me, O LORD, from mine enemies: [q]I flee unto thee to hide me.[5]

10 Teach[r] me to do thy will; for thou *art* my God: [s]thy Spirit *is* good, lead me into the [t]land of uprightness.

11 Quicken[u] me, O LORD, for thy name's sake: [v]for thy righteousness' sake bring my soul out of trouble.

12 And[x] of thy mercy cut off mine [6]enemies,

A.M. — B.C. —

d Ps.16.1;17.4,5,8;71.8,with 39.1. Ja. 1.26; 3.2.
e Ps. 119. 36. Mat. 6. 13. Ja.1.13.
g Pr.23.6; 1.10–19; 7.7–23.9.17.
8 Christ came 'eating and drinking' (Mat. 11. 19), and therefore guards himself by prayer against that temptation of appetite by which Satan made his first attempt against him (Mat. 4. 3), and by which the men of the world still continue to be occupied and seduced, Mat. 6. 32.. *C.*
h Pr.9.8;19.25;25.12; 27.6; 6.23; 15. 5, 32, 33. Ga.6.1. Le.19.17. Mat. 18.15.
4 Or, *Let the righteous smite me kindly and reprove me, let not* their *precious oil break my head*, &c.
5 See note * below.
i Ja. 5.16. Mat. 5.44.
j 1 Sa.31.1,8;24.9–19; 26.17–25.2 Sa.1.17–27.
k 2 Sa.23.1.
l 1 Sa. 22. 18, 19. Re. 11.8,9. Eze. 37.2,11.
6 Describing the persecution of the apostles and martyrs. See Ro. 8. 36. Thus the bones of Wickliffe, the harbinger of the Reformation, were dug up and burned, and refused even the privilege of a peaceful grave.—*C.*
n 2 Ch.20.12. Ps.123.1,2;25.15.
7 Heb. *make not my soul bare*, Ps.102.17;73.9,18.
o Pr.13.14. Ps.140. 5; 119.110;142 3.
p Ps. 35. 8; 7.16; 91.2, 3. Pr.11.8.
8 Heb. *pass over.*

PSALM CXLII.

B.C. cir. 1058.

1 Or, A psalm of *David, giving instruction*, Ps.32. title.
a 1 Sa.22.1, or 24.3.
b Ex.14.15. Ps. 55.1, 2;77.1;130.1. He.5.7.
c Ps. 62. 8; 102. title–10;6.1–4;88.1–18. Is.26. 16;38.14.
d Ps.143.1,4;61.2;22. 14;102.41.6;17.3.
e Ps.140.5; 141.9; 56. 6.
2 Or, *Look on the right hand and see.*
g Ps.69.20;31.11; 88. 8,18.2 Ti.4.16.
3 Heb. *perished from me.*
4 Heb. *no man sought after my soul.*
h Ps. 31.14;46.1;91.2; 9.4.2 Ch.20.12.
5 Even so our Lord uttered his loud and solitary cry upon the cross, 'Father, into thy hands I commit my spirit,' Lu. 23. 46.—*C.*
i Ps.16.5;73. 26; 119. 57; 27. 13; 56. 13. La.3. 24.
j Ps.116.6;130.1;143. 3,7;79.8.

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* 'Let the righteous' (either the righteous *God*, or the righteous *man*) out of kindness correct and reprove me; but let not the oil of the impious anoint my head—for my prayer shall ever be against their wicked doings, saying — Let their judges be cast down in stony places, that they may hearken to my words, for they are sweet.—*C.*

A.M. cir. 2946. B.C. cir. 1058.

k Ps.7.1,5;38. 19; 31. 15; 119.86; 18. 16. 1 Sa. xxii.–xxiv. Ro.8.33,37.
l See title. Ps.142.7; 130. 1; 88. 4–7; 69. 1, 2; 143.1,11. Is.61.1.
m Ps.34.2;119.74;107. 42;35.27;7.7.
o Ps.13.6;119.17;116. 7;103.1–5.

PSALM CXLIII.

B.C. cir. 1021.

a Ps.4.1;5.1,2; 130.2; 31.1;18.6.
b 2 Sa.7.25. Ps.74.20; 7.6,8.
1 He that prays to be answered *in righteousness* must be one that is conscious of being himself *righteous*, even 'Jesus Christ the righteous,' 'whom the Father heareth always.'—*C.*
c Job 40.4;14.3,4. Ps. 130.3. Ec.7.20.
d Ex. 34.7. Job 4. 17; 9.2,3;15.14;25.4. Ro.3. 20. Ga.2.16.
e Ps.142.6;140.1–5;7. 1,2;17.9;31.12,13; 88.4–7;102.3–11.
g Ps.142.3;61.2; 102. 3, 4; 119. 81–83; 55. 3. Mar.14.33.
h Ps.77.5,10,11;142.6. 1 Sa.27.48.
i Ps.88.9;68.31; 28.2. 1 Ti.2.8. 1 Ki.8.38.
j Ps.63.1;42.1;84.2.
2 See note on Ps. 3. 2.—*C.*
k Ps.13.1–4;40.13,17; 27.9; 88.3,4. Ca.5.6. Is. 57.16.
3 Or, *for I am become like*, &c.
l Ps. 30. 5; 69. 13, 16; 119.49–52;46. 5;5.3; 36. 7;31.19.
4 That is, in the morning of the resurrection—the moment that truly evidenced the love of the Father to the Son, and to the church his body, Ep. 1. 19, 20, 22.—*C.*
m Ps.73.24; 5.8; 25.4; 32.8;119.5,34;31.5.
o Ps.25.1. La.3.41.
p Ps.7. 1; 31. 1; 59. 1; 140.1;142.6,7.
q Ps.31.2;57.1;32.7.
5 Heb. *hide me with thee.*
r Mi. 4. 2. 1 Jn. 2. 27. Ps.25.4,5; 139.24; 31. 3; 110.5. Je.31.18.
s Ne.9.20. 2 Ti. 1. 7. Jn.14.26;16.13,14.
t Is.26.10.
u Hab. 3. 2. Ep. 2. 1. Ps.119.25,37,40, 50; 80. 19;85.6.
v Ps.142.7;7.6,8;ver. 1.
x Ps.136.15–20;59.12, 15;55.23;21.8.
6 In mercy to me and to society at large. The influence of one wicked man is immense. Human nature is upon his side, because it is corrupt and prone to evil. The general tone and sentiment of society is on his side.—*P.*

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need will make us importunate in prayer for speedy help, gracious acceptance, direction, preservation, and merciful restraints. Faithful and Christian reproof is a necessary and kind office of friendship. And to love reproof, and be thankful for it, is one of the surest symptoms of a gracious heart. But that reproof will be most effectual which comes from those whose unsuspected piety gives weight to their words, and whose tender manner of applying it renders it soft and penetrating. For men to pray to be put right, and yet to be displeased with rebuke for what is wrong, is base dissimulation. Often people never regard God's candidates for the magistracy or ministry, till their own be destroyed or shamefully disgraced. But let the case of the church or saints be ever so deplorable, fervent prayers will soon render it hopeful. And if our eyes be fixed on God, our feet shall not slip. But the destruction of the wicked is determined, and their devices to hurt others shall but hasten their own wretchedness.

PSALM CXLII. Ver. 1. This is a specimen of those 'prayers and supplications, with strong crying and tears,' which Christ offered up 'in the days of his flesh' to 'Him that was able to save him, and was heard in that he feared,' He. 5. 7. If any desire more evidence of Christ speaking in these words, let them examine Ps. xvi. xxxi. xxxiv. lxix., which various quotations in the New Testament have, by the Spirit, interpreted of him; and their parallelism with this psalm must equally assign it to Messiah. *C.*

REFLECTIONS.—Sore troubles ought to produce fervent prayers. They who have the God of all grace to flee to, may safely leave in his hand all their troubles. And when our consciences condemn us not, then have we confidence before him. We can never be brought so low but God can help us. If men forsake or disregard us, God, as our refuge and portion, will more than balance our want. If we are even fettered in the bands of corruption, temptation, or trouble, he can deliver us. And the mercies which our brethren enjoy should excite our praises, as members of the same body.

PSALM CXLIII. Ver. 2. Christ was not *justified*, that is, judged in the flesh, and legally pronounced righteous as *a living man;* but 'he was delivered (that is, to death) for our offences, and raised for our justification,' Ro. 4. 25, being 'put to death in the flesh, and quickened by the Spirit,' 1 Pe. 3. 18; and as Paul expresses it, 'God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit,' 1 Ti. 3. 16. *C.*

Ver. 10. *Teach me.* Let it never be forgot, that the *Word* that was truly God, became as truly *flesh;* and that Jesus, 'though a Son, learned obedience by the things that he suffered,' He. 5. 8. *C.*

Ver. 11. *Quicken me*—'God who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, hath quickened us together with Christ,' Ep. 2. 5. *C.*

REFLECTIONS.—If ever we hope for God's acceptance of us, it must not be for anything in us, but purely of grace, for his dear Son's sake, according to the promises of his Word. The most righteous cannot bear the severity of God's justice. They who best know their own hearts will ever be the first to condemn themselves, and to cry for mercy at God's hand. And they who plead guilty before the law, and flee to the grace of the gospel in Christ, shall be justified from all things. When our distress is greatest, God's power and grace shall be the more magnified in our deliverance. Though it be hard to exercise courageous faith under sore troubles, yet remembrance of God's kindness, to ourselves or others, in former times, is very encouraging. And they who thirst for his presence, favour, and love, shall never be sent away empty from his throne of grace; whatever manifestations of mercy, direction, instruction, deliverance, guidance, quicken-

and destroy all them that afflict my soul: [y]for I *am* thy servant.

PSALM CXLIV.

1 David blesseth God for his mercy both to him and to man. 5 He prayeth that God would powerfully deliver him from his enemies. 9 He promiseth to praise God. 11 He prayeth for the happy state of the kingdom under God's favour.

A psalm of David.[1]

BLESSED *be* the LORD my strength,[2] which[a] teacheth my hands to war,[3] *and* my fingers to fight.

2 My[b] goodness,[4] and my fortress; my high tower, and my deliverer; my shield, and *he* in whom I trust; who subdueth my people under me.

3 LORD,[c] what *is* man, that thou takest knowledge of him! *or* the son of man, that thou makest account of him!

4 Man[d] is like to vanity: [z]his days *are* as a shadow that passeth away.

5 Bow[g] thy heavens, O LORD, and come down: touch the mountains, and they shall smoke.

6 Cast[h] forth lightning, and scatter them:[5] shoot out thine arrows, and destroy them.[6]

7 Send[i] thine hand[7] from above; rid me, and deliver me out of great waters, from the hand of [j]strange children;

8 Whose[k] mouth speaketh vanity; and their right hand *is* a right hand of falsehood.

9 I[l] will sing a new song unto thee, O God: upon a psaltery *and* an instrument of ten strings will I sing praises unto thee.

10 *It*[m] *is he* that giveth salvation[8] unto kings; who delivereth David[9] his servant from the hurtful sword.

11 Rid[o] me, and deliver me from the hand of strange children, whose mouth speaketh vanity, and their right hand *is* a right hand of falsehood:

12 That our sons *may be* [p]as plants grown up in their youth; *that* our daughters *may be* as[q] corner-stones, polished[1] *after* the similitude of a palace;[2]

13 *That*[r] our garners *may be* full, affording all manner of store;[3] *that* our sheep may bring forth thousands and ten thousands in our streets;

14 *That* our oxen *may be* strong to labour;[4] *that there be* no [s]breaking in, nor going out; that *there be* no complaining in our streets.

A.M. cir. 2983.
B.C. cir. 1021.

y Ps.116.16;119.94.

PSALM CXLIV.

B.C. cir. 1048.

1 This psalm is mainly a compilation made, probably by the author himself, from portions of other psalms, and arranged in one complete form for some special purpose. The principal portions of it are found in Ps. 18, 8; xxxiii. civ. The general burden is a prayer to Jehovah for help and deliverance in prospect of some impending danger. It is the song of a warrior; but of one who feels that his courage, his skill, and his physical strength must be sustained by God.—*P.*

2 Heb. *my rock*, Is. 45.24. De.32.30,31. Ps. 18.2,31.

a 2 Sa.22. 35. Ps. 18. 34.

3 Heb. *to the war*, &c.

b 2 Sa.22.2,3,40,48.v. Ps. 91. 2–4; 59. 10, 17. 1 Pe.1.5. Pr.18.10. Ep. 6. 16.

4 Or, *My mercy.*

c Job 7. 17. Ps. 8. 4. He.2.6–9.

d Job 14. 2; 4.19. Ps. 39.5; 62.9. Is. 40. 15, 17. Ja.4.14.

e Ps.102.11;109.23.

f Ps.18.9; 104.32. Is. 64.1,2. Na.1.5,6. Ex.19. 18. Zec.4.7.

h Ps.18.13,14; 77.17, 18. Jos. 10. 10, 11. 2 Sa. 22.14,15.

5 *Scatter them*—that is, the 'strange children,' who, being of 'their father the devil' (Jn. 8. 44), will rebelliously continue to war against Jehovah and his Christ, Ps. 2.1, &c.—*C.*

6 Instances of the direct interference of Jehovah on behalf of his people in battle occurred in the celebrated victories of Joshua at Gibeon and of Barak on the plain of Esdrael. In reference to the latter the poetess wrote:—'They fought from heaven; the stars in their courses fought against Sisera,' Ju. 5. 20.—*P.*

i Ps. 18. 4, 16; 69. 1, 2, 14; 130. 1. Is. 43. 2; 8. 7, 8.

7 Heb. *hands.*

j Ps.54.3. Mal. 2. 11. ver. 11.

k Ps.12.2; 4. 2; 109.2, 3. Is.36.6; 59.13–15.

l Ps.108. 1, 2; 33.2, 3; 92.3; 98.1, 5; 150.3–5.

m Ps.18.50; 33.16; 21. 1, 5. Is.49.8. 2 Sa.xvii.–xxx.v.viii.x.

8 Or, *victory.*

9 *David.* That is, 'his beloved,' as the word *David* signifies, Mat.3.17.—*C.*

o ver.7,8.2 Sa.8.6.

p Ps.128.3. Is.44.3,4. De.28.4. Ep.4.12,13.

q Pr. 31. 10–27. Job 42.15. 1 Ti.2.9,10. 1 Pe. 3.3,4. Tit.2.5.

1 Heb. *cut.*

2 See note ° below.

r Ps.107.38. De.7.13; 28.4. Pr.3.9,10. Joel 1. 17.

3 Heb. *from kind to kind.*

4 Heb. *able to bear burdens*, or *loaden* with flesh.

s Lc. 26. 17, 33. De. 28.55.

° Or, 'Our daughters as pillars, hewn (and sculptured) like

A.M. cir. 2956.
B.C. cir. 1048.

those of a palace.' The idea embodied in the figure is that the daughters of Israel might have grace, symmetry, and beauty.—*P.*

t Ps.33.12; 65.4; 36.8; 89.15. De.33.29. Ep.1. 3.

PSALM CXLV.

B.C. cir. 1048.

a Ps.100. title.

1 This is one of the alphabetical psalms, each verse beginning with a letter of the Hebrew alphabet. It is a song of praise, most probably written, as the title indicates, by David.—*P.*

b Ps.9.1; 18.49; 30.1–5; 119.164; 34.1,2; 68.3,4; 71. 8, 14–24; 104. 33, 34; 103.1–5; 146.1,2. Ju.20. 26. Re.15.3,4. ver.5,21.

2 See notes on Ex. 34.5. Ps.8.1.—*C.*

c Ps.48.1; 96.4. Re.5. 12. Job 5.9; 9.10; 11.7. Ep.3.8.

3 Heb. *and of his greatness* there *is no search*, Ro.11.33.

d Ps.78.5,6; 148. 14; 44. 1, 2; 22.30,31; 102.18; 118. 15, 38.19. ver.5,7,10–12.

4 Heb. *things* or *words*, Ps.72.18; 40.5; 22.22,23; 86.12,13.

5 Heb. *declare it*, Je.50.28.

6 Heb. *boil up*, Ps. 45.1; 138.5. Is.63.7.

e Ex. 34. 6, 7. Nu.14. 18. Ps. 86. 5, 15; 103. 8; 111.4. Mi.7.18,19. Ro.2. 4; 5.20,21. Ep.2.4,7.

7 Heb. *great in mercy.*

g Na.1.7. Mat.5.45. Ac.14.17; 17.25,28. Ps. 89.1,2.

8 Yea, even to the wicked, 'for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust,' Mat.5. 45.—*C.*

h In every work of God, whether in creation, providence, or redemption, there is some wondrous manifestation of mercy. Every department of the universe shows that the omnipotent Creator and Governor has a heart to love all his creatures, and to pity and succour weakness and helplessness.—*P.*

k Ps. 19. 1–6; 32. 11; 107.1,2. Is.43.21. Ro.1. 19,20. Ja.3.9. 1 Pe.2.9.

i 1 Ch.29.11–13; 16.8–26. Re.5.9–13; 11.17; 15. 3, 4. Ps. viii. xiv. lxxii. lxxviii. ciii.–cviii. &c.

j Ps. 146.10. Da.2.44; 7.14. Is.9.7. 1 Ti.1.17. 2 Pe.1.11.

1 Heb. *a kingdom of all ages.*

k Mi. 7.8,9. Ps. 37.24; 94.14, 18; 146.8; 147.6.

l Ps. 104. 27, 28; 136. 25. Ac.17.25. Lu.12.42.

2 Or, *look unto thee.*

m Ps.104. 21, 28; 147. 9; 111.5. Ge.1.29,30.

o De.32.4. Re.19.11; 15.3,4. Ps.111.2–8.

3 Or, *merciful* or *bountiful.*

p De.4.7. Ja.4.8. Jn. 14.23. Is.58.9.

4 Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.' Mat. 18. 20; 28. 20. 1 Co.1. 2. Jn.4.24.—*C.*

q Jn. 4. 24. Ps. 17. 1; 119. 2. Je.29.13.

r 1 Jn.5.14. Ps. 37.4; 65.2; 102.17; 34.15. Is. 58.9; 65.24.

15 Happy[t] *is that* people that is in such a case; *yea*, happy *is that* people whose God *is* the LORD.

PSALM CXLV.

1 David praiseth God for his fame, 8 for his goodness, 11 for his kingdom, 14 for his providence, 17 and for his saving mercy.

[a]David's *psalm* of praise.[1]

I WILL [b]extol thee, my God, O King; and I will bless thy name[2] for ever and ever.

2 Every day will I bless thee; and I will praise thy name for ever and ever.

3 Great[c] *is* the LORD, and greatly to be praised; and his greatness *is* unsearchable.[3]

4 One[d] generation shall praise thy works to another, and shall declare thy mighty acts.

5 I will speak of the glorious honour of thy majesty, and of thy wondrous works.[4]

6 And *men* shall speak of the might of thy terrible acts; and I will declare[5] thy greatness.

7 They shall abundantly utter[6] the memory of thy great goodness, and shall sing of thy righteousness.

8 The[e] LORD *is* gracious, and full of compassion; slow to anger, and of great mercy.[7]

9 The[g] LORD *is* good to all;[8] and his tender mercies *are* over all his works.[9]

10 All [h]thy works shall praise thee, O LORD; and thy saints shall bless thee.

11 They[i] shall speak of the glory of thy kingdom, and talk of thy power;

12 To make known to the sons of men his mighty acts, and the glorious majesty of his kingdom.

13 Thy[j] kingdom *is* an everlasting [1]kingdom, and thy dominion *endureth* throughout all generations.

14 The[k] LORD upholdeth all that fall, and raiseth up all *those that be* bowed down.

15 The[l] eyes of all wait upon thee;[2] and thou givest them their meat in due season.

16 Thou[n] openest thine hand, and satisfiest the desire of every living thing.

17 The[o] LORD *is* righteous in all his ways, and holy[3] in all his works.

18 The[p] LORD *is* nigh unto all them that call upon him,[4] to all that [q]call upon him in truth.

19 He[r] will fulfil the desire of them that fear him: he also will hear their cry, and will save them.

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ing for themselves, and destruction of enemies, they may ask.

PSALM CXLIV. Ver. 1. *Teacheth my hands to war*—'a good warfare,' 1 Ti. 1. 18, grasping and wielding 'the sword of the Spirit,' Ep. 6. 17; and *my fingers* to 'fight the good fight of faith,' 1 Ti. 6. 12, directing the arrows of truth to the hearts of the King's enemies, Ps. 45. 5. *C.*

Ver. 3. On comparing this verse with Ps. 8. 4 and He. 2. 6–9, it will appear that the speaker is Messiah, made a little—rather, for a little—lower than the angels; that for his obedience unto death he might be crowned with glory and honour. *C.*

Ver. 5. The Lord literally descended upon Mount Sinai, taking upon earth a local habitation, that he might manifest his visible glory, Ex. 19. 18. Here he is represented as causing the heavens to bow to the earth, not in a mere figure, but in a reality—when he shall be 'revealed from heaven in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ,' 2 Th. 1. 8. *C.*

Ver. 11. *A right hand of falsehood.* False to every engagement, however solemnly ratified; obliterating their baptism by infidelity, and, in the Lord's supper, eating and drinking to their own condemnation. *C.*

REFLECTIONS.—Behold, as in a figure, Jesus Christ, the child of heaven, advanced by his Father to his right hand, and invested with all power in heaven and in earth! There he rejoices in his God, and in his glorious victories of salvation, and makes intercession for the conquest and ruin of all evil, and for the abundant happiness of his people.—Great and blessed is the believer's hope in the divine relations and perfections; and infinite is the condescension and kindness of God towards man: so mean, so unsubstantial, so transitory! Certainly then there shall come a day in which God will redeem his people out of all their deep waters of trouble, and justly reward his and their enemies. O what a mercy is it to receive, out of the hand of a reconciled God, children endowed with every corporeal and mental accomplishment, garners replenished with useful stores, thriving flocks and herds, and a safe and quiet commonwealth! Yet it is not in earthly enjoyments, but in God himself, as our God and our ALL IN ALL, that solid and everlasting happiness consists.

PSALM CXLV. Ver. 1. The speaker engages 'to bless and praise the name of his God and King every day, for ever and ever,' ver. 1, 2. And surely he who knows that *every day* he will be so able and inclined must be Jesus, 'the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever.' *C.*

Ver. 3. *Greatness.* From comparing the structure of this psalm with He. 1. 10, it would appear, that in this verse the Father addresses the Son, whose 'mighty works' in creation, providence, and redemption, he expounds and extols before angels and men. *Greatness* can but be comprehended by viewing works made and upheld, enemies restrained and subdued, and obedient subjects ruled and employed. *C.*

Ver. 9. Lest any should impiously misinterpret these gracious

20 The[s] LORD preserveth all them that love him: but all the wicked will he destroy.

21 My[t] mouth shall speak the praise of the LORD: and let [u]all flesh bless his holy name for ever and ever.[5]

PSALM CXLVI.

1 The psalmist voweth perpetual praises to God. 3 He exhorteth not to trust in man. 5 God, for his power, justice, mercy, and kingdom, is only worthy to be trusted.

PRAISE ye the LORD.[1] Praise[a] the LORD, O my soul.[2]

2 While[b] I live will I praise the LORD: I will sing praises unto my God while I have any being.[3]

3 Put[c] not your trust in princes, *nor* in the son of man, in whom *there is* no help.[4]

4 His[d] breath goeth forth, he returneth to his earth; in that very day his thoughts perish.

5 Happy[e] *is he* that *hath* the God of Jacob[5] for his help, whose hope *is* in the LORD his God;

6 Which[g] made heaven, and earth, the sea, and all that therein *is;* [h]which keepeth truth for ever;

7 Which[i] executeth judgment for the oppressed; which [j]giveth food to the hungry. The[k] LORD looseth the prisoners:

8 The[l] LORD openeth *the eyes of* the blind:[6] the LORD [m]raiseth *them that are* bowed down: the [o]LORD loveth the righteous:

9 The LORD [p]preserveth the strangers; he relieveth the fatherless and widow: but the [q]way of the wicked he turneth upside down.[7]

10 The[r] LORD shall reign for ever, *even* thy God, O Zion, unto all generations. Praise ye the LORD.

PSALM CXLVII.

1 The prophet exhorteth to praise God for his care of the church, 4 his power, 6 and his mercy: 7 to praise him for his providence: 12 to praise him for his blessings upon the kingdom, 15 for his power over the elements, 19 and for his ordinances in the church.

PRAISE ye the LORD: [a]for *it is* good to sing praises unto our God; for *it is* pleasant; *and* praise is comely.

2 The[b] LORD doth build up Jerusalem: [c]he gathereth together the outcasts of Israel.

3 He[d] healeth the broken in heart, and bindeth up their wounds.[1]

4 He[e] telleth the number of the stars; he calleth them all by *their* names.

A.M. cir. 2956.
B.C. cir. 1048.

s Ex.20.6.De.33.3. 1 Pe.1.5. Ps.31.23. Jude 1. Jn.10.28,29. Pr.1.32, 33!3.33-35.
t Re.5.13. ver.1,2,5; Ps.30.12!71.8,14-24!22. 22.
u Ps.65.2!47.1; 66.1, 4!100.1!117.1,2.
[5] Equivalent on earth to the command in heaven, 'Let all the angels of God worship him,' He.1.6.—*C.*

PSALM CXLVI.
1 Heb. *Hallelujah*, Ps.104.35.
a Ps.103.1,2!104.1,35.
[2] See note * below.
b Ps.104.33,34!145.1, 2,5,21; 71.8,14-24; 119. 164.
[3] 'In my eternal being.'—*A. Clarke.*
c Ps.62.9!118.8,9; 33. 16; 144.10. Pr.21.31. Is. 2.22. Je.17.5-7.
[4] Or, *salvation.*
d Ps.104.29. Ec.12.7. Is.2.22. Job 14.10! 27. 11.
e Je.17.7,8. Is.45.17, 24,25. Ps.144.15! 84.12; 2.12.
[5] That is the *Word* that was with God and was God. See Ge.15.1,2,4,7,8,18; 17.1 —22!32.24-30. Ho.12.3-5.—*C.*
g Ge.1.1. Ex. 20.11. Je.32.17. Re.14.7.
h Ps.100.5; 89.2. Mi. 7.20.
i Ps.103.6; 12.5; 72.4. Is.49.25,26.
j Ps.145.15,16!136.25.
k Ps.68.6; 107.14. Is. 61.1. Zec.9.11.
l Mat. 9. 30. Jn. 9. 6-32. Is. 35.5. 1 Pe.2.9.
[6] Which was fully verified to the letter, Lu.4.18,21.—*C.*
m Ps. 147. 6; 145. 14. Lu.13.11-13. Mat.11.5.
o De. 33. 3. Ps. 11. 7. Jn.14.21,23.
p Pr.15.25. De.10.18, 19. Ps.10.14,18!68.5. Je. 49.11. Ho.14.3.
q Job 5.12,13; 40.11, 12. Pr. 4. 19. Ps. 83. 13-17!21.8-12.
[7] The *way* of the wicked is—lies, imposture, and oppression; and all that sustain these, the Lord will utterly overturn.—*C.*
r Ex. 15. 18; 145. 13. Re. 11. 15, 17. Is. 9. 7. Da.6.26!7.14.

PSALM CXLVII.
B.C. cir. 1047.
a Ps.135.3!33.1-4!92. 1-4.
b Ps.51.18!102.13,16. Da.9.25. Mat.16.18.
c De.30.3,4. Is.11.12! 56.8; 27.13. Je.30.18,19. Ep.2.12-19.
d Ps.51.17. Is.57.15; 61.1. Eze.34.16. Ho.6. 1,2.
[1] Heb. *griefs.*
e Is. 40. 26. Ge.15. 7. Job 25.3.

[*] This is a general psalm of praise, containing thoughts such as are appropriately suggested by a contemplation of the character of God, and his dealings with men. The idea is that of the blessedness of trusting in God; the security of those who do it; the superiority of this confidence and peace over any that is reposed in princes; and the evidence that it will be safe to trust in him, furnished by his

A.M. cir. 2957.
B.C. cir. 1047.

merciful interpositions in behalf of the oppressed, the hungry, the prisoner, the blind, the bowed down, the righteous, the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow' (*Barnes*).—*P.*
g Ps.48.1; 89.6,8!145. 3. Je. 32.17,18. Is.40.28. Ro.11.33.
[2] Heb. *of his understanding* there is *no number.*
h Ps. 146. 8; 145. 14; 149.4; 25. 9. Mat.5.5. 1 Pe.3.4. Lu.14.11.
i Ps.73.18,27; 55.16, 23!146.9.
j ver.1,12; Ps.107.1, 8,15. Ep.5.20.
k Heb. *answer,* Ex.15.21. Ps.68.25.
l 1 Ki.18.45. Job 38. 26. Ps. 65. 9-13; 104.13, 14.
n Job 38.41. Ps.104. 27,28!136.25. Mat.6.26. Ge.1.29,30.
o Ps. 33. 16, 17; 20. 8. Ho.1.7. Is. 31. 1.3. Pr. 21.31. Je.9.23,24.
p Ps.11.7; 35.27; 149. 4; 33.18. Pr.11.20. Is.62. 4. Mal.3.16,17. Zep. 3. 17.
q Ps.118.2-4; 135.19, 20; 22.23! 33.1. Ga.4.26. He.12.22.
r Ps.127.1; 128.3. Is. 44.3-5!54.13!59.21.
s Ps. 115. 14.
[3] Heb. *who maketh thy border peace.*
[4] Heb. *fat of wheat,* Ps.81.16. De.32.14. Jn. 12.24.
t Ps.107. 20,25; 33. 9; 148.8. Ro.10.18. 2 Th. 3.1.
u Job 37.6; 38.22,29. Is.55.10.
v Ex.9. 23-25. Jos. 10.11. Job 37. 8, 10; 38. 22,29,30. Is.30.30.
[5] Probably hail is here meant. It is a kind of ice, and God scatters it, as one would scatter morsels of broken bread, over the surface of the earth.—*P.*
[6] 'Who can bear the force of his *hail*?'—it is the same word which in the previous clause is rendered 'ice.' Hail sometimes falls in tremendous showers in Palestine. It is generally accompanied with a strong piercing wind, so that it is almost impossible to resist its fury.—*P.*
w ver.15. Job 37.10, Ps.33.9. Ge.8.22.
y Ps.76.1;78.5. Mal. 4.4. Ro.3.2!9.4. De.33. 3,4!4.6-8.
[7] Heb. *words.*
z Ro.3.1,2. De.4.32-34. Ac.14.16. Pr.29.18. Ep.2.12.

PSALM CXLVIII.
B.C. cir. 1047.
1 Heb. *Hallelujah*, Ps.104.35!105.45.
a Re.5.11,13. Lu. 2. 13,14. Ps.149.6.
b Ps.103.20,21;68.17. Ge.2.1. Da.7.10. He.1. 7,14.
[2] *Angels.* Spirits employed as God's messengers.—*C.*
[3] *Hosts.* Spirits employed as his *armies,* for judgment upon his enemies, or defence of his people, 2 Ki.19.35. Is.37.36. Ps. 34.7. Mat. 26.53. 2 Th. 1.7. Re.12.7.—*C.*
c Ps.19.1-6; 136. 6-9; 74.16.
d 1 Ki.8.27. 2 Co.12. 2. Is.66.1. Ge. 1.7. Job 26.9!38.22-29. Ps.104.3.

5 Great[y] *is* our LORD, and of great power: his understanding *is* infinite.[2]

6 The[h] LORD lifteth up the meek: [i]he casteth the wicked down to the ground.

7 Sing[j] unto the LORD with thanksgiving; [k]sing praise upon the harp unto our God:

8 Who[l] covereth the heaven with clouds, who prepareth rain for the earth, who maketh grass to grow upon the mountains.

9 He[n] giveth to the beast his food, *and* to the young ravens which cry.

10 He[o] delighteth not in the strength of the horse: he taketh not pleasure in the legs of a man.

11 The[p] LORD taketh pleasure in them that fear him, in those that hope in his mercy.

12 Praise[q] the LORD, O Jerusalem; praise thy God, O Zion:

13 For[r] he hath strengthened the bars of thy gates; [s]he hath blessed thy children within thee.

14 He maketh peace *in* thy borders,[3] *and* filleth thee with the finest of the wheat.[4]

15 He[t] sendeth forth his commandment *upon* earth; his word runneth very swiftly.

16 He[u] giveth snow like wool: he scattereth the hoar-frost like ashes.

17 He[v] casteth forth his ice like [5]morsels: who can stand before his cold?[6]

18 He[x] sendeth out his word, and melteth them: he causeth his wind to blow, *and* the waters flow.

19 He[y] showeth his word[7] unto Jacob, his statutes and his judgments unto Israel.

20 He[z] hath not dealt so with any nation: and *as for his* judgments, they have not known them. Praise ye the LORD.

PSALM CXLVIII.

1 The psalmist exhorteth the celestial, 7 the terrestrial, 11 and the rational creatures, to praise God.

PRAISE ye the LORD.[1] Praise[a] ye the LORD from the heavens: praise him in the heights.

2 Praise[b] ye him, all his angels:[2] praise ye him, all his hosts.[3]

3 Praise[c] ye him, sun and moon: praise him, all ye stars of light.

4 Praise[d] him, ye heavens of heavens, and ye waters that *be* above the heavens.

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words, let it be carefully noted that sin is no work of God—and that where it reigneth unto final impenitence mercy is clean gone, Ps. 77. 8; 109. 12; He. 10. 28; Ja. 2. 13. *C.*

REFLECTIONS.—O the infinite greatness, the unbounded grace, and everlasting preciousness of a God in Christ! Happy are they who spend their time and their eternity in the enjoyment and praises of him! How delightful is it to tell our neighbours, to tell our posterity, that which our eyes have seen, and our hearts have believed, concerning this God, who is LOVE; and to tell how this God shall be our God for ever! And it is delightful to behold and praise our exalted Redeemer, who fills heaven and earth with his kindness.

PSALM CXLVI. Ver. 1. The Son, as Prophet of the church, first calls upon all, and then upon that 'reasonable soul' which he took when he 'became flesh' to praise Jehovah, Father, Son, and Spirit. *C.*

Ver. 9. *Strangers.* Those who confess that they are 'strangers and pilgrims on the earth,' 'who desire a better country, that is, an heavenly,' He. 11. 13-16. *C.*

REFLECTIONS.—Happy are they whose God is the Lord, and whose praises never end! But the greatest on earth appear as insignificant nothings before God, or even to a gracious heart. Nothing on earth is properly a man's property but his grave. But though in man there be no help, no ground of hope, our God-man is mighty to save; and hope in him knows no disappointment. Be stirred up, therefore, my soul, to depend on him, who is my almighty Maker, my faithful and promise-performing Friend, my kind and righteous Protector, my bountiful Provider, my omnipotent Deliverer, my gracious Enlightener, my seasonable Restorer, my perpetual Preserver, and the just Punisher of all evil—my King, my God, and my ALL.

PSALM CXLVII. Ver. 1. The grammar of the psalm, as seen in the phrase 'our God,' ver. 1, 5, 7, discovers the speaker to be the church in her collective and corporate capacity, calling upon her several members to the delightful work of praise—a work *pleasant* to the heart of those engaged in it, and *comely* in the eyes of saints and angels. *C.*

Ver. 2. *The Lord doth build up Jerusalem.* All the works ascribed to the Lord, throughout the psalm, are works that he is always doing. Accordingly, after every siege and demolition God, by his providence, immediately proceeded to build up Jerusalem again, his architectural witness to all nations: and 'the outcasts of Israel' he has always continued to gather, temporally, into separate and cohesive communities; and spiritually, into one body and temple in Christ Jesus, Ep. 4. 11–16; 1 Pe. 2. 5. *C.*

Ver. 13. *Bars of thy gates.* The principal *gates* of the spiritual Jerusalem are *profession* and *baptism,* Ac. 8. 37, 38: and the principal *bars*—'trying the spirits,' 1 Jn. 4. 1–3: condemnation of error, 1 Ti. 4. 7; 2 Ti. 2. 16; Tit. 1. 10, 11; avoidance of the abettors of false doctrine and schism, Ro. 16. 17; 1 Th. 3. 6; 1 Ti. 6. 3–5; and excluding from church membership the erroneous and profane, 1 Co. 5. 4–13; Tit. 3. 10. *C.*

Ver. 16. *Snow like wool.* Not only is water when changed into snow rendered in appearance 'like wool,' but by a wonderful provision in its structure it acts as wool in protecting plants, and even living bodies, from the destructive influence of the cold. *C.*

REFLECTIONS.—How good and great must God be

5 Let them praise the name of the LORD: for[c] he commanded, and they were created.

6 He[g] hath also stablished them for ever and ever:[4] he hath made a decree which shall not pass.

7 Praise the LORD from the earth, [h]ye dragons, and all deeps:

8 Fire,[i] and hail; snow, and vapours; stormy wind fulfilling his word;

9 Mountains,[j] and all hills; fruitful trees, and all cedars;

10 Beasts,[k] and all cattle; creeping things, and flying fowl;[5]

11 Kings[l] of the earth, and all people; princes, and all judges of the earth;

12 Both[m] young men and maidens; old men and children:

13 Let them praise the name of the LORD: for[o] his name alone is excellent;[6] his glory *is* above the earth and heaven.

14 He[p] also exalteth the horn of his people, the praise of all his saints; *even* of the children of Israel, a people [q]near unto him. Praise ye the LORD.

PSALM CXLIX.

1 The prophet exhorteth to praise God for his love to the church, 5 and for that power which he hath given to his saints.

PRAISE ye the LORD.[1] Sing[a] unto the LORD a new song,[2] *and* his praise in the congregation of saints.[3]

2 Let[b] Israel rejoice in him that [c]made him: let the children of Zion be joyful in their King.[4]

3 Let[d] them praise his name in the [5]dance: let them sing praises unto him with the timbrel and harp.

4 For[e] the LORD taketh pleasure in his people: [g]he will beautify the meek with salvation.

5 Let[h] the saints be joyful in glory: let them sing aloud [i]upon their beds.[6]

6 *Let*[j] the high *praises* of God *be* in their mouth,[7] and a [k]two-edged sword in their hand;

7 To[l] execute vengeance upon the heathen, *and* punishments upon the people;

8 To bind their kings with chains, and their nobles with fetters of iron;

9 To[n] execute upon them the judgment [8]written: [o]this honour have all his saints. Praise ye the LORD.

PSALM CL.

An exhortation to praise God with all kinds of musical instruments.

PRAISE ye the LORD.[1] Praise[a] God in his sanctuary: praise him in [b]the firmament of his power.[2]

2 Praise him [c]for his mighty acts: praise him according to his excellent greatness.

3 Praise[d] him with the sound of the trumpet:[3] praise him with the psaltery and harp.

4 Praise him with the timbrel and [4]dance: praise him with stringed instruments and organs.

5 Praise[e] him upon the loud cymbals: praise him upon the high-sounding cymbals.

6 Let[g] every thing that hath breath praise the LORD. Praise ye the LORD.

A.M. cir. 2957.
B.C. cir. 1047.

c Ge.1.1,3,6.Ps.33.6, 9.He.11.3.

g Ps.89.37;119.90,91. Je.31.35,36;33.25. Is. 14.27;25.1;46.10.

4 An imperfect philosophy entertained many fears for the stability of the planetary system—a sounder philosophy has demonstrated that the system is calculated to subsist for ever. But this by no means precludes God from changing and remodelling at his will either the heavens or the earth that his wisdom formed and his power has sustained.He.1.11,12. 2Pe.3.7,12.Re.21.5.—*C.*

h Ge.1.21. Is.43.20. Ps.104.25,26;107.23,24.

i Job 37. 2–6; 38. 22–29. Ex.9.23–25. Ps. 147. 15–18;11.6.

j Ps. 114.4,6;29. 5–8. Is. 42. 11; 41. 18, 19; 55. 12.

k Ps.50.10,11. Ge. 1. 20–25.

5 Heb. *birds of wing.*

l Ps.72.10,11; 22. 27–29; 66. 1, 4. Pr. 8.15,16. Ac.17.28.

m Ps.68.25;8.2. Mat. 21.15,16.Zec.9.17.

o Ps.8. 1, 9. Is. 12. 4. Phi. 2. 9–11. Ep. 2. 20–23.

6 Heb. *exalted.*

p Ps.75.10;89.17;92. 10;149.9.De.10.21.

q De.4.7.Ep.2.13,17, 19. Jn.14.21,23. Ja. 4.8. Ex. 19. 5,6. 1 Pe. 2. 9. Tit.2.14.

PSALM CXLIX.

B.C. cir. 1047.

1 Heb. *Hallelujah*, Ps.104.35;106.1.

a Ps.33.1–3;68.26;89. 71. xcv. – c. cxxxiv. – cxxxvi.cxiv.–cxl.

2 See note on Ps.96. 1.—*C.*

3 Them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, 1 Co.1.2.—*C.*

b Ps. 22. 23; 118. 3, 4; 135.19,20.

c Ps. 100. 3. Is. 54. 5. Mat.21.5.1 Ti.6.15.

4 Zion signifies a monument, a sepulchre, a turret, dryness; and in any sense the regenerate believer is truly a 'child of Zion.'—*C.*

d Ps.33.2; 81.2,3; 68. 25; 150.3–5. Re.7.9; 14. 2.

5 Or, *with the pipe.*

e Ps.147.10,11;35.27. Pr. 11. 20. Is. 62. 3–5. Zep.3.17.

g Is.61.10. Ps.132.16; 91.15,16.

h Ps.33.1;118.15;145. 10.

i Ps.42.8;63.6. Job 35. 10.

6 Not beds of sleep, but of rest. He.4.9.—*C.*

j Ps.81.14. Lu. 2. 14. Re.5.9,12,13.

7 Heb. *throat.*

k He.4.12. Ep. 6.17. Re.1.16.

l Re.6.13–17; 19. 14–21; 11. 15–18, with Jos. vi.–xii.

n De.32. 41, 43. Nu. 24.17. Re.17.14,16.

8 As conjoint judges with Christ, 1 Co. 6.2. —*C.*

o Ps.148.14. Ro.8.37; 16.20.1 Jn.5.4.

PSALM CL.

B.C. cir. 1045.

1 Heb. *Hallelujah*, Ps.104.35;149.9.

a Ps.27.4; 29. 9; 48.8; 111.1;134.1.2;135.2.

b Ge.1.6,7. Ps.136.5, 9,or Ep.3.21.

2 Literally, 'Praise him in the expanse of his power.' The meaning is, in every department of the universe where his power is displayed—in the heavens, in the air, in the earth. God rules in all.—*P.*

c Ps.145.5,6; xcv.–c. ciii. – cviii. cxxxv. cxxxvi.

d Da.3.5,&c. Ps. 33. 2;81.2; 68.25; 149.3; 92. 3;98.5,6;108.2.

3 Or, *cornet.*

4 Or, *pipe.*

e 1 Ch.15.16,&c.

g Ps.145.10; 148.7,10 –12.Re.5.13.

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in himself, when his greatness, wisdom, power, and goodness are so manifested in all his works. And when he so observes and provides for all his creatures, how impossible is it that his ransomed children should be overlooked or starved! Much of God is to be seen in all around us—in luminaries, in animals, in crops, in seasons, in human persons or societies; but, above all, in his church and in his word. If these be abused by us, it will be more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgment than for us.

PSALM CXLVIII. Ver. 1. *In the heights.* The highest regions of heaven, where the glory of God is most brightly exhibited, and the mysteries of his government—unspeakable in earthly language—are audibly expounded and proclaimed, 2 Co.12.2–4. *C.*

Ver. 7. *Dragons.* This word is generally interpreted 'sea-monsters'—an unmeaning phrase. The word is *generic*, and that it sometimes signifies *wild beasts* seems probable from Mal. 1. 3. That it also is applied to the *whale*, seems certain from its description as one of the *mammalia*, La. 4. 3, and from its property of holding its breath and violently emitting it, Je. 14. 6. *C.*

REFLECTIONS.—How great and good must God appear to his people, when their minds are so overcharged with their debt of praise! And indeed, had the praises of God but due room on earth, it would much resemble heaven. But none are more deep in the debt of praise than faithful men; sometime afar off, but now brought near to him by the blood of his Son!

PSALM CXLIX. Ver. 2. *Israel.* They that have obtained a 'new name,' who wrestle with God in prayer, and prevail, by faith, in the name of Jesus, Ge. 32. 24, 28; Ho. 12. 3, 4; Jn. 14. 13. *C.*

Ver. 3. *Dance.* The word translated *dance* signifies a pipe, or some other fistular instrument of music, and not any mode of *marching* or *saltation. C.*

Ver. 6. *Two-edged sword.* The two-edged sword of the Word—the law of fire and the gospel of grace, Ep. 6. 17; He. 4. 12; De. 33. 2; Ac. 20. 24; Tit. 2. 11. *C.*

REFLECTIONS.—Behold here Jesus and his gospel church chiefly in her millennial state. He and his people mutually rejoice in one another:—while they praise him, he imparts the blessings of salvation to them; and while he goes forth in his chariots of salvation, conquering sinners by his grace, or in his chariots of judgment, to oppose his Jewish, heathen, and anti-christian enemies, by their prayers and influence they work together with him.

PSALM CL. Ver. 1. The first verse marks the place where the Lord is to be praised—the sanctuary on earth, the firmament above. *C.*

Ver. 2. The second verse assigns reasons for praise—God's mighty acts, and the multitude of his acts. *C.*

Ver. 3–6. The remaining portion of the psalm calls first upon instruments of every construction, and finally upon everything that breathes, to praise the Lord. *C.*

REFLECTIONS.—Happy are they who dwell in God's house above—they are always praising him on the highest key! And happy are they who are on the way to it—they have always matter, and often a heart, for praise.

CONCLUDING REMARKS ON THE BOOK OF PSALMS.

The Hebrew title of the Book of Psalms is 'Praises;' because the praise of God as Creator, Upholder, and Governor—as Father, Redeemer, and Sanctifier—constitutes their principal subject. The Greek title, whence our English name, 'Psalms,' is derived from the Septuagint, and describes these sacred compositions as accompanied by musical instruments. And this accompaniment was in accordance with the law of Moses, Le. 23. 24, &c., and the ritual appointed by divine revelation in the days of David and Solomon, 1 Ch. xvi.

But while praise is justly due to God as Creator, Upholder, and Governor of the world, much more is it due to him as Father, Redeemer, and Sanctifier. And as God the Father is made known and glorified by the Son—and as the Spirit glorifies both Father and Son, by taking 'the things of Christ and showing them' to believers—so it was to be expected that Christ, the beloved Son of God, the Messiah, the Saviour of sinners, would furnish the chief subject of praise in the heart and the songs of the church. Accordingly we have seen that the Psalms are full of Christ—the church on earth strictly imitating the church in heaven, in asserting that 'worthy is the Lamb that was slain, to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing;' and in ascribing 'blessing, and honour, and glory, and power unto Him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb, for ever and ever.'

The Psalms constitute the great storehouse of prayer in every mood and condition of the spirit. 'Is any merry—let him sing psalms.' Is any sad—they will teach him to cry from the depths of affliction. Is any persecuted—they will furnish him with petitions for a refuge and deliverance. Is any in want—they will lead him to the Friend of the poor and needy. Is any in sickness—they will lead him the way to the true Physician. Is any dying and in misery—they will show him the path of life, ending in fulness of joy at the right hand of the Eternal. And all this they do, because they are the spiritual revelations of the 'supplications, strong crying, and tears' of Jesus in the days of his flesh; and therefore furnish to his disciples the model and the material of their prayers of faith.

The writers of some of the Psalms are known, and the Jews enumerate ten. But this is of little importance—for that the author of all was the Spirit of God, we have the fullest evidence. Thus, independently of that heavenly character which

bears witness of their heavenly origin—we have, in the New Testament, more frequent attestations of their divine origin, than for any other book of the whole Scripture collection. They are at least fifty times quoted by our Lord or his apostles. And besides furnishing to our Lord the most powerful of his arguments against the unbelieving Jews, they also furnished him the words in which, upon the cross, he both prayed and expired.

According to the Masoretic copies and the Syriac version, the Psalms are divided into five books: the first extending from Ps. i.–xl.—the second from Ps. xli.–lxxii.—the third from Ps. lxxiii.–lxxxix.—the fourth from Ps. xc.–cvi.—and the fifth from Ps. cvii.–cl. The first four of these end with 'Amen and Amen;' the last with 'Hallelujah.' This division was very ancient, as it evidently existed before the Septuagint translation.

Most of the Psalms have titles prefixed, which by some, as ancient traditionary expositions of the contents, are held in high esteem, and considered as endued with a kind of canonical authority. But some of the highest authorities amongst the ancient Christian writers—as Augustine and Theodoret—have freely admitted that these titles have often no relation to the body of the psalm, and seldom contribute anything to the discovery of the meaning. In their great obscurity all are agreed; and conjectural meanings are so various that they cease to be of value. These titles have accordingly been retained, partly out of respect to those that, in any degree, value them; and partly as mere relics of antiquity, esteemed not for any intrinsic worth, but as samples and memorials of the works of other times.

That the Psalms are occasionally prophetical of Christ no Christian can overlook or deny. That but few, however, are thus prophetical of him, has been an opinion extensively circulated and received—the number of such *specially prophetic* psalms being ordinarily confined to Ps. ii. xvi. xxii. xl. xlv. lxviii. lxxii. lxxxvii. cx. and cxviii. But were the correctness of this meagre enumeration admitted, still the real relation of the Psalms to Christ remains unsettled. For the real question is, not how many psalms are *prophetical*, but how many are *descriptive* of Christ, and proved to be descriptive of him, because they apply accurately to him, and however they may be strained by the efforts of 'accommodation,' still utterly refuse to become applicable to any other. Could we conclude with Origen, Chrysostom, Theodoret, Augustine, Ambrose, Euthymius, and others of the ancient Christian writers, that David was the author of all the Psalms—or admitting, as is commonly believed, that other inspired authors wrote a part of the collection—yet could we accurately ascertain how many were composed by David—and it is upon all hands admitted that he composed a large portion—we would then be able, upon David's own authority, or rather upon that of the Spirit speaking by him, greatly to extend, if not to universalize, the prophetic boundaries of the Psalms. For that the psalms written by David himself were prophetic we have David's own authority, which, as Horsley observes, may be allowed to overpower a host of modern expositors. For thus king David at the close of his life describes himself and his sacred songs: 'David the son of Jesse said, and the man who was raised up on high, the anointed of the God of Jacob, and the sweet psalmist of Israel said, The Spirit of Jehovah spake by me, and his word was my tongue,' 2 Sa. 23. 1, 2. It was the word, therefore, of Jehovah's Spirit which was uttered by David's tongue. But it should seem the Spirit of Jehovah would not be wanting to enable a mere man to make complaint of *his own enemies*, to describe *his own sufferings just as he felt them*, and *his own escapes just as they happened*. But the Spirit of Jehovah described, by David's utterance, what was known to that Spirit only, and that Spirit only could describe. So that if David be allowed to have had any knowledge of the true subject of his own compositions, it was nothing in his own life, but something put into his mind by the Holy Spirit of God; and the misapplication of the Psalms to the literal David has done more mischief than the misapplication of any other parts of the Scriptures among those who profess the belief of the Christian religion. (See Horsley on the *Psalms*, vol. i. p. 14.) Nor do we hesitate to express our firm conviction, that a right interpretation of the Psalms, whereby Christ is so clearly discovered in his person, his offices, his passion, his victories, his glories, and his judgment, will bring a light, a comfort, and a joy to the heart of the believer, unknown while darkness lay upon this blessed portion of the Sacred Volume. *C.*

THE BOOK OF PROVERBS,

And the two immediately following, were penned by Solomon, the renowned king of Israel. Its Hebrew name MISCHLIM imports sentences well pressed together, and powerful to command our assent and regulate our conduct. Teaching by such proverbs, or short substantial sentences, was a very ancient, and is a very plain, profitable, and easy method of instruction. These *Proverbs of Solomon* are not a mere collection of the wise sayings which had been uttered before his time, but are the inspired dictates of the Holy Ghost to him; and are often quoted or alluded to as such in other inspired books. This book comprehends: (1) A preface; consisting of manifold exhortations to the study and improvement of true wisdom, and of warnings to avoid connections or intimacy with wicked persons, whoredom, rash suretiship, sloth, &c. ch. i.–ix. (2) The Proverbs themselves; published from the beginning, x.–xxiv., or copied out by the direction of Hezekiah, xxv.–xxix. (3) The appendix; containing the prophecy of Agur, and the directions of his mother to him, xxx. xxxi. As the Book of Psalms is calculated to make our hearts warm towards God in holy and pious affections, the scope of this is to make our face shine before men in a prudent, discreet, honest, and useful conversation; which is a no less necessary part of religion. And no book in the world, in so small a compass, affords us such a complete body of rules for directing our personal and relative behaviour.

CHAPTER I.

1 *The use of the Proverbs.* 7 *An exhortation to fear God, and regard the advice of parents.* 10 *To avoid the enticings of sinners.* 20 *Wisdom complaineth of the contempt of scorners.* 24 *She threateneth them.*

THE Proverbs[a] of Solomon, the son of David, king of Israel;

2 To[b] know[1] wisdom and instruction; to perceive[2] the words of understanding;

A.M. cir. 3029. B.C. cir. 975.

CHAP. I.

a ch. 10. 1; 25. 1. Job 27. 1. Jn. 16. 25. 1 Ki. 4. 31, 32. Ec. 12. 9.

b ch. 22. 20, 21; 2. 1–9; 4. 5, 7. De. 4. 5, 6. Job 22. 22. 2 Ti. 3. 15–17. 2 Pe. 1. 3, 19.

1 'To impart.'—*Boothroyd.*

2 *To perceive.* Rather, 'to supply.'—*C.*

3 *To receive.* Rather, 'to bring.'—*C.*

A.M. cir. 3029. B.C. cir. 975.

4 Heb. *equities.*

c ch. 9. 4, &c. 1 Co. 2. 10. 2 Ti. 3. 15. Ps. 119. 9.

5 *Subtilty.* Prudence in conduct, discernment between right and wrong in all their forms.—*C.*

6 Or, *advisement.*

d ch. 9. 9. Ps. 119. 18, 98–100. 2 Pe. 1. 5; 3. 18.

e 1 Ch. 12. 32. Job 34. 10, 34. Is. 54. 13. Je. 31. 34.

3 To receive[3] the instruction of wisdom, justice, and judgment, and equity;[4]

4 To[c] give subtilty[5] to the simple, to the young man knowledge and discretion.[6]

5 A[d] wise *man* will hear, and will increase learning; and [e]a man of understanding shall attain unto wise counsels:

CHAPTER I. Ver. 1. The choice, divine, substantial, instructive, and governing, but sometimes darkly expressed, sentences of the incomparably wise and inspired Solomon. 2. Framed by the Spirit of God to teach men true and solid wisdom in things pertaining to God and their neighbour, to enable them to discern sin and duty, and to receive and profit by whatever good instructions or advices are given them: 3. To incline and persuade them readily to hearken to such instructions as direct them to live in a wise, candid, upright, and virtuous manner; 4. That those who are unskilful, rash, and incautious, may become circumspect, prudent, and discreet in their conduct: 5. And those who are wise in the matters of time and eternity, may become still more wise and prudent; and be able, with great advantage, to govern themselves and others; 6. And be capable of finding out the meaning of the wise, though dark, sayings of God or men, and profitably to apply them to themselves, or explain them to others.—7. It is necessary that every one who desires true wisdom should begin with, and chiefly study, the saving knowledge of God, and live under a holy awe in the love, worship, and service of him; as, without this, all other knowledge is vain and useless; and, for want of it, wicked men, who prefer trifles to things of infinite importance, pour contempt on the wisest instructions that can be given them. 8, 9. And, next to the fear of God, it is necessary, my dear young men, that you reverence, honour, and obey your parents, and gladly receive and earnestly practise their instructions, as things of inestimable value, which will render you more amiable and honourable than all the gay adorning on earth. 10. And, in order to promote the fear of God and regard to parental instructions, see that with the utmost circumspection and earnestness you avoid all unnecessary fellowship with wicked persons, and all hearkening to their flattering enticements. 11–15. If, in the most courteous manner, and by every argument drawn from profound secrecy, sure success, immense profit, and good fellowship, they would seduce you to robbery, or any other wickedness, abhor their counsels and flee from their company: 16. For, being set on mischief themselves, if they once entangle you, they will perpetually hurry you from one horrid crime to another. 17. And while they lay snares for others whom they reckon rash and inconsiderate, themselves, like silly birds, rush into courses, of which the dangerous issue might be easily perceived: 18. And, in the end, all their pains and cunning to undo others bring ruin upon themselves from the hand of God and men: 19. And all unrighteous methods of procuring wealth but issue in the destruction of the procurers.—20–23. While you shun and abhor the enticements of the wicked, listen to the voice of Jesus Christ, the wisdom of God, who, in his word and ordinances of the gospel, in the most public, affectionate, earnest, and importunate manner, calls you, however simple, ignorant, foolish, or even scornful, to forsake your wicked courses, and turn to him by faith and repentance, to receive his Spirit, freely given, and believe his words divinely manifested

PALMYRA ROAD—LEADING FROM DAMASCUS TO TADMOR, THE CITY SOLOMON BUILT IN THE DESERT. [PROVERBS, i: 1.]—Solomon inherited from his father David a vast kingdom. His dominion stretched from the river Euphrates to the Mediterranean Sea, south to the river of Egypt, and north to near where the city of Aleppo now stands. Damascus was within his territory, and he built Palmyra, called Tadmor, in his day. This is a city in the wilderness, and that Solomon built it we learn from I. Kings, ix: 18, and II. Chronicles, viii: 4. Tadmor is between the Euphrates and Hamath, and is situated in an oasis of the desert. The celebrated Queen Zenobia had her capital and home in Palmyra. She built up a mighty kingdom which rivaled and defied the Roman power. She was captured and brought to Rome by the emperor Aurelian, A. D. 273. We give here as illustrating this first chapter of Proverbs, written by Solomon, a picture of a road leading out from Damascus to Tadmor, the city he built.

6 To[g] understand a proverb, and the interpretation;[7] the[h] words of the wise, and their dark sayings.

7 ¶ The[i] fear of the LORD *is* the [8]beginning[9] of knowledge: *but* fools despise wisdom and instruction.[1]

8 My[j] son, [k]hear the instruction of thy father, and forsake not the law of thy mother:

9 For[l] they *shall be* an ornament[2] of grace unto thy head, and chains about thy neck.

10 ¶ My son, [m]if sinners entice thee, consent thou not.

11 If they say, [o]Come with us, let us lay wait for blood, let us lurk privily for the innocent without cause;

12 Let[p] us swallow them up alive as the grave; and whole, as those that go down into the pit:

13 We[q] shall find all precious substance, we shall fill our houses with spoil:

14 Cast in thy lot among us; let us all have one purse:

15 My son, [r]walk not thou in the way with them; [s]refrain thy foot from their path:

16 For[t] their feet run to evil, and make haste to shed blood:

17 (Surely[u] in vain the net is spread [3]in the sight of any bird:)[4]

18 And[v] they lay wait for their *own* blood; they lurk privily for their *own* lives.[5]

19 So *are* the ways of every one [w]that is greedy of gain; *which* taketh away the life of the owners thereof.

20 ¶ Wisdom[6] crieth without; she uttereth her voice in the streets;[7]

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21 She crieth in the chief place of concourse, in the openings of the gates: in the city she uttereth her words, *saying*,

22 How[y] long, ye simple ones,[8] will ye love simplicity? and the scorners delight in their scorning, and fools hate knowledge?

23 Turn[z] you at my reproof: behold, I [a]will pour out my Spirit unto you, I will make known my words unto you.

24 ¶ Because[b] I have called, and ye refused; I have stretched out my hand, and no man regarded;

25 But ye have set at nought all my counsel, and would none of my reproof:

26 I[c] also will laugh at your calamity; I will mock when your fear cometh.

27 When[d] your fear cometh as desolation, and your destruction cometh as a whirlwind; when distress and anguish cometh upon you:

28 Then[e] shall they call upon me, but I will not answer; they shall seek me early, but they shall not find me:

29 For[g] that they hated knowledge, and did not choose the fear of the LORD:

30 They[h] would none of my counsel; [i]they despised all my reproof:

31 Therefore[j] shall they eat of the fruit of their own way, and be filled with their own [9]devices.

32 For[k] the turning away[1] of the simple shall slay them, and the prosperity of fools shall destroy them.

33 But[l] whoso hearkeneth unto me shall dwell safely, and shall be quiet from fear of evil.

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x Hab.2.9–12.ch.23.4;28.20,22.1 Ti.6.9,10.Ja.5.3,4. 6 Heb. *Wisdoms*, that is, *excellent wisdom*, i.e. *Christ*, Col.2.3.1 Co.1.24.ch.8.1,4;9.1,3.Jn.7.37,38.Mat.11.28–30.

g Mat.13.11, 51. Ac. 8.30,31.Ep.1.17.
7 Or, *an eloquent speech.*
h Ec. 12. 11. 1 Co.2. 14,15. 2 Pe.3.16, Ps.49. 4;78.2.
i Job28.28.Ps.111.10. ch.9.10;22.4.
8 Or, *the principal part.*
9 *The beginning.* 'The sum.'—*Boothroyd.*
1 Here begin those brief, pointed, antithetical sentences embodying profound thought and practical sense, which, as it were, cut their way into the mind and heart of the reader. —*P.*
j ver.10,15;ch.2.1;3. 1,11,21, &c. Jos. 7. 19. Ga.4.19.1 Jn.2.12,18;3. 7,18.
k ch.2.1–4;3.1;4.1,7; 5.1,2;6.20;31.1. 1 Sa. 2. 25,2 Ti.1.5;3.14,15.
l ch.3.22;4.8. 1 Pe.3. 3,4. 1 Ti.2.9,10.
2 Heb. *adding.*
m Ro.16.18.Ep.5.11. Ge.39.8,9. ch. 13. 20;9. 6;22.24,25;4.14,15;5.8.
o Je.5.26.Ps.10.8–10; 54.3;56.5,6;64.4,5.
p Ps.56. 2; 124. 3. Je. 51.34. La. 2. 5, 16. Nu. 16.30,32. Mi.3.3,4. Zep. 3.3.
q Hab.2.9.1 Ti.6.10. Je.51.34.Na.2.12.
r Ps.1.1. ch.4.14, 15; 2.12–16; 5.8; 13. 20; 9.6. Ep.5.11.
s Ps.119.101.
t ch.4.16;6.18. Ho.4. 2.Is.59.7,Ro.3.15.
u Je. 8. 6, 7. Is. 1.3, with ch. 7. 21–23; 9.14, 15. Ja.1.14.
3 Heb. *in the eyes of everything that hath a wing.*
4 'Man being made wiser than the fowls of heaven,' should manifest his superiority by the avoidance of the visible snares of sinners, Job 35.11.—*C.*
v Ps.9.16;7.15,16;55. 23,Es.7.10.
5 It will be observed that there is no equivalent in the Hebrew for the words '*own.*' They do not serve to throw light upon the meaning; on the contrary, they change the true sense altogether. Omit them and the sense is clear.—*P.*
6 Wisdom is personified: represented as a great teacher publicly declaring

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and inculcating the highest and noblest truths. The Spirit of God is the great teacher; the Word of God is his grand instrument, by which he makes known to man everything needful to guide him on earth and prepare him for heaven.—*P.*
y ch. 9. 4. Ps. 94. 8. Mat.9.13;18.11;23. 37. He.5.12. Jn. 6. 37. Re. 22.17. Is.55.2,7. Je.3.1, 14,22.
8 *Simple ones.* Seduced, deceived ones. —*C.*
z Ho. 14. 1. Eze. 33. 11.
a Is.44.3,4. Joel 2.28. Lu.11.13. Jn.7.37,39;16. 63. Eze.36.27;11.19,20. Ep.1.17,18.
b Is.65.2,12;66.4. Je. 7.13; 44.4,5. Eze. 8. 18. Mat.23.37; 22.5,6. Lu. 19.41,42; 7. 30. Ps. 107. 11. Zec. 7. 11,12. Re.3. 20. ver. 30. 2 Ch. 36.15, 16. Ho.11.2,7.
c Lu.14.24. Mat.7.22. Ps. 2. 4, 5; 37.13. Ju.10. 14.
d ch.10.24. Ps. 21. 8–12; 69. 22–28. Is.xxiv.; 65.7,11–15;66.14,15,24. Zec.xi. Mat.xxiv. Lu. 21.26. Da.9.26,27.1 Th. 2.15,16.
e Ge.6.3. Job 27.9. Is. 1. 15. Je. 11. 11; 14. 12. Eze.8.18. Mi.3.4. Zec. 7.13. Ps. 18. 41. Ja. 4.3. Jn.7 34;8.21.
g Is.27.11. Job 21.14. Ps. 50. 17. Ac. 13. 47. 1 Th.2.15,16.ver.22.
h ver.25. Ps.81.11,12. Lu.7.30;14.18–20;20.9–18.Ac.7.51,52.
9 The direct declarations of the Spirit of God in this passage fully accord with the facts of history. The Jewish nation is a sufficient proof. They rejected and despised the divine counsels and warnings for centuries; but at length judgment came. It should be observed also that the teaching of the New Testament is in this entire harmony with that of the Old. Witness our Lord's judgments on Chorazin, Bethsaida, and Capernaum, and Paul's sweeping statement in Ro. 1. 28—'And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind.'—*P.*

i ch.6.23. *j* Job 4.8.ch.14.14; 22.8. Je.2.19; 6.19. Is.3.11. Ga.6.7,8.
k Ps.69.22. Ro.11.9. De.32.15–25. Ho.13.6,7. Zep.2.15. Is.32.10,11;47.8. Re.18.7,8.
1 Or, *ease.*
l Ps.25.12,13; 112.7.ch.8.32–35; 22.4. Is.26.3; 55.3. Jn. 10. 28,29. 1 Pe.1.5. Jude 1. De.33.26–29.

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unto you. 24–29. But in the most solemn manner he warns you, that if you persist in despising his gracious calls, instructions, and offers, his righteous judgment shall overtake and ruin you and your nation, in the most unexpected, fearful, complete, and remediless manner; —and that, while your most rueful cries for deliverance shall be disregarded, your own counsels and contrivances shall render you inexpressibly miserable, and your occasional escapes, and even prosperity, shall, by encouraging your folly, pride, and wickedness, prove means of hastening and aggravating your ruin; 33. While they who hearken to his instructions, and believe on his name, shall, by his watchful providence, be marvellously protected, comforted, and eternally saved.

Ver. 1. The Hebrew word rendered 'proverb,' literally signifies 'likeness' or 'comparison.' It originally involved, therefore, the idea of a simile, but it had given to it at an early period a wider signification. It came to denote 'such short, pointed sayings, as do not involve a comparison directly, but still convey their meaning by the help of a figure. From this stage of its application it passed to sententious maxims generally, many of which, however, still involve a comparison. Such comparisons are either expressed, or the things compared are placed side by side, and the comparison left for the hearer or reader to supply. Next we find it used of those longer pieces in which a single idea is no longer exhausted in a sentence, but forms the germ of the whole, and is worked out into a didactic poem. Many instances of this kind occur in the first section of the Book of Proverbs.' The title therefore which is here given by the author or compiler to the whole of this book is appropriate, expressing very well its general character. *P.*

Ver. 2–4 form a general introduction to the whole book, explaining briefly its nature, and stating its object. The object was, to impart wisdom, not merely theoretical, but practical; such wisdom, in fact, as will enable man to understand what he is himself, what God is, what he owes to God, what is necessary for his salvation, and how he is to live, and speak, and think in the world. *P.*

Ver. 5. *A wise man will hear.* Right hearing is the great mark and duty of God's children. It is the great remedy against idolatry: 'Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord,' De. 6. 4. It is the special claim of Jesus: He that hath ears to hear, let him hear,' Mat. 13. 9. It is the special claim of the Spirit: 'Let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches,' Re. xxvii. It is the great principle of the spiritual life: 'Hear, and your soul shall live,' Is. 55. 3. It is the great channel of faith: 'Faith cometh by hearing,' Ro. 10. 17. *C.*

Ver. 7. *The fear of the Lord.* 'Doth not perfect love cast out fear?' True, but not the fear of God. It casteth out the fear of condemnation, Ro. 8. 1; it triumphs over the fear of death, 1 Co. 15. 57; but it implants and cherishes the fear of reverence for the majesty, the holiness, and the mercy of God. *C.*

Ver. 11. *Innocent.* The sinners do not call their contemplated victims *innocent* in the sense of guiltless, for that would detract from their enticement; they call them innocent in the sense of simple, unwarlike.—*Without cause.* Whose religion, instead of bringing safety and profit, renders them an easy prey. The speech of the bandits of the desert preparing to watch and plunder the caravans; the principle of avarice stimulating to dishonesty and cruelty in every form and in every generation. O believer, beware of covetousness, and be content with such things as thou hast, Lu. 12. 15. *C.*

Ver. 18. Robbery generally leads to murder, and experience proves that murderers seldom escape undetected and unpunished; so that the plotter against his neighbour is really ensnaring himself, and toiling for his own ruin. *C.*

Ver. 23. *I will pour out my Spirit.* Christ, 'in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge,' Col. 2. 3, here promises to pour out that Spirit which alone can make the letter of the word effectual, and the soul wise to salvation. *C.*

Ver. 26. How can a merciful Saviour thus 'laugh and mock' at the 'calamity and fear' of sinners? Just because they are still impenitent sinners. The devil is even now as much a 'liar and a murderer' as he was in the beginning of his rebellion, and his hosts 'believe and tremble,' but they never desire to *love*. Even so, the 'carnal mind' abideth 'enmity against God,' and hates the Judge while it writhes beneath the judgment. *C.*

Ver. 32. *Turning away of the simple,* &c. 'The turning away' to worldly ease, carnal indulgence, and spiritual sleep.—*Prosperity of fools,* &c. Because they think not of death, of judgment, of eternity; and are promising ease to their bodies, till their souls are demanded of them.—*Note,* Rebel not in adversity, for 'whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth.' *C.*

REFLECTIONS.—The inspired oracles of God are calculated to convey the most solid and precious instruction in the things both of time and eternity: and it is necessary and profitable that all, even the wisest, should carefully search them, particularly in the days of youth, in which the faculties are most quick, the temptations most numerous, and our conversation, for time and eternity, just forming. Deep regard to God and to parental admonitions are highly necessary in those who desire true wisdom. But there can be no solid knowledge or prudence where the heart is not changed, believes not on Christ, and loves not God as in him. With amazing earnestness and craft do sinners seduce others, particularly young and simple ones, into fellowship with them in sin. It is necessary, therefore, to be always impressed with the awe of God's omniscience and just judgment, that no temptation of secrecy or of gain may tempt us to wickedness: and to avoid the society of the wicked if we choose to escape their ruin. But with what infatuation do men, more stupid than birds, rush into danger when fairly warned! and in ruining others, they but ruin themselves in a more miserable manner: and however secrecy or power may protect them from men, the judgment of God overtakes them. Their cruelty and avarice hurry them and their companions into lasting misery and woe. Alas! how great is their folly, who, for a perishing world, destroy an immortal soul; and for a momentary pleasure, plunge themselves into everlasting woe! But great is the compassion of Jesus to such rebellious sinners: in the most earnest and open manner he pleads with them, in the ordinances of his grace, to promote their eternal salvation. Condescending are his offers and invitations of mercy, pointed to the most unworthy and wicked; and precious and necessary the benefits which he offers. But inexcusable is their guilt, and dreadful their ruin, who obstinately refuse them. Rejected of God in their misery, even their ease and prosperity harden and ensnare them, and aggravate their woe! But blessed above all with salvation and rest are those who receive them, and listen to his gracious voice.

CHAPTER II.

1 The study of wisdom tendeth to promote godliness, 10 and safety from evil company, 20 and to direct men in good and salutary ways.

MY son, [a]if thou wilt receive my words, and hide my commandments with thee;

2 So that [b]thou incline thine ear unto wisdom, *and* apply thine heart to understanding;

3 Yea, [c]if thou criest after knowledge, *and* liftest up thy voice[1] for understanding;

4 If[d] thou seekest her as silver, and searchest for her as *for* hid treasures;

5 Then[e] shalt thou understand the fear of the LORD, and find the knowledge of God.

6 For[g] the LORD giveth wisdom: out of his mouth *cometh* knowledge and understanding.

7 He layeth up [h]sound wisdom for the righteous: *he is* a [i]buckler to them that walk uprightly.

8 He [j]keepeth the paths of judgment, and preserveth the way of his saints.

9 Then[k] shalt thou understand righteousness, and judgment, and equity; *yea,* every good path.[2]

10 ¶ When[l] wisdom entereth into thine heart, and knowledge is pleasant unto thy soul,

11 Discretion[n] shall preserve thee, understanding shall keep thee;

12 To[o] deliver thee from the way of the evil *man,* from the man that speaketh[p] froward things;

13 Who[q] leave the paths of uprightness, to walk in the ways of darkness;

14 Who[r] rejoice to do evil, *and* delight in the frowardness of the wicked;

A.M. cir. 3029.
B.C. cir. 975.

CHAP. II.

a ch.1.8; 3.1; 4.1,20, 21; 5.1,2,7; 6.20,21; 7.1–3. Ps.119.9,11,127,128.

b Is.55.3.ver.3,4. Ro. 12.11. Ec. 9.10. Ac.17. 11. Jn.5.39.

c ch.8.17. Ja.1.5.

1 Heb. *givest thy voice.*

d Mat.6.33; 13.44. ch. 3.14; 8.18,19. Job 28.12–19. Ps.119.72.

e Ho.6.3. Job 28.28. Mat.11.25; 13.11. Is.54. 13; 33.6. Je.31.34.

g 1 Ki.3.9,12. Ja.1.5, 17. Is. 48.17. Ep. 1. 17–19; 3.18,19.

h 1 Co.1.24; 2.7. 2 Ti. 3.15.

i Ge.15.1. Ps. 84. 11; 5.12. ch. 30.5.

j Ps. 5. 8; 25. 9; 23. 3; 119. 3, 8. 1 Sa.2. 9. Jude 24. Jn.10.28,29. 1 Pe. 1. 5.

k Ps.119.99. ver.5,6; ch.1.2–6. Je.6.16.

2 This verse is more immediately connected with ver. 5, and follows, like the latter, as a result of the diligent search after wisdom. Righteousness is that adherence to strict law and justice which characterizes every act of God's government, and ought to characterize the doings of his people. Judgment embraces those punishments inflicted upon sinners, and the judicial acts done in vindication of the divine character, and in defence and for the promotion of God's kingdom. Equity embraces the whole scheme of redemption and of grace, with the whole sphere of Christian work and duty.—*P.*

l Job 32.12; 23.12. Ps. 19.10; 119.97–99. Je.15. 16. Col. 3.16.

n ch.6.22,23. Ps.119. 5,7,9,11,34. Ep.5.15.

o Ps.17.4,5. Ep.5.11, 15. ch.13.20; 9.6.

p Ac.20.30. 1 Co.15. 32.

q Ps.14.3. ch. 21. 16. Ep.4.18,19. Jn.3.20; 12. 35. Ro.13.12; 1.28, &c.

r ch.10.23. Je.11.15. Ro.13.12; 1.32.

A.M. cir. 3029.
B.C. cir. 975.

s De.32.5. Ps. 125.5. Is. 59. 8. Ro. 1. 28–32. Tit.3.3.

t ch.5.3,20; 7.5; 6.24; 19.27; 19.13–18. Ec.7.26. Ro.16.18.

u 1 Co.6.16, with Ge. 2.24.

v 1 Co.11.3, with Je. 3.1,4.

x Mal.2.14,15. Ge.2. 24.

y ch.5.5,11; 6.26; 7.27; 9.18.

z Ec.7.26. He. 13.4. Ho.4.11,14. Re. 22.11. Ps.81.12. Mat.7.14.

3 What profundity of wisdom is requisite to guard the intellect, the heart, and the senses against the various forms of temptation! False philosophy assails us with its insidious but superficial speculations. Malice and envy and slander assail us, trying our tempers, and going far to ruin our influence. Pleasure, wealth, fame assail us, and in their train follow lust and passion. Divine wisdom alone, aided by divine grace, can enable weak mortals to resist and overcome all their enemies.—*P.*

a Ps. 119. 5, 63, 115. He. 6. 12. Je. 6. 16. ch. 13.20. Ca.1.8.

b Ps.37.3,9,11,22,29. Is.1.19. Job 1.3; 42.12.

c Job 18. 17. Ps. 104. 35; 37. 22; 52. 5; 10. 16. Mal.4.1.

4 Or, *plucked up.*

CHAP. III.

a ch.1.8; 2.1. De.8.1; 30.16,20. He.2.1–3.

b Is.51.7. Je.31.33.

c De.30.16,20. 1 Ti.4. 8. ch.4.10,22; ver.8. Ps. 91.16; 119.165. De. 6. 2, 3. Jn.17.2. Ro.5.1,11.

1 'Length of days' probably means 'health.'—*P.*

2 Heb. *years of life.*

3 Or, *good success.*

4 'Good understanding' or 'success;' that is, acceptance among men. They will naturally manifest gratitude for the favours you bestow on them. The kind, benevolent, warm-hearted man is generally beloved.—*P.*

15 Whose[s] ways *are* crooked, and *they* froward in their paths:

16 To[t] deliver thee from the strange woman, *even* from the stranger *which* flattereth with her words;

17 Which [u]forsaketh the [v]guide of her youth, and forgetteth [x]the covenant of her God:

18 For[y] her house inclineth unto death, and her paths unto the dead:

19 None[z] that go unto her return again, neither take they hold of the paths of life.[3]

20 ¶ That[a] thou mayest walk in the way of good *men,* and keep the paths of the righteous.

21 For[b] the upright shall dwell in the land, and the perfect shall remain in it.

22 But[c] the wicked shall be cut off from the earth, and the transgressors shall be rooted out of it.[4]

CHAPTER III.

1 An exhortation to obedience, 5 to faith, 7 to mortification, 9 to devotion, 11 to patience. 13 The happy gain of wisdom. 19 The power, 21 and the benefits of wisdom. 27 An exhortation to charitableness, 30 peaceableness, 31 and contentedness. 33 The cursed state of the wicked.

MY son,[a] forget not my law; but [b]let thine heart keep my commandments:

2 For [c]length of days,[1] and long life,[2] and peace, shall they add to thee.

3 Let[d] not mercy and truth forsake thee: bind [e]them about thy neck; write them upon the table of thine heart:

4 So[g] shalt thou find favour and good understanding[3] in the sight of God and man.[4]

d ch.16.7. 1 Co.13.2–8. Mi.6.8. Mat.23.23. Ps.103.17; 89.33; 25.10. 6.2; 7.3. Ps.119.9–11. 2 Co.3.3. *e* Ex.13.9. De.6.8 ch. *g* 1 Sa.2.26. Ps.111.10. Lu.2.52. Ro.14.18.

CHAPTER II. Ver. 1–5. And for your excitement and encouragement, know assuredly, my children, that if you entertain, receive, and lay up in your heart the instructions and directions which I now give you; if you earnestly study, and importunately pray for, the enjoyment of Jesus Christ, and of all true and spiritual wisdom and knowledge in him, as infinitely more precious, useful, and desirable than all the treasures on earth, then you shall, by the influences of the Holy Spirit, happily obtain your desire, and be enabled and directed to know, obey, fear, love, worship, and serve God in a proper and truly acceptable manner. 6–9. For as wisdom and every other blessing is the free gift of God, he in his Word hath revealed, and by his Spirit bestows it upon men, and gives them a true and spiritual knowledge of himself and his ways. He hath in store, and is always ready to bestow upon such as ask it, true, solid, and substantial wisdom. And while he instructs and directs, he, by his almighty providence, infallibly preserves from soul-ruining mischiefs such as walk in a sincere, candid, and upright manner. He guides and enables the lovers of holiness to persevere in their integrity according to the rules of his Word, and preserves them from being drawn aside from it or endangered in it. And in seeking wisdom from him, you shall come to understand his righteousness and wisdom in all his administrations, and be enabled to imitate him in everything truly holy and virtuous. 10. And if Jesus Christ, the spiritual knowledge of divine things, and the power of practical godliness, have once been admitted to your heart and into your affections, 11–15. These will tend to preserve you from the crafty and ruinous seduction, either of subtle men, who, having apostatized from everything good, walk and delight in the perplexed ways of vice, and in making others as wicked as themselves, drawing them aside, and entangling them in courses directly contrary to their own true interest, safety, conscience, or reason; 16. Or of light and lewd women, unworthy to be reckoned Israelites, who set themselves, by all the arts of flattery, to decoy such as you into whoredom; 17. Perfidiously alienating their affections and persons from their own husbands, and disregarding the solemn vows made to them at marriage; 18. And who really love no one, but promote the death and eternal damnation of all such as cultivate any familiarity with them. 19. Very few who are once ensnared into their impure embraces are ever, by the grace of God, recovered to a penitent, chaste, and virtuous life on earth, or to everlasting glory in heaven.—20–22. And, moreover, while you are preserved from the ruinous infection of these wicked seducers, you shall be enabled to follow the example of the holy patriarchs and prophets; and, in consequence of this, shall happily dwell in this promised land of Canaan, and inherit the spiritual and everlasting felicity prefigured by it.—While these wicked seducers and their followers shall, after a short-lived flourish of prosperity, be furiously driven from this land and earth, and cast into the woe and depths of hell.

Ver. 4. *Pearls* are brought up from the depths of the sea; *gold* is washed from the earth and sands; *silver* is dug from the deep and dark mine; *gems* are extricated from the solid rock; the relics of antiquity are separated from rubbish and ruins—and shall the unsearchable riches of Christ be expected on the surface, as the reward of the indolent, or the discovery of accident? No. The believer searches in study of the Word, in study of the ways of Providence, in study of his own heart, in the depths of sovereign grace and eternal love—and discovers those treasures that lie hid from the wise and prudent, but which God by his Spirit reveals unto babes. *C.*

Ver. 9. *Understand righteousness.* It should never be forgotten that there is but one righteousness that can ever be discovered, 'the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all, and upon all them that believe,' Ro. 3. 10, 22. *C.*

Ver. 12. Men, evil in heart and froward in speech; for in the heart originate all evil things, and out of the abundance of an evil heart the mouth speaketh, Mat. 12. 34. *C.*

Ver. 17. A woman who has violated her marriage vow is here exhibited. Faithless to God, faithless to man—the perjured wanton is at once the original and the emblem of all that is most seductive, dangerous, and deadly. But to view the passage as a mere warning against a wicked woman, were to narrow it far within the limits of its full meaning. She is the emblem of that heathen idolatry by which the spirit is seduced from God, and immersed in sensuality; and she is the emblem of that seductive apostasy in the nominal Christian church which is called Babylon —with whom the kings of the earth have committed fornication, and whose judgment, though it linger, will come in one hour, Re. 18. 9, 10. *C.*

REFLECTIONS.—With remarkable diligence should we attend to all the exercises of true religion. The Lord is ready to bless such as are diligent with great success; and usually bestows upon them remarkable instruction, satisfaction, and protection. There is need of real religion to season and rule our heart; and of God's special preservation and our utmost caution while we live in this world, where men of corrupt principles, and women of treacherous and corrupt practices, so greatly abound. In their sinful courses such are generally obstinate, active, and crafty. 'Ensnaring are their enticements, and dangerous and ordinarily ruinous their connections: and few, once entangled in their wickedness, ever seriously repent, or turn to Jesus Christ for life and salvation. Happy then are they who are delivered from them, and enabled to walk as truly pious and circumspect. Godliness has the promise of this life and of that which is to come. Even now the saints alone have a blessed portion on earth; and at last they only shall inhabit the new earth, into which no wicked person shall ever enter.

CHAPTER III. Ver. 1, 2. Let me therefore again entreat you, my dear children, to receive, and rivet in your judgment, memory, will, and affections, the counsels and commands which I now give, that you may practise them in your lives: thus shall your temporal life be long, healthful, and prosperous; be attended with a pleasant life of grace here, and followed by an eternal life of glory hereafter. 3, 4. And while you live by a cordial, constant, and assured faith in the mercy and faithfulness of God, pledged in his Word, study always, as your great honour, to imitate him in kindness, compassion, and uprightness: thus shall you be highly respected and honoured, and shall prudently order your affairs both before God and men. 5, 6. Always, by faith in his spiritual promises and relations, depend wholly on God for strength, direction, and success in your undertakings, and never upon your own knowledge or carnal prudence. In every undertaking believe and depend on his overruling power, observe his directions, and implore and wait for his favour and blessing, and he shall guide you in all

5 ¶ Trust[h] in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding.

6 In[i] all thy ways acknowledge him,[5] and he shall direct thy paths.

7 ¶ Be[j] not wise in thine own eyes: fear the LORD, and depart from evil.

8 It[k] shall be health[6] to thy navel,[7] and marrow[8] to thy bones.

9 ¶ Honour[l] the LORD with thy substance, and with the first-fruits of all thine increase:

10 So[m] shall thy barns be filled with plenty, and thy presses shall burst out with new wine.

11 ¶ My[o] son, despise not the chastening of the LORD; neither be weary of his correction:

12 For whom the LORD loveth he correcteth, even as a father the son *in whom* he delighteth.

13 ¶ Happy[p] *is* the man *that* findeth wisdom, and the man *that* getteth understanding:[9]

14 For[q] the merchandise of it *is* better than the merchandise of silver, and the gain thereof than fine gold.

15 She[r] *is* more precious than rubies; and all the things thou canst desire are not to be compared unto her.

16 Length[s] of days *is* in her right hand; *and* in her left hand riches and honour.

17 Her[t] ways *are* ways of pleasantness, and all her paths *are* peace.

18 She *is* [u]a tree of life to them that [v]lay hold upon her; and happy *is every one* that retaineth her.

19 ¶ The[x] LORD by wisdom[1] hath founded the earth, by understanding hath he [2]established the heavens;

20 By his knowledge [y]the depths are broken up, and [z]the clouds drop down the dew.

21 ¶ My son, [a]let not them depart from thine eyes; keep sound wisdom and discretion:

22 So[b] shall they be life unto thy soul, and grace to thy neck.[3]

23 Then[c] shalt thou walk in thy way safely, and thy foot shall not stumble.

24 When[d] thou liest down, thou shalt not be afraid; yea, thou shalt lie down, and [e]thy sleep shall be sweet.

25 Be[g] not afraid of sudden fear, neither of the desolation of the wicked, when it cometh.

26 For[h] the LORD shall be thy confidence, and shall keep thy foot from being taken.

27 ¶ Withhold[i] not good[4] from them to whom it is due,[5] when it is in the power of thine hand to do *it*.

28 Say[j] not unto thy neighbour, Go, and come again, and to-morrow I will give, when thou hast it by thee.

29 ¶ Devise[k] not[6] evil against thy neighbour, seeing he dwelleth securely by thee.

30 Strive[l] not with a man without cause, if he have done thee no harm.

31 Envy[n] thou not the oppressor,[7] and choose none of his ways.

32 For[o] the froward *is* abomination to the LORD: [p]but his secret[8] *is* with the righteous.

33 ¶ The[q] curse of the LORD *is* in the house

A.M. cir. 3029. B.C. cir. 975.

h Ps.37.3;62.8.ch.16. 3;23.4

i 1 Ch.28.9. Ja. 1.5. Phi.4. 6. Ezr. 8. 21. Je. 10.23. Ps.32.8.

5 'In all thy ways,' in public and in private, in the family, in the business of life, in the church, in time of prosperity and joy, and in time of adversity and sorrow, acknowledge God; bow submissive to his wisdom; ask his blessing; seek his guidance.—*P.*

j Ro.12.16;11.25.ch. 16.6,12.18.5.21. 1 Co.3. 18. Ps.34.9,11–14. Job1. 1,8.

k De.32.47;30.20.

6 Heb. *medicine.*

7 'It shall be health to thy *waist*,' as it is translated by M. Good, Ca.7.2. Boothroyd translates it *bosom*; others *body*; and others the *clasp* or buckle of a belt or girdle.—*C.*

8 Heb. *watering* or *moistening*, Job21.24.

l Ex.22.29; 23.19; 34. 26. De.26.2, &c. Lu.14. 13,14.

m Ec.11.1,2. Mat.10. 42. De.28.8. Mal.3.10–12.1 Ti.4.8.

o 8.35,36.

p Job 5.17. He.12.5–11. Ps.94. 12. Re. 3, 19. De.8.5. Is.27.8,9. Am. 3.2. 2 Co.4.17.

9 Heb. *the man* that *draweth out understanding*, Jn.6.45. Ep.1.17,18;3.18,19.

q Phi. 3, 8, 9. Job 28. 15, &c. Ps. 19. 10; 119. 72, 111, 162; 73.25. ch.8. 11, 19; 16. 16; 4.7. Mat. 16.26. Ca.4.9–16.

r Job 28.13, &c.

s ver.2; ch.8.18; 4.6, 8,9. 1 Ti.4.8; 6.6. 2 Co.6. 6–10. 1 Co.3.21–23. Ps. 84.11. Mat.6.33.

t Mat. 11. 29, 30. Ps. 119. 165; 37. 37. Is.57.2. Ro.5.1.

u ch. 11. 30; 13. 12, with Ge. 2. 9; 3. 22, 24. Re.22.2,14;2.7.

v He.6.18. Ca.3.4.

x Ps. 104. 24; 136. 5. ch. 8. 27. Je. 10. 12; 51. 15, Jn.1.3.

1 The Father has, by his Son, who is both 'the wisdom of God, and the power of God' (1 Co. 1. 24), created all things; and by him, as his eternal Word, they continue to be ordered and upheld, He. 1 2,3.—*C.*

2 Or, *prepared*, Ps. 33.6.

y Ge. 7. 11; 8. 2, 10. Job 38.8–11,26–28. Ps. 65.9–12. Je.14.22. Joel 2.23.

z Job 36.27.

a ver.1–3;ch.2.7,11.9; 4.8,9. He.2.1,3. Ps.119. 9,11.

b See ver.1–4. Is.38. 16. Jn.6.63. 1 Jn.1.1. ch. 1.9.

3 They will not only secure for thee eternal glory in heaven, but they will adorn with those graces which must secure the respect and admiration of thy fellow-men on earth.—*P.*

c Ps.37.24; 91.11,12; 121.3,8. Zec.10.12.

d Le. 26. 6. Eze. 34. 25. Ps. 3,4,5,8. Ac.12.6. Je.31.26. Ec.5.12.

e Ps.127.2.

g Ps.91.5;112.7. Is.8. 12,13;41.10,14–16;43.1, 2. 1 Pe.3.13.

h Ps. 91.1–9; 62.1–7; 121. 3, 8. Hab. 3.17,18. Is.27.3. 1 Sa.2.9.

i Ro.13.7,8. Ep.4.28. Ga.6.10.

4 The good of temporal assistance, spiritual instruction, rebuke, correction, or comfort.—*C.*

5 Heb. *the owners thereof.*

j Le.19.13. De.24.15. Ja.2.15 16; 5.4. 1 Jn.3. 17.

k Je.18.18.ch.12.2.

6 Or, *practise no.*

l Mat. 12. 19; 5. 40. 2 Ti.2.24. He.12.1. Ro. 12.15,18. ch.25.8,9; 18. 6.

n Ps.37.1,7; 73.3.ch. 24.1.

7 Heb. *a man of violence.*

o Ps.18.26.ch.8.13.

p Ps. 25. 14. Mat. 11. 25; 13.11; 16.17. ch.14. 16. Joh 29.4.

8 'His secret,' that is, his covenant—that mysterious, but glorious relationship which subsists between him as the heavenly Father and his children on earth.—*P.*

q Mal. 2. 2. Zec.5.4. Je.10.25.

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your proceedings, and bring them to a happy issue. 7, 8. Never indulge a conceit of your own knowledge or wisdom, as if it were sufficient to direct you in the easiest matters: but under the influence of a holy and filial awe of and regard to God, avoid with care whatever he has forbidden in his law: as that is the way to promote the health, strength, and comfort of both soul and body in time and eternity. 9, 10. In just gratitude to God, who has bestowed all that you have upon you, make conscience of employing your estates in works of piety, for the maintenance of his worship, and of charity to his poor, and of justice to all men: so shall his blessing abundantly increase them in everything useful and comfortable. 11, 12. Never overlook or contemn the afflictions which you meet with, as if they were trifles, or happened by chance; and never grow weary of them as an intolerable burden, or take any unlawful course to remove them; but kindly receive and submit to them as the corrections of a kind and gracious Father, in which he manifests his distinguished love to and care for your souls.—13–18. Thrice happy is the man who through much tribulation, and with much care and pains, obtains the enjoyment of Jesus Christ, and the spiritual wisdom and knowledge that is in and by him. This is infinitely preferable to everything gainful, comely, precious, or profitable on earth. By this we are secured in all the real blessings of this present life and of that which is to come. In cleaving to Jesus, and walking in his ordinances and laws, the most delightful comforts and pleasures, the most blessed tranquillity of mind and conscience, the most happy success of affairs, and eternal rest with God in glory, are to be enjoyed.—Immortal, quickening, and invigorating is the satisfaction enjoyed by every one who earnestly embraces his person, receives his instructions, and steadfastly walks in his ways. 19, 20. And no wonder that Jesus Christ, and the spiritual wisdom and knowledge that are hid in him, should be so profitable, pleasant, and comfortable, when by him, and in the exercise of his infinite wisdom, God formed, founded, and settled the heavens, and earth, and seas, and all that is therein, and makes the fountains to pour forth streams for the nourishment of animals, and the clouds to drop down dews and rains for the nourishment of plants, corn, and grass.—21–26. Be it therefore your earnest care to fix these my instructions in your heart, and to keep them always before your eyes, as the means of obtaining true and profitable knowledge and prudence. You will find them infallible promoters of true life, and honour, and comfort, temporal, spiritual, and eternal. By means hereof, you, by the blessing of God, shall prosper in your labours, and be kept from falling into sin or danger; and under his protection you shall enjoy the most safe and pleasant rest and refreshment. No reports of sudden and approaching danger, or of desolating judgments, appointed for or effected by the wicked, need in the least terrify you; for the Almighty JEHOVAH, in whom you have placed all your trust and confidence, shall support, protect, and preserve you from danger. 27, 28. Never delay the payment of just debts, or the giving to the Lord, or to the poor, beyond the first opportunity afforded you, as you know not if ever Providence will give you another. 29. Never contrive mischief against any: especially against such as depend on your equity and kindness. 30. Never be quarrelsome and contentious: and especially to such as have done you no injury. 31, 32. Never let the prosperity and wealth of oppressors tempt you to wish yourselves in their condition, or to imitate them in their injurious conduct; for wilful and obstinate oppressors are infinitely detested and hated of God; but his secret counsels and comforts are vouchsafed to such as walk uprightly and honestly. 33. Evil-doers, however great, and all that they have, are under the destructive influence of God's curse; but good men, being under the influence of his favour and blessing, may be happy in the meanest condition upon earth. 34. God will certainly at last expose proud mockers of religion and virtue to scorn and contempt; but will render such as are meek and humble highly respected and honoured. 35. And though persons truly wise unto salvation may for a time be abusively reproached and contemned, yet they shall, in the most free and fixed manner, enjoy honour from God and men at last; whereas contempt and misery are all the promotion that wicked men, ignorant of God and regardless of their true interest, shall ever attain.

Ver. 2. The *fifth* is the first commandment with promise; which ever in this life receives a literal fulfilment, as far as it serves for God's glory and the good of his people: also a spiritual fulfilment; for believers always count their days by the continuance of goodness and mercy; and their life has become truly long from their 'desire to depart and be with Christ.' But hereafter the promise is fully realized in all the blessings of life and immortality. *C.*

Ver. 5. *Trust in the Lord.* Trust in the Lord's word, whatever hath been thy own previous opinion; trust in his will, whatever hath been thy previous inclinations; trust in his promise, whatever hath been thy own previous experience; and trust in his guidance, whatever may be thy doubts, difficulties, or fears. *C.*

Ver. 16. Some think this description of temporal blessings is confined to the Jewish, and not literally extended to the Christian dispensation. This, with the exception of the promise of possessing Canaan, is an unfounded distinction; 'for godliness is profitable unto all things, having the promise of the life that now is,' 1 Ti. 4. 8. The true meaning of the verse lies in referring its promise to the gift of eternal life, and the acquisition of the 'unsearchable riches of Christ.' *C.*

Ver. 17. *Ways of pleasantness.* A way is rendered pleasant, (1) by health to journey and enjoy; (2) by the smoothness of the path; (3) by the beauty of the prospect; (4) by the safety of the country; (5) by the agreeableness of companions; (6) by the prospect of a cheerful and happy rest and welcome at the end: all these meet when Jesus is 'the way.' *C.*

Ver. 22. *Life unto thy soul.* The life of the body is supported by food, digestion, and nutrition, which eventuate in health and enjoyment. The life of the soul is supported by the bread that cometh down from heaven; is accompanied with 'hunger and thirst after righteousness,' which is followed by 'growth in grace,' and eventuates in 'the peace of God' with 'joy unspeakable and full of glory.' *C.*

Ver. 25. *Be not afraid of sudden fear.* 'Sudden fear,' or what is commonly called a *panic*, with 'rumours of wars,' 'dire portents and omens,' are continually disturbing the minds of men. But by all, the believer in Jesus remains unmoved. His Redeemer liveth—his sins are forgiven—he is accepted of God—he inherits the promises—Jesus is with him in the ship, and he trembles not in any storm that his Father may commission to try his faith. *C.*

Ver. 32. *His secret is with the righteous.* This does not signify any secret information that God gives to the one, while he withholds it from the other (for the grace of God hath appeared unto all men, teaching them that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, they should live soberly, righteously, and godly); but it signifies God's residence in the hearts of believers, which this world can neither see, imagine, nor admit; and that secret comfort which he administers to them by his promises and Spirit, in the midst of all the public trials of which they are partakers, and

of the wicked: but [r]he blesseth the habitation of the just.

34 Surely[s] he scorneth the scorners: but he giveth grace unto the lowly.

35 The[t] wise shall inherit glory: but shame shall be the promotion of fools.[9]

CHAPTER IV.

1 *Solomon, to persuade obedience,* 3 *showeth what instruction he had of his parents,* 5 *to study wisdom,* 14 *and to shun the path of the wicked.* 20 *He exhorteth to faith,* 23 *and sanctification.*

HEAR, ye[a] children,[1] the instruction of a father, and attend to know understanding.

2 For I give you [b]good doctrine, forsake ye not my law.

3 For[c] I was my father's son, tender and only *beloved* in the sight of my mother.[2]

4 He[d] taught me also, and said unto me, Let[e] thine heart retain my words: keep my commandments, and live.

5 ¶ Get[g] wisdom, get understanding: forget *it* not; neither decline from the words of my mouth.

6 Forsake her not, and she shall preserve thee; [h]love her, and she shall keep thee.

7 Wisdom *is* the [i]principal thing; *therefore* get wisdom: and with all thy getting get understanding.

8 Exalt[j] her, and she shall promote thee: she shall bring thee to honour,[3] when thou dost embrace her.

9 She shall give to thine head [k]an ornament of grace: [4]a crown of glory shall she deliver to thee.[5]

10 Hear, O my son, and receive my sayings; and [l]the years of thy life shall be many.

11 I have taught thee in the way of wisdom; I have led thee in right paths.[6]

A.M. cir. 3029. B.C. cir. 975.

r Job 8.6,7. Ps.1.3; 91.10. 2 Sa.6.11;7.16.

s ch.21.24. Ps.138.6. Ja.4.6. 1 Pe.5.5. Lu.1. 51.

t ver.16; ch. 4. 8. Ps. 73.24. 1 Sa.2.30. Da.12. 2,3. Is.65.13–15.

[9] Heb. *exalteth the fools.*

CHAP. IV.

a ch.1.8; 2. 1–4; 3. 1, 21; 5.1,2; 6.20–23; 7.1,4. Ep.6.1,4

1 The exhortation here turns from a son and his personal duties, to children and their public duties.—*C.*

b De. 32. 2. 1 Ti.4.6. Tit.1.9. ch.22.20,21.

c 1 Ch. 29.1. 2 Sa.12. 24,25; 7.14. 1 Ki.1.13.

2 The *Father,* God; the *mother,* the church, Ga. 4. 26. They cannot be any others, for no father except God could truly promise life to obedient children, ver. 4. God alone commands the blessing upon Zion, even life for evermore.—*C.*

d 1 Ch. 28. 9–21. Ge. 18.19. Ep.6.4. 2 Ti.3.15. ch.22.6.

e ch.3.1,2; 7.2. Le. 18.4,5. 15.55.3.

g ch.2.2–4,11. 2 Ti.1. 13. Is.8.20. 2 Th.2.15. 2 Pe.3.18. Jn.5.39.

h Ps. 119. 97–100. 2 Th.2.10.

i Mat.13.44. Lu.10. 42. Phi. 3. 7–10. Col. 1. 18; 2.3,9; 3.11. Re.3.18.

j 1 Sa.2.30. Da.1.19. ch.3.16; 8.18; 22.4; 29. 23. 1 Ti.4.8.

3 Often to honour with men, invariably to honour with God —even as our Lord hath said, 'If any man serve me, him will my Father honour,' Jn.12.26.—*C.*

k See ch.1.9. 1 Pe.3. 4. 1 Ti.2.9,10. 2 Ti.4.8. Re.2.10.

4 Or, *she shall compass thee with a crown of glory.*

5 There is no crown of glory amongst men, for here all is vanity and vexation of spirit. This is that crown of glory for which Paul longed, 'the crown of (a Saviour's) righteousness that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for them that love him,' 2 Ti.4.8.—*C.*

l ch. 3. 2; 7. 2; ver.4, 13. De.6.2; 32.47. Ps.21. 4; 91.16.

6 I have led thee in the knowledge of Messiah, even Jesus Christ, the wisdom of God.—*C.*

m 2 Sa. 22. 37. ch. 3. 23. Job 18.7. Ps.18.19, 36; 91.11,12; 121. 3,7,8; 119.32,165.

o ch. 3. 18; 23. 23. 1 Th.5.21. Re.3.12; 2.13. 2 Pe.3.17. Jude 3.

p Ps.1.1. ch.1.10,15; 9.6; 13.20.

7 A path is private, a way is public; follow neither. Take no part with wicked men, either in their public professions and actions, or in their private doings and cabals.—*C.*

q ch.5.8. Ps.1.1. 1 Th. 5.22. Ep.5.11.

r Ps. 36.4. ch.1.16; 11. 23. Is. 57. 20. Ro. 3.15, 16. 2 Pe.2.14.

s ch. 20.17. Ps. 53.4. Mi.2.1; 3.3. Zep.3.3.

t Ps.84.7. 2 Sa.28.4,5. Job 11.17; 17.9. Mat.5. 14,16. Phi.2.15. 2 Pe.1. 19; 3.18.

u Je. 13. 16. Is. 59. 9; 42.25. Job 5.14; 18.5,6; 12.25. Ps.82.5. Ep.4.18, 19. Jn.12.35.

8 The stumbling-block of all wicked men, since the days of Cain, has been Jesus: and none of the wicked have known him. When they saw him there was no comeliness that they should desire him; he was despised, and they esteemed him not. And they will stumble in darkness and in broken ways till they take Jesus for their truth, their way, and their light.—*C.*

w ch.1.8; 2.3,4; 3.1,3, 21; 5.1,2; 6.20,21; 7.1–3. Is.55.3. Ps.34.11.

x ver.4,10,13; ch.3.8. De.32.47. Jn.6.63.

[9] Heb. *medicine.*

y Mar. 13.33, 37; 14. 38. ch.23.19.

1 Heb. *above all keeping.*

z Mat.12.35; 15.19.

2 Words, actions, growth, joy, sorrow, sleep, restoration, and descent by kind, are the chief issues of life natural, and the simplest emblems of life intellectual and spiritual.—*C.*

a Ep.4.29. Col.3.8. 1 Co.15.33. Ja.1.26.

3 Heb. *forwardness of mouth, and perverseness of lips.*

b Job 31.1. Ps.119.37. Mat.6.22.

c Hag.1.5. Ep. 5.15. He.12.13. Ps.119.59.

12 When[m] thou goest, thy steps shall not be straitened; and when thou runnest, thou shalt not stumble.

13 Take[o] fast hold of instruction; let *her* not go: keep her; for she *is* thy life.

14 ¶ Enter[p] not into the path of the wicked, and go not in the way of evil *men.*[7]

15 Avoid[q] it, pass not by it, turn from it, and pass away.

16 For[r] they sleep not, except they have done mischief; and their sleep is taken away, unless they cause *some* to fall.

17 For[s] they eat the bread of wickedness, and drink the wine of violence.

18 But[t] the path of the just *is* as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day.

19 The[u] way of the wicked *is* as darkness: they know not at what they stumble.[8]

20 ¶ My son, [v]attend to my words; incline thine ear unto my sayings:

21 Let them not depart from thine eyes; keep them in the midst of thine heart:

22 For[x] they *are* life unto those that find them, and health[9] to all their flesh.

23 ¶ Keep[y] thy heart with all diligence;[1] for out of it *are* the [z]issues of life.[2]

24 Put[a] away from thee a froward mouth, and perverse lips[3] put far from thee.

25 Let[b] thine eyes look right on, and let thine eyelids look straight before thee.

26 Ponder[c] the path of thy feet, and let all thy ways be established.[4]

27 Turn[d] not to the right hand nor to the left; remove thy foot from evil.

4 Or, *all thy ways shall be ordered aright,* Is.7.9.2 Ch.20.20. *d* De.5.32; 28.14; 12.32. Jos.1.7. Ec.7.16,17. Is.30.21.

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that secret acquittal which he reports to their consciences, in the midst of all the public calumnies they may be condemned to underlie. *C.*

Ver. 34. *Giveth grace unto the lowly.* It does not signify that God gives grace to men who have become *lowly,* previous to grace, or without grace, by a mere effort of unrenewed nature: but that he first gives *lowliness,* which is a grace of the Spirit, and then, where he has already sown the seed, continues to water and give the increase. *C.*

REFLECTIONS.—Real religion has a glorious and blessed tendency to render men happy in themselves, and blessings to all around them. And those who neglect and despise it are in general mean-spirited, foolish, and self-ruining wretches, dishonourers of God, and plagues to mankind. But great is the shame that the professors of religion so little conform their lives to the excellent rules thereof, that they so little exemplify them in their behaviour and conduct. And comely would the church of God appear if that regard to God's law, faith in him, devotion, resignation to his will, diligence in his work, and that truth, mercy, equity, peacefulness, humility, and prudence towards men, required in his Word, were duly exercised.

CHAPTER IV. Ver. 1–3. My dear young friends, attend to and receive these affectionate, wholesome, and profitable instructions which I give you: and while you live, earnestly practise the same. They are the very same which I myself, as a darling son, and intended successor on the throne, received from my pious and affectionate father David. 4–9. He, in the most careful and earnest manner, instructed me in my childhood, and begged me to fix his instructions and directions in my heart, and practise them in my life, as the means of attaining true and lasting felicity. He earnestly recommended to me the getting of Jesus Christ, and the true knowledge and fear of God in him, and cleaving thereto, as the grand and effectual means of preservation from sin and danger, and of obtaining happiness and honour both in time and eternity.* 10–13. As you wish to live long and prosperously, receive, and observe in your practice, these my instructions. I do not direct you into paths of folly, fraud, or perverseness, but into a course of wisdom, integrity, and virtue; in which you may prosecute business without any entangling difficulties, and with ease, despatch, and certain success. Carefully fix these instructions in your mind and heart, and persevere in the practice of them, as on this your happiness in time and eternity depends. 14–19. With the utmost care and abhorrence avoid the company and course of wicked men, and every temptation thereto; and with the greatest speed and earnestness flee from it if you have been entangled; for such is the malignity of their dispositions, that they can take no rest till they execute their villanous intentions, and are perpetually disturbing themselves in order to ruin others. They neither have, nor desire, any other provision to live on than what they get by unjust and violent courses. And while good men daily grow in knowledge, grace, and holiness of conversation, till they arrive at perfection, wicked men, amidst gross ignorance, error, confusion, crimes, and wretchedness, rush on heedlessly till they are plunged into everlasting misery. 20–27. And in order to retain in heart, and practise in life, these my excellent instructions, which are a source of lasting and complete happiness to all who improve them aright, watch over your heart, and keep your mind, conscience, will, affections, thoughts, and desires, with uncommon earnestness, as from these do originally issue the eternal happiness or misery of mankind. Resolutely shun all impure or wicked discourse; and never let any corrupt, false, filthy, idle, passionate, or scornful communication proceed from your lips. Let your mind and thoughts be fixed only upon the right paths of holiness and virtue, that you may walk in them without ever turning from them; and never let your eyes, by fixing on improper objects, seduce you into sin or danger. Before you fix upon any action, carefully examine whether it be agreeable to God's law, and answerable to the end for which you intend it; and let every step you take in life be rightly ordered, according to the rule of his Word. And, by shunning extremes on every hand, labour to avoid everything offensive or injurious either to God or men.

* Whether David's words end here, or reach farther, perhaps to the end of chap. ix., we do not certainly know.

Ver. 18. Even the private path of the just (the believer justified by faith, Ro. iii.) is as the shining light. It shineth more and more before God, in faith and love; more and more before men, in diligence and zeal; more and more before the church, in knowledge and edification; more and more before God, in humility and holiness. *C.*

Ver. 23. *Keep thy heart with all diligence.* Keep it with the diligence of a guardian, that would fence it against intrusion or assault; with the diligence of a servant, that would attend to its necessities and requirements; with the diligence of a steward, keeping all accounts of expenditure and gain; and with the diligence of a physician, attending to its symptoms, and prescribing for its diseases; and with the diligence of a friend, taking equal pleasure in bearing with its infirmities, sympathizing with its sorrows, relieving its necessities, and participating in its joys. *C.*

REFLECTIONS.—It is the greatest honour, as well as duty, of parents carefully to instruct their children: and it may be infinitely useful after both instructors and instructed are laid in the dust. Unspeakably excellent is Jesus Christ, his grace, and holy religion. Multitudes of powerful reasons engage us to remember and cleave to them: and to love, delight in, or exalt them. Yet how apt are our corrupt hearts to ensnare us into

CHAPTER V.

1 Solomon again exhorteth to attend to his wise counsels. 3 He showeth the mischiefs of whoredom and riot. 15 He exhorteth to contentedness, liberality, and chastity. 22 The wicked are overtaken with their own sins.

MY son,[a] attend unto my wisdom, *and* bow thine ear to my understanding;

2 That thou mayest regard discretion, and *that*[b] thy lips may keep knowledge.

3 ¶ For[c] the lips of a strange woman drop *as* an honeycomb, and her mouth[1] *is* smoother than oil:

4 But[d] her end is bitter as wormwood, sharp as a two-edged sword.

5 Her[e] feet go down to death; her steps take hold on hell.

6 Lest thou shouldest [g]ponder the path of life,[2] her ways are [h]moveable, *that* thou canst not know *them*.[3]

7 Hear[i] me now therefore, O ye children, and depart not from the words of my mouth.

8 Remove[j] thy way far from her, and come not nigh the door of her house;[4]

9 Lest [k]thou give thine honour unto others, and thy years unto the cruel;

10 Lest[l] strangers be filled with thy wealth,[5] and thy labours *be* in the house of a stranger;

11 And[n] thou [o]mourn at the last, when thy flesh and thy body are consumed,

12 And say, [p]How have I hated instruction, and [q]my heart despised reproof;

13 And have not obeyed the voice of my teachers, nor inclined mine ear to them that instructed me!

14 I[r] was almost in all evil in the midst of the congregation and assembly.

A.M. cir. 3029.
B.C. cir. 975.

CHAP. V.

a See ch.4.1,20;1.2-6,8.Is.55.3. Re.2.7,11, 17,29;3.6.

b Mal.2.7. ch. 16. 23; 10.20;12.18; 15.2,4. Ca. 4.11.

c ch.2.16; 7.21; 6. 24. Ps.55.21.

1 Heb. *palate.*

d Ec.7.26.ch.2.18,19; 6.26;7. 27; 9. 18. Ps. 55. 21.

e ch.7.27;2.18.He.13. 4.Re.21.8.

g Hag. 1. 5. Ps. 119. 59.De.32.29.

2 'She does not ponder the paths of life.'—*German Translation.*

h ch. 7. 11–13; 2. 16, 17.Ec 7.26.

3 The meaning seems to be—her wiles and allurements are so insidious and so various that, dazzled and distracted by them, thou art not able calmly to reflect upon their fatal result, or wisely to consider the path of duty, which is ever the path of life.—*P.*

i Ps.34.11. ch.3.1,21; 4. 1, 10, 21; 7.24; 22. 17–21.He.12.25;2.1,3.

j ch.4.14. Ep.5.11. 1 Th.5.22.Ro.12.9.

4 A great lesson is taught here. It is dangerous to approach evil, even for the purpose of battling with it. We are all weak and fallible; our duty therefore is to shun evil, to flee from it, to avoid the very neighbourhood of temptation. Youth especially should be on its guard; for the devil sometimes takes advantage even of the self-confidence and boasted integrity of youth. We shun the house or the city infected with pestilence, so ought we to shun the place infected by sin.—*P.*

k 1 Th.4.4. Re.14.9, 10.ch.6.26,33,34;31.3.

l Ho.7.9.ch.6.26.

5 Heb.*thy strength.*

n Ro. 6. 21. He. 12. 17.ch.7.23.

o Roar as a lion, He.13.4.ch.19.12;20.2; 28.15.

p Zec.7.11–14.Ps.50. 17; 73. 22. Lu. 19. 42. Mat. 23. 37. ch.6.32. 2 Ch.36.15,16. Je.44.4,5. Zec.1.4–6.

q ch.1.25;6.23;12.1.

r ch.6.26,29,32,33;7. 23.He.13.4.Re.22.15.

A.M. cir. 3029.
B.C. cir. 975.

s ver.18,19.Ec.9.9. 1 Co. 7. 2–5,9. 1 Pe. 3. 7, with ch.23.27,9.17.

t Le.20.18.De.33.28. Is.48.1. Ps.68.26; 128.2; 127.3.

6 Rather, 'should thy fountains be dispersed abroad as rivers of water in the streets?'—*C.*

u 1 Co.7.3, with Mal. 2.14,ch.2.17.Is.62.5.

v Ec.9.9. 1 Co.7.3–5. Ca.2.9;7.3–6;4.5;1.13.

7 Heb. *water thee.*

8 Heb. *err thou always in her love.*

x ch.2.16–19;6.24–35; 7.13–23; 9.13–18; 23.27, 28.

y 2 Ch.16.9. Job 31.4; 34.21.ch.15.3. Je.16.17; 32.19. Ho.7.2. He.4.13; 13.4.

9 What a solemn truth is this! The eye of the Lord is always upon us. We may hide our sin from man; we may succeed in covering our shame from the world's scorn, but we cannot cover it from the eye of the Omniscient; and he who seeth us always will judge us at last.—*P.*

z ch. 11. 3, 5, 6. Ps.9. 15,16. La.1.14. Je.2.19. He.13.4. Ho.4.11–14.

1 Heb. *sins.*

a ch.10.21. Job 4.21; 30.12; 36. 12. Ps. 81. 12. Re.22.11.ch.14.14,32.

2 'At the last death and destruction, as the Lord's executioners, shall take away his life from him, yea, they shall torment him in hell.' Jon 26. 12. Now all this shall befal him for want of instruction, for his ignorance, carelessness, and disobedience' (*Muffet*).—*P.*

CHAP. VI.

a ch.11.15;17.18; 20. 16;22.26. Job 17.3.with Ge. 42. 37; 43. 9. Phile. 18,19.

1 By humble acknowledgment of thy rashness, and by earnest entreaties, procure thine indemnity.

2 *Go, humble thyself*—come down from the vain dignity of a patron of strangers to the commonplace but indispensable duty of securing the rights of your friends.—*C.*

3 Or, *so shalt thou prevail with thy friend.*

15 ¶ Drink[s] waters out of thine own cistern, and running waters out of thine own well.

16 Let thy [t]fountains be dispersed abroad, *and* rivers of waters in the streets.[6]

17 Let them be only thine own, and not strangers' with thee.

18 Let[u] thy fountain be blessed; and rejoice with the wife of thy youth.

19 *Let*[v] *her be as* the loving hind and pleasant roe: let her breasts satisfy thee[7] at all times; and be thou ravished always with her love.[8]

20 And[x] why wilt thou, my son, be ravished with a strange woman, and embrace the bosom of a stranger?

21 For[y] the ways of man *are* before the eyes of the LORD, and he pondereth all his goings.[9]

22 ¶ His[z] own iniquities shall take the wicked himself, and he shall be holden with the cords of his sins.[1]

23 He[a] shall die without instruction, and in the greatness of his folly he shall go astray.[2]

CHAPTER VI.

1 Against suretiship, 6 idleness, 12 and mischievousness. 16 Seven things hateful to God. 20 The blessings of obedience to parents. 25 The mischiefs of whoredom.

MY son, [a]if thou be surety for thy friend, *if* thou hast stricken thy hand with a stranger,

2 Thou art snared with the words of thy mouth, thou art taken with the words of thy mouth.

3 Do this now, my son, and deliver thyself, when thou art come into the hand of thy friend; go, humble[1] thyself,[2] and make sure thy friend.[3]

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fellowship with wicked persons or practices, or even to render us intent on, and delighted in, the most cruel and barbarous conduct! But wide is the difference in time, and especially in eternity, between the way of holiness and that of iniquity. While the saints gradually grow up in grace here, and live in endless felicity hereafter, the wicked blindly rush forward into everlasting misery. Great circumspection, care, diligence, and watchfulness are therefore necessary in denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, and in living soberly, righteously, and godly in this present evil world.

CHAPTER V. Ver. 1, 2. And, my children, what I am just going to say requires your particular and most serious consideration, that you may be able to preserve yourselves from the most subtle and dangerous deceits, and, by your pious and prudent discourses and admonitions, prevent the ensnarement of others. 3–6. For, astonishing are the arts, and inconceivable the enchanting flatteries, of whorish women, as if nothing but the most pure and exquisite pleasures were to be enjoyed in fellowship with them: but dreadful is the real issue thereof, in the impairing of men's health, strength, estates, and reputation; and in remorse of conscience, wretched death, and endless damnation. And to prevent your repentance and escape from their snares, they will turn themselves into ten thousand forms, that they may work on your several humours. 7–14. Let me, therefore, with the utmost affection, earnestness, and solemnity, beseech you to avoid such women, and all, even the most distant, approaches to familiarity with them, as a dangerous, an infernal plague; lest you forfeit your credit, and sacrifice your vigour of life to base and cruel wretches, who labour to ruin you to every intent, and for ever; and lest your wealth, and the fruit of your care and labour, should by their means be transferred from you to others; and when your substance is gone, and your body pining to death, under horrible diseases, you should have nothing left you but inexpressible torment of conscience, reflecting upon the faithful admonitions of parents and teachers which you have contemned, and the miseries you do, and must for ever, undergo. 15–19. And to prevent your having the smallest inclination to the base and polluting pleasures of whoredom, marry; and in a wife, wholly your own, enjoy and rest contented with the pure, chaste, and honourable pleasures of the marriage state. Take pleasure in having children by her, sporting in the streets, or dispersed into families. Have children by her alone, and which you are sufficiently certain are really your own. Make your wife happy, by an affectionate cleaving to her only: and take pleasure in her innocent and delightful company. While you live together, let her always be amiable in your eyes; cherish her with the most tender affection; and in her embraces, and tender regard, always take such satisfaction as to prevent your affections in the least fixing upon another in her stead. 20, 21. And when you can so fully, pleasantly, securely, constantly, innocently, and honourably enjoy such pleasures in a pious and affectionate wife, why risk everything dear, to enjoy the base, dishonourable, destructive, and damning pleasures of whoredom—especially when the all-seeing God witnesses your most secret conduct, and will quickly reward or punish you according to the nature of it? 22, 23. Nor shall whoremongers and adulterers long escape his insupportable justice;—their own guilt and lust shall for ever bind and hold them fast under the power of his wrath. To punish their contempt of former instructions and warnings, God shall abandon them to impenitence, and permit them madly to rush forward, through increasing crimes, into endless damnation.

Ver. 2. *Knowledge.* The knowledge of the evil of sin in time and eternity; the knowledge of God in Christ, reconciling the world to himself; the knowledge of regeneration, whereby men are renewed in heart, speech, and behaviour; the knowledge of glory, into which fornicators and adulterers can never enter. *C.*

Ver. 6. *Movable.* Like the shifting sands at the estuary of rivers, that move in a storm, and destroy many vessels before their new positions can be sufficiently ascertained. But let it never be forgot, that whilst this wicked and seducing woman is a real character, she is also an emblem of heathen idolatry and Christian apostasy; that like her, lead the soul away from God, and promising life, lead down to the ways of destruction and death. See note on ch. 2. 17. *C.*

Ver. 19. *The loving hind and pleasant roe.* The affection of many quadrupeds and birds—nay, of some animals of the deep—for their young, presents an instructive lesson, and often a killing reproof, to rational, immortal, and accountable beings. But however great the evil and the shame, when human beings become unfaithful to one another—how much greater when the harlotry of error seduces the church from her Saviour—when 'the ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master's crib, but Israel doth not know, God's people do not consider?' Is. 1. 3. *C.*

REFLECTIONS.—It is shameful and shocking that mankind should be inclined, nay, so much inclined, to a sin so base, so beastly, and ruinous, as whoredom.—That even in the sex where modesty ought to shine with distinguished lustre, wretches should be found who impudently entice to it! Surely it must be very absurd to prefer the pleasures of it, attended with miseries innumerable, to the innocent, the sanctified joys and honours of the marriage state! But no wonder that they who atheistically discredit the omniscience and justice of God, and live thoughtless of their future account, should proceed to the most infamous lengths in wickedness. Yet let them remember, that in the most miserable manner, correspondent to their sins, they shall at last be hurried into endless fire!

CHAPTER VI. Ver. 1–5. And that no occasion may be given for family contentions or ruin, let me admonish you to beware of all rash engagements in suretiship, especially for such whose honesty or ability you know not; but if you have rashly entangled and

4 Give[b] not sleep to thine eyes, nor slumber to thine eyelids.

5 Deliver thyself as a roe from the hand *of the hunter*, and as a bird from the hand of the fowler.[4]

6 ¶ Go[c] to the ant, thou sluggard;[5] consider her ways, and be wise:

7 Which having no guide, overseer, or ruler,

8 Provideth[d] her meat in the summer, *and* gathereth her food in the harvest.

9 How[e] long wilt thou sleep, O sluggard? when wilt thou arise out of thy sleep?

10 *Yet*[g] a little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to sleep:

11 So shall thy poverty come as one that travelleth,[6] and thy want as an armed man.

12 ¶ A[h] naughty person, a wicked man, walketh with a froward mouth.

13 He[i] winketh with his eyes, he speaketh with his feet, he teacheth with his fingers;[7]

14 Frowardness[j] *is* in his heart, [k]he deviseth mischief continually, he soweth[8] discord:

15 Therefore[l] shall his calamity come suddenly; suddenly shall he be broken without remedy.

16 ¶ These six *things* doth the LORD hate; yea, seven *are* an abomination unto him:[9]

17 A[n] proud [1]look, [o]a lying tongue, and hands that shed innocent blood,

18 An[p] heart that deviseth wicked imaginations, [q]feet that be swift in running to mischief,

19 A[r] false witness *that* speaketh lies, and him[s] that soweth discord among brethren.

20 ¶ My[t] son, keep thy father's commandment, and forsake not the law of thy mother:[2]

21 Bind them continually upon thine heart, *and* tie them about thy neck.

A.M. cir. 3029. B.C. cir. 975.

22 When[u] thou goest, it shall lead thee; when thou sleepest, it shall keep thee; and *when* thou awakest, it shall talk with thee.

23 For[v] the commandment *is* a lamp;[3] and the law *is* light; and reproofs of instruction *are* [x]the way of life:

24 To [y]keep thee from the evil woman, from the flattery [4]of the tongue of a strange [5]woman.

25 ¶ Lust[z] not after her beauty in thine heart; neither let her take thee with her eyelids:

26 For by means of a whorish woman *a man is brought* to a [a]piece of bread; and the adulteress[6] will [b]hunt for the precious life.[7]

27 Can a man take [c]fire in his bosom, and his clothes not be burnt?

28 Can one go upon hot coals, and his feet not be burnt?

29 So [d]he that goeth in to his neighbour's wife; whosoever toucheth her shall not be innocent.[8]

30 *Men* do not despise[9] a thief, if he steal to satisfy his soul when he is hungry:

31 But *if* he be found, he shall restore sevenfold; [e]he shall give all the substance of his house.

32 *But* whoso committeth adultery with a woman lacketh [1]understanding: [g]he *that* doeth it destroyeth his own soul.[2]

33 A[h] wound and dishonour shall he get; and his reproach shall not be wiped away.

34 For[i] jealousy *is* the rage of a man: therefore he will not spare in the [j]day of vengeance.

35 He will not regard any ransom;[3] neither will he rest content, though thou givest many gifts.

A.M. cir. 3029. B.C. cir. 975.

b Ps.132.4.Ec.9.10.

4 Struggle as an entangled roe or bird to get free.

c Job 12.7.Mat.6.26.

5 Some ants make no provision for the winter; others however do, so that the statement is a literal fact, and not, as some have ignorantly intimated, a mere fanciful illustration.—*C.*

d ch.30.25.1 Ti.6.19.

e 1 Co. 15. 34. Ep. 5. 14.Ro.13.11. Ps.94.8. 1 Pe.4.3.ch.1.22.

g ch.24.33,34;10.4,5; 19.15;13.4;20.4;23.21. 2 Th.3.10.

6 One who, walking slowly, is long on the way, but arrives at last.—*C.*

h Mat.25.26.Ps.36.3; 10.3,7;73.8,9, with 1 Ti. 5.13.

i Job 15.12.Ps.35.19. ch.10.10.Is.58.9.

7 Having described a *sluggard*, a *naughty man* is next introduced. His mouth is froward, never modest; his eyes wink at sin, but never discover or reprove it; his feet in walking or running speak his impatience, self-conceit, or malice; and his fingers, the instruments and emblems of all his works, teach not his imaginary accomplices, but all who will observe and learn the secrets of his inward heart, and the wicked devices in which it is engaged.—*C.*

j Je. 17. 9. Ro. 8. 7. Mat.15.9.

k Is. 57. 20. Mi. 2. 1. Ps.36.4.ch.4.16; 16. 14, 18.

8 Heb. *casteth forth*, ver.19.Ro.16.17.

l ch.1.27; 14.32; ver. 11. Ps. 73. 18–20; 50. 22. Je.19.11. Is.30.13.2 Ch. 36.16.1 Th.5.3.

9 Heb. *of his soul.*

m Ps. 18. 27; 138. 6; 101.5. ch.8.13;30.13.

1 Heb. *haughty eyes.*

o Ps.120.3,4;5.6. Re. 22.15. Ho.4.1,2. Is. 59. 13–15;1.15. 2 Ki.24.3,4.

p Mi.2.1. Ge.6.5. Ps. 36.4. ch.16.16.4, 18; 24.8. Je.4.14.

q Ro.3.15. ch. 1. 16. Is.59.7.

2 The law of God, thy regenerating Father; of his church, thy spiritual mother. Ga.4.26. The passage, from its unlimited nature, cannot be understood of earthly parents.—*C.*

u De.11.18–21. ch.3. 23,24;2.11. Ps.17.4;119. 9,11,97;143.3.

v Ps.19.7,8; 119.105.

2 Pe.1.19.

3 Or, *candle.*

x ch.3.2,8,18;4.4,13. Le.19.17. Ps.141.5.

y ch.2.16;5.3;7.5; 22. 26,27.

4 Or, *of the strange tongue.*

5 See note on ch. 2. 17.—*C.*

z Mat.5.28,with Ca. 4.9.

a 1 Sa.2.36.ch.28.21; 29.3;5.10. Lu.15.13–16.

6 Heb. *a man's woman.*

b Eze.13.18.ch.5.10, 11.Ge.39.14,&c.

7 Having broken her vow both to God and man, she can no more be trusted, and having thus disregarded her own character and salvation, she must in the same way be destructive to her guilty associate.—*C.*

—This verse may be rendered as follows: —'For the wages (or price) of a harlot is (only) a piece of bread, yet the adulteress hunts after precious life,' *i.e.* while foolish man hires a harlot for a piece of bread, the harlot so hired destroys his immortal soul.—*P.*

c Job 31.12.ch.23.27, 28. Ro.1.27. Mat.5.28. Ec.7.26.

d Ge.39.31;29.21,23. Ru.2.9. 1 Co. 7. 1. He. 13.4.Re.21.8;22.15.

8 Shall not be innocent of a threefold sin—himself violating the law of God—and joining with another in violating both the law of God and the responsibility of a solemn vow. —*C.*

9 *Despise.* Overlook, as exempt from moral responsibility or punishment.—*C.*

e Ps. 79.12. with Ex. 22.4. Lu.19.8. Job20.18.

1 Heb. *heart*, ch. 7. 7;9.4,16.

2 The law of Moses inflicted death both upon the adulterer and adulteress. To this law many heathen nations conformed—the laws of these lands merely inflict a pecuniary fine. Whether this departure from the Mosaic jurisprudence be right should be a matter of serious inquiry for Christian moralists and legislators.—*C.*

22 When[u] thou goest, it shall lead thee; when thou sleepest, it shall keep thee; and *when* thou awakest, it shall talk with thee.

23 For[v] the commandment *is* a lamp;[3] and the law *is* light; and reproofs of instruction *are* [x]the way of life:

24 To [y]keep thee from the evil woman, from the flattery [4]of the tongue of a strange [5]woman.

25 ¶ Lust[z] not after her beauty in thine heart; neither let her take thee with her eyelids:

26 For by means of a whorish woman *a man is brought* to a [a]piece of bread; and the adulteress[6] will [b]hunt for the precious life.[7]

27 Can a man take [c]fire in his bosom, and his clothes not be burnt?

28 Can one go upon hot coals, and his feet not be burnt?

29 So [d]he that goeth in to his neighbour's wife; whosoever toucheth her shall not be innocent.[8]

30 *Men* do not despise[9] a thief, if he steal to satisfy his soul when he is hungry:

31 But *if* he be found, he shall restore sevenfold; [e]he shall give all the substance of his house.

32 *But* whoso committeth adultery with a woman lacketh [1]understanding: [g]he *that* doeth it destroyeth his own soul.[2]

33 A[h] wound and dishonour shall he get; and his reproach shall not be wiped away.

34 For[i] jealousy *is* the rage of a man: therefore he will not spare in the [j]day of vengeance.

35 He will not regard any ransom;[3] neither will he rest content, though thou givest many gifts.

g He.13.4. Job 31.12. Le.20.10.1 Co.6.9,10. Ga.5.19,21. Re.21.8;22.15.

h ver.34; ch.5.9–11. Ju.16.9.1 Ki.11.4,5; 15.5. Ps.51.8.

i Ju.19.29,30.

j Is.34.8;63.4. Ca.8.6.

3 Heb. *He will not accept the face of any ransom.*

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enslaved yourself by such obligations, endeavour, as quickly as possible, by every humble and persuasive method you can think of; nay, struggle as for life, to disengage yourself, by pressing the debtor to pay what he owes, or the creditor to acquit you of your bond.—6–11. Meanwhile, never indulge yourself in sloth, and want of provident care; but learn, from those puny insects the *ants*, to labour diligently in your calling, and carefully improve every opportunity of honestly providing for yourself and your family: and remember that, if that inclination to idleness and sloth, so common to mankind, be indulged by you, whether in greater or smaller degrees, unexpected and at last extreme poverty shall irresistibly come upon you.—12–15. Remember too, that it is the property of persons vile and wicked to accustom themselves to profane, blasphemous, proud, passionate, lewd, or reproachful discourse, or by signs made with their eyes, feet, or fingers to stir up others to mischief. The heart of such being filled with perverse inclinations, they are perpetually contriving mischief, and stirring up hatred and contention among their neighbours: but suddenly shall their villany and wickedness issue in their irretrievable infamy and ruin. 16–19. And indeed proud looks, lying tongues, murderous hands, hearts given to mischievous contrivances, feet given to a speedy execution of injurious designs, perjured persons, and sowers of discord among friends or neighbours, are distinguished objects of God's indignation.—20–22. Let me therefore again press you to attend to, highly esteem, and carefully practise, those divine instructions which have been tendered to you by your parents. This will be of great use to direct, preserve, and comfort you in your whole labours of life. 23, 24. For the law of God, as a lamp, guides in adversity, and, as the light of the sun, directs and comforts in prosperity; and the reproofs of his Word are excellent means of preserving from ruin, and leading to true happiness; and are particularly useful to preserve from being deluded by the flattering speeches and enticements of lewd women, those sinks of wickedness and plagues of mankind. 25–29. As you regard your temporal or eternal welfare, never gaze on the beauty or fine attire of such: never let their wanton and enticing looks engage you to the most distant desire after their dangerous embraces; for if once they insnare you, they will never quit their hold till they have reduced you to extreme beggary, or to a miserable and ignominious death. You may more safely take fire into your bosom, or walk upon burning coals, than intermeddle, however privately or transiently, with a whorish woman, particularly if either party be married. 30–33. If one merely steal to fill his hungry belly, he is not exposed to shame or punishment; and if it be found that he has stolen more, it is only required that he should make complete restitution according to the law, which may perhaps amount to all that he is worth. But he who commits adultery with a woman can have no necessity for it, but acts through mere folly and wickedness, and so exposes himself to the loss of his life by the magistrates, as well as to eternal damnation from the hand of God. He exposes himself to bloody quarrels, and renders himself irrecoverably infamous. And though the civil magistrate should wickedly spare his life, yet it is exposed to the fury of a justly enraged husband, who will regard no penitential submissions or entreaties, and accept no gifts as the ransom of it.

Ver. 1. This is a passage of great practical difficulty. Does it, by implication, altogether forbid the aid of suretiship to friends? This cannot be; for in many instances such suretiship is indispensable. Does it, then, covertly condemn merely such 'rash and inconsiderate engagements as arise from an undue facility of temper, rather than from a deliberate calculation of duty?' Such covert insinuation of a principle is inconsistent with the plainness of Scripture. With great deference, the following slight and well warranted change in the translation is suggested:—'My son, if thou be surety *to* thy friend,' see Ge. 24. 54. This makes the object of the passage to be a warning against any neglect of a friend's interest (for which we have become accountable), from any undue presumptuous draft upon his friendship—a most necessary warning; for in practice there are many who will neglect their own interests, and the interests of their best friends, for the *éclat* that may result from their attention and liberality to strangers. *C.*

REFLECTIONS.—Greatly advantageous, even to the outward interests of persons, families, and nations, is an exact obedience to God's commandments. And it is sinful and foolish to ruin our estates or families by engaging for other people's debts: but infamously wicked are those debtors who exert not themselves to the utmost to relieve their sureties. Great care ought to be taken of our outward property. In respect of it we are but God's stewards, and ought to lay it out and bring it in according to his directions. The amazing instinct which God hath given to some animals, and their conduct, shame the slothful of mankind. Such sluggards are very averse to be roused to their work, spiritual or temporal. If one degree of indolence be denied them, they would gradually enjoy a lesser: but poverty in a quick, irresistible, and ruinous manner, comes to such at last. With alarming earnestness do sinners practise iniquity, and make every power of their soul, or member of their body, instrumental therein. And many things in heart, in lip, in life, are detested by God, which are overlooked as almost innocent by

CHAPTER VII.

1 Solomon persuadeth to a sincere and kind familiarity with wisdom. 6 In an example of his own experience, he showeth 10 the cunning of a lewd woman, 22 and the desperate simplicity of a young wanton. 24 He dissuadeth from such dangerous courses.

MY [a]son,[1] keep my words, and lay up my commandments with thee.

2 Keep[b] my commandments, and live; and my law [c]as the apple of thine eye.

3 Bind[d] them upon thy fingers, write them upon the table of thine heart.

4 Say[e] unto wisdom, Thou *art* my sister; and call understanding *thy* kinswoman:

5 That[f] they may keep thee from the strange woman, from the stranger *which* flattereth with her words.

6 ¶ For[2] at the window of my house[3] I looked through my casement,

7 And beheld among the simple ones, I discerned among the youths,[4] a young man [h]void of understanding,[5]

8 Passing through the street near her corner; and he [i]went the way to her house,

9 In[j] the twilight, in the evening,[6] in the black and dark night:

10 And, behold, there met him a woman *with* the [k]attire of an harlot,[7] and subtile of heart.

11 (She[l] *is* loud and stubborn; her feet abide not in her house:

12 Now[m] *is she* without, now in the streets, and lieth in wait at every corner.)

13 So [n]she caught him, and kissed him, *and* with an impudent face said[8] unto him,

14 *I have* peace-offerings with me;[9] this day have I paid my vows:

15 Therefore came I forth to meet thee, diligently to seek thy face, and I have found thee.

16 I have decked my bed with coverings of tapestry, with carved *works*, with [p]fine linen of Egypt.

17 I have perfumed my bed with myrrh, aloes, and cinnamon.

18 Come, let us take our fill of love until the morning; let us solace ourselves with loves.

19 For the goodman[1] *is* not at home, he is gone a long journey:

20 He hath taken a bag of money with [2]him, *and* will come home at the day appointed.[3]

21 With[q] her much fair speech she caused him to yield, with the [r]flattering of her lips she forced him.

22 He goeth after her straightway,[4] as an ox goeth to the slaughter, or as a fool to the [s]correction of the stocks;[5]

23 Till[t] a dart strike through his liver; as a bird hasteth to the snare, and knoweth not that it *is* for his life.

24 ¶ Hearken[u] unto me now therefore, O ye children, and attend to the words of my mouth:

25 Let[v] not thine heart decline to her ways, go not astray in her paths:

26 For she hath cast down many wounded; yea, many [x]strong *men* have been slain by her.

27 Her[y] house *is* the way to hell, going down to the chambers of death.

CHAPTER VIII.

1 The fame, 6 and evidence of wisdom. 10 The excellency, 12 the nature, 15 the power, 18 the riches, 22 and the eternity of wisdom. 32 Wisdom is to be desired for the blessedness it bringeth.

DOTH not [a]wisdom cry? and understanding put forth her voice?[1]

2 She standeth in the top of high places, by the way in the places of the paths:

3 She crieth at the gates, at the entry of the city, at the coming in at the doors:

4 Unto[b] you, O men, I call; and my voice *is* to the sons of man.

5 O[c] ye simple, understand wisdom; and, [d]ye fools, be ye of an understanding heart.

6 ¶ Hear, for I will [e]speak of excellent things; and the opening of my lips *shall be* right things.

7 For[g] my mouth shall speak truth; and wickedness *is* an abomination to my lips.[2]

8 All the words of my mouth *are* in righteousness; *there is* nothing [h]froward[3] or perverse in them.

9 They[i] *are* all plain to him that understandeth, and right to them that find knowledge.

10 ¶ Receive[j] my instruction, and [k]not silver; and knowledge rather than choice gold.

11 For[l] wisdom *is* better than rubies; and

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CHAP. VII.

a ch.1.8; 2.1–7; 3.1, 3, 21; 4.1, 20, 21; 5.1, 2.

1 *My son.* The speaker is either God as the heavenly Father, or an earthly father, inspired by his Spirit, and speaking by his authority. That God himself is the speaker, seems warranted by the familiar reference to 'my commandments,' 'my law,' and the unqualified promises of *life* in keeping them—statements and promises far beyond the dignity and power of any earthly parent, and which God alone is able to make and realize.—*C.*

b ch.4.4, 13; 3.2, 8, 18. Le.18.5. Is.55.3. De.32.47. 1 Jn.3.23. Jn.14.21, 23.

c De.32.10. Ps.17.8. Zec.2.8.

d De.6.8; 11.18. ch.3.3; 6.21. Ps.119.9, 11. Je.31.33. 2 Co.3.3.

e ch.2.2–4; 3.6; 4.5–8, with Job 27, 14. Mat. 12.49, 50. Jn.14.21, 23.

f ch. 5, 3; 2.16; 6.24. Ec.7.26.

2 What follows appears to have been a fact observed by Solomon.

3 This narrative by no means contradicts the opinion that God the Father is the speaker and instructor; for the heart of a believer, the church of his redeemed, and heaven itself, is each called his *house*.—*C.*

4 Heb. *the sons.*

h ch.6.32; 9.4, 16. Je. 4.22.

5 This is the 'wayside' hearer described by our Lord, Mat. 13. 19, from whom the devil, by aid of the flesh, takes away intellectual discernment and spiritual life.—*C.*

i ch.5.8.

j Job 24.15. 1 Th.5.7. Ep.5.7, 11. Ge.39.11.

6 Heb. *in the evening of the day.*

k Ge. 38. 15, with 1 Ti.2.10.

7 Harlots here, and elsewhere in this book, are representatives and emblems of idolatry and its seductions, whether under the forms of heathenism or nominal Christianity.—*C.*

l ch. 9.13. 1 Ti. 5.13. Tit.2.5. Je.3.3.

m ch.9.14; 23.27. Eze. 16.24, 25. Je.3.2.

o Ge.39.7–12. Ec.7. 26. Is.3.9.

8 Heb. *she strengthened her face, and said.* Je.3.3.

9 Heb. *Peace-offerings are upon me,* ch.30.20. Zec.11.5. Le. 7.15.

N.B. Harlots here, and elsewhere in this book, are plain emblems of the Popish church.

p 1 Ki.10.28. Is.19.9. Eze.27.7.

1 Her husband, whom she mentions with contempt, and pretends that there was no fear of his discovering them.

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2 Heb. *in his hand.*

3 Or, *the new moon.*

q ch.5.3; 4.16; 16.24; 22.27, 28; ver. 5. Ec. 7. 26.

r Ps.12.2.

4 Heb. *suddenly,* Ac.14.13.

s Job 13.27. Je.20.2. Ac.16.24.

5 'As a hart boundeth into the toils' (*Boothroyd*). But this translation requires an unauthorized change on the original. The evident meaning is, that as a fool pursues his course to punishment blindly, and without thought, because he is a fool, so the victim of seduction (temporal or spiritual) follows his tempter, not merely because he is weak in moral principle, but void of a sound intellect.—*C.*

t Nu. 25. 8. Ec. 9. 12. ch.5.9, 11; 6.26.

u ch.1.8; 2.1, 2; 3.1; 4. 1, 20; 5. 1; 6. 20, 21; see ver. 1–4.

v ch.4.14, 15; 5.8; 6. 25; 23.31, 33. Mat.5.28.

x Ju. 16. 19–30. Ne. 13.26. 1 Ki.11.1, 2.

y ch. 2. 18, 19; 5. 5; 9. 18; 22.27, 28. Ec.7.26.

CHAP. VIII.

a Christ, who is the wisdom of God, 1 Co. 1. 24. Col. 2, 3, in the most public and earnest manner publisheth the gospel to men, ch.1.20, 21; 9.1, 3, &c. Jn.7.37.

1 Wisdom is here personified. She is represented as a great and universal teacher. In all places, at all times, under all circumstances, her lessons are within the reach of the thoughtful and attentive. The eternal Son is the grand revealer of divine wisdom. He is the universal Teacher. He teaches by various instruments and agencies —by the light of nature, by the inner conscience, by the dispensations of providence, and by the full and clear dictates of revelation. If men are ignorant, the fault is their own; it is because they wilfully shut their eyes and stop their ears.—*P.*

b Is.45.19. 1 2. Mar.16. 15. Is.55.1, 3. Mat.5.1; 16.6, 9, 13. Re.22.17.

c Is. 55.1–3. ch.1. 22; 9.4; 21.1–3; 3.1; 5.1. Je.6. 8. Is.42.18. Ps.94.8.

d 1 Co.1.26; 6.9–11.

e ch. 22. 20. Ps.19. 7–11. Col.1.26, 27. 1 Co.2 2, 7. 2 Co.2.1. 1 Ti.3.16.

g Re. 3.14. Ro.15. 8. Jn. 8. 14; 17. 17. 1 Ti.1. 15. ch.19.7–10; 30.5.

2 Heb. *the abomination of my lips.*

h Ps.12.6.

3 Heb. *wreathed.*

i Mt. 2. 7. Ps.19.9; 119. 30; 36. 9. Is. 2. 3. 5. Mat. 13. 11. 1 Co. 2.10, 12. Ep. 1. 17, 18.

j ch.23.23.

k 1 Ti.3.15–17. Mat. 16. 26. Ps. 119. 72, 111, 127, 162.

l Job 28.15. Ps.19.10; 119.72, 127. ch.3.14, 15; 16.16; 4.7. Phi.3.8, 9.

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men. With what ardent love ought we to regard the word of God as our enlightening instructor and regulating law! It is necessary to receive, retain, and improve it as a powerful mean to preserve us from fleshly lusts, which war against both body and soul. But terrible and fatal snares are the flattering words and looks of whorish and light women. It is impossible to avoid destruction if once we are entangled by them. And it is shocking that so many indulge themselves in a crime so infamous and destructive.

CHAPTER VII. Ver. 1–5. My dear young friends, let me again press upon your consciences to lay up my advices and instructions in your judgment, heart, and memory; and carefully, tenderly, and readily to observe and practise them. Make yourselves familiar with Jesus Christ, and his spiritual instructions, as the most powerful means of preservation from the ensnaring arts and flatteries of whorish women, which is a privilege of infinite importance. 6–9. For, from my own window I observed a thoughtless young fop sauntering under night in the streets, and in a stately manner walking towards a corner which these infamous strumpets used to haunt. 10–20. There, one dressed in a light and whorish manner, and extremely skilled in the arts of enticement,—one extremely talkative, ready to brawl with her husband, given to idle visiting, and gadding about to places of dissipation and concourse, —met him, caught him in her arms and kissed him, and in an impudent manner told him that, being a devout lady, she had that very day been offering thank-offerings to God; and being to feast upon her share of the flesh thereof, she had solicitously sought him to take a part of it, and had happily found him;—and that she had decked and perfumed her bed in the most engaging manner,—in which they might riot all night in exquisite pleasures, without any danger, as the silly fellow called her husband was gone a long journey, had a great deal of business to transact, and would not return till the full moon. 21–23. Notwithstanding his showing some aversion at first, she, by her fair pretences and flattering speeches, quickly compelled him to follow her, as willingly, and no less stupidly, than an ox goeth to the slaughter, or a madman to the stocks,—never thinking of anything but pleasure, till the enraged husband sheath his sword in his bowels, or the judgments of God accomplish his irretrievable ruin!—24–27. Let me therefore beseech you, my dear young men, whom I unfeignedly regard, diligently to observe and practise these warnings which I have repeatedly given you. Never indulge the smallest inclination towards such women; never listen to their enticements; never indulge the smallest fellowship or familiarity with such; never hope to be safe in, or to return from, such courses; for many, even of those noted in valour and wisdom, have been totally ruined in reputation, estate, body, and soul by such women; and fellowship with them is the certain road to a miserable death and eternal damnation.

Ver. 14. *Peace-offerings.* The law of God, De. 12. 6, 7, adjudged the greater part of the *peace-offering* to the offerer as a feast for himself and his friends. And here, by a perverse interpretation, the beneficence of religion is made a cloak and incentive to sin.—*Note,* And let every Christian note it well: to turn

all the things that may be desired are not to be compared to it.

12 ¶ I[n] wisdom dwell with prudence,[4] and find out knowledge of witty inventions.

13 The[o] fear of the LORD *is* to hate evil: pride,[p] and arrogancy, and the evil way, and the froward mouth, do I hate.

14 Counsel[q] *is* mine, and sound wisdom: I *am* understanding; [r]I have strength.[5]

15 ¶ By[s] me kings reign, and princes decree justice.

16 By me princes rule, and nobles, *even* all the judges of the earth.

17 I[t] love them that love me; and [u]those that seek me early shall find me.

18 Riches[v] and honour *are* with me; *yea,* durable riches and righteousness.

19 My[w] fruit *is* better than gold, yea, than fine gold; and my revenue than choice silver.

20 I[y] lead[6] in the way of righteousness, in the midst of the paths of judgment;

21 That I may cause those that love me [z]to inherit substance; and I will fill their treasures.

22 ¶ The[a] LORD possessed me in the beginning of his way, before his works of old.[7]

23 I[b] was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was.

24 When *there were* no depths, I was brought forth; when *there were* no fountains abounding with water.

A.M. cir. 3029.
B.C. cir. 975.

n Col. 2. 3. Ps. 40. 5; 92. 5; 139. 17. Is. 55. 8; 28. 26. Ro. 11. 33.

4 Or, *subtilty.*

o ch. 16. 6. Job 28. 28. ch. 1. 7. Ps. 97. 10; 101. 3; 111. 10; 119. 104, 128. Ro. 12. 9. 1 Th. 5. 22. 2 Ti. 2. 19.

p ch. 6. 12, 17–19. Ps. 5. 4–6; 138. 6. Job 40. 11, 12. Hab. 1. 13.

q Col. 2. 3. Ps. 147. 5. Is. 9. 6; 11. 2; 40. 29. 1 Co. 1. 24. Jn. 1. 4, 9.

r Ec. 7. 19.

5 That 'knowledge is power' is the common language of the world. And if it be understood of the 'knowledge of God in Christ,' it is true; for therein is strength whereby the weakest can overcome the world, the flesh, and the devil. See Re. 2. 7, 17, &c.—*C.*

s Mat. 28. 18; 2. 21. Da. 2. 21; 7. 14. Ep. 1. 20–22. 1 Pe. 3. 22. Ro. 13. 1.

t 1 Sa. 2. 30. Ps. 91. 14, 15. Jn. 14. 21, 23. Ec. 12. 1. Je. 2. 2. Mar. 10. 14. Ja. 1. 5.

u Is. 45. 19.

v Mat. 6. 33. ch. 3. 16. Jn. 6. 27. Lu. 10. 42. Ja. 2. 5.

w ch. 3. 14, 15, 18. Job 28. 15–19. Phi. 3. 8, 9. with Mat. 16. 26. Ca. 2. 3. Jn. 12. 24.

y Is. 55. 4; 49. 10. Jn. 10. 3. Ps. 23. 3. Re. 7. 17.

6 Or, *walk.*

z Je. 3. 19. Is. 45. 17. Ro. 8. 17. Re. 21. 7. Ps. 16. 11; 17. 15; 73. 26. 2 Co. 4. 17, 18. Ja. 4. 14. 1 Pe. 1. 4.

a Ps. 2. 7. Jn. 1. 1, 14. Re. 3. 14.

7 From divine wisdom viewed abstractly the writer now turns to him who is the grand revealer of wisdom—the *eternal Son.* His nature, his character, and his attributes as a person are set forth; and this is done for the purpose of inducing men to hearken to and honour him.—*P.*

b Mi. 5. 2. Ps. 89. 19, 20; 2. 6. Is. 49. 1–8. Je. 30. 21.

A.M. cir. 3029.
B.C. cir. 975.

c Is. 53. 8. Ps. 90. 2; 102. 25. He. 1. 10. Is. 9. 6. Mi. 5. 2.

8 Or, *open places.*

9 Or, *the chief part.*

d Mat. 25. 34.

e Ps. 33. 6. Col. 1. 16. He. 1. 2. Jn. 1. 3.

1 Or, *a circle,* Is. 40. 22.

g Job 26. 8; 28. 25, 26; 38. 28, 29.

h Ge. 1. 9, 10. Job 38. 4, 5, 10, 11. Ps. 104. 5. Je. 5. 22.

i Job 26. 7. Ps. 24. 2.

j Jn. 1. 1, 14, 18. Mat. 3. 17. Col. 1. 13. Is. 42. 1.

k Ps. 40. 7, 8; 147. 11. He. 10. 5. Is. 4. 2; 62. 4, 5.

l Ps. 16. 3. De. 33. 3. Jn. 13. 1. 1 Jn. 4. 19. Tit. 3. 4; 2. 14.

n Ps. 34. 11; 45. 10.

o Ps. 1. 1–3; 119. 1, 2; 128. 1. Lu. 11. 28.

p Is. 55. 1, 3; 46. 12, 13. Re. 22. 17. Ro. 10. 17. He. 2. 1, 3; 10. 26, 29.

q Mat. 7. 24. Lu. 11. 28.

r Lu. 1. 6; 10. 39. ch. 1. 21; 8. 3. Ps. 84. 1, 2, 10.

2 All wisdom, divine as well as human, must be sought after. It is not so much a gift as an acquirement. To obtain it our faculties must be exercised; our time must be diligently employed; every aid and instrumentality must be faithfully made use of. It is quite true that by mere human study man cannot attain to divine wisdom; but it is also true that God enables us to acquire that wisdom, not by any direct revelation, but by quickening our natural faculties so that we can see clearly and understand fully.—*P.*

s Phi. 3. 8, 9. Ro. 8. 1, 30–39. Col. 3. 3. Ep. 1. 6, 7. Jn. 3. 16, 17; 6. 51–57. 1 Jn. 5. 11, 12.

3 Heb. *bring forth.*

t He. 2. 3; 10. 27, 29. Jn. 3. 18, 36. Ro. 6. 23.

25 Before[c] the mountains were settled, before the hills was I brought forth:

26 While as yet he had not made the earth, nor the fields,[8] nor the highest part[9] of the dust of the world.

27 When he [d]prepared the heavens, I *was* there; [e]when he set a compass[1] upon the face of the depth;

28 When he [g]established the clouds above; when he strengthened the fountains of the deep;

29 When[h] he gave to the sea his decree, that the waters should not pass his commandment; when he [i]appointed the foundations of the earth:

30 Then[j] I was by him, *as* one brought up *with him:* and I was daily *his* delight, rejoicing always before him;

31 Rejoicing in the [k]habitable part of his earth; and [l]my delights *were* with the sons of men.

32 ¶ Now therefore [n]hearken unto me, O ye children: for[o] blessed *are they that* keep my ways.

33 Hear[p] instruction, and be wise, and refuse it not.

34 Blessed[q] *is* the man that heareth me, [r]watching daily at my gates, waiting at the posts of my doors.[2]

35 For[s] whoso findeth me findeth life, and shall obtain[3] favour of the LORD.

36 But[t] he that sinneth against me wrongeth his own soul: all they that hate me love death.

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the grace of God into licentiousness is a constant inclination in man, and a constant temptation of Satan. Let believers watch and pray that they follow neither. *C.*

Ver. 18. It is thus that by the misapplication of words, the world, the flesh, and the devil continue to seduce and destroy. Love is an attribute, a name for God himself; yet, under this name, the seducer covers her own perjury, her victim's lewdness, and the disregard and enmity of both to God. *C.*

REFLECTIONS.—It is necessary to love, search, and meditate on God's law day and night; and to make it the constant food of our heart and standard of our life. Then should we find therein the most sanctifying virtue. Magistrates and ministers should carefully inspect the people committed to their charge! And there is need of frequent and fervent prayers to God for our friends and neighbours, as we know not in what guilt fearful temptations may involve them if not overcome. The devil quickly finds business for idle and unseasonable saunterers, especially if young. And when women are once addicted to flaunting, loose, and gaudy apparel, and to wheedling in love matters, and are extremely talkative, and given to an unsettled and dissipated course, it will require no great pains to make harlots of them. Terribly base and impudent these women become who have thrown off the restraints of modesty peculiar to their sex. And sad is the case when husbands and wives are glad to be rid of one another's company. It is shameful, wicked, and ruinous, when Satan and his abominable agents or lusts are, in days of youth, preferred to Jesus Christ and his grace. But fearful and speedy destruction, from the crime itself, or from the hand of God or man, awaits the whorish adulterer. Surely then we should be solicitous to improve the falls and miseries of others, as a warning for us to take heed, lest, in the same thoughtless and inconsiderate manner, we hurry ourselves into everlasting ruin.

CHAPTER VIII. Ver. 1–11. And why, to your ruin, should you listen to the flattering enticements of whorish women, when Jesus Christ, the wisdom of God, by himself and his messengers, in the most open and earnest manner, calls you, and every one of mankind, even the most simple and foolish, to the study of true and spiritual wisdom;—to listen to, consider, and believe the excellent, pure, holy, substantial, faithful, precious, and infinitely useful oracles of his Word: 12–31. And in order to enforce his call, and recommend his instructions, represents himself as the infinitely wise God, the source of all wisdom and prudence; the infinitely Holy One, who detests everything proud, polluted, or perverse;—and the Almighty God, able to execute all his purposes, and by whose deputed authority all the magistrates on earth govern their subjects;—the infinite lover and rich rewarder of all that seek him, particularly in youth;—the inexhaustible portion and unerring guide of all those who receive him by faith:—the eternal and only begotten Son of JEHOVAH, appointed to be our Mediator;—the almighty Maker of all things in heaven and earth;—and who, from his infinite and peculiar love to mankind, took a distinguished pleasure in forming the earth as a theatre, whereon he should appear, save, and hold intimate fellowship with the sons and daughters of Adam. 32–36. On account of all which excellencies and kindness he, in the most earnest and condescending manner, entreats and charges you to hear, receive, and practically observe his instructions, attend his ordinances, and receive himself in them, as the free gift of God, and as the only mean of true and everlasting happiness;—and warns you, that if you refuse and hate him, you will infallibly and eternally ruin yourselves.

Ver. 1. He that would understand this, and similar passages, may consult Is. 11. 2, 3, where he will find the seven gifts of the Spirit enumerated as the endowments of Christ. And as every attribute of God is but a name for his being—so the forth-putting of every separate attribute is but an account of the actings of his being in that special view. Accordingly, 'wisdom and understanding' are here both used as titles of Christ—*wisdom,* to indicate his full comprehension of the interests and means of the house of God—*understanding,* to indicate his adequacy to sustain their weight, care, and management. *C.*

Ver. 5. *Ye simple.* This word is applied either to that singleness of heart that rejects the world and is persuaded of God, Ro. 16. 19, or that singleness of heart that rejects God and follows the world, Pr. 14. 15. Singleness is the original idea in both cases—the nature of that singleness is explained by its peculiar attributes, as it occurs. *C.*

Ver. 9. He that hath *understanding,* is not necessarily he that is learned; but he in whose heart the Word of God has been sown as a seed of life, and who has resisted and overcome the efforts of Satan to take it away, Mat. 13. 19. To such a one all the words of God are plain, because it is written, 'If any man will do his (the Father's) will, he shall know of the doctrine whether it be of God,' Jn. 7. 17. *C.*

Ver. 12. *Prudence* implies foresight, forethought, and preparation for coming events. It is an attribute of God, Ep. 1. 8; and, rightly understood, a precious grace of the Spirit in man, Is. 52, 13.—*Witty.* This word is here used in the sense of *ingenious, skilful.* To the Spirit of God all human ingenuity is to be attributed, Ex. 31. 2, 3, the administration of whose gifts are all in the hands of Christ, the *eternal Wisdom. C.*

Ver. 18. Were further proof required that the WISDOM here speaking is Christ, it would here be furnished: none but he is righteous, Ro. 3. 10; 1 Jn. 2. 1; none but he has righteousness, Ro. 3. 22. *C.*

REFLECTIONS.—How public, earnest, and extensive are the calls of the gospel! Infinitely excellent is that Jesus Christ and his salvation therein exhibited and offered, and that religion which is therein prescribed. And happy, in the blessings of time and eternity, are those persons, families, and nations in which the knowledge of Christ and his truths prevail and reign! They are enriched with the fruits of his mediation, and filled with all the fulness of God. But is it not infinitely amazing, that God's eternal Son, the Creator and Preserver of all things, should have, from everlasting, entered into the room of, and fixed his thoughts, his delights upon, the children of men? Surely then he deserves our strictest attention, our earliest and strongest affection. And just and righteous is the sorest punishment which can be inflicted upon those self-ruiners who refuse him, and neglect and despise the ordinances of his grace. Let me consider this great Apostle and High-priest of my profession, this great ALL and IN ALL. Let my heart seek him early, earnestly, and above all things else. Let me love him, who first loved me, with my whole heart, soul, mind, and strength. Let me rejoice and delight in him as my exceeding joy, and all my consolation. Let me carefully attend his ordinances, watching daily at his gates, at the posts of his doors; and if I find him who is the great God my Saviour, and the *eternal life,* my pains will be infinitely more than rewarded.

CHAPTER IX. Ver. 1–5. And why enter the ruinous house or covet the ensnaring entertainment of a harlot, when the infinitely wise Jesus Christ, who is made of God unto us wisdom, hath framed, for his fellowship with men, a glorious church on earth and in heaven, fully supported by divine perfections, purposes, oracles, and offices; and hath prepared his own crucified self, his word, ordinances, and eternal felicities,

CHAPTER IX.

1 The discipline, 4 and doctrine of wisdom. 13 The custom, 16 and error of folly.

WISDOM [a]hath [b]builded her house, she hath hewn out her [c]seven pillars;[1]

2 She[d] hath killed her beasts;[2] she hath mingled her wine; she hath also furnished her table;

3 She[e] hath sent forth her maidens: [f]she crieth upon the highest places of the city,

4 Whoso[h] *is* simple,[3] let him turn in hither: *as for* him that wanteth understanding, she saith to him,

5 Come, [i]eat of my bread, and drink of the wine *which* I have mingled.[4]

6 Forsake[j] the foolish, and live; and go in the way of understanding.

7 He[k] that reproveth a scorner getteth to himself shame; and he that rebuketh a wicked *man getteth* himself a blot.

8 Reprove[l] not a scorner, lest he hate thee: rebuke[m] a wise man, and he will love thee.

9 Give[o] *instruction* to a wise *man*, and he will be yet wiser: teach a just *man*, and he will increase in learning.

10 The[p] fear of the LORD *is* the beginning of wisdom; and the knowledge of the Holy *is* understanding:

11 For[q] by me thy days shall be multiplied, and the years of thy life shall be increased.

12 If[r] thou be wise, thou shalt be wise for thyself:[5] but [s]if thou scornest, thou alone shalt bear it.

13 ¶ A[t] foolish woman *is* clamorous; *she is* simple, and knoweth nothing.

14 For[u] she sitteth at the door of her house, on a seat in the high places of the city,

15 To[v] call passengers who go right on their ways:

16 Whoso[x] *is* simple, let him turn in hither; and *as for* him that wanteth understanding, she saith to him,

17 Stolen[y] waters are sweet, and bread *eaten* in secret[6] is pleasant.

18 ¶ But he [z]knoweth not [a]that the dead *are* there; *and that* her guests *are* in the depths of hell.[7]

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CHAP. IX.

a ch.1.20;8.1.1 Co.1.24,30.Col.2.3,9.

b Ep. 2. 20–22. Mat. 16.18.1 Ti.3.15. He.3.3, 4.1 Pe.2.5.

c Ga.2.9. Ep.4.11–13. Re.3.12. Ca.3.10.

1 Wisdom is here exhibited as building a firm, beautiful, and perfect temple, where all her votaries may dwell in princely magnificence and security. It is a refuge from the world's vanities, an asylum from its persecutions, and a school for the acquisition of divine truth. Wisdom is Jesus Christ our great King; the temple is his true church; the seven pillars are the emblems of perfection and stability; the food and the wine represent Christian ordinances and teaching.—*C.*

d Mat. 22. 3–10. Tit. 2.14. Jn.6.54–56.

2 Heb. *her killing*, Is.53.5,10;55. 1;56.6.

e Ro.10. 15. Mat. 22. 3. Lu.14.16;11.49.2 Co. 5.20.

f Jn.7.37. Mat.9.13. ch.8.2.2 Co.5.20.

h ch.1.22;8.5;ver.16. Is.55.1–7. Re. 22.17; 3. 17, 18. Mat.9.13.

3 See note on ch. 8. 5.—*C.*

i Is.55.1–3; 25.6. Jn. 6.27, 54–57. Ca.5.1.

4 See note * below.

j ch.14, 7. Ps.45.10;6. 8; 119. 115. Ep. 5. 11. 2 Co.6.17.

k Ge.18.8,9.2 Ch.24. 20,21;25.15,16. 1 Ki.18. 17.

l Mat.7.6; 15.14. ch. 23.9;1.7. Am.5.10.

m Le.19.17. Ps.141.5. 2 Sa.25.33.

o Ho.6.3.ch.1.2–7.4. 18. Mat.13.11,12. 2 Pe. 3.18. Job 17.9.

p Job 28, 28. Ps. 111. 10. ch.1.7; 30.3. 1 Jn.5. 20. Jn.17.3.

q ch.10.27;2. 3, 8,16, 18,22. De.6.2. Ps.91.16. Jn.6.40.

r ch.16.26. Job 22.2, 3,21–30;35.6,7. Ez.e.18. 20.

* It is evident from

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Ca. 8. 2 that the Hebrews were accustomed to mingle wine with spices to render it more palatable and more wholesome. Here wine is the emblem of the restorative power of the gospel promises, commingled with the preservative powers of gospel holiness.—*C.*

5 Because receiving all, while able to give nothing in return.—*C.*

s Is.28.22. He.10.26–29.

t ch.2.16; 5.3; 7.5,11; 8.5;9.4. Ps.94.8.

u ch.7.10–12. Ge.38. 14. Je.3.2.

v ch. 7. 13–15. Re.2. 20.

x See ver.4.

y ch.20.17. Ro.7.8.

6 Heb. *of secrecies.*

z Ps.82.5. Is.1.3. ch. 29.7. Ho.2.8.

a ch.2.18,19;5.5;6.26; 7.27.

7 Dead in sin; but not quickened with Christ. See Ep. 2. 1, 2.—*C.*

CHAP. X.

a ch.15.20; 17.21,25; 19.13; 23. 15, 16, 24, 25; 29.3,15. Phi.3.18.

b ch.11.4. Ps.49.6–9. Lu.12.19–21. Ro. 5.21. Da.4.27. Phi.3.9.

1 Riches acquired by covetousness, chicanery, and oppression.—*C.*

c Job 5. 20. Ps.37.25; 33.19; 34.9,10, with Job xviii.xx.

2 Or, *the wicked for* their *wickedness.*

d ch.11.24;12.24; 19. 15; 13. 4; 21. 5; ver. 22, with 1 Co. 15. 58. Mat. 7.7. ch.3.14;8.19.

3 This statement is intended as a warning, not against absolute idleness, for that is so shameful that few will fall into it; but against *slackness*, inattention, procrastination, dilatoriness, and that whether in things temporal or spiritual.—*C.*

e ch.6.8; 17.2; 19. 26; 24.33,34.

CHAPTER X.

From this chapter to the five-and-twentieth are sundry observations of moral virtues and their contrary vices.

THE Proverbs of Solomon. A [c]wise son maketh a glad father: but a foolish son *is* the heaviness of his mother.

2 Treasures[b] of wickedness profit [1]nothing: but righteousness delivereth from death.

3 The[c] LORD will not suffer the soul of the righteous to famish: but he casteth away the substance of the wicked.[2]

4 He[d] becometh poor that dealeth *with* a slack hand: but the hand of the diligent maketh rich.[3]

5 He[e] that gathereth in summer *is* a wise

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for the nourishment and satisfaction of sinful men; and in the gospel, by his faithful prophets, apostles, and ministers, earnestly invites and beseeches even the most weak, wicked, and besotted sinners of mankind to come by faith, and freely partake of his nourishing, strengthening, delightful, and satisfactory fulness and blessings? 6–12. Earnestly he admonishes you to avoid all unnecessary intimacy with wicked persons, as you regard your temporal or eternal happiness; as by it you cannot, even in attempting their reformation, justly expect to profit them, but may be sure of procuring hatred and infamy to yourselves;—and to cultivate familiarity with wise and serious persons, whom you may both profit and be profited by;—and to study true and experimental godliness, as the proper mean to render you truly happy in this world and in that which is to come; and solemnly warns you that you yourselves must reap the inexpressibly important fruits of your attention to or scornful rejection of his instructions.—13–18. And remember, as before God, that nothing more effectually renders men despisers of Christ and his blessings than fellowship with light and lewd women, or false teachers; who, ignorant of everything spiritually good, and extremely talkative, artfully and impudently seduce simple persons, who intend no such thing, to imagine that forbidden pleasures are peculiarly delightful. And, alas! few of those tempted by them seriously consider, that by such pleasures multitudes have already lost their lives, and are entered into the everlasting torments of hell.

Ver. 7. *Blot.* The shame of disappointed hopes, the *blot* of having cast what was holy before dogs, who turn again and rend the hand by which they have been fed, Mat. 7. 6. *C.*

Ver. 8. *Reprove not a scorner.* Why not reprove a scorner? Because Providence does not show that he is prepared to bear reproof. But deal with him in meekness; and pray for him in thine heart; and thus, and in this true and holy sense, become 'all things unto all men, that thou mayest save some,' 1 Co. 9. 19–22. *C.*

Ver. 16. *Whoso is simple.* The seducer here employs the language of WISDOM, ver. 4, even as Satan employed the language of Scripture in his temptation of our Lord, Mat. 4. 6.—*Note*, It has ever been the custom of error and heresy to employ, nay, to extol Scripture language; while inwardly, often rejecting its authority, and always perverting its meaning. *C.*

REFLECTIONS.—What great things Jesus Christ has done, and still does, for our salvation! O how unwilling is he that we should perish! Gloriously formed, and well supported and established, are his promise and church. Rich are his gospel provisions—his own flesh and blood, nay, all the fulness of God. And free and unencumbered with legal qualifications are his gospel calls. How absurd, insolent, and foolish are the scornful refusers thereof! For certain and just is their aggravated and everlasting ruin. And it is impossible to have fellowship with Christ, in grace or glory, and yet live in intimacy with wicked men. There is need of the utmost care, both in giving and taking reproofs. Fidelity in reproofs is the surest evidence of genuine friendship. None are too wise to learn, nor too good to amend. And they who rage at rebuke prove the weakness of their own understanding, as well as the want of grace. But, alas! what manifold temptations, suited to the taste of our corrupt hearts, are presented to us by Satan and his emissaries, to keep or draw us from Jesus Christ! And too many, through ignorance of and inattention to the danger, comply therewith. But however sweet the pleasures of sin be in the mouth, they are bitter in the belly; they issue in endless torment and anguish.

CHAPTER X. Ver. 1. It is a great comfort to parents to see their children profiting by their instructions and examples, and growing up in wisdom, piety, and virtue. But it is a grief and burden to them when they are foolish, stubborn, and profligate. 2. Ill-gotten riches afford no solid comfort in life, but draw on a wasting or poisoning curse: but Jesus' glorious love, and a holy, just, and merciful conduct, procure safety and deliverance from the greatest dangers. 3. The Lord, who has all fulness in his hand, will always grant necessary supplies, for both soul and body, to them who are justified in Christ and live in a just and merciful manner. But he will deprive the wicked of their ill-gotten possessions by some stroke of his providence, or remove them from it by death. 4. Negligence and sloth, and even fraudulent methods of gain, bring men to poverty; but active diligence tends to enrich men both in temporals and spirituals. 5. To seize upon and improve opportunities of obtaining spiritual or temporal things, particularly in the time of youth, is a mark of true wisdom: but he that slothfully neglects them, brings misery and shame upon himself and his parents. 6. The justified in Christ are, to their everlasting honour and safety, blessed in him with all the blessings of time and eternity: and outward blessings often attend the just and merciful on earth. But their own iniquity shall violently overwhelm and confound those who wickedly defraud and oppress their neighbours. 7. The pious and virtuous shall, at least after death, be remembered with honour and praise, men blessing God for their good example and useful conversation; but wicked livers shall either be forgotten or remembered with abhorrence. 8. They who are truly wise will thankfully receive and practise laws from God or good advices from men: but self-conceited persons, who will not learn of others, but love to hear themselves talk, shall bring themselves into contempt, sin, and misery: nay, into hell. 9. He who in dealing with God and men walks in candour, simplicity, and godly sincerity, is safe under the divine protection in his way to eternal life, and avoids manifold miseries and snares in this world; but he who indulges himself in hypocrisy towards God, and in inconstancy and deceit towards men, shall be detected and made a public reproach. 10. He who under pretence of kindness betrays his neighbour, and by signs mocks him or tempts others to injure him, is a common grievance, and shall at last become miserable; but a noisy and perpetual talker ruins himself by his words, and deserves to be beaten for his impertinence. 11. Good discourse always tends to the profit, comfort, and refreshment of those that receive it; but wicked men, to their own ruin, pour forth virulent and mischievous language; or, if their language be fair, it but conceals the mischief which they intend to effect when opportunity serves. 12. Where there is hatred in the heart, almost everything, however innocent, will be used to raise quarrels or disturbances: but love overlooks affronts and injuries, pacifies the mind of the injured, and composes contentions for which too much ground had been given. 13. Where wisdom abounds in the heart, the discourse of the lips will be sensible and

son: *but* he that sleepeth in harvest *is* a son that causeth shame.

6 Blessings[g] *are* upon the head of the just: but violence covereth the mouth of the wicked.

7 The[h] memory of the just *is* blessed: but the name of the wicked shall rot.

8 The[i] wise in heart will receive commandments: but a prating fool[4] shall [5]fall.[6]

9 He[j] that walketh uprightly walketh surely: but he that perverteth his ways shall be known.

10 He[k] that winketh with the eye causeth sorrow: but a prating fool shall fall.[7]

11 The[l] mouth of a righteous *man is* a well of life: but violence covereth the mouth of the wicked.

12 Hatred[m] stirreth up strifes: but [o]love covereth all sins.

13 In[p] the lips of him that hath understanding wisdom is found: but a rod *is* for the back of him that is void of understanding.[8]

14 Wise[q] *men* lay up knowledge: but the mouth of the foolish *is* near destruction.[9]

15 The[r] rich man's wealth *is* his strong city: the destruction of the poor *is* their poverty.[1]

16 The[s] labour of the righteous *tendeth* to life; the fruit of the wicked to sin.

17 He[t] *is in* the way of life that keepeth instruction: [u]but he that refuseth reproof erreth.[2]

18 He[v] that hideth hatred *with* lying lips, and he that uttereth a slander, *is* a fool.

19 In[x] the multitude of words there wanteth not sin: but he that refraineth his lips *is* wise.

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g Ps.32.1,11.112.1,6.
ver.7,11.Es.7,8.
h 1 Ki.11.36.Ps.112.6;9.6;49.11.Lu.1.48.Ec.8.10.
i Ps. 119. 34. ver. 10, 14,19ch.13,31;17.27,28;18.6;29.11,20.
4 Heb., *a fool of lips.*
5 Or, *shall be beaten.*
6 He will fall into contempt, so that even when he speaks wisely no man will regard him; and he will fall into trouble, being ensnared by his own lips; and he will fall into much sin, because he has not learned to 'bridle his tongue'—and an unbridled tongue is fuel set on fire of hell,'Ja.3.2-6.
j Is. 33. 15, 16. 2 Co. 11.12.Ps.23.4.ch.28.18. 1 Ti.5.24.2 Ti.3.9.
k Job 15.12.Ps.35.19. ch.6.13;ver.8.
7 The structure of this proverb is peculiar and unusual. The general plan is to contrast a virtue and a vice. Here two vices are contrasted. In the first clause the sin of hypocrisy is depicted; in the second the sin of outspoken babbling folly.—*P.*
l ch.13.14; 16. 22; 18. 4.Ps.37.30,31;140.9,11; 64.3,8,ver.6.
m Ja.4.1.ch.29.22.
o 1 Co.13.4-7.1 Pe.4. 8.Ja.5.20.ch.17.9.
p Lu. 4. 22. Is. 50. 4. ch.26.3.Mi.6.9. Ps. 37. 30.
8 Heb. *heart.*
q ch.9.9; 13. 3; 18. 7. Mat.13.44,52;12.35.
9 By betraying its own weakness or wickedness; or injuring others, so as to bring down distrust, contempt, or punishment.—*C.*
r Job 31.24.ch.18.11; 14. 20; 19.4,7. Ec. 7.12; 10.19.Ps.52.7.1Ti.6.17.
1 That is, the poor are often so overwhelmed by hardship that they are led to entertain hard thoughts of God and of his providence. They are over-anxious. It was against this form of temptation Agur the son of Jakeh prayed, Pr. 30. 8.—*P.*
2 Or, *causeth to err.*

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y Mat. 12. 33, 34; 15. 19.Ro.8.8,I.c.17.9. Ep. 2.1-3.Tit.3.3.
z Ps.37. 30. ch. 15. 4; 22. 18; 5. 23. Job 5. 21. Ro.6.23.Ho.4.6.
3 Heb. *of heart.*
a Ge.24.35; 13.2. Ps. 37.22; 107.38. De.8. 18. Mat.6.33.1 Ti.4.8;6.9, 10. 2 Ki.5.27. Ec. 5. 12, 13,18b.2.
b ch. 14.9; 15. 21; 26. 18,19. Ps.52.7. Ro.1.32.
c He.10.27.ch.14.32.
d Ps.145.19.Is.45.11. Mat. 5.6,7. 7. 11. Jn. 5. 14,15;14.13;16.24.
4 The fear of death and judgment; the desire to be with Christ in rest and glory.—*C.*
e Ps.73.18–20; 37. 36; 58.9.
f ver.30;ch.12.3.Ps. 15.5;125.1,2.Mat.7.24.
5 The righteous one, even Jesus, the only foundation of faith, hope, and acceptance,1Co.3.11.—*C.*
h Mat. 25. 26. He.5. 11.
i ch. 3. 2,18, 22; 9.11. Ps.34.11–14;91.16.
6 Heb. *addeth.*
7 Prolongeth days of enjoyment in faith, peace, and hope.—*C.*
j Ec.7.17. Job 15.32; 22.16. Ps.55.23.
8 See note on Ps. 55.23.—*C.*
k Ps.9.18.Ro.5.4,5. 1 Jn.3.2,3.
l Job 8.13; 11.20. Ps. 112.10.ch.14.32.
9 They expect pleasure and happiness from their thoughtless and sinful line of conduct; they expect it from the riches which they are labouring to amass, or from the fame they are striving to acquire; but they will be grievously disappointed.—*P.*
m Zec. 10. 12. Phi. 4. 13. Is.40.31.
o Ps.9.17; 73.27; 1.5. Is.3.11.Ro.2.8,9.
p Ps.37.22; 125.1; 15. 5.Mat.16.18.
q Ps.37.9,10,36; 52.5; 112.10.
r ver.20,21.Ps.37.30. Ca.4.11.
s Ps.31.18; 63.11; 5.9; 52.3–5.
t ver.13,14. Ec.12.9–11.Tit.2.8.
u ch.11.11;12.6,18.
1 Heb. *frowardnesses.*

20 The[y] tongue of the just *is as* choice silver: the heart of the wicked *is* little worth.

21 The[z] lips of the righteous feed many: but fools die for want of wisdom.[3]

22 The[a] blessing of the LORD, it maketh rich, and he addeth no sorrow with it.

23 *It*[b] *is* as sport to a fool to do mischief: but a man of understanding hath wisdom.

24 The[c] fear of the wicked, it shall come upon him: but [d]the desire of the righteous shall be granted.[4]

25 As[e] the whirlwind passeth, so *is* the wicked no *more:* [f]but the righteous *is* an everlasting foundation.[5]

26 As[h] vinegar to the teeth, and as smoke to the eyes, so *is* the sluggard to them that send him.

27 The[i] fear of the LORD [6]prolongeth [7]days: but [j]the years of the wicked shall be [8]shortened.

28 The[k] hope of the righteous *shall be* gladness: but the [l]expectation of the wicked shall perish.[9]

29 The[n] way of the LORD *is* strength to the upright: [o]but destruction *shall be* to the workers of iniquity.

30 The[p] righteous shall [q]never be removed: but [q]the wicked shall not inhabit the earth.

31 The[r] mouth of the just bringeth forth wisdom: [s]but the froward tongue shall be cut out.

32 The[t] lips of the righteous know what is acceptable: [u]but the mouth of the wicked *speaketh* frowardness.[1]

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edifying; but nothing but sore afflictions here, or the torments of hell hereafter, can bring obstinate fools to any serious reflection. 14. They who know the value of true wisdom labour to enlarge their knowledge, and to keep it up till they have proper opportunities for using it: but fools rashly blab out what tends to their own or others' ruin. 15. Riches make men confident and secure, and even protect them against manifold injuries in this world; whereas poverty depresses men's spirits, and exposes them to injury and abuse. 16. The industry of the righteous in outward things issues in the comfortable maintenance of himself and others; and his care for his soul issues in life spiritual and eternal: but whatever a wicked man has by inheritance, or by his own acquirement, hardens him in sin, and is abused to gratify his sinful lusts. 17. He is in the way to eternal life who receives, lays up in his heart, and practises the instructions of God's Word, and readily regards advices, and even reproofs, given him by others: but he who neglects to give reproof, encourages men in their mistakes; and he who refuses to take and improve instructions and reproofs, obstinately rushes upon his own destruction. 18. He who conceals his hatred by great professions of friendship before one's face, and he who artfully vents slander behind one's back, is, with all his cunning, an impious fool in God's reckoning, and his wickedness shall be publicly exposed. 19. Even in much speaking there are ordinarily to be found words idle or wicked. It is therefore prudent to be sparing in our words, and to consider well both when, and where, and what, and how we speak. 20, 21. Prudent and pious discourse is pure and substantial: it edifies, instructs, and nourishes the hearers: but the heart of the wicked, being only evil, and that continually, is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked; nothing good can proceed from it; but they persist and perish in the devices of their own foolishness, neither knowing nor caring to know the way of life and peace. 22. It is not men's anxious labour and care that make them rich, either in temporal or spiritual things; but the blessing of God upon their lawful endeavours confers riches, and enables to enjoy them comfortably, without pressure of guilt, tormenting fear, or perplexing care. 23. Senseless sinners take pleasure in, and make a jest of, the most horrid impieties they can commit: but they that are wise carefully avoid mischief, and all sporting with it or delighting in it. 24. The miseries which wicked men fear under the awakenings of conscience shall come upon them; and whatever blessings the righteous desire and pray for shall be granted them in due season. 25. However the wicked may bluster for a while, and threaten to overthrow everthing that stands in their way, they quickly and terribly ruin themselves and rush into misery: but the righteous, being built on Christ the Rock of Ages, and fixed in piety and virtue, stand fast for ever. No storm can shake their confidence, or deprive them of their durable and immovable felicity. 26. As vinegar sets the teeth on edge, and smoke is vexatious to the eyes, so sluggish, negligent, and dilatory persons vex and provoke them who send or employ them in any important business. 27. A religious observance of God's laws, and preserving of our body in temperance, soberness, and chastity, tends to prolong our life: but wickedness of itself, and by God's righteous judgments on account of it, brings on diseases, and hastens the sinner to his grave and to hell. 28. The hope of the godly, founded on Jesus' promise and blood, brings delight and satisfaction to the soul, and issues in everlasting felicity; but the hope of the wicked shall issue in disappointment and eternal misery. 29. Upright walking in Christ, and the exercising of piety and virtue, increase a person's strength for duty and courage in it: but the workers of iniquity shall be plagued with terrors and overwhelmed in misery. 30. Nothing so establishes persons or families in a relation to Christ as their righteousness, and a course of piety, justice, and mercy: but the wicked, however successful they may be for a time, shall never be able to fix themselves in their prosperity, but be rooted out from the enjoyment of it. 31. The godly, out of the good treasure of their heart, bring forth good discourse, which tends to make the hearers wise unto salvation: but he that uses his tongue to abuse, cozen, or raise dissension, or to blaspheme God and spread error, shall, in the end, have it silenced in hell. 32. The righteous know, and accustom themselves to speak things truly useful and edifying; but the wicked abandon their lips to falsehood, flattery, fraud, and calumny, or such like subtle but detestable arts of doing mischief.

Ver. 1. This is the commencement of the second great division of the book. It is different in structure from the first division. The latter is made up of parables and proverbs of considerable length; while the former consists wholly of brief, pointed sentences, each of which consists generally of two antithetical members, embodying one idea. Most of them are figurative, being based on some comparison, both in language and in idea. It is probable that, though all these proverbial sayings were at one time or another uttered by Solomon, yet most of them were of much older date. His diligent study had made him familiar with the wisdom of the ancients, and his powerful memory retained it. In the end he either wrote the proverbs out himself under divine guidance, or he employed others to do so. Most of these proverbs are examples of antithetic parallelism, the second clause containing the contrast to the first. Each verse is, as a rule, complete in itself, and embodies a perfectly intelligible sentiment. There is in each a truth clearly and sharply enunciated, and a lesson which is almost forced upon the heart. *P.*

Ver. 6. For the original meaning of *blessing*, see note on Ge. 1. 22, 28. And such blessings, spiritual, 'the just,' the justified by faith, enjoy in heavenly places in Christ Jesus, Ep. 1. 3—even the blessings of the election of grace, the adoption of children, the pardon of sin, acceptance in the Beloved, inseparable union with their exalted Head, the revelation of grace, and the eternal inheritance of unfading glory. *C.*

Ver. 12. Hatred stirs up strifes that are at rest; but love covers them over, so that they sleep and are not remembered. And it is not to *small* or *few* offences that this gentle office is extended: love covereth all, even the 'multitude of sins,' 1 Co. 13. 7. *C.*

Ver. 15. *Wealth.* Not the wealth of money, for that, by tempting cupidity, is often the cause of ruin; but the wealth of faith, of good works, 1 Ti. 6. 18; Ja. 2. 5, and spiritual wisdom, ver. 14. These constitute the 'strong city' of the rich believer, in which the poverty here described has neither lot, inheritance, nor defence. *C.*

Ver. 21. This is true, naturally and spiritually. A little instruction in mechanics and agriculture may almost miraculously multiply the food of a country; while the words of truth and com-

CHAPTER XI.

A.M. cir. 3029. B.C. cir. 975.

A FALSE[a] balance[1] *is* abomination to the LORD: but a just weight[2] *is* his delight.

2 *When*[b] pride cometh, then cometh shame: but with the lowly *is* wisdom.

3 The[c] integrity of the upright shall guide them: but the perverseness of transgressors shall destroy them.

4 Riches[3] profit not in the day of wrath: but righteousness delivereth from death.

5 The[e] righteousness of the perfect shall direct[3] his way:[4] but the wicked shall fall by his own wickedness.

6 The[g] righteousness of the upright[5] shall deliver them: but [h]transgressors shall be taken in *their own* naughtiness.

7 When[i] a wicked man dieth, *his* expectation shall perish; and the hope of unjust *men* perisheth.

8 The[j] righteous is delivered out of trouble, and the wicked cometh in his stead.

A.M. cir. 3029. B.C. cir. 975.

9 An[k] hypocrite with *his* mouth destroyeth his neighbour: [l]but through knowledge shall the just be delivered.

10 When[n] it goeth well with the righteous, the city rejoiceth; and when the wicked perish, *there is* shouting.

11 By[o] the blessing of the upright the city is exalted: but it is overthrown by the mouth of the wicked.

12 He[p] that is void of wisdom[6] despiseth his neighbour: but a man of understanding holdeth his peace.

13 A[q] tale-bearer[7] revealeth secrets: but he that is of a faithful spirit concealeth the matter.

14 Where[r] no counsel *is*, the people fall: but in the multitude of counsellors *there is* safety.

15 He[s] that is surety for a stranger shall smart *for it*;[8] and he that hateth suretiship[9] is sure.[1]

16 A[t] gracious woman retaineth honour; and strong *men* retain riches.

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a Le. 19. 35, 36. De. 25. 13–16. ch. 16. 11; 20. 10, 23.

1 Heb. *balances of deceit.*

2 Heb. *a perfect stone.*

b ch. 15. 33; 16. 18; 18. 12. Da. 4. 30, 31.

c ch. 13. 6; 20. 9. Ps. 25. 21. ver. 5.

d ch. 10. 2; 6. 34, 35. Eze. 7. 19. Zep. 1. 18. 1 Ti. 6. 6–10; 4. 8. Ge. 7. 1.

e Is. 3. 10, 11. Ro. 2. 7–10. ch. 12. 21, 28.

3 Heb. *rectify.*

4 A description of Jesus, the only perfect and righteous one.—*C.*

g Ps. 19. 11. Is. 3. 10. 1 Co. 15. 58. 1 Ti. 4. 8.

5 *The righteousness of the upright* is 'the righteousness of God, which is by faith of Jesus Christ, unto all and upon all that do believe,' Ro. 3. 22.—*C.*

h ch. 5. 22; ver. 3, 5, 19. 27, 31. Is. 3. 11. Ec. 10. 8, 9.

i ch. 10. 28; 14. 32. Job 8. 13; 11. 20; 27. 8. Lu. 12. 14–20.

j ch. 21. 18. Is. 43. 3, 4. Es. 7. 9, 10. Da. 6. 23, 24.

k 1 Ki. 22. 21. Job 8. 13. Ac. 20. 30.

l 2 Pe. 3. 17, 18. Is. 53. 11.

n Es. 8. 15, ver. 11; ch. 28. 12, 28. Ps. 58. 10, 11. Re. 19. 1–7; 18. 20, 21. Ju. v.

o ch. 14. 34; 29. 8. Job 22. 30. Ja. 3. 6. 2 Sa. 20. 1.

p Job 12. 5. ch. 10. 19. Ju. 9. 28. Ne. 4. 2. ver. 13.

6 Heb. *destitute of heart.*

q Le. 19. 16. ch. 20. 19; 26. 20. 1 Ti. 5. 13. 1 Pe. 4. 8.

7 Heb. *He that walketh* being a *tale-bearer.*

r 1 Ki. xii. ch. 15. 22; 24. 6; 12. 15. Ju. 19. 30. Ps. 119. 24. Is. 9. 6; 28. 29.

s ch. 6. 1–5; 27. 13; 20. 16; 22. 26.

8 Heb. *shall be sore broken.*

9 Heb. *those that strike* hands.

1 He that speaks of what he does not understand, and he that asserts what he does not know to be true, must be a fool; and he that guarantees a stranger, with whose principles, habits, history, character, and connections he is unacquainted, must sooner or later pay a heavy penalty for his thoughtless credulity.—*C.*

t ch. 31. 10–30. De. 8. 18.

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fort revive and feed the souls of perishing thousands with the bread that endureth unto eternal life. *C.*

Ver. 22. No sorrow in remembering how it was got, no sorrow in estimating how much has been lost, no sorrow in contemplating how much is endangered, no sorrow in anticipating how lavishly it may be spent, and no sorrow in watching and protecting it from the covetous, the deceitful, or the violent. *C.*

Ver. 29. The way of the Lord is Jesus manifested in prophecy, in types, in flesh, or by the Spirit; and he is strength to the faith, patience, and zeal of the upright—the men who stand upright, because they stand in a Redeemer's righteousness. *C.*

CHAPTER XI. Ver. 1. All manner of injustice and fraud is extremely hateful and detestable to God, the governor of the world: but strict equity in the whole of our commerce one with another is highly pleasing to him. 2. Haughty conceit of ourselves, and insulting of others, draws along with it the utmost contempt and disgrace; both God and men take pleasure to mortify and expose the proud; but such as, having learned of Christ, live under a deep sense of their own weakness and unworthiness, find favour with men and acceptance with God. 3. When men sincerely practise what God has revealed to them, they may expect his Spirit to direct them in their duty and to their eternal felicity: but the obstinate adherence of sinners to their own lusts and imaginations, and their opposition to Christ and his laws, shall hurry them into certain and everlasting destruction. 4. Riches, heaped up by extortion or covetousness, are of no avail to deliver us from the wrath of God, or even the rage of men, when the time of punishment is come: but righteousness hath a promise of life annexed to it; it prevents those sins which would expose us to God's judgments or man's punishments; it secures against the sting of temporal, and prevents eternal death. 5, 6. Being made righteous in Christ, and sanctified by his grace, and studying a sincere and impartial observance of God's laws, are effectual means to secure direction in duty and deliverance from evil; but the wicked shall perish by those very impious and evil courses by which they hoped to secure or exalt themselves. 7. In death wicked men find all their projects and hopes utterly destroyed. Whatever they thought to accomplish by their riches, their power, or their friends, perishes together with them, while they themselves launch forth into eternal misery. 8. The righteous are frequently in an unexpected manner delivered from their perplexing troubles; and the wicked, who perhaps brought them into them, are plunged into those very miseries themselves. 9. By flatteries, false doctrines, and artful seductions, hypocrites draw their neighbours into sin, and thereby into ruin. But through knowledge of Christ and his Word shall the righteous be guarded against their wiles, and preserved from the destruction which they intended. 10. It is matter of general gladness when wise and godly men prosper and are advanced, because they use their power and wealth for the benefit of all around them; and great is the joy when wicked men, who, as plagues and curses where they dwell, corrupt their manners, and draw down the wrath of God upon them, are cut off. 11. By God's blessing upon the upright, and by their prayers, advices, and kindness, all around them are profited: but the wicked, by their blasphemies, errors, evil counsels, and maxims, corrupt men's manners, and ruin their welfare. 12. It is common for self-conceited fools to despise their neighbours, to reproach them as weak, or to render them ridiculous; but a prudent man, whatever he thinks, avoids speaking to the reproach of others; as, beside the wickedness of contemning others, none is so mean as to be insensible of it, or incapable of finding means of resentment. 13. They who make a trade of carrying tales from one to another, never stick at treacherously discovering the secrets which have been intrusted to them; but a faithful friend conceals, not only what has been intrusted to him, but everything else that could tend to his neighbour's prejudice. 14. Where prudent counsel is wanting, nations and private affairs go to wreck: but where many wise counsellors unite in their deliberations, every precaution will be taken, every danger prevented, and the most proper methods used to insure success. 15. He who stands bound for the debts of another man, especially one whose ability and honesty are unknown to him, is in great danger to be ruined in his estate: and the way to be secure in that point is to avoid and hate all such engagements. 16. Remarkable and increasing grace and virtue in a woman will engage affection and respect when all other accomplishments fade and decline; and strong men hold fast the wealth which they have acquired. 17. He who is kind and bountiful to others, secures to himself a gracious reward from God: but he who is covetous, hard-hearted, and cruel, brings trouble on himself and his relations. 18. Whatever wicked men do to render themselves rich, easy, or honoured, will disappoint their expectation; but they who exercise themselves in true piety and virtue, shall infallibly obtain the blessed reward of their works in time and eternity. 19. As holiness and virtue promote true happiness here and hereafter, so the more eagerly a man pursues an evil course, the more is he bent upon his own destruction. 20. Hypocrites, who live in enmity and opposition to God and his law, while they pretend much piety, kindness, equity, and candour, are of all men the most odious to him: but they who, being renewed by his grace, walk before him in truth, equity, simplicity, and godly sincerity, are, and shall for ever be, the objects of his special favour and delight. 21. Though wicked men should do their utmost attempt to strengthen themselves by leagues and associates, they shall never be capable of protecting themselves from the just punishment of their sin: but the righteous, and often their children for their sakes, though deserted of all men, shall be delivered by God himself from everything ruinous. 22. As a golden jewel is very ill placed in the snout of a swine, which is still routing in mires and dunghills; so beauty is ill bestowed upon a woman who, void of good sense, modesty, and virtue, loves to employ herself in perpetual talkativeness, and wallow in filthy lusts and whorish pleasures. 23. The righteous habitually desire, and shall obtain, solid and substantial blessings to themselves and others; but wicked men wish for mischief on others, and hope to execute their wrath and malice upon them; which in the end will only bring more fearful and lasting ruin upon themselves. 24, 25. They who, from a right principle, are remarkably liberal to the poor and to pious institutions, shall find their stock proportionably increased for their real advantage; and while they refresh and support others with their bounty, God shall reward them with prosperity of soul, in grace or comfort, or even with the enjoyments of this present world: but the pinching hand of avarice prevents enjoyment, or brings down the curse of God upon our substance. 26. He who, in a time of scarcity, hoards up corn to raise the price, shall be hated and cursed by mankind: but good wishes and commendations from men, and blessings from God, shall attend him who then opens his granaries and sells it at a moderate price. 27. He who earnestly sets himself to contrive and do good to others, shall obtain favour with God and men: but he who makes mischief his business shall draw upon himself the evil which he designs against his neighbour. 28. He that anxiously grasps for, and trusts in, riches as his surest support and defence, shall find them a broken reed to pierce him through with many sorrows, and shall fall to decay as a withered leaf: but the righteous, who are united to Christ by faith, and walk in all holy and just conversation, shall receive, out of his fulness, abundant supplies of quickening and fructifying grace, and shall thrive and prosper in their concerns. 29. He who by his passion, prodigality, covetousness, and ambition troubles his family, may for a time make a great bustle and stir, but it will issue in disappointment, disgrace, and poverty; and the fool, who knows not how to manage, and who lives without thought, shall be reduced to want, and forced to serve, if not sell himself to, a wiser neighbour. 30. A good man's graces, prayers, instructions, and examples are a mean of quickening, comfort, and prosperity to others around: and he that by instruction, prayer, or the like, draws men from Satan to the knowledge, faith, and obedience of Christ, shows forth true and heavenly wisdom. 31. If God will not pass his own favourites without proper correction for their sins in this world, who can justly expect that the obstinate and contemptuous breakers of his law shall escape the just punishment of their many crimes?

Ver. 3. *Integrity* literally signifies *entireness.* The love of God, united with the love of our neighbour—and that measured by the love of self—constitutes this entireness, this completeness of principle, which guides the believer in every way, however dark, intricate, or dangerous; and never is acquired by man as a sinner, but by the revelation of the love of God in Christ, which constrains him first to love God, and then his neighbour as himself. *C.*

Ver. 9. This fact was awfully exemplified by the scribes and Pharisees, that 'generation of vipers, hypocrites,' by whom speedy and terrible vengeance was brought down upon the nation whom they deceived. *C.*

Ver. 10. *In the multitude*, &c. This is a proverb frequently perverted, as if it meant, that in the multitude of *talkers* and

17 The[u] merciful man doeth good to his own soul: but *he that is* cruel troubleth his own flesh.

18 The[v] wicked worketh a deceitful work: but to him that soweth righteousness[2] *shall be* a sure reward.

19 As[w] righteousness *tendeth* to life; so he that pursueth evil *pursueth it* to his own death.

20 They[y] that are of a froward heart *are* abomination to the LORD: but *such as are* upright in *their* way *are* his delight.

21 *Though*[z] hand *join* in hand, the wicked shall not be unpunished: but the seed of the righteous shall be delivered.

22 *As* a jewel of gold in a swine's snout, *so is* a fair woman which is without[3] discretion.

23 The[a] desire of the righteous *is* only good: *but* the expectation of the wicked *is* wrath.

24 There[b] is that scattereth, and yet increaseth; and *there is* that withholdeth more than is meet, but *it tendeth* to poverty.

25 The[c] liberal soul[4] shall be made fat; and he that watereth shall be watered also himself.[5]

a Ps.119.5;37.4, with 10.1–12;9.16,17. Ro.2.7–10. He.10.27. *b* Ps.112.9. ver.18,25. Ec.11.1,6. 2 Co. 9.6. Phi.4.17. De.15.10. *c* Is.32.8. 2 Co.9.8–10. Job 29.13. Ps.41. 1–3. Mat.5.7;25.34,35.

A.M. cir. 3029.
B.C. cir. 975.

u Ec.5.18. Mat.5.7; 25.34–40. Ps.55.23; 120. 3,4; 140.11.

v Ps.36.1–4. Ga.6.7–9. Ho.10.12,13. Ja.2.8; 3.13,18; 4.8,10.1 Ti.4.8.

2 Who soweth[a] the seed of the Word, which reveals and commends the righteousness of God, which is by faith of Jesus Christ.—*C.*

w ver. 4; ch. 8. 35, 36. Is.3.10,11. Ro. 3. 7–10; 6.23; 8.13.1 Ti.6.8–10.

y ch.6.14;8.13. Ps.18. 25,26; 51.6; 11.7; 84.11; 119.1,15,16.

z Is. 27. 4. ch. 16. 5. Ex.20.5. Ge.9.9. Ps. 9. 16–18; 37.25,26; 102.28. Ac.2.38.

3 Heb. *departeth from*, ch.9.13;7.10.

4 Heb. *The soul of blessing.*

5 These are noble sentiments; and they prove that those grand virtues which are usually supposed to be the results of the milder and more perfect religion of Jesus, were thoroughly understood and inculcated by the sages of the Old Testament. We often hear of *Christian* charity, and *Christian* benevolence, and *Christian* love, as if these had never been known previous to the advent of our Lord. They are as old as creation. They lie at the foundation of Bible truth. There is no difference between the moral code of the Old Testament and that developed in the New.—*P.*

d Job 29.13.

e At reasonable rates, Am.8.6.

6 He that refuses to sell food, till it rises, through scarcity, beyond the average of a just remunerating price, such as he would be willing to obtain for other merchandise.—*C.*

g Ne.1.11. Es.2.22; iv. vi. viii.–x. Mat.7.7,11.

h Ps.7.15,16;9.15,16; 10.2;57.6. Es.iii. viii. ix. Re.13.10.

i Mar.10.24. 1 Ti.6. 9,17. Job 31.24. Ps. 62. 10.

j Ps.1.3;92.12–14. Je. 17.8.

k Ge.34.30. Hab.2.9. Ec.5.16. ch.15.27.

l Ps.149.9;49.14. Da. 7.27.

n ch.3.18; 13.1,2; 15. 4 ver.4.

o Mat.4.19. Da.12.3. Ja.5.20. 2 Co.10.4,5.

7 Heb. *taketh.*

p Je.25.29.1 Pe.4.17, 18. 2 Th. 1. 6–9. Ps. xxxvii. cxii. Lu. xxvi. De.xxviii.

CHAP. XII.

a Ps. 119. 18, 27, 34, &c.;32.8,9. ch.5.11;9.7, 8. Am.5.10.

1 'He that hateth correction abideth ignorant.'—*Boothroyd.*

b ch.8.35,36; 6.18; 1. 31.

c Ec.8.8. ch.10.3,25; 11. 31; 14. 2,3,6; ver.7. Ps.15.5; 125.1,2. Je.17. 8.

26 He that withholdeth corn, the people shall curse him: but[d] blessing *shall be* upon the head of him that[e] selleth *it*.[6]

27 He[g] that diligently seeketh good procureth favour: [h]but he that seeketh mischief, it shall come unto him.

28 He[i] that trusteth in his riches shall fall: but [j]the righteous shall flourish as a branch.

29 He[k] that troubleth his own house shall inherit the wind: [l]and the fool *shall be* servant to the wise of heart.

30 The[n] fruit of the righteous *is* a tree of life; and he that [o]winneth[7] souls *is* wise.

31 Behold,[p] the righteous shall be recompensed in the earth: much more the wicked and the sinner.

CHAPTER XII.

WHOSO loveth[a] instruction loveth knowledge: but he that hateth reproof *is* brutish.[1]

2 A[b] good *man* obtaineth favour of the LORD: but a man of wicked devices will he condemn.

3 A[c] man shall not be established by wicked-

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opinions there was safety—whereas counsellors, in the scriptural sense, are those who, being filled with the Spirit of God, which is a Spirit of counsel, Is. 11. 2, are 'wise to win souls,' and to lead men to Christ, the only refuge of sinners. *C.*

Ver. 21. This verse is generally interpreted of the confederacies of wicked men, ratified by hand joining in hand, as a manner of swearing. The interpretation of the judicious Brown Paterson, 'from hand to hand,' from one generation to another, seems greatly preferable, as in strict conformity with the following clause. *C.*

Ver. 22. Personal beauty is one of the gifts of God, and, like all his other gifts, may be employed for his glory and the good of the creature upon whom it is bestowed. But to this end it must be guided by *discretion*—a judgment formed in the light of divine truth on the origin and fading nature of the gift, and the accountability of the possessor for its use or abuse. Without this *discretion*, it is but like a costly ornament bestowed upon the swine, which degrades it by its unclean propensities—and 'returns, even from being washed, to its wallowing in the mire.' *C.*

Ver. 29. *He that troubleth his own house*, &c. This proverb is mainly directed to those who can govern their tongue and temper in public, but who lay aside this restraint, and forget 'the law of kindness' in their own houses. They shall inherit the wind—calms uncertain, and the storms destructive. *C.*

CHAPTER XII. Ver. 1. He who loves reproofs, advices, and instructions, will become wise and intelligent; but he who declines, hates, and is enraged at rebukes for his faults, is under the power of his brutish passions; and there is little hope that he will ever know or act like a man. 2. The man who, being united to Christ, is clothed with his righteousness, and sanctified by his grace, and deals kindly and bountifully with others, shall be more and more favoured and blessed of God; but he whose thoughts are bent on wickedness shall be condemned to suffer the just punishment of his iniquity. 3. No man, however subtle or powerful, shall be able to establish his own or his family's greatness by wicked methods: but the righteous, being rooted and grounded in the rock Christ, though shaken by manifold storms of trouble, shall remain unmovable in a flourishing state. 4. A pious, prudent, active, chaste, and affectionate wife is a singular ornament and honour to her husband: but one that is graceless, lazy, foolish, prodigal, peevish, boisterous, and wanton, shames him when abroad, and torments him at home; and, like an incurable disease, vexes his heart, hastens him to his grave, wastes his substance, and ruins his family. 5. The thoughts and designs of good men are managed with piety, equity, candour, and truth; but the contrivances of the wicked are carried on with fraud, dissimulation, and falsehood. 6. Wicked men, by their consultations with one another, and by their reproach and perjury, study to undo their opposers; but they who are sincerely good will labour, by their advice, testimony, recommendation, or request, to deliver such innocent persons from their snares. 7. God himself not only defeats the ruinous projects of the wicked, but totally destroys and extirpates them and their families: whereas he continues and establishes the persons, properties, and families of the just. 8. Not earthly science, honour, or riches, but spiritual wisdom, and a prudent management of his affairs, by fair and honest means, will render a man highly and lastingly honoured, and commended of God and of all good men: but he who indulges his obstinate corruptions, hates and opposes his duty, and labours by wicked means to accomplish his ends, shall bring himself into present and everlasting contempt. 9. Far happier is he who, making no pompous show in the world, lives within the bounds of his income, though it should hardly afford him a single servant, than he who shows away with a great deal of elegance, equipage, and attendants, when he can hardly get necessary subsistence, without running into debt, or some other shameful and miserable shift. 10. Good men have implanted in their hearts a tender concern for the welfare and life of the brute animals, much more for that of their servants and neighbours: but the nature of the wicked is so cruel, that the very kindnesses which they affect to show are maliciously designed and ruinous. 11. Diligent industry in lawful callings shall, through the blessing of God, afford men a competent portion of temporal things; but idleness and bad company mark a man foolish, and lead him into desperate, impoverishing, and ruinous courses. 12. Wicked men desire, approve, and practise deceitful arts for ruining others, and wish to be secure in so doing: but the piety and justice from which righteous men's actions proceed, bring forth glory to God, maintenance and blessings to themselves, and much benefit and advantage to others around. 13. Wicked men are often brought into trouble by their own rash speeches, treasons, perjuries, lies, and calumnies: but the righteous, by the providence of God, and even by their prudent discourse, avoid and escape from many difficulties, in which otherwise they had been entangled. 14. A man shall receive abundant blessings from God, as the reward of that good which he has done by his pious and profitable discourses or works. 15. Fools are so self-conceited, that they consult nobody, but hold right whatever they think or do themselves: but wise men, distrusting their own judgment and abilities, wisely ask and take advice or instruction of others. 16. Fools, having no command of their passions, are no sooner provoked, than rage and fury appear in their countenance, words, and actions; but prudent persons conceal that displeasure which would tend to their disgrace, and overlook the shameful provocation given them, rather than dishonour themselves by resenting it. 17. He who, especially when called to be a witness, boldly and freely speaks the truth, and nothing else, shows himself an honest man, and does justice to his neighbours: but he who conceals truth, forges lies, or attests falsehoods, shows himself a deceitful and mischievous villain. 18. Some, by false accusations, calumnies, and bitter reproaches, wound the reputations, spirits, or estates of their neighbours, and make discords and divisions among them: but good men, by their prudent speeches, will labour to heal men's reputations, compose their disputes, and comfort and edify their souls. 19. Constant adherence to strict truth in his speeches establishes a man's credit, and what he says can never be disproved; but a liar, though he may be at first believed, is soon after found out and confuted; and he is moreover apt to contradict himself, and blast his reputation for ever. 20. They who plot mischief shall, to their great vexation, be disappointed in their expectations, and even fall into that evil which they intended for others; but they who by their counsels labour to promote the piety, peace, and happiness of others, shall have lasting joy and comfort for their reward. 21. Let the wicked plot as they will, nothing shall befall the righteous, but what tends to their spiritual and eternal advantage; but the wicked shall be quite overwhelmed with inward plagues and outward calamities. 22. Lies and liars are remarkably hated and abhorred of God; but they who, in their speeches and whole conduct, act in truth, fidelity, and candour, are beloved, and shall be blessed by him. 23. A prudent man conceals the knowledge he has, except when called by Providence to use it for the benefit of others, and even then makes no boasting ostentation of it; but a fool, through thoughtlessness, rashness, or ambition to be esteemed wise, proclaims his own weakness and ignorance. 24. Diligent and prudent activity in honest callings is the way to obtain riches, honour, and authority; but laziness and villany render men poor and enslaved. 25. Anxious cares about the things of this world, griefs for disappointments and troubles, convictions of sin, and fears of hell, depress the most magnanimous spirit, and make it to pore disconsolate over its wretchedness: but good instruction and advice from friends, and especially the promises of God powerfully applied, revive and make it glad. 26. In his state of union with Christ, justification and adoption, in his inward graces, and his exercises of holiness, and in his abundant happiness, a righteous man is more excellent than his neighbour; but the way that the wicked takes to render himself great or happy only deceives and disappoints him, and issues in misery. 27. Lazy wretches cannot endure to prosecute their own schemes for obtaining earthly enjoyments; or what they have deceitfully obtained never affords them any real comforts, but, as it were, slips through their fingers, or rots at their side, or is taken from them: but the wealth and honour, which is obtained by an honest diligence, is extremely valuable and lasting, being blessed of God. 28. In receiving Christ as our wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption, and walking in him, there is a real possession of life spiritual, and a certain

ness: but the root of the righteous shall not be moved.[2]

4 A[c] virtuous woman *is* a crown to her husband: but she that maketh ashamed *is* as rottenness in his bones.

5 The[e] thoughts of the righteous *are* right: *but* the counsels of the wicked *are* deceit.

6 The[g] words of the wicked *are* to lie in wait for blood: but the mouth of the upright shall deliver them.

7 The[h] wicked are overthrown, and *are* not: but the house of the righteous shall stand.

8 A[i] man shall be commended according to his wisdom: but he that is of a perverse heart[3] shall be despised.

9 *He*[j] *that is* despised, and hath a servant, *is* better than he that honoureth himself, and lacketh bread.[4]

10 A[k] righteous *man* regardeth the life of his beast: but the tender mercies[5] of the wicked *are* cruel.

11 He[l] that tilleth his land shall be satisfied with bread: [m]but he that followeth vain *persons is* void of understanding.

12 The[o] wicked desireth the [6]net[7] of evil *men:* but[p] the root[8] of the righteous yieldeth *fruit.*

13 The[q] wicked is snared by the transgression of *his* lips:[9] but[r] the just shall come out of trouble.

14 A[s] man shall be satisfied with good by the fruit of *his* mouth; and the recompense of a man's hands shall be rendered unto him.

15 The[t] way of a fool *is* right in his own eyes: but he that hearkeneth unto counsel *is* wise.

16 A fool's wrath is presently[1] known: but a prudent *man* covereth shame.

A.M. cir. 3029.
B.C. cir. 975.

2 The immovable *root* is Jesus the righteous, Ps. 16. 8. Re. 5. 5.—*C.*

d 1 Sa. 25. 33. 1 Co. 11. 7. ch. 31. 23; 14. 1; 27. 15; 19. 13.

e ch. 11. 18, 23. Ps. 10. 7–10; 36. 1–4.

f Ps. 10. 7–10. ch. 1. 11, 18; 14. 3. Es. 5. 7, 24.

h Ps. 37. 35–37. Mat. 7. 24–28. ch. 11. 21; 14. 11.

i Ps. 15. 4. ch. 18. 3. 1 Sa. 25. 17. Lu. 6. 48, 49.

3 Heb. *perverse of heart.*

j ch. 13. 7; 25. 14. Lu. 14. 11.

4 Rather—'he that is despised, and is servant to himself;' that is, he who is despised by the vain, but who yet, by his labour, provides for his own wants, is a better man in the sight of God, a better man for the community that he serves, and a happier man in his own feelings, than 'he that honoureth himself,' and despises labour, and who, by his indolence and extravagance, falls into inextricable debts, and, in the end of his career, 'lacketh bread.'—*C.*

k Ge. 33. 14. De. 25. 4. 1 Sa. 11. 2. Ju. 1. 7. Nu. 22. 28.

5 Or, *bowels.*

l Ps. 128. 2. Ge. 3. 19. ch. 28. 19; 14. 4; 13. 23. Ep. 4. 30.

m Jn. 2. 8. ch. 1. 10; 7. 7; 13. 20; 19. 6. 1 Co. 15. 33.

o Hab. 1. 15, 16. Ps. 10. 7–10.

6 Or, *the fortress.*

7 The cunning plans whereby the wicked insnare and overreach the ignorant and inexperienced, and become suddenly rich without the appearance of labour.—*C.*

p Ps. 1. 3. Je. 17. 7, 8.

8 See note * below.

q Da. 6. 24. ch. 18. 7. Ps. 64. 8; 5. 10.

9 Heb. *The snare of the wicked* is *in the transgression of lips.*

r 2 Pe. 2. 9.

s ch. 13. 2; 11. 31; 18. 20. Is. 3. 10, 11.

t ch. 3. 7; 9. 9; 10. 14. Lu. 18. 11. ver. 1. Ro. 12. 16; 11. 20, 25. Re. 3. 18.

1 Heb. *in that day,* ch. 29. 11. 1 Ki. 19, 1, 2. Ec. 7. 9. Am. 5. 13. Ja. 1. 19.

* The resources of the wicked are but a broken branch—its fruit once plucked, it yields no more: their characters once discovered, they are unable to overreach again. But the *root* of the righteous, even faith in Jesus, yields fruit in its season—godliness with contentment, the only true and abiding gain.—*C.*

A.M. cir. 3029.
B.C. cir. 975.

u ch. 14. 5, 25. 1 Sa. 22. 14. Ac. 24. 5. Ps. 52. 2–4.

v Ps. 57. 4; 59. 7; 64. 3; 140. 3, 9, 11. Ke. 13. 11.

x ch. 30. 20, 21, 32; 14. 3; 15. 7. Da. 11. 33.

y Zec. 1. 5, 6.

z Ps. 52. 5; 120. 3, 4.

2 Falsehood may succeed, and often does succeed, for a little: but it is at last detected, and its momentary triumph is over and for ever; and then the liar hath his portion where the worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched, Re. 21. 8.—*C.*

a Je. 17. 9. Ps. 9. 16; 12. 2, 3.

b Mat. 5. 9. He. 12. 14. 1 Pe. 3. 8–13. Ro. 12. 18.

c Ro. 1. 16, 18; 2. 7–10. Is. 3. 10, 11. 2 Th. 1. 6–10. Ps. 91. 9, 10.

d Ps. 5. 6, 7. ch. 6. 16, 17; 11. 20. Re. 22. 14, 15.

e ch. 13. 16; 15. 2; 10. 14, 19; 11. 12, 13. Ec. 10. 3, 12–14.

3 Either he modestly conceals his own knowledge and is silent that he may listen to others, or else conceals the unnecessary divulgence of anything that might injure his neighbours.—*C.*

g ch. 10. 4; 22. 29; 13. 4; ver. 27.

4 Or, *deceitful.*

h ch. 15. 13. He. 2. 15.

i ch. 15. 23. Is. 50. 4; 40. 1, 2; 52. 3, 12. Je. 29. 10, 11. Mat. 9. 2.

j Ps. 16. 3. 1 Co. 15. 10. 2 Co. 5. 17.

5 Or, *abundant.*

k ver. 13. Ja. 1. 13, 14. Ps. 81. 12, 13. Is. 56. 4.

l ch. 13. 4; 23. 21.

n ch. 15. 16, 17; 16. 8; 17. 1. Ps. 37. 16.

o ch. 8. 35, 9. 11. Ro. 5. 21; 8. 1, 28–30. Is. 1. 19. 1 Pe. 3. 13. 2 Co. 4. 17, 18.

CHAP. XIII.

a ch. 9. 7; 12. 1; 5. 11, 12. 1 Ki. 2. 3. 1 Sa. 25. 21, 25. Mat. 7. 6.

b Is. 28. 14, 15.

c ch. 12. 14; 18. 20; 11. 31; 4. 16; 10. 6. Mat. 12. 37. Is. 3. 10, 11. Re. 18. 6.

d Ps. 75. 8. Je. 25. 27–31.

1 See note on ch. 12. 14.—*C.*

e Ja. 3. 2, &c. ch. 21. 23; 18. 20, 27; ver. 2. Mat. 12. 36, 37.

g ch. 10. 4; 21. 25. Nu. 23. 10. 1 Ti. 4. 7, 8. 2 Ti. 4. 7, 8. 1 Co. 15. 58.

17 *He*[u] *that* speaketh truth showeth forth righteousness: but a false witness deceit.

18 There[v] is that speaketh like the piercings of a sword: [z]but the tongue of the wise *is* health.

19 The[y] lip of truth shall be established for ever: [z]but a lying tongue *is* but for a [2]moment.

20 Deceit[a] *is* in the heart of them that imagine evil: [b]but to the counsellors of peace *is* joy.

21 There[c] shall no evil happen to the just: but the wicked shall be filled with mischief.

22 Lying[d] lips *are* abomination to the LORD: but they that deal truly *are* his delight.

23 A[e] prudent man concealeth [3]knowledge: but the heart of fools proclaimeth foolishness.

24 The[g] hand of the diligent shall bear rule: but the slothful[4] shall be under tribute.

25 Heaviness[h] in the heart of man maketh it stoop: [i]but a good word maketh it glad.

26 The[j] righteous *is* more excellent[5] than his neighbour: [k]but the way of the wicked seduceth them.

27 The[l] slothful *man* roasteth not that which he took in hunting: [n]but the substance of a diligent man *is* precious.

28 In[o] the way of righteousness *is* life; and *in* the pathway *thereof there is* no death.

CHAPTER XIII.

A WISE[a] son *heareth* his father's instruction: but [b]a scorner heareth not rebuke.

2 A[c] man shall eat good by the fruit of *his* mouth: but [d]the soul of the transgressors *shall eat* violence.[1]

3 He[e] that keepeth his mouth keepeth his life: *but* he that openeth wide his lips shall have destruction.

4 The[g] soul of the sluggard desireth, and

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prospect of life eternal; nor is there a single act of piety or virtue that tends to make a man miserable.

Ver. 14. *The fruit of his mouth.* A word of instruction, reproof, comfort, or kindness is sure to be, sooner or later, in some form repaid—and though never acknowledged by the world, will not be forgotten of God. In another sense also the proverb is fulfilled: the man who establishes a character for truth and intelligence, is sure to find his remuneration in character and employment, ver. 17, 19. *C.*

Ver. 21. *No evil.* No real, permanent evil. Troubles, pains, and even distresses, he may feel, but there is nothing really evil that is not superseded by the enjoyment of eternal blessedness. *C.*

Ver. 26. *More excellent.* 'More successful' (*A. Williams*). But as there is none righteous but Jesus, Ro. 3. 10, 22, the words either describe him who is 'fairer than the sons of men,' or the man who is made righteous by faith in Jesus, and whose excellency lies in the imputation of righteousness, and the renewal of his nature by the power of his Spirit. *C.*

CHAPTER XIII. Ver. 1. Wise children will reverently receive, obey, and submit to their parents' instructions, advices, and corrections; but there is no hope of him who laughs and scoffs when he is admonished or chidden for his faults. 2. He who lays himself out in instructing, advising, and comforting others, or in other edifying discourse, shall be regarded by men and rewarded by God: but evil speakers shall be forced to endure those miseries which they brought upon others. 3. He that carefully bridles his tongue, thinks well before he speaks, and takes heed to utter nothing improper or unseasonable, preserves himself from much trouble and danger: but he who is extremely talkative, throwing out everything that comes into his head, is in the ready way to be ruined, both by God and by man. 4. Nothing, neither riches, nor learning, nor honour, nor happiness, is to be gotten by mere sluggish desires, without diligent endeavours; but they who, in a dependence upon God, industriously use proper means, shall have sufficiency of outward things, and abundant comforts in Christ, both here and hereafter. 5. A righteous man not only carefully avoids, but hates, all manner of falsehood in heart, word, and deed; but a wicked man continues to impose upon others, till his detected falsehoods and villanies render him evidently odious to God and detested by men, as a stinking carcass; and so contemptible that he dare not show his face for shame. 6. They who have Jesus' sacrificial life in them, and his grace accepted by them, and who study uprightness and equity in their whole conduct, shall be preserved sound in the faith, steadfast in the obedience of the gospel, unmoved by Satan's temptations or the world's frowns or smiles; but the wicked man, and all his wicked contrivances, shall be overthrown by their own iniquity. 7. Some, in their pride and vanity, make a great show of wealth, wisdom, or grace, when they are worth nothing: while others, by their garb or their speeches, conceal their abundant riches, knowledge, or grace. 8. Riches are so far from rendering men truly happy, that they tempt others to rob or accuse them, that their lives may be saved by huge sums of money; whereas the poor is reckoned so inconsiderable, that nobody thinks it worth while to rob, accuse, or even rebuke him. 9. The holiness, comfort, and prosperity of the righteous continues in its brightness and glory: but the small appearance of comfort and happiness which the wicked enjoy in this world will quickly be extinguished in endless misery. 10. Pride is the principal, and often the sole, cause of quarrels and contentions, and of the continuance of them: the opinionated cannot bear contradiction; the aspiring, a rival; the self-willed, opposition: but they who piously consult their God and their Bible, and prudently advise with their discreet neighbours, transact things in quietness and peace. 11. Wealth gotten by fraud, gaming, theft, oppression, or the like, having the curse of God upon it, shall quickly be wasted: but that which is gotten by honest industry and diligence shall continue and increase. 12. The delay of that which a man eagerly expects renders his mind very uneasy; but when he enjoys what he long desired and looked for, it is sweet, satisfactory, and reviving. 13. He who despises God's word, or the advices of his faithful friends, shall quickly be ruined: but he who reverently submits himself to and obeys God's commandments shall be rewarded. 14. The instructions of a good man, and much more the doctrines of God's Word, refresh, comfort, and enliven the soul, and preserve from those pernicious principles and destructive practices by which many are insnared. 15. A prudent, pious, and regular behaviour is most amiable and acceptable to all men: but the behaviour of lawless and wicked persons, like a rough way, is very ruinous to themselves, and offensive to God and good men. 16. Prudent persons undertake nothing but with due deliberation, and what they understand: and manage their affairs with knowledge and discretion: but fools discover their weakness, by rashly meddling with matters out of their reach. 17. Unfaithfulness in discharging his trust, or delivering his message, will bring a wicked servant, ambassador, or minister into shame, condemnation, and misery: but he who acts faithfully procures safety and advantage both to his master and himself. 19. It is a high satisfaction to enjoy what we desire, especially spiritual blessings and comforts: but foolish sinners

hath nothing: but the soul of the diligent shall be made fat.

5 A[h] righteous *man* hateth lying: [i]but a wicked *man* is loathsome, and cometh to shame.

6 Righteousness[j] keepeth *him that is* upright in the way: but wickedness overthroweth the sinner.[2]

7 There[k] is that maketh himself rich, yet *hath* nothing:[3] *there*[l] *is* that maketh himself poor, yet *hath* great riches.

8 The[m] ransom of a man's life *are* his riches: but the [o]poor heareth not rebuke.

9 The[p] light of the righteous [4]rejoiceth: [q]but the lamp[5] of the wicked shall be put out.

10 Only[r] by pride cometh contention: but with the well-advised *is* wisdom.

11 Wealth[s] *gotten* by vanity shall be diminished: [t]but he that gathereth by labour[6] shall increase.

12 Hope[u] deferred maketh the heart sick: but [v]*when* the desire cometh, *it is* a tree of life.[7]

13 Whoso[w] despiseth the word shall be destroyed: [y]but he that feareth the commandment shall be rewarded.[8]

14 The[z] law of the wise *is* a fountain of life, to depart from the snares of death.

15 Good[a] understanding giveth favour: [b]but the way of transgressors *is* hard.

16 Every[c] prudent *man* dealeth with knowledge: but a fool [9]layeth open *his* folly.

A.M. cir. 3029.
B.C. cir. 975.

h Ps.119.163.Ro.12.9.Col.3.9.
i Re.21.8;22.15. Da.12.2. Is.65.13-15. ch.3.35.
j ch.11.3,5,6; 28.11. Is.3.10,11. Ez.e.xviii.
[2] Heb. *sin.*
k ver.11;ch.12.9.Ho.12.8. Re.3.17. 1 Jn.1.8. Mat.5.3.2 Co.6.10.
[3] He has no enjoyment.—*C.*
l Ec.11.1,2.
m Je.41.8. Job 2.4.
o Je.39.10. Ps.72.4.
p Ps. 97. 11; 112. 4. Es.8.16.
[4] Or, 'maketh joyful,' as the light of the sun makes the world rejoice; or 'increaseth,' which meaning the word conveys metaphorically. 'The light of the righteous' is their good works, their charity, their noble example, their sound instructions which they are ever anxious to give.—*P.*
q Job 18. 5, 6; 21. 17. Ec.7.5,6.
[5] Or, *candle.*
r 3 Jn.9,10. Ja. 4.1. 2 Ki.14. 10. ch. 10. 8; 11. 14;12.15;24.6.
s ch.10. 2; 20. 21. Je. 17.11.2 Ki.4.4,5.
t Ps.128.2.
[6] Heb. *with the hand.*
u Ps.119.81.1Sa.27.1.
v ver.19;ch.3.18. Jn. 16.21,22. Ps.40.2.
[7] 'But when the thing hoped for cometh, it is a tree of life,' Probably reference may be made to the tree of life in Eden. It sustains and comforts the drooping heart.—*P.*
x ch.19.16. Is.66.2. 2 Ch. 36. 16. Lu. 16. 31. Mal.3.16. Ps.19.11.
y Ps.115.13.
[8] Or, *be in peace.*
z ch.14.27; 10. 11; 16. 22. Jn.17.3;14.6;1 Jn.25. 1 Jn.5.20,21. 2 Sa.22.6,7.
a ch.3.4. Ps.112.5.
b Ro.3.10-18. Am.2. 13. Ps.95.8,11. Is.59.13.
c ch.12. 23; 15. 2. Ps. 112.5. 1 Sa.25. 25. 2 Sa. 16.22.
[9] Heb. *spreadeth.*

A.M. cir. 3029.
B.C. cir. 975.

d ch.10. 26; 25. 13. 1 Ki. 12. 18. 2 Co. 5. 20. Job 33.23,24.
e ch.9.7; 12.1; 19. 16; 15.5, 31; ver. 13. 2 Ch. xxiv.xxv.1 Sa.2.30.
[1] Few things are more difficult than the receiving of reproof in a proper spirit. Reproof always has the tendency to rouse natural pride, and consequently to give offence. Especially is this the case when it is administered rudely. It requires a wise man to give reproof, and a still wiser man to receive it.—*P.*
g ver.12. Ca.3.3,4. 2 Ti.4.7,8.
h Je.17.9. Ro.8.7, 8. Tit.3.3.ch.29.27.
i Ps.119. 63. Mal. 3. 16.Col.3.16. He.10.24.
j ch.9.6.Ge.13.12;14. 12. 1 Ki. 22. 4, 32.1 Co. 15.33.
[2] Heb. *shall be broken.*
k Ge.4. 7. Ps. 32. 10; 140.11. Ac.28.4. Ro.2.7-10.1 Ti.4.8.
l De.6.2,3, Ps.128.2, 6. Job 27. 16, 17. Ec. 2. 26.ch.28.8.
m ch.12.11;28.19; 10. 12;11.3,5,6.
[3] 'Oh, how much of the poverty of the poor arises from their own want of management! They have little or no economy, and no foresight. When they get anything, they speedily spend it, and a feast and a famine make the chief varieties of their life' (*Clarke*).—*P.*
o ch.23.13; 19.18; 22. 6,15;29.15,17.
p Ps.34.10; 37. 3. ch 19.15; 6.11; 24. 34. De. 28.48;32.24.
q 2 Th.3.10.

CHAP. XIV.

a ch.24.3.Ru.4.11. 1 Ki.21.21.ch.12.4.
b Ps.25.21.1 Sa.2.30. Job 12.4. Mat.12.33,35.
c Ro.2.4.

17 A[d] wicked messenger falleth into mischief: but a faithful ambassador *is* health.

18 Poverty[e] and shame *shall be* to him that refuseth instruction: but he that regardeth reproof shall be honoured.[1]

19 The[g] desire accomplished is sweet to the soul: [h]but *it is* abomination to fools to depart from evil.

20 He[i] that walketh with wise *men* shall be wise: [j]but a companion of fools shall be destroyed.[2]

21 Evil[k] pursueth sinners: but to the righteous good shall be repaid.

22 A[l] good *man* leaveth an inheritance to his children's children; and the wealth of the sinner *is* laid up for the just.

23 Much[m] food *is in* the tillage of the poor: but there is *that is* destroyed for want of judgment.[3]

24 He[o] that spareth his rod hateth his son: but he that loveth him chasteneth him betimes.

25 The[p] righteous eateth to the satisfying of his soul: [q]but the belly of the wicked shall want.

CHAPTER XIV.

EVERY wise[a] woman buildeth her house: but the foolish plucketh it down with her hands.

2 He[b] that walketh in his uprightness feareth the LORD: but [c]*he that is* perverse in his ways despiseth him.

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hate to forsake their lusts and sinful practices, even as means of receiving the choicest benefits. 22. By gaining his estate in a just and upright manner, and by doing good with it while he lives, and by earnest instruction of and fervent prayers for his family, a good man takes the surest course to fix his estate upon them for many generations: but the sinner leaves a curse entailed upon his wealth: and, by the righteous providence of God, it is quickly transferred from his family to one that is truly pious and virtuous. 23. Poor men, by their diligent labour and industry, many times abundantly provide for themselves and family, and even grow rich; while others, who are rich, are reduced to poverty, through their ignorance, rashness, injustice, oppression, deceit, &c. 24. That fond affection which restrains parents from duly correcting their children when they do amiss, is a real and ruinous hatred, a sinful withholding from them a mean, appointed by God, for their amendment and happiness: but parents who truly love their children will study, by early and Christian corrections, to prevent their fixing in evil habits or customs. 25. A righteous man never wants satisfaction, because his desires are moderate, and he lives in a temperate use of God's blessings; God gives him a competency, a heart to use it, and contentment in it: but wicked men, insatiable in their desires, and extravagant in the abuse of their plenty, shall be indigent in the midst of abundance, or reduced to the distresses of poverty.

Ver. 3. As a little helm governs the largest ship, so does the tongue govern the man; and as he that governs the helm guides the ship, he that can govern the tongue can command the man—and in doing so, he 'keepeth his life'—his life of faith in Jesus, of peace with God, and of joy in the Holy Ghost, and hope of glory. *C.*

Ver. 6. *Righteousness.* Not his own righteousness, for that has no existence beyond the name, Ro. 3. 10: but the 'righteousness of God which is, by faith of Jesus Christ, unto all, and upon all them that believe,' Ro. 3. 22. *C.*

Ver. 7. *Maketh himself poor.* A man may, in the natural sense, 'make himself poor,' as in educating and providing for his family, and thereby he is made truly rich. He may also make himself comparatively poor by deeds of beneficence, and be in the sight of God 'rich in good works,' 1 Ti. 6. 18. But, in the spiritual sense, the passage is most completely verified; for the man that, by grace, 'maketh himself poor in spirit,' is, in return, enriched with possession of the kingdom of heaven, Mat. 5. 2. *C.*

Ver. 8. *The poor heareth not rebuke.* The poor in the world, and the poor in spirit, are like some humble plant, in a valley far below the storms of the higher regions: they hear them not. The one might be happy, if he valued the peace of his station: the other is really so, for he enjoys the peace of God. *C.*

Ver. 14. The law—the word and doctrine of the wise—which teaches to depart from the ways of sin and death, is a fountain of spiritual comfort and peace, springing up to life eternal, Jn. 4. 14. *C.*

Ver. 15. A man of 'good understanding' will do a *favour* when in his power; but the way of *transgressors* is *hard;* that is, unkind, offensive, violent. *C.*

Ver. 19. He that would *accomplish* good, must often pass 'through bad report,' and labour after his object with much self-denial—but Providence will repay him in the end with the *sweet* satisfaction of good attained, as well as intended. But fools will never sacrifice present indulgence for future hopes; self-denial, repentance, and godliness are their 'abomination'—'their god is their belly—their end is destruction,' Phi. 3. 19. *C.*

Ver. 24. Let parents beware of misunderstanding this precept, 'The rod' does not signify merely the 'rod' of punishment, but also the 'rod' of a dignified authority; of a habitual, temperate, and chastened restraint. *C.*

CHAPTER XIV. Ver. 1. A virtuous wife, by her piety, prudence, good economy, and the like, supports and advances her family in honour, happiness, and wealth: but a wicked imprudent wife, by her pride, prodigality, idleness, carelessness, or otherwise, will quickly reduce a happy family to poverty, disgrace, and ruin. 2. By a universal regard to piety and virtue, men manifest the fear and holy reverence of God implanted in their heart: but by an obstinate rebellion against his laws, and eager study to gratify their sinful lusts and passions, they discover their profane contempt of his Majesty. 3. The insolent, calumniating, and contemptuous speeches of proud men are very injurious and wounding to others, and often at last prove a scourge to themselves: but the prudent, peaceable, and pleasing words of wise men, neither offending God nor men, secure them in safety. 4. They who would have plenty must be content with the dirt that labour makes; or if the tillage of the fields be neglected, famine must follow; but laborious tillage will issue in great plenty. 6. Proud self-conceited scoffers at what is holy and serious are never like to profit by their studies, or to come to the knowledge of divine truth; whereas they who humbly, and dependently on God, apply themselves to search out truth, quickly attain to the knowledge of whatever is necessary and useful. 7. It is proper to flee from the company of such persons as discover the corruption of their heart in the vanity or wickedness of their words. 8. Prudent men chiefly study to know how to act in their own calling and religious course; but wicked men employ their knowledge and wit to deceive others. 9. Insensible of the evil, malignity, and danger of sin, wicked men harden themselves in it, please themselves with their own and other men's sins, sport themselves in the commission or recollection thereof, and so provoke God to wrath against them; but they who are afraid of, hate, and avoid sin, truly love and regard their neighbours, and obtain favour with God and man. 10. No one can know what another inwardly suffers in worldly griefs and vexations, or in troubles of conscience; neither can they share with him in his inward joys, particularly those of a spiritual nature. 11. The stately houses, wealthy and honoured families of the wicked, shall in wrath be reduced to ruin and misery, and their hopes of eternal happiness issue in everlasting despair; whereas the poor and unsettled family of the truly pious shall flourish and become illustrious. 12. There is need strictly and impartially to try courses and customs: for prejudice, self-flattery, affected ignorance, and the like, make many things seem lawful and good which are really sinful and ruinous. 13. Immoderate joys and pleasures are ordinarily mingled with and issue in inward vexation and anguish: and the diverting of inward convictions and important duties by carnal mirth will quickly issue in the weepings and wailings of eternal despair. 14. He who even in heart revolts from God and his ways, shall be fearfully overwhelmed with the punishment of his sin; but a good man, who steadfastly cleaves to the Lord, shall enjoy great comfort in the testimony of a good conscience, and in keeping God's commands. 15. Weak half-witted persons believe every idle story and plausible pretence, and thereby are drawn into evil: but prudent men examine things before they trust to them or practise them. 16. A wise man, when warned of his error or danger, fears to displease God or to provoke his wrath, and immediately starts back from the sin to which he was tempted, or in which he had involved himself: but a fool rages against those that reprove, warn, or threaten him, and goes on resolutely in sin, fearless of any danger. 17. He who is soon angry involves himself in rash and imprudent words and actions, for which he is to be pitied: but a man who conceals

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3 In[d] the mouth of the foolish *is* a rod of pride: but the lips of the wise [e]shall preserve them.

4 Where no oxen *are*, the crib *is* clean: [g]but much increase *is* by the strength of the ox.

5 A[h] faithful witness will not lie: but a false witness will utter lies.

6 A[i] scorner seeketh wisdom, and *findeth it* not: [j]but knowledge *is* easy unto him that understandeth.

7 Go[k] from the presence of a foolish man, when thou perceivest not *in him* the lips of knowledge.

8 The[l] wisdom of the prudent *is* to understand his way: [m]but the folly of fools *is* deceit.

9 Fools[o] make a mock[1] at [2]sin: [p]but among the righteous *there is* favour.

10 The[q] heart knoweth his own bitterness;[3] and a stranger doth not intermeddle with his joy.

11 The[r] house of the wicked shall be overthrown: but the tabernacle of the upright shall flourish.

12 There[s] is a way which seemeth right unto a man; but the end thereof *are* the ways of death.

13 Even[t] in laughter the heart is sorrowful; and the end of that mirth *is* heaviness.

14 The[u] backslider in heart shall be filled with his own ways; [v]and a good man *shall be satisfied* from himself.

15 The[x] simple believeth every word: but the prudent *man* looketh well to his going.

16 A[y] wise *man* feareth, and departeth from evil: but the fool [z]rageth, and is confident.

17 *He*[a] *that is* soon angry dealeth foolishly; and[b] a man of wicked devices is hated.

y ch.16.6; 22.3. Ge.39.7–12.1 Th.5.22. Ps.119.120. Job 31.14,23. *x* Mat.14.3,4. ch.7.22.
a Ja.1.19.ver.29; ch.29.22. *b* Es.iii.vii.

d Ps.31.18; 73.9. Job 5. 21. ch. 10. 13; 26. 3. Eze.7.10.
e ch. 12. 6. Es. 7.3,4. Da.11.33; 12.3. Re. 11. 5,6.
g ch. 13. 23; 12. 11. 1 Co.9.9–11; 15.10,58.
h Ex.20.16; 23.1.ch. 6.19; 12.17; 19.5.
i ch.18.1,2; 24.7. Jn. 7.34.
j ch.8.9; 17.14. Mat. 11. 29. Ps. 119. 18, 98–100.
k ch.9.6; 13.20. 1 Co. 5.11. Ep.5.7,11. Je. 28. 11.
l 2 Ti.3. 15–17. Je. 6. 16. Ps.119.5–7.
m Lu.12.19,20. 2 Ti. 3.13. 2 Co. 3.10.
o ch.26.19,20; 10.23.
1 Fools do not acknowledge, but always attempt to excuse and palliate, their sins.—*C.*
2 This is very common in the world. Open sins—shameful sins are often made topics of merriment and joking. Nothing could be more unseemly, and nothing could be more injurious in its influence. Sin as a violation of God's law, as an offence against the majesty of Heaven, as a blot upon the immortal soul of man, which was made in the divine image, ought ever to be regarded with feelings of holy horror and profound regret. Besides, joking and merriment make us familiar with that which forms their subject; the moral sense is thus dulled and deadened, and the way opened up to personal indulgence.—*P.*
p ch.3. 4; 8. 35; 12. 2; 13.15.
q 1 Ki.19.4. Jn.12.27; 16.20,22; 14.26, 27. Re. 2.17. 1 Co.2.11.
3 Heb. *the bitterness of his soul.*
r Job 8.9,10,15. Mat. 7.26,27. ch.12.7. Is. 44. 3.4. 2 Sa.2.3, 3,4.
s ch.16.25; 12.15. Ro. 6.21,23. Is.3.11. Mat.7. 13.
t Ec. ii.1.7, 2–6; 11. 9. Lu.16.25. ch.5.4. Ja.5. 5. Re.18.7. Da.v.
u Jo.2.19; 4.18. Ps.81. 12. Mat.27. 5. Is. 3. 11. ch.1.21.
v 2 Ki. 20. 3. ch. 12. 14. 2 Co.1.12. Ga.6.4,8.
x Ep.4.14; 5.15. 1 Jn. 4.1. Ac.17.11. Am.5.13. ch.4.26.

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c 1 Pe.1.18. Je.44.17. Job 11.12. Ps.49.13.
d 3 Jn.12. ch. 4. 7–9. Phi.3.8. Jn.17.3.
e Ps.49.14. Mal. 4.3. Is. 60. 14; 49. 23; 14. 2. Da.7.27. Mi.7.9,10,17.
g ch.19.6,7. Mi. 7. 5. Job xxix.xxx.
4 Heb. *many* are *the lovers of the rich.*
h 1 Jn.3.17. Ps.112.9; 41. 1–3. Mat.25.4, &c.; 5.7. ch.19.17; 11.24–26. Da.4.27. ver.31. He.6. 10.
i ch.6.18; 12.2; 1. 31; ver.17.
j Mi.7.20. Ps.23.6; 61. 7. Ge.24.27; 32.10.
k ch.18.2,7. Ec. 5. 3; 10.3. 1 Ti.5.13.
l Sound judgment, gracious spirit, and active exertion, form, when united, an invaluable character. When separated, judgment and labour produce good; but mere talking wastes time, loses opportunity, and ends in want.—*C.*
l ver. 18, 19; ch. 3. 9. Ec.7.11,12.
m Lu. 12. 16–21; 16. 19,25.
n Wisdom produces riches, temporal or spiritual. Temporal riches, a crown of respect on earth; spiritual riches, of glory in heaven. But all the plans and actings of foolishness terminate in the production of some new folly.—*C.*
o See ver. 5. Ex. 20. 16.
p Ec.7.18. Mal.3.16, 17. Ps. 128.1–6; 34.10. 2 Ti.1.12. Ge.17.7. Je.15. 11; 49.11.
q Is.33. 6. ch. 13. 14; 10. 11; 2. 10–20; 7. 5–27. Jn.4.14. ver.16.
r 1 Ki.4.20,21. Is.60. 4–8. 2 Ki. 20. 32; 13. 7. Re.17.15,16.
s Nu. 12. 3. ver. 17. Ja.3.17,18. ch.16.32; 15. 18.
7 Heb. *short of spirit*, ver.17.
t Ps. 119. 80. 2 Co. 1. 12.
u ch.12.4. Job 5.2. Ps. 112.10.
v ch.22.2; 17.5; 19.17. Mat. 25. 40, 45. 1 Jn. 3. 17. ver.21.
8 As if he had made something unworthy of kindness—a reproach either to his wisdom or benevolence; or to both.—*C.*
9 Christ the righteous, and the believer made righteous through him.—*C.*

18 The[c] simple inherit folly: but the prudent are [d]crowned with knowledge.

19 The[e] evil bow before the good; and the wicked at the gates of the righteous.

20 The[g] poor is hated even of his own neighbour: but the rich *hath* many friends.[4]

21 He[h] that despiseth his neighbour sinneth: but he that hath mercy on the poor, happy *is* he.

22 Do[i] they not err that devise evil? [j]but mercy and truth *shall be* to them that devise good.

23 In all labour there is profit: [k]but the talk of the lips *tendeth* only to penury.[5]

24 The[l] crown of the wise *is* their riches: [m]*but* the foolishness of fools *is* folly.[6]

25 A[o] true witness delivereth souls: but a deceitful *witness* speaketh lies.

26 In[p] the fear of the LORD *is* strong confidence; and his children shall have a place of refuge.

27 The[q] fear of the LORD *is* a fountain of life, to depart from the snares of death.

28 In[r] the multitude of people *is* the king's honour: but in the want of people *is* the destruction of the prince.

29 *He*[s] *that is* slow to wrath *is* of great understanding: but *he that is* hasty[7] of spirit exalteth folly.

30 A[t] sound heart *is* the life of the flesh: but envy the [u]rottenness of the bones.

31 He[v] that oppresseth the poor reproacheth his Maker:[8] but he that honoureth him hath mercy on the poor.

32 The[x] wicked is driven away in his wickedness: [y]but the righteous hath hope in his [9]death.

33 Wisdom[z] resteth in the heart of him that

x Da.4.31. Job 27.20,21; 18.18. Jn.8.21,24. *y* Ps.23.4. Job 13.15; 19.25–27. 2 Co.5.1. Phi. 1.21,23. Ps.37.37. *z* ch.12.23; 13.16; 15.2,28; 29.11; 18.2,7. Ec.5.3; 10.3.

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his wrath, and deliberately contrives how to take a cruel revenge, deserves to be hated and abhorred. 18. Inconsiderate sinners hold fast their wickedness, and delight in it, as their portion and inheritance, till they feel the woful effects of it: but the prudent, to their remarkable honour and influence, increase in spiritual understanding. 19. Even in this world the wicked are often obliged to stoop and submit to the righteous, and implore their favour and relief: and at the last day, the debasement of the wicked, and exaltation of the righteous, shall be complete. 20. If a man fall into poverty, his neighbours, who once professed great friendship, will forsake and disregard him: but if a man grow rich, many, who before took no notice of him, will pretend great affection to him, and even the greatest will offer him their favour. 21. He who overlooks and contemns his poor neighbour provokes God to punish and render him miserable: but he who compassionately relieves the poor shall be blessed by God on that account. 22. They who contrive mischief against their innocent neighbours miss their end and ruin themselves: but they who study to do men real good shall be graciously and faithfully rewarded by God. 23. Industrious labour in any lawful calling will bring in some gain: but talkativeness and proud boasting tend only to make men beggars. 24. Riches are a singular ornament and advantage to wise men who know how to use them, because thereby they have the greater opportunities of doing good: but riches only render foolish men's folly the more notorious, because they have thereby the greater opportunities of doing mischief and wickedness. 25. An upright witness will, at all hazards, avow the truth, to save the lives or characters of such as are falsely accused: but deceitful men will boldly pour forth lies and calumnies to destroy the innocent. 26. They that fear God may be confident of his protection to themselves and their posterity in times of danger. 27. A holy regard to God, and obedience to his law, will issue in men's solid and eternal comfort, and preserve them from those sinful courses in which many are ensnared to their own destruction. 28. Kings ought to cherish their subjects; for on their number, wealth, and power, their own honour depends; and if they be wasted by unnecessary wars, or forced by oppression into other countries, it will prove the ruin of the kingdom. 29. He who under great provocations can maintain a calmness of temper, discovers much wisdom and grace: but he who is hastily inflamed by reproaches and ill-usage, exposes his corruption and folly, and makes it apparent to every one. 30. Nothing more conduces to health and happiness than a mind renewed by God's Spirit, freed from the dominion of sinful lusts, quiet, gentle, and contented: but envy, and such like fretful passions, torment men's spirits, waste their bodies, and hasten them towards hell and the grave. 31. He that defrauds or oppresses the poor, or withholds the relief which their circumstances require, forgets and even practically blasphemes God who makes them poor, and engages himself to defend and relieve them: but he who hath any due respect to God will show pity to the poor, and labour to supply them. 32. In death the wicked is suddenly and irresistibly driven away from all his beloved hopes and enjoyments in his sinful state; and often, in the very act of sin, and always on account of it, into everlasting misery: but the righteous, being united to Christ, clothed with his righteousness, and sanctified by his indwelling Spirit, has, even in trouble and death, well-grounded hopes of eternal felicity. 33. Prudent men study to grow in grace, and in the knowledge of Christ, without making unseasonable or ostentatious demonstrations of it: but foolish men expose themselves by their eager desire to vent their minds in every company. 34. Religion and virtue, equity and kindness, through the blessing of God, increase the glory, power, and wealth of a nation: but rebellion against God, or injuring of mankind, disgraces and ruins societies. 35. A prudent, active, and faithful minister of state cannot but be dear to a wise king: and one who by his ill management disgraces his government, and brings all things into confusion, cannot but be the object of his wrath.

Ver. 1. The wise woman, by her prudence and management, godly example, and instruction, raises her family either in riches or character, or both; while the foolish, by her vanity, extravagance, and neglect, brings ruin upon herself, her husband, and her children. This truth applies to churches as well as to families. *C.*

Ver. 6. Those that would not *strive*, Lu. 13. 24, 25, and the 'foolish virgins' who neglected, Mat. 25. 8–11, all sought to enter and were refused. The first, because they did not *strive;* and when forced to come near, they still stood *without*, and would not enter by Christ the door, Jn. 10. 9; and the 'foolish virgins' came without *light*, without Christ 'the true *light*,' Jn. 1. 4, 9, and were therefore justly rejected and condemned, Jn. 3. 19. *C.*

Ver. 12. If a man judge by temporal advantages, and not by eternal interests—if he follow human authority in preference to divine truth—if he obey the impulse of passion instead of reason and conscience, all his ways will seem right when seen by these false lights, but their *seeming* will not change their *nature*—they all terminate in spiritual and eternal death. *C.*

Ver. 14. *A good man shall be satisfied from himself.* How can a man be satisfied from himself? Not from himself, as a branch bearing fruit by its own power; but from himself as a branch in Christ the living vine, and bearing all his fruit because of this union, Jn. 15. 5; not from himself as a *mine*, natively producing silver, gold, or gems; but from himself as an earthen vessel which God has enriched with his heavenly treasures, 2 Co. 4. 7. *C.*

Ver. 19. *The evil bow before the good.* Sooner or later this event is always realized; and the temporary exceptions never

hath understanding: but *that which is* in the midst of fools is made known.

34 Righteousness[a] exalteth a nation: but sin *is* a reproach to any people.[1]

35 The[b] king's favour *is* toward a wise servant: but his wrath is *against* him that causeth shame.

CHAPTER XV.

A SOFT[a] answer turneth away wrath: but grievous words[1] stir up anger.

2 The[b] tongue of the wise useth knowledge aright: [c]but the mouth of fools [d]poureth out foolishness.

3 The[e] eyes of the LORD *are* in every place, beholding the evil and the good.

4 A[g] wholesome tongue[2] *is* a tree of life:[3] but perverseness therein *is* a breach in the spirit.

5 A[h] fool despiseth his father's instruction: but he that regardeth reproof is prudent.

6 In[i] the house of the righteous *is* much treasure: but in the revenues of the wicked is trouble.

7 The[j] lips of the wise disperse knowledge: but the heart of the foolish *doeth* not so.

8 The[k] sacrifice of the wicked *is* an abomination to the LORD: [l]but the prayer of the upright *is* his delight.

9 The[n] way of the wicked *is* an abomination unto the LORD: [o]but he loveth him that followeth after righteousness.

10 [p]Correction[4] *is* grievous unto him that forsaketh the way; *and* he that hateth reproof shall die.

11 Hell[q] and destruction *are* before the [5]LORD; how much more then the hearts of the children of men?

12 A[r] scorner loveth not one that reproveth him; neither will he go unto the wise.

13 A[s] merry heart maketh a cheerful countenance: but by sorrow of the heart the spirit is broken.

14 The[t] heart of him that hath understanding seeketh knowledge: [u]but the mouth of fools feedeth on foolishness.

15 All[v] the days of the afflicted *are* evil: [z]but he that is of a merry heart *hath* a continual [6]feast.

16 Better[y] *is* little with the fear of the LORD, than great treasure, and trouble therewith.

17 Better[z] *is* a dinner of herbs where love is, than a stalled ox, and hatred therewith.

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a Je.22.15. Le.xxvi. De. xxviii. xxx. Eze. xvi.xx.xxii.xxiii.

1 Heb. *to nations.*

b Mat. 24. 45. ch. 16. 12,13;20.8,26. Lu.12.42 -48.

CHAP. XV.

a ch.25.15. Ju.8.1-3; xii. 1 Sa. xxv. 2 Sa. 19. 43.1 Ki.xii.

1 Literally, 'words of grief or pain;' *i.e.* which cause pain. Sharp, hasty, insulting words.—*P.*

b Ps.39.1;45.1. Is.50. 4.

c ver.28;ch.12.23;13. 16;14.33.

d Heb. *belcheth* or *bubbleth*, Ps.45.1; 145. 7.

e Job 34.21. ch. 5.21. 2 Ch.16. 9. Ps.33.13,14. Je.16. 17;32. 19. He. 4. 13.

g 1 Ti.6.3.ch.3.18;12. 18. Ps. 52. 2-4. 1 Co.15. 33.

2 Heb. *the healing of the tongue.*

h ch.10.1; 12.1; 13.1, 18. ver.10,12,31,32. Ps. 141.5.

i Ps.112.3;37.16. Job 20.22,23. De.28.17,18.

j ver. 2, 4; ch. 10. 21. Ca.4.11;7.9. Ec.5.3;10. 3.

k ch.28.9;21.27. Is.1. 11;61.8;66.3. Je.6.20;7. 22. Am.5.22. Jn.4.24.

3 'A *healing* tongue,' that labours to bind up the wounds that malevolence or sorrow has inflicted, and to unite the divisions caused by misconception and prejudice. It is truly a 'tree of life' whose 'leaves are for the healing of the nations.' It is the tongue of Jesus, preaching

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peace on earth and good - will toward men; and the tongue of his servants guided by his Spirit, and following his example.—*C.*

l Ca.2.14.ver.29. Ps. 102.17;9.12. Lu.18.11-14.

n Ho.4.1,2. Ro.3.10-19. Je.44.4. Hab.1.13.

o Is. 26. 7. Ps. 146. 8. 1 Ti.6.11. He. 6. 12-18. 1 Co.15.28. ch.21.21.

p ch.12.1; 13.1,16; 5. 11,12;10.17.

4 Or, *instruction*, ver.32.

q Job 26. 6. He.4.13. Ps. 139. 8; 7.9; 44. 21. 2 Ch.6.30. Je.17.10. Jn.2. 24, 25; 21. 17. Ac. 1. 24. Re.2.23.

5 The state of the dead — Hades. and the state of the condemned, are alike seen by and known to God. None of his creatures is ever beyond the reach of his omniscient eye, or beyond the power of his omnipotent arm. —*P.*

r ver.5,10. Am.5.10. 2 Ti.4.3.ch.9.7,8. Is.30. 9-11. Job 21.14.

s ch. 17. 22; 12. 25. 2 Co.1.12. He.2.15.

t Ps. 119. 18. Ac. 17. 11. Phi. 3.7-11. 2 Pe. 3. 18;1.2,5.

u ch.12.23. Is.30.10. Ec.5.3;10.14.ver.2.

v Ge.47.9. Ps.90.7,9.

x ch.17. 22. Ro. 5. 1-11. 2 Co.1.12;2.14.

6 Rather—'the eyes of the wicked are every day anticipating evil; but the good enjoy constant repose.'—*C.*

y Ps.37.16. ch. 16. 8. Ec.4.6. 1 Ti.6.6.

z ch.17.1. Ps. 133.1-3. Jn.14.21,23.

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finally weaken or contradict the general rule. It is now verified in every righteous judgment by an upright judge upon earth: it will finally be completed by the Judge of the quick and the dead. *C.*

Ver. 30. *A sound heart.* A sound heart is a heart restored to spiritual health by Jesus, the only physician of the soul, Mat. 9. 12; and its principal symptoms are faith, hope, and love—a 'conscience void of offence,' because 'sprinkled from dead works,' which contributes as much to relieve bodily suffering, and promote bodily health, as to remove spiritual trouble and promote peace and enjoyment. *C.*

Ver. 33. Wisdom will neither 'cast its pearls before swine, nor give that which is holy to the dogs,'—and must therefore often *rest* and wait for opportunities. But the vanity that is in the heart of fools is always seeking occasions for display, and cares nothing about others if it only can glorify itself. *C.*

CHAPTER XV. Ver. 1. Mild, submissive, and yielding answers pacify anger and wrath: but sharp, contemptuous, and impertinent language increases passion, or kindles it up where it was not before. 2. A wise man gives profitable instructions, and understands how to speak in a seasonable and prudent manner: whereas fools, by the worthless stuff they utter, and by their indiscreet and confused manner of expressing their thoughts, only manifest their own folly. 3. The infinite knowledge and observance of God extends everywhere, and to every person or action, thought, or disposition, whether good or bad. 4. Wholesome and profitable discourses instruct the ignorant, comfort the grieved, heal breaches, cure contentions among neighbours, and soften the exasperated; but corrupt, proud, passionate, and erroneous discourse disturbs the peace, and corrupts the temper and manners, of both speakers and hearers. 5. Inattention to the instructions, advices, and reproofs of superiors, manifests and issues in the greatest folly; but he who willingly receives rebukes, and carefully observes them, shows himself wise, and prudently consults his own welfare and happiness. 6. A truly pious, just, and merciful man is really very rich; as, however little of this world's wealth he may possess, he has all things working for his real advantage, and God's blessing on what he has, and is contented with it: but vexation and trouble embitter the revenues of the wicked. They are gotten with anxiety, enjoyed under a curse, employed in the service of sin, and tend to their ruin. 7. Wise men tender good instructions, advices, and reproofs to all around them: but foolish men, having their heart filled with ignorance and lust, impart nothing valuable. 8. All the external devotions and most liberal almsgivings of wicked men, are so far from recommending them to God's favour, that they are abhorred by him as but the vile gratifications of their own pride, legality, or other lusts; but the most humble prayers and meanest services of those united to Christ, which are performed in faith and dependence on him, and sincerely aiming at his glory, are exceedingly acceptable to him, and issue in much comfort to themselves. 9. The whole designs, contrivances, thoughts, words, and actions of wicked men are abominable to the Lord; and this renders their religious services corrupt and hated: but he loves such as, having Jesus' sacrificial life in their souls, do, in their thoughts, affections, and endeavours, earnestly study to perfect holiness in his fear. 10. Such as dislike faithful reproof, for their apostasy from the ways of the Lord, shall be severely punished; and at last, if they continue haters of admonition and advice, shall certainly be lost. 11. The state of the dead and lost, and every other thing unknown to us, are perfectly known to God. How exact then must be his knowledge and observance of the dispositions, purposes, and thoughts of men! 12. Mockers of God and religion shun the admonitions of their conscience, and hate such as reprove them; and even avoid the company of wise, religious, or virtuous persons, lest they should meet with their reproofs or advices. 13. When the conscience is graciously purged and quieted, and the mind comforted, it issues in outward health and cheerfulness: but grief and sorrow, seizing on the heart, disturb, weaken, and dispirit it, and make a man a burden to himself and to all around. 14. Such as are truly wise, and inwardly instructed by the Spirit of God, earnestly study to obtain more solid knowledge: but persons void of true understanding gape after, and relish nothing but frivolous, vain, and unprofitable things. 15. All the days of persons discontented under their afflictions are grievous and miserable: but they who have their conscience graciously quieted, their heart joyful in God, and content with their lot, have more true and perpetual comfort and satisfaction than can be enjoyed in the most delicious banquet on earth. 16. A very small share of earthly enjoyments, attended with real grace and true holiness, is better than the largest abundance of wealth with the disquiet, confusion, and anxious care which usually attend it. 17. The meanest fare, attended by the mutual love of friends, is far preferable to the most sumptuous entertainment attended with hatred and contention. 18. Hasty, passionate, and furious persons are apt to quarrel for very trifles, and so disturb the most peaceable company: but those who are humble, meek, and patient, instead of raising strife themselves, will labour to compose it when it has been raised by others. 19. A slothful man is apt to fancy or pretend a great many unconquerable difficulties in the way of his duty: but a good and active person looks on his way as easy and plain, notwithstanding a few trifling hindrances. 20. Nothing so much rejoices the hearts of pious parents as to see their children grow up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord: but foolish children requite their mothers' fond indulgence by irreverent carriage towards them; and by despising their commands, instructions, advices, or reproofs, and so making them contemptible. 21. They who are void of grace, sense, and consideration, take pleasure in doing the most empty, absurd, and wicked things: but such as are truly knowing and wise study for their own pleasure and comfort, as well as for the honour of God, to conduct their thoughts, words, and actions in a regular, sincere, and holy manner. 22. Without prudent counsellors, and for want of due deliberation, the most important designs and projects often miscarry: but where, by prudent consultation, difficulties are foreseen and provided against, men's purposes succeed to their wish. 23. Ready, pertinent, and seasonable advice is an honour and comfort to him who gives it, especially when the good success of it is found, and it is very profitable to him who receives it. 24. Holy and gracious persons, in the pursuit of everlasting life, set their affections and hopes on things above, have their conversation in heaven, and eye the glory of God in everything they do, that they may escape sinful pollutions, horrid dangers, and everlasting destruction. 25. God takes pleasure to debase the proud, demolishing their stately houses, overturning their families, and ruining their honours and wealth: but he will preserve poor widows who have no helper in their rights, against every insolent or covetous invader. 26. The Lord abhors the thoughts, inclinations, purposes, and contrivances of wicked men: but the hearts of the godly being purged by his blood and Spirit, their prayers, and edifying instructions, advices, and reproofs are pleasant to him and his people. 27. They who hasten to be rich, and with anxious care labour for worldly enjoyments, not only harass all around them, but weary themselves, and plague their families, and bring the curse of God on what they have: but he who hates bribes and other unlawful methods of gain, shall have a competent portion of the good things of this world, and comfort and prosperity in it. 28. A good man avoids answering before he is asked, and studies to say nothing but what is pure, profitable, suitable, and seasonable: but a wicked man is apt, in a rash and forward manner, to speak what is unsuitable, sinful, and hurtful. 29. The Lord utterly dislikes wicked persons, and refuses to regard their prayers: but he is ever willing and ready to hear the prayers of the godly offered to him in faith, and is their sure and present help in time of work or

18 A[a] wrathful man stirreth up strife: but *he that is* slow to anger appeaseth strife.

19 The[b] way of the slothful *man is* as an hedge of thorns: but [c]the way of the righteous *is* made plain.[7]

20 A[d] wise son maketh a glad father: but a foolish man despiseth his mother.

21 Folly[e] *is* joy to *him that is* destitute of wisdom:[8] but[g] a man of understanding walketh uprightly.

22 Without[h] counsel purposes are disappointed: but in the multitude of counsellors they are established.[9]

23 A[i] man hath joy by the answer of his mouth; and a word *spoken* in due season,[1] how good *is it!*[2]

24 The[j] way of life *is* above to the wise, that he may depart from hell beneath.[3]

25 The[k] LORD will destroy the house of the proud: but he will establish the border of the widow.

26 The[l] thoughts of the wicked *are* an abomination to the LORD: [m]but *the words* of the pure *are* pleasant words.[4]

27 He[o] that is greedy of gain troubleth his own house: [p]but he that hateth gifts[5] shall live.

n ver.7,23. Ps.45.1;66.16; 37.30,31; 19.14. Mal.3.16. *o* ch.1.19;11.29;20.21. Is.5.8. Hab.2.9,10. Je.17.11. *p* Ex.23.8. De.16.19. Is.33.15,16. Ps.15.5.

A.M. cir. 3029. B.C. cir. 975.

a ch. 26. 21; 19. 11. Mat.5.9. Ju.12.1–6;8.1–3. ver.1.

b ch.22. 5, 13; 26. 13; 20.4.

c Ps.27.11. Is.35.8.

[7] Heb. *is raised up as a causey*, Is.35.8.

d ch.10.1;29.3;23.15, 16;30.17.

e ch. 10. 23; 14. 9; 26. 18,19.

[8] Heb. *void of heart.*

g 2 Co. 1. 12. Ac. 24. 16. Ep.5.15.

h ch. 11. 14. Ec. 4.9, 10. Ju.19.30. Lu.14.28–32.

[9] See note on ch. 11.14.—*C.*

i ch.24.26;25. 11. Col. 3.6. Ep.4.29. 1 Pe.3.15.

[1] Heb. *in his season*, Is.50.4.

[2] A single word of instruction, of warning, of reproof, of comfort, has often been the immediate and instrumental means of conversion; and a mere look of Christ checked Peter in the highway to destruction, and sent him out in penitence to 'weep bitterly.'—*C.*

j Jn.14.6. Mat. 6. 21. Phi.3.20. 2Co.4.18. Col. 3.1,2.

[3] The wise man—the man, who, by the Word and Spirit, is made 'wise unto salvation,' has set his affections on 'things above,' and his 'life is hid with Christ in God,' Col.3.1–5.—*C.*

k ch.12.7; 14. 11. Ps. 52.5;68.5,6;146.9;138.6. De.10,17,18. Je.49.11.

l Ge.6.5,6. ch. 6. 16, 18.

[4] Heb. *words of pleasantness.*

[5] *Gifts.* The word here is taken in the sense of 'corrupting bribes' given to pervert justice.—*C.*

A.M. cir. 3029. B.C. cir. 975.

q ch.16.23. 1 Pe.3.15. ver.2,14,23.

r ver.2. Ps.36.3; 5.9; 52.2–4.

s Ps.34.16. Ep.2.12.

[6] Not *far* from him in place, for in him we live and move; but far from hearing his covetous desires or malicious and blasphemous imprecations; and far from helping him when destruction smites him in his impenitence.—*C.*

t Ps.145.18;34.15;91. 15;102.17. Ro.8.26,27.

u Ec.11.7. Ps.4.6,7.

v ch.22.1. Ec.7.1, or Lu.2. 10, 11. Ps. 89. 15. Je.15.16. ch.3.8; 12. 25; 16.24.

x ver. 5. Ec. 12. 11. ch.13.20; 15,6; 9.9. Jn. 15.3,4.

y See ver.5.

[7] Or, *correction*, ver.10,12.

[8] Or, *obeyeth.*

[9] Heb. *possesseth an heart*, ch.17.16.

z Job 28. 28. Ps. 111. 10. ch.1.7,9. 10;6.23.

a Ja.4. 10. ch. 18. 12. Ru. 3. 14. 1 Sa. 25. 41. Lu.14.11.

CHAP. XVI.

a ver.9; ch.19.21;20. 24. 2 Co.3.5. Je.10.23;1. 9. Phi.2.13. Mat.10.19, 20.

[1] Or, *disposings.*

b ver.25; ch.14.12;21. 2;30.12. Lu.18.11.

c 1 Sa.16.7. Je.17.10. Da.5.27.

d Ps.37.5;55.22. Mat. 6.25,34. Lu.12.22. 1 Pe. 5.7. Phi.4.6.

[2] Or, *Roll.*

e Ro.11. 36; 1. 19,20. Is.43.7,21. Re.4.11.

f Job 21.30. Ro.9.22.

h ch.6.17,18,13;11.21. Da.7.20,25. 2 Th.2.4.

[3] Heb. *held innocent*, Is.3.11. Eze.18.4. Ro.2.8,9.

[4] See note on ch.11. 21.—*C.*

28 The[q] heart of the righteous studieth to answer: but [r]the mouth of the wicked poureth out evil things.

29 The[s] LORD *is* far from the wicked:[6] but [t]he heareth the prayer of the righteous.

30 The[u] light of the eyes rejoiceth the heart; [v]*and* a good report maketh the bones fat.

31 The[x] ear that heareth the reproof of life abideth among the wise.

32 He[y] that refuseth instruction[7] despiseth his own soul: but he that heareth[8] reproof getteth understanding.[9]

33 The[z] fear of the LORD *is* the instruction of wisdom; [a]and before honour *is* humility.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE [a]preparations[1] of the heart in man, and the answer of the tongue, *is* from the LORD.

2 All[b] the ways of a man *are* clean in his own eyes: [c]but the LORD weigheth the spirits.

3 [d]Commit[2] thy works unto the LORD, and thy thoughts shall be established.

4 The[e] LORD hath made all *things* for himself; [g]yea, even the wicked for the day of evil.

5 Every[h] one *that is* proud in heart *is* an abomination to the LORD: *though* hand *join* in hand, he shall not be [3]unpunished.[4]

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warfare. 30. It is a remarkable pleasure to behold the manifold works of God: and the good report of a given and offered Saviour, and of reconciliation to God and eternal salvation, or even a good report of ourselves or neighbours, affords inward satisfaction and comfort. 31. They who with pleasure listen to and improve wholesome instructions, tending to promote their spiritual or eternal life, increase in wisdom, and shall be qualified to give good instruction to others. 32. Such as refuse or contemn proper instructions or reproofs undervalue their own soul, neglect the means of its safety, and, for the sake of some outward and perishing thing, wilfully ruin it: but he who delights to be taught and admonished, increases in solid, soul-comforting, and saving knowledge, wisdom, and prudence. 33. A holy awe of God, and real regard to his way, disposes us to the study of true wisdom and knowledge, and is a certain mark of it; and humility and patient submission in a low condition is the best preparation for honour and preferment.

Ver. 6. *In the house of the righteous is much treasure.* That is, (1) Christ the righteous, who has hid in him 'all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge;' (2) the righteous, through faith in Christ, having all the treasures of divine wisdom, faith, hope, charity, communicated by his Word and Spirit; (3) of temporal treasures, the righteous always possesses *contentment*, which is inseparable from godliness, and is 'great gain;' while he possesses that industry of hand which arises from freedom of spirit, and is the fruitful parent of all earthly prosperity. *C.*

Ver. 8. *The prayer of the upright is his delight.* 'The upright' are those who are not ashamed to look up with 'boldness to the throne of grace for grace to help them;' and their prayer a 'delight to the Lord,' because it renounces all the righteousness of the creature, and altogether relies upon the 'righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ.' *C.*

Ver. 27. *He that is greedy of gain troubleth his own house.* By needless and distracting cares and toils, by transfusing the spirit of covetousness into his children, and by all the retributive consequences of that chicanery and oppression which covetousness is sure to generate, and Providence sooner or later to punish. *C.*

CHAPTER XVI. Ver. 1. Every right inclination, thought, or purpose in the heart, and all right management of our words, come through an active faith in God. 2. Ignorance and self-conceit make men often to think themselves faultless and holy in their conduct, when the Lord, who searches and judges the intentions and frame of the heart, finds it quite otherwise. 3. Commit whatever works you undertake to the direction and management of God in his providence, and implore his blessing therein, so shall your honest desires be accomplished. 4. God made and would bring men to his own service, and for the manifestation of his glorious perfections; yea, even the wicked to be instruments of his righteous will, and at last the objects of it, by continuing in their impieties. 5. When men are inwardly proud on account of their gifts, honours, or wealth, God sees them, and will certainly punish them in their pride. 6. By God's exercise of his mercy and faithfulness in giving his Son, and fulfilling his promises, men's iniquity is expiated, pardoned, and subdued; and even by their exercise of mercy, equity, and fidelity, the punishment of sin in outward calamities is often prevented. And by the fear of God implanted in the heart, and a continued holy regard to his law, men hate, watch against, and avoid sin; and so escape the fearful consequences of it. 7. When a man makes it his habitual and earnest endeavour to receive Christ, and walk in him soberly, righteously, and godly, the Lord, or his God reconciled in Christ, inclines even those who were his foes to become his friends. 8. A small estate honestly gotten and cheerfully enjoyed, is preferable to vast incomes heaped up by oppression and kept without hospitality. 9. A man's mind fixes its end, contrives the means, and perhaps reckons upon the success: but the Lord determines the event, and orders every motion and step taken towards it. 10. The edicts, commands, and decisions of kings ought always to be directed by the unerring law of God; and their decisions ought to be so just and exact, that no man may be wronged thereby. 11. The Lord requires that, even in our private dealings, everything, even the smallest, should be managed with the most scrupulous integrity and equity. 12. Kings, being in the most exalted station, ought to be distinguished patterns of piety and virtue, and to countenance it in others, as the only security of their throne. 13. Kings ought highly to value and love sincere and faithful advisers, who truly inform them of what tends to their own and their kingdom's welfare. 14. The wrath of a king is almost as terrifying as a message of death, and, especially in despotic governments, often issues in death to its object: but virtuous and prudent courtiers will pacify it, and make a reconciliation. 15. The favours and gracious smiles of a prince are extremely reviving and comfortable, and fruitful of expected happiness, especially to such as he had been formerly incensed against. 16. But real religion, and a solid understanding to discern between good and evil, are preferable to all the wealth that kings can bestow or industry procure. 17. It is the constant aim and endeavour of upright men to decline everything that is evil, and to follow that which is good: and by heedful care of their thoughts, words, and actions, their souls and bodies are, through the grace and providence of God, preserved from destruction. 18. Pride and haughtiness are the ordinary forerunners of debasement and misery, and the means of bringing it on men. 19. It is better, in imitation of Christ and his dear saints, to submit to the meanest condition, and patiently to bear injuries, than to partake of victories, spoil, and wealth along with the proud. 20. They who understand business thoroughly, and manage it prudently and discreetly, bid fair to have good success; but it is only by trusting in God that true and everlasting happiness can be obtained. 21. They whose heart is well furnished with experimental knowledge of God's Word, take the proper method to obtain a high reputation for wisdom and prudence; and if they can with eloquence and clearness communicate their instructions, it will greatly tend to the edification of others. 22. Spiritual knowledge and grace are the beginning and earnest of eternal life, are comfortable to him who enjoys them, and useful to others: but the learning of fools is frivolous and vain; and even their instructions do but render men foolish. 23, 24. The enlightened mind of a wise man instructs him to speak judiciously and pertinently, gives weight of evidence to what he says, and renders it pleasant to the hearer, as a honeycomb is to the mouth, and nourishing and strengthening as marrow is to the bones. 25. Many are highly pleased with their own ways, even when they are such as tend to their ruin, spiritual, temporal, and eternal. 26. He that, prompted by his wants, labours in worldly employments, procures his own preservation in life: whereas he who labours in plaguing others, will find even every evil word tend to his own hurt. 27. Wicked men, with great pains, contrive and labour to do mischief, as if treasures could be gained by it: and their lying, slanderous, and insolent speeches are very injurious, painful, and destructive. 28. Persons of a perverse, passionate, and contentious spirit raise dissensions among those who are inclined to live at peace; and they who secretly defame, backbite, detract, and whisper about false stories, make breaches between the kindest neighbours and dearest relations. 29, 30. Such as are eager to do mischief, or live by violence and rapine, not content to do wrong themselves, entice others to become their companions, and then lead them into the most pernicious courses. With profound study they contrive the ruin of others; and

6 By[i] mercy and truth iniquity is purged;[5] and by the fear of the LORD *men* depart from evil.

7 When[j] a man's ways please the LORD, he maketh even his enemies to be at peace with him.

8 Better[k] *is* a little with righteousness, than great revenues without right.

9 A[l] man's heart deviseth his way: but the LORD directeth his steps.

10 A[m] divine sentence[6] *is* in the lips of the king; his mouth transgresseth not in judgment.

11 A[o] just weight and balance *are* the LORD's: all the weights[7] of the bag *are* his work.

12 *It*[p] *is* an abomination to kings to commit wickedness: for the throne is established by righteousness.

13 Righteous[q] lips *are* the delight of kings;[8] and they love him that speaketh right.

14 The[r] wrath of a king *is as* messengers of [9]death: [a]but a wise man will pacify it.

15 In[t] the light of the king's countenance *is* life; and his favour *is* as a cloud of the latter rain.

16 How[u] much better *is it* to get wisdom than gold? and to get understanding rather to be chosen than silver?

17 The[v] highway of the upright *is* to depart from evil: [z]he that keepeth his way preserveth his soul.

18 Pride[y] *goeth* before destruction; and an haughty spirit before a fall.

19 Better[x] *it is to be* of an humble spirit with the lowly, than to divide the spoil with the proud.

20 He that handleth a matter[1] wisely shall find good; and whoso [a]trusteth in the LORD, happy *is* he.

A.M. cir. 3029.
B.C. cir. 975.

i Ps.85.10. Mi. 7.18-20.6.8.ch.3.3;20.28; 14. 16,27. Ne.5.15.Ro.6.1, 2,14.

5 'Iniquity is covered.'—*Boothroyd.*

j Ro.8.31. Col. 1. 10. Ps. 119.165. Job 5.1-23. Je.15.11, 19;39.16-18. 2 Ch.17.5,10.Re.3.9.

k Ps.37.16. ch.15.16. He.2.9,13.1 Ti.6.6,9.

l See ver.1. Ps.37.23. ch.19.21; 20. 24. Je. 10. 23,24.

m Ge. 44. 15. ver. 12, 13. De.17.20.

6 Heb. *divination.*

o Le.19.35,36. De.25. 13-15. ch.11.1;20.10,23.

7 Heb. *all the stones.*

p ver. 10, 13. De. 17. 19,20. ch.20.28;25.5;29. 14. Je.22.3. Ps.45.7. Is. 9.7.

q ch.14.35;22.11. Ps. 101.5-7.2 Sa.23.3.

8 That is, of kings whose thrones are established in righteousness, ver. 12.—*C.*

r ch.19.12; 20. 2. Es. vii.ix.

9 See note * below.

s Ac. 12. 20.1 Sa.25. 21-35.2 Sa.20.16-22.

t ch.19.12. Job 29.23. Ps.72.6. Ec.10.1.

u ch.8.11, 19;3.14,15; 4.7. Job 28.13-19.

v Is.35.8. Ac.24.16.2 Co.1.12. Tit. 2. 11-14. Lu.1.75.

x ch.10.9;4.23. Jude 20,21.

y Es.6.6,&c.; ch.11. 2;18.12;29.23. Da.4.30, 31. Job 40.11,12. Es.iii. vii.

* 'This doubtless refers to the manner in which execution was, and still is, in the East, performed upon persons who were high enough to incur the immediate wrath of the king. This may be explained by an account of the usage in Persia. When the king has determined on the death of a governor of a province, an order for his execution is made out, sealed with the royal signet, and consigned to an officer appointed for the purpose. This man rides post. Then, presenting himself to the principal person of the place, he shows the royal mandate, and forces the individual to accompany him, and lend his assistance. He enters the house of the condemned, walks straight up to his victim, places the warrant in the hands of his witness; then, drawing his scimitar, he strikes off his head' (*Kitto*).—*P.*

b ch.4.7-9;3.16. Ec. 12.10.2 Ti.3.15-17.

c ch.13.14;14.27; 10. 11. Jn.17.3;4.14.

d ch.15.2, 14, 28. Je. 10.8.

e Ps. 45. 1; 37. 30, 31. Mat. 12. 34, 35. ch. 15. 28.

2 Heb. *maketh wise.*

g ch.15.23,26. Ca. 4. 11. Ps.19.103; 51.8; 19. 10. Je.15.16.

h ch.14.12; 12.15,26; 30.11-14. Eze.18.4. Ro. 2.8,9. Is. 3.11.

3 See note on ch.14. 12.—*C.*

4 Heb. *The soul of him that laboureth.*

i ch.9.12. Ec.6.7.

5 Heb. *boweth unto him.*

j Ps.7.15;52.2-4;120. 3,4. Ja.3.6.

6 Heb. *a man of Belial,* Ju.xix.

k ch. 6.14,19; 15. 18; 26.21;29.22;28.8;17.9.

7 Heb. *sendeth forth.*

l ch.1.10-14;2.12-15. Ac.20.29. 2 Pe.2.1,2;3. 17.

m Jn.3.20. Mi.2.1. ch. 6.12-14. Ps.37.12.

o ch.20.29. Le.19.32.

p Ac. 24. 16; 13. 36. Lu.1.6.2 Co.1.12.

q ch. 14. 29; 15. 2, 18; 19.11.

r ch.4.23;25.28.2 Ki. 19.7.

s Jonahr.7. Jos.7.14; 18. 10. 1 Sa. 14. 41, 42. Ne.11.1. Nu.26.55. Ac. 1.26.

8 'The lot-pebble is cast about in the bosom of the lot-vase, but the whole disposal is from God.'—*Note.* The lot is undoubtedly a divine institution; and hence the curses that constantly follow gaming, as a vain and practically blasphemous appeal to the judgment of God.—*C.*

CHAP. XVII.

a ch. 15. 16,17; 16. 8. Ec.4.6. 1 Ti. 6. 6,8. Ps. 37.16.

1 *Dry morsel.*—'A mouldy crust.'—*C.*

2 Or, *good cheer.*

3 *Sacrifices.* Peace-offerings, of which the greater part was allotted to the offerer as a feast for himself and his friends, Le.7. 15.—*C.*

b ch. 10. 5; 19. 26; 29. 15; 28. 7, 24.

21 The[b] wise in heart shall be called prudent; and the sweetness of the lips increaseth learning.

22 Understanding[c] *is* a well-spring of life unto him that hath it: [d]but the instruction of fools *is* folly.

23 The[e] heart of the wise teacheth[2] his mouth, and addeth learning to his lips.

24 Pleasant[g] words *are as* an honey-comb, sweet to the soul, and health to the bones.

25 There[h] is a way that seemeth right unto a man; but the end thereof *are* the ways of [3]death.

26 He that [4]laboureth, [4]laboureth for himself; for his mouth craveth it of him.[5]

27 An[j] ungodly man[6] diggeth up evil; and in his lips *there is* as a burning fire.

28 A[k] froward man soweth[7] strife; and a whisperer separateth chief friends.

29 A[l] violent man enticeth his neighbour, and leadeth him into the way *that is* not good.

30 He[m] shutteth his eyes to devise froward things; moving his lips he bringeth evil to pass.

31 The[o] hoary head *is* a crown of glory, *if* it be found [p]in the way of righteousness.

32 *He*[q] *that is* slow to anger *is* better than the mighty; [r]and he that ruleth his spirit than he that taketh a city.

33 The[s] lot is cast into the lap; but the whole disposing thereof *is* of the LORD.[8]

CHAPTER XVII.

BETTER *is* [a]a dry morsel,[1] and quietness therewith, than an house full of [2]sacrifices[3] *with* strife.

2 A wise servant shall have rule over [b]a son that causeth shame, and shall have part of the inheritance among the brethren.

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then, by their advice, or giving of the sign, it is furiously effected.—33. Events appear fortuitous, as the lot which is cast into the lap of a garment or into a hollow vessel: but all things are regulated by exact law; and nothing, at least in nature, happens but according to his eternal mind, and by the particular regulation of his will.

Ver. 1. Various changes of translation have been proposed in this verse, all tending to say that 'man hath the disposing of the heart,' but the answer, or power to answer with the tongue, is from the Lord. But by whatever authorities supported, these changes are certainly to be rejected; for surely the thoughts of the heart are as much in the hand of God as are the answers of the tongue. The translation of Holden is to be preferred: 'The deliberations of the heart in man, and the utterance of the tongue, are from Jehovah.' *C.*

Ver. 4. *The wicked for the day of evil.* It does not mean that God created the wicked on purpose to condemn them eternally. God created man upright, and for his own glory; man, by the abuse of his free will, 'fell from the estate wherein he was created,' and the finally impenitent God hath appointed to a righteous sentence in the day of final judgment.' 'The evil day for the evil-doer.' *C.*

Ver. 10. Such a sentence is ever in the lips of Christ the King in Zion; and such should ever be in the lips of earthly kings, who, whether they know it and regard it or not, reign by him and for him, and stand accountable as stewards at his awful throne of judgment. *C.*

Ver. 12. *The throne is established by righteousness.* A throne may be upheld by unjust war, usurpation, and oppression; but can be established in peace, prosperity, and permanence by righteousness alone. *C.*

Ver. 15. *A cloud of the latter rain.* 'The cloud of the latter rain,' promising gentle showers, was considered as the promise of an abundant harvest. *C.*

Ver. 21. Graceful, unaffected, and earnest speech will induce others to listen and learn.—*Note,* While speech, both in thought and manner, is truly a gift, it is the duty of every Christian to improve what he possesses, so as to commend the truth first to the ear, and then to the heart of men. A careless utterance, with an ungainly and offensive action, are, in public instructors, not always mere defects, but may be sins—sins of neglect, which cannot be palliated, and should not be defended. *C.*

Ver. 26. Work was prescribed to man even in innocence, Ge. 2. 15, but toil was inflicted as a curse on sin. Yet such is the mercy of God that want, by its imperative demands upon industry, and even toil, counteracts a thousand greater evils that abundance and luxury would infallibly entail. *C.*

Ver. 31. *Way of righteousness.* That is, following and longing after Jesus, the Lord our only righteousness. *C.*

CHAPTER XVII. Ver. 1. The meanest fare, enjoyed in peace with God and our neighbour, and with quietness in our own mind, is better than the most sumptuous cheer, attended with brawling, contention, and strife. 2. A pious and prudent servant ought to be preferred to a foolish and wicked child, and deserves a share of the inheritance in a family. 3. As gold and silver are tried and purified in the fire, so the Lord, who searches the hearts of all men, proves and refines his own people from their sinful dross in the furnace of affliction.—6. It is an honour to parents to have a numerous posterity walking in holiness and virtue; and it is the honour of children to have pious and prudent ancestors.—8. Presents and bribes appear so lovely and tempting, that few can refuse them, or decline gratifying the desire of the giver. 9. Overlooking of injuries, and mutual forbearance, is the best way to preserve and increase friendship and love: but repeating old faults breaks the strictest bonds of friendship, and makes an irreconcilable separation.—11. Some men are so wilful and refractory, that, shaking off all reverence to God and their superiors, they are wholly and irreclaimably bent on mischief; they must therefore be cut off by some exemplary punishment. 12. It is less dangerous to meet a bear in the heat of his rage, than a furious fool in the pursuit of his unruly passions and desires.—14. When men begin a quarrel, it gradually becomes more and more violent and extensive, till it is with difficulty made up: it is best therefore to check and stifle all contentions in the beginning. 16. In his mysterious providence, God gives to many foolish persons natural abilities, worldly substance, and opportunities of learning wisdom; and yet gives them no sense or inclination to desire it. 17. A true friend continues constant in his affection and usefulness, however our circumstances alter: and a brother, who deserves the name, is especially kind and helpful in a time of adversity. 18. He is extremely foolish whose kindness hurries him into rash suretiship for the debts of others, especially when they are suspected of knavery. 19. He certainly loves wickedness who accustoms himself to brawling and contention: and he who carries himself proudly, scornfully, and contemptuously towards others, lives above his estate, and builds sumptuous houses, hurries himself into ruin; and breakers of the public peace open wide the flood-gates to all impiety. 20. A man of wicked devices, which he resolves to accomplish by any means, shall find himself deceived in his expectations of good: and a false, deceitful, and self-inconsistent tongue will prove the ruin of its owner. 22. Nothing more conduces to health than solid quietness of conscience, and a moderate cheerfulness of spirit: but excessive sadness and grief waste the body, and dry it up to a mere skeleton. 23. Many wicked persons, who would refuse an open bribe, will willingly enough take bribes or presents secretly, in order to influence them to give counsel or judgment contrary to law and equity. 24. A pious and prudent man has his mind fixed upon the unerring oracles of God, and has his sense and wisdom at hand to guide and govern him; but a foolish one has his thoughts always wandering and roving about impertinences, and is never in

3 The[e] fining-pot *is* for silver, and the furnace for gold: but the LORD trieth the hearts.

4 A[d] wicked doer giveth heed to false lips; *and* a liar giveth ear to a naughty tongue.[4]

5 Whoso[e] mocketh the poor reproacheth his Maker;[5] *and* he that is glad at calamities shall not be unpunished.[6]

6 Children's[g] children *are* the crown of old men; and the glory of children *are* their fathers.[7]

7 Excellent[h] speech[8] becometh not a fool; much less do lying lips[9] a prince.

8 A[i] gift *is as* a precious stone[1] in the eyes of him that hath it; whithersoever it turneth, it prospereth.[2]

9 He[j] that covereth a transgression seeketh[3] love: [k]but he that repeateth a matter separateth *very* friends.

10 A[l] reproof entereth more into a wise man than an hundred stripes into a fool.[4]

11 An[m] evil *man* seeketh only rebellion; therefore a cruel messenger shall be sent against him.

12 Let[o] a bear robbed of her whelps meet a man, rather than a fool in his folly.

13 Whoso [p]rewardeth evil for good, evil shall not depart from his house.

14 The beginning of strife *is as* when one letteth out water; [q]therefore leave off contention, before it be meddled with.

15 He[r] that justifieth the wicked, and he that condemneth the just, even they both *are* abomination to the LORD.

16 Wherefore[s] *is there* a price in the hand of a fool to get wisdom, seeing *he hath* no heart *to it?*

17 A[t] friend loveth at all times; and a brother is born for adversity.

A.M. cir. 3029.
B.C. cir. 975.

c ch.27.21. Ps. 26. 2; 17. 3; 139. 23, 24. Je. 17. 10. Mal. 3. 3. 1 Pe. 1. 7. Is. 48. 10.

d 1 Sa. 22. 7–11. 1 Ki. 22. 6–27. ch. 29. 12.

4 The envious, the deceitful, and all those who are inclined to injure others, are ever eager to hear an evil tale. It is their disposition, their nature. The second clause might be rendered, 'the deceitful man giveth ear to an evil tongue.' —*P.*

e ch. 14. 31. Ja. 2. 15, 16. 1 Jn. 3. 17. Ob. 11–16. Je. 17. 26. Job 31. 29. Re. 11. 10, 13.

5 See note on ch. 14. 31.—*C.*

6 Heb. *held innocent.*

g Ps. 127. 3, 5; 128. 3, 6. Job 42. 16. Ge. 50. 23.

7 That is, when found in the way of righteousness, as in ch. 16. 31.—*C.*

h ch. 26. 7; 16. 10–13; 29. 12.

8 Heb. *a lip of excellency.*

9 Heb. *a lip of lying.*

i ch. 28. 16; 19. 6; 21. 14. Ge. xxxiii. 1 Sa. xxv. 2 Sa. 16. 1–4.

1 Heb. *a stone of grace.*

2 'A present doth wonderfully please and affect him that loveth to receive. It affecteth anything for obtaining whereof it was given; for whether it be given to get an office or to find pardon for an offence, or to appease wrath, or to win favour, it hath a prosperous success' (*Muffet*).—*P.*

j ch. 10. 12; 19. 11. 1 Pe. 4. 8.

3 Or, *procureth.*

k See ch. 16. 28; 6. 19.

l Ps. 141. 5. ch. 9. 8, 9; 12. 1; 15. 5, 31, 32.

4 Or, *A reproof aweth more a wise man than to strike a fool a hundred times.*

m 2 Sa. xviii. xx. Nu. xvi.

o Ho. 13. 8. ch. 28. 15. 2 Ki. 2. 24.

p Ps. 55. 12–15; 35. 12; 109. 4–29. Ro. 12. 17. 1 Th. 5. 15. 1 Pe. 3. 9.

q He. 12. 14. Ro. 12. 18. ch. 13. 10; 16. 32; 20. 3; 25. 8, 9. 1 Th. 4. 11.

r Ex. 23. 7. ch. 24. 24. Is. 5. 23, 24. Eze. 13. 10, 16. 1 Ki. 21. 13.

s Is. 55. 1–7. Ps. 81. 8–11. Ho. 11. 2, 7. Ac. 13. 46, 47. 2 Co. 6. 1. He. 2. 3.

t ch. 18. 24. 1 Sa. xviii. –xx. xxiii. 2 Sa. i. ix. Ru. 1. 16. Is. 4. 14.

A.M. cir. 3029.
B.C. cir. 975.

u ch. 6. 1–5; 11. 15; 20. 16; 22. 26, 27.

5 Heb. *heart.*

6 'Before the face of his friend;' that is, without consulting him as a dispassionate observer, and weighing his opinion and advice.—*C.*

v Ps. 36. 1–4. ch. 10. 12; 13. 10. Ja. 4. 1; 3. 6, 16.

x ch. 11. 2; 16. 18; 18. 12. 1 Sa. 25. 36–38. Da. 4. 30, 31.

7 He that, for the sake of vain show, enlarges his establishment beyond his station and means.—*C.*

y Ps. 18. 26. ch. 3. 33; 8. 13; 16. 28; 22. 5; 18. 6, 7. Ja. 3. 6.

8 Heb. *The froward of heart.*

z ch. 10. 1; 15. 20; 19. 13; ver. 25. Ge. 26. 35; 42. 38.

a ch. 15. 13, 15; 12. 25. Ec. 9. 7–9. Ps. 22. 15. 2 Co. 6. 7.

9 Or, *to a medicine.*

b ch. 18. 14.

c ch. 21. 14; 18. 16. 1 Sa. 8. 3. Ex. 23. 2, 8. 2 Ki. 5. 27.

1 In the East money and valuables are always carried in the bosom in a pocket inside the robe, which is supported by the girdle. The meaning is that the man who has a bad cause endeavours stealthily to give a bribe in order to pervert judgment.—*P.*

d ch. 14. 6; 15. 14. Ec. 2. 14; 8. 1.

e ch. 23. 5. Ps. 119. 37.

g ch. 10. 1; 15. 20; 19. 13; ver. 25. 2 Sa. xiii.–xviii.

h 1 Ki. i. ch. 28. 5; 10. 19; ver. 11, 15. Ja. 1. 19; 3. 2.

i Am. 5. 13. Ps. 39. 1, 9.

2 Or, *a cool spirit.*

j Job 13. 5, with Ec. 5. 3; 10. 3. ch. 15. 2; 14. 6–8; 28. 6, 7.

CHAP. XVIII.

a Jude 19, or Nu. 6. 2.

1 Or, *He that separateth himself seeketh according to* his *desire*, and *intermeddleth in every business.*

b ch. 15. 5; 17. 16; 26. 12. 1 Co. 8. 1. Mat. 8. 34.

2 The fool seeks not knowledge from any love of it, but from the vain desire to display his own accomplishments.—*C.*

c Ps. x. xxxv. lix. lxiv. cxl. cxxiii. cxx. lii.; 36. 1–4.

d ch. 20. 5; 10. 11; 16. 22; 13. 14. Mat. 12. 34–37.

18 A[u] man void of understanding[5] striketh hands, *and* becometh surety in the presence of his friend.[6]

19 He[v] loveth transgression that loveth strife; [x]*and* he that exalteth his gate[7] seeketh destruction.

20 He[y] that hath a froward heart[8] findeth no good; and he that hath a perverse tongue falleth into mischief.

21 He[z] that begetteth a fool *doeth it* to his sorrow; and the father of a fool hath no joy.

22 A[a] merry heart doeth good *like* a medicine:[9] but [b]a broken spirit drieth the bones.

23 A[c] wicked *man* taketh a gift out of the bosom to pervert the ways of judgment.[1]

24 Wisdom[d] *is* before him that hath understanding: [e]but the eyes of a fool *are* in the ends of the earth.

25 A[g] foolish son *is* a grief to his father, and bitterness to her that bare him.

26 Also[h] to punish the just *is* not good, *nor* to strike princes for equity.

27 He[i] that hath knowledge spareth his words; *and* a man of understanding is of an excellent spirit.[2]

28 Even[j] a fool, when he holdeth his peace, is counted wise; *and* he that shutteth his lips *is esteemed* a man of understanding.

CHAPTER XVIII.

THROUGH desire[a] a man having separated himself, seeketh *and* intermeddleth with all wisdom.[1]

2 A[b] fool hath no delight in understanding, but that his heart may discover itself.[2]

3 When[c] the wicked cometh, *then* cometh also contempt, and with ignominy reproach.

4 The[d] words of a man's mouth *are as* deep

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any fixed or serious temper.—27. The more wise and knowing a man is, he is the less apt to be talkative, speaking only what is fit and necessary; and his wisdom renders his mind and temper humble, calm, temperate, and dispassionate. 28. So great a virtue it is to be duly silent, that if even a foolish person restrain his lips from rash and impertinent talk, he is for the time reckoned a wise and intelligent person.

Ver. 5. It is the poor man who is referred to in both clauses of this verse; consequently the second clause might be translated as follows:—'He that rejoiceth at his adversity (the adversity of the poor man) shall not be held innocent.' How often does one hear the remark made in regard to those who have fallen from affluence to poverty, 'He deserves it.' 'It is a righteous judgment upon his pride, or his folly,' &c.! It is such observations, and the spirit which prompts them, that are here condemned. *P.*

Ver. 7. *Excellent speech becometh not a fool. Bandits* often talk highly of generosity—the *desert-robber* deifies hospitality—*gamesters* speak of debts of honour—the *murderous Pharisees* talked scrupulously of the Sabbath—the *monks* of the dark ages, while they absorbed half the riches of Europe, extolled the virtue of poverty—and *popes*, while domineering alike over the vassal and his lord, called themselves, in high-sounding and affected humility, 'the servants of the servants of God.' Such is 'excellent speech' in the lips of 'fools,' who demonstrate their folly by affecting to admire some solitary, convenient, and advantageous virtue, while professedly immersed in open and destructive vice. *C.*

Ver. 14. *Leave off contention* in argument about vain, useless, and irrelevant matters, before *strife* be 'meddled with' at all; for the beginning of strife—not matter of argument, but of temper—is the breaking down of a water mound, that you may easily demolish, but may be totally unable to repair. *C.*

Ver. 17. The love of brother to brother is a natural feeling. Except where sin or passion interfere to overcome or deaden natural affection, a man will never see a near relative wronged without making an attempt to defend him. It is not only the duty of a kinsman to help his kinsman in trouble, but it is the inherent and natural tendency of his mind. Instinct, in fact, prompts to it. *P.*

Ver. 25. The sorrows inflicted upon fathers and mothers by foolish children are not here (and in ver. 21) enumerated as evils in which the parents have no share; but as warnings against the neglect of a wise and godly education, and against the intusion of vanity, self-conceit, and pride into the hearts of children, whereby so many parents literally convert them into fools. *C.*

Ver. 27. *A man of understanding is of an excellent spirit.* And being of an 'excellent spirit,' he is contented to listen to what he hears; to feed upon his own thoughts, and not to intrude his opinions until love and duty absolutely require him to speak. *C.*

CHAPTER XVIII. Ver. 1. While self-conceited persons seek to distinguish themselves by their high pretences to wisdom, and inconstant ones seek but never find satisfaction, they who have a true desire of knowledge disengage themselves from all avocations, in order to study true wisdom. 2. A vain man studies knowledge or even religion, for no other end but to make a show with it. 3. Wherever wicked men come, they bring their contempt of God and reproaching of religion along with them, which will at last issue in contempt and misery to themselves. 4. A wise man's words, as deep waters, flow calmly, and contain the deep mysteries of God: and his heart, being full of wisdom, is ever sending forth streams of instructive, refreshing, quickening, and fructifying influences to all around him. 5. It is exceeding great wickedness to pervert justice, and, through favour or interest, to connive at and acquit the wicked, or to give the cause against a righteous man through prejudice or partiality. 6, 7. Fools, by meddling in other men's quarrels, or by speeches irritating others against them, procure mischief, and even lasting and eternal ruin to themselves. 8. The slanders and reproaches of tale-bearers, however covered over with pretences of sorrow, and however greedily they be received by the hearers, like mortal and incurable wounds, pierce to and rankle the very heart. 9. Idleness and prodigality are nearly allied, and both issue in the ruin of the persons guilty of them. Negligence about our soul is as fatal as open and avowed ungodliness. 10. Jesus Christ, and all the perfections, promises, and providences of God in him, are an impregnable defence and satisfaction to all such as by faith flee to him: no enemy then can ever hurt them. 11. It is only in his own conceit that the rich man's wealth appears a mean of remarkable safety either here or hereafter. 12. Pride in prosperity, forgetfulness of God, and despising of others, are certain means and forerunners of destruction: and humility, meekness, and patience, in a low condition, are the best preparation for honour and preferment. 13. He who, to show his quick parts, or through a forwardness of temper, answers to a matter before he hears it fully and understands it, shames himself, and manifests his folly. 14. A manly spirit, especially if encouraged and supported by the influences of the Holy Ghost, will bear up under manifold and sore calamities of an external kind: but if the spirit be wounded with melancholy dejection, and a sense of God's wrath, how insupportable is the case, till Jesus, by his blood and grace, give relief! 15. Prudent persons, by diligent meditation, and by attentive listening to instruction, labour to increase more and more in wisdom. 16. There are few men so mean, base, or wicked, but large gifts and presents will procure their release from prison, nay, bring them into favour with great men, or even to the honour of waiting upon princes. 17. They who are first in representing their case, ordinarily make it to appear right, and even prepossess the judge in their favour; but by diligent search into their allegations, their neighbours often find innumerable mistakes in their representations. 18. In

HANGMAN'S TREE, DAMASCUS. [PROVERBS, xviii.]—David conquered and garrisoned the city of Damascus during his reign, and during a part of the reign of Solomon Damascus was under the dominion of Israel. The Proverbs of Solomon were written about 1000 years before Christ. We place this picture to illustrate the 18th chapter of Proverbs, because in some degree Damascus is connected with the beginning of the reign of Solomon in Israel. Damascus occupies the most beautiful site in Western Asia. It lies at the eastern pass of Anti-Libanus in a vast plain of great fertility, watered by the Abana and Pharpar rivers. In the center of this plain, which without the rivers would be an arid desert, in the midst of dense masses of foliage there glisten the minarets from the mosques of Damascus. Seen at a distance it looks like a dream, a vision starting up from the desert.

waters, *and* the well-spring of wisdom *as* a flowing brook.

5 *It*[t] *is* not good to accept the person of the wicked, to overthrow the righteous in judgment.

6 A[g] fool's lips enter into contention, and his mouth calleth for strokes.

7 A[h] fool's mouth *is* his destruction, and his lips *are* the snare of his soul.

8 The[i] words of a tale-bearer[3] *are* as wounds,[4] and they go down into the innermost parts[5] of the belly.

9 He[j] also that is slothful in his work is brother to him that is a great waster.

10 The[k] name[6] of the LORD *is* a strong tower: the righteous runneth into it, and is safe.[7]

11 The[l] rich man's wealth *is* his strong city, and as an high wall in his own conceit.[8]

12 Before[m] destruction the heart of man is haughty; and before honour *is* humility.

13 He[o] that answereth a matter[9] before he heareth *it*,[1] it *is* folly and shame unto him.

14 The[p] spirit of a man will sustain his infirmity:[2] but[q] a wounded spirit who can bear?

15 The[r] heart of the prudent getteth knowledge; and the ear of the wise seeketh knowledge.

16 A[s] man's gift maketh room for him, and bringeth him before great men.

17 *He*[t] *that is* first in his own cause *seemeth* just: but his neighbour cometh and searcheth him.

18 The[u] lot causeth contentions to cease, and parteth between the mighty.

19 A[v] brother offended *is harder to be won* than a strong city; and *their* contentions *are* like the bars of a castle.[3]

20 A[x] man's belly shall be satisfied with the fruit of his mouth; *and* with the increase of his lips shall he be filled.

21 Death[y] and life *are* in the power of the tongue; and they that love it shall [z]eat the fruit thereof.

22 *Whoso*[a] findeth a wife findeth a good *thing*, and obtaineth favour of the LORD.[4]

A.M. cir. 3029.
B.C. cir. 975.

[c] Le.19.15. De.1.17; 16.19. ch. 17.15; 24.23. Ro.2.11. Is.59.14.

[g] ch.15.1,2; 20.3; 12.16; 14.16. Ec. 10.3, 13, 14.

[h] ch.10.14; 12.13; 13.3. Ec.10.3, 12, 13. Ja.3.6, 8.

[i] ch.12.18; 16.28; 26.22. Le.19.16.

[3] Or, *whisperer*.

[4] Or, *like as when men are wounded*.

[5] Heb. *chambers*.

[j] ch.10.4; 13.4; 23.21; 28.24. Ro.12.11.

[k] Ps.18.2; 27.1; 61.3; 91.2; 144.2. Na. 1.7. Is. 26.4. Sa.17.45.

[6] See note on Ex. 34.5. Ps.8.1.—*C*.

[7] Heb. *is set aloft*.

[l] ch. 10. 15. Ps. 49.6; 52.7. Ec.7.12.

[8] That is—the self-conceited rich man trusts in his deceitful riches, which can neither bestow contentment nor insure their own permanence.—*C*.

[m] ch.11.2; 15. 33; 16. 18; 29. 23. Lu.14. 11; 18. 14. Is.2.11-17.

[o] Es.3.10. 2 Sa. 16.4. Jn.7.51.

[9] Heb. *returneth a word*.

[1] Before he heareth fully the statements and reasons of the matter.—*C*.

[p] Job 1.21; 6.4. ch.17. 22. Ps. xiii. lxxiii. lxxvii. lxxxviii.

[2] The spirit, while strong in the Lord, will sustain a sufferer under bodily infirmity; but if the spirit be wounded in conscience, and unhealed by the grace of Jesus, that is wretchedness intolerable.—*C*.

[q] Ps.147.3.

[r] Is.54.13. Ep.1. 17–19. ch. 10.14; 13.16; 15. 14. Ps. 85.8; 119.97–100. Lu.10.39.

[s] ch.17.8; 21.14; 19.6. 1 Sa. 25. 27. Ge. 33. 10; 43.11.

[t] Ac.24.1–21.2 Sa.16. 3, with 19.26.

[u] Jos.14. 2. 1 Sa. 10. 21; 14.42. 2 Sa. 11. 1.

[v] Ge.27.41. 1 Ki. 12. 16. Ac.15.39.

[3] Which are strong and not easily broken.—*Noyes*. How great the blessedness of a meek, quiet, peaceful, and forgiving spirit among brethren.—'See how these Christians love one another,' was a heathen's remark of Christianity. The Lord restore it as the mark of his people, and cause contentions to cease and harmony and unity to prevail among all who name the name of Jesus.—*C*.

[x] ch.12.6, 14; 13.2; 14. 3; 10. 31; 15.2, 14.

[y] ver.4,6,7. Mat. 12. 36, 37. Ja.3.9.

[z] Is.57.19.

[a] ch.19.14; 31.10; 3.4; 8.35.

[4] Whoso findeth a wife, being guided not of self-will, but of the Lord, findeth good, and obtaineth favour of the Lord, who guided him. See ch.19.14.—*C*.

[b] Ge.33.3. 2 Ki. 4. 1. Ru.2.7.

[c] Ja.2.3. Ex.5.2. 1 Sa. 10.11.

[d] ch.27.9, 10, 17; 17.17. 2 Sa.1.26.

CHAP. XIX.

[a] ch.28.6; 12.26; 19.22. Mat.16.26; 5.3. Ja.2.4–6.

1 'Perverse with his lips, though he be rich' (*Holden*).—*C*.

[b] Ro.10.2. Is.27.11. 2 Th.1.8.

[c] ch.1.16; 21.5; 24.21; 28.13.

2 The first clause condemns ignorance, the second passion. Ignorance is generally the result of indolence; passion is the result of rashness and ignorance combined. True wisdom will always have the tendency to keep passion in check.—*P*.

[d] Ac.14.15. Ro.16.9. Ps.37.1; 73. 2–22. Je. 12. 1. Eze. 18. 25. Jude 16.

[e] ch. 14. 20; ver. 6. 2 Ti.1.15; 4.16.

[f] Ex. 21. 1. ch. 6. 19; 21.28. De. 19.16. Da.6. 24.

[3] Heb. *held innocent*.

[4] However long he may run, he will not in the end escape detection and disgrace.—*C*.

[h] ver.12; ch.29.26; 16. 15; 23 1; 21.28; 18.16; 17. 8.

[5] Heb. *a man of gifts*.

[i] ch.14.20. Ps. 55.12, 13; 38. 11; 88.8, 18. Job 19.13–19.

[6] The meaning appears to be—if the kinsmen of the poor act so, how much more will those who are only bound by the ties of common friendship separate themselves from the man who speaks fairly, but does not act accordingly.—*P*.

[7] Heb. *an heart*.

[j] ch.3.13; 8.35, 36; 4.1–9; 2.1–7, 10–12. De.4.6.

[k] See ver.5. Ze.5.

[l] ch.1.32; 30.22; 28.3. Ec.10.6, 7.

[8] One *servilely* devoted to the will of a master is only fit for being the tool of arbitrary power, but is totally unfit for the exercise of rational and dignified government.—*C*.

[m] ch. 14. 29; 16. 32. Col.3.12. Ja.1.19.

[9] Or, *prudence*.

[o] Mat.5.44; 6. 14, 15; 18.21, 22. Ro. 12.19–21. Ep.4.32.

[p] Es.7. 8. ch. 16. 14. 15; 20.2; 28.15. Ps.72.4, 6.

[1] The wrath of the Lord the King (Ps.2. 12), and the wrath of an earthly king when directed against the guilty.—*C*.

[q] Ho.14.5.

23 The[b] poor useth entreaties: but the rich answereth [c]roughly.

24 A[d] man *that hath* friends must show himself friendly: and there is a friend *that* sticketh closer than a brother.

CHAPTER XIX.

BETTER *is*[a] the poor that walketh in his integrity, than *he that is* perverse in his lips, and is a fool.[1]

2 Also, [b]*that* the soul *be* without knowledge, *it is* not good; and he that [c]hasteth with *his* feet sinneth.[2]

3 The[d] foolishness of man perverteth his way: and his heart fretteth against the LORD.

4 Wealth[e] maketh many friends: but the poor is separated from his neighbour.

5 A[g] false witness shall not be [3]unpunished; and *he that* speaketh lies shall not escape.[4]

6 Many[h] will entreat the favour of the prince: and every man *is* a friend to him that giveth gifts.[5]

7 All[i] the brethren of the poor do hate him: how much more do his friends go far from him? he pursueth *them with* words, *yet* they *are* wanting *to him*.[6]

8 He that getteth [7]wisdom [j]loveth his own soul: he that keepeth understanding shall find good.

9 A[k] false witness shall not be unpunished; and *he that* speaketh lies shall perish.

10 Delight[l] is not seemly for a fool; much less for a servant[8] to have rule over princes.

11 The[m] discretion[9] of a man deferreth his anger; [o]and *it is* his glory to pass over a transgression.

12 The[p] king's wrath *is* as the roaring of a lion;[1] but [q]his favour *is* as dew upon the grass.

13 A[r] foolish son *is* the calamity of his father: [s]and the contentions of a wife *are* a continual dropping.

14 House[t] and riches *are* the inheritance of fathers; and [u]a prudent wife *is* from the LORD.

[r] ch.10.1; 15.20; 17.21, 25. 2 Sa.xiii.–xix.
[s] ch.21.9, 19; 27.15.
[t] 2 Co.12.14. Ge.25.5,6.
[u] ch.18.22; 31.10.

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some cases, where the parties contending are very powerful to maintain their pretensions, and the reasons strong on both sides, the referring of the determination to God by the lot is the proper method to put each into quiet possession of that which falls to his share. 19. No contentions are so sharp and obstinate as those between near relations and long-continued friends. It is easier to take strong cities, or to bow or break the strongest iron bars, than to make a reconciliation. 20. Great care ought to be taken about our words; for, according as they are wholesome, good, and edifying, or are bad and unsavoury, shall be our temporal or eternal reward for them. 21. Much evil, or much good, necessarily issues from the right or wrong use of our tongues: and as men love and accustom themselves to good or bad discourse, shall be their reward or punishment; nay, ordinarily, they who love to talk much shall suffer by it. 22. To be provided with a pious, prudent, and active wife is a great blessing, and a singular instance of God's favour. 23. Not boldness, but modest entreaties and doleful supplications, become those who are poor and miserable: but rich men are too apt to be so elated with their outward circumstances, as to return haughty and harsh answers. 24. Such as have friends must study to behave towards them in a friendly manner, in doing them all good offices possible: and sometimes friends are found that will be more constant and faithful in helping us in the day of affliction than our nearest relations.

Ver. 1. Through desire of real knowledge, a man having separated himself from secular business, seeks, not some solitary department of study, but expatiates over all subjects, as did Solomon; for by the student of real knowledge, every subject is found to lead to the knowledge and the love of God, and in that all wisdom lies. *C*.

Ver. 3. When the wicked cometh into notice, office, or power, then cometh, it may be, the adulation of fools and flatterers—but the contempt of wise men, with an ignominious end to his vain pretensions, and the reproach of those he has injured, deceived, or betrayed. *C*.

Ver. 16. The invariable custom in Asiatic countries in approaching superiors is to present a gift. Here it is to be viewed as the emblem of that name and righteousness with which alone the sinner can find access to the throne of grace. *C*.

CHAPTER XIX. Ver. 1. A poor, honest, and upright man is much more happy and honourable, than a rich wicked man that makes no conscience either of speaking or acting in a wise or gracious manner. 2. When a man is ignorant, not knowing what to follow or what to avoid, he cannot become holy or happy. And he who in a rash and unadvised manner pursues his purpose, cannot fail to commit many sinful blunders. 3. When a man's ignorance and wickedness have made him miscarry, he often blames the providence of God, and frets and murmurs against him. 4. When men grow rich, they are sure to have many courting their favour, and professing themselves their hearty friends; but when they become poor and need friends, even those who were formerly kind turn their backs on them. 5. False witnesses and private calumniators shall at last, however slowly, meet with the due punishment of their wickedness. 6, 7. Multitudes will court the favour of the great and liberal who can enrich or advance them; but everybody is apt to desert and contemn the poor who need and beg their assistance. 8. He that receives Christ learns the true knowledge of God; and he who strictly practises the direction of his Word, shows a real regard to his own soul, and shall obtain the spiritual and eternal blessings which he needs.—10. Not plenty, prosperity, or pleasure, but rather stripes, are fit for fools: and much less is it proper for slaves to be able wantonly to domineer over princes and men of great wealth or honour. 11. It is an evidence of great wisdom to be slow to anger: and it is a great honour kindly to pass over injuries, and return good for evil. 12. The frowns and wrath of a king are very terrible to his subjects, and make them apprehensive

15 Slothfulness[v] casteth into a deep sleep; and an idle soul shall suffer hunger.

16 He[w] that keepeth the commandment keepeth his own soul: *but* he that despiseth his ways shall die.

17 He[y] that hath pity upon the poor lendeth unto the LORD; and that which he hath given[2] will he pay him again.

18 Chasten[z] thy son while there is hope, and let not thy soul spare for his crying.[3]

19 A[a] man of great wrath shall suffer punishment; for if thou deliver *him*, yet thou must do[4] it again.

20 Hear[b] counsel, and receive instruction, that thou mayest be wise in thy latter end.

21 *There*[c] *are* many devices in a man's heart; nevertheless the counsel of the LORD, that shall stand.

22 The[d] desire of a man *is* his kindness; and a poor man *is* better than a liar.[5]

23 The[e] fear of the LORD *tendeth* to life: and *he that hath it* shall abide satisfied; he shall not be visited with evil.[6]

24 A[g] slothful *man* hideth his hand in *his* bosom, and will not so much as bring it to his mouth again.

25 Smite[h] a scorner, and the simple will beware;[7] and reprove one that hath understanding *and* he will understand knowledge.

26 He[i] that wasteth *his* father, *and* chaseth away *his* mother, *is* a son that causeth shame, and bringeth reproach.

27 Cease,[j] my son, to hear the instruction *that causeth* to err from the words of knowledge.

28 An ungodly witness[8] scorneth[k] judgment; and[l] the mouth of the wicked devoureth iniquity.[9]

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v ch. 6. 9–11; 23. 21; 10.4; 20. 13; 24. 30–34; 12. 27; 13. 4; 21. 25. Ro. 12. 11. 2 Th. 3. 10.

w Lu. 11. 28; 10. 28. ch. 13. 13. Mat. 19. 17. Is. 3. 10, 11; 1. 19, 20. Ro. 2. 7–10. He. 2. 3.

y ch. 28. 28. Mat. 10. 42; 25. 35–40. 2 Co. 9. 6–9. He. 6. 10. Ec. 11. 1, 2.

2 Or, *his deed.*

z ch. 13. 24; 23. 13, 14; 29. 17. Ep. 6. 4.

3 Or, *to his destruction*, or *to cause him to die.*

a 2 Sa. 16. 5–7. 1 Ki. 2. 46.

4 Heb. *add.*

b ch. 1. 8; 2. 1–9; 3. 1–4; 4. 1–13; 8. 34, 35. Ps. 37. 37. De. 32. 29. Ps. 90. 12, 14.

c Ec. 7. 29. Job 23. 13. Ps. 33. 10, 11. ch. 16. 1, 9; 21. 30. Is. 46. 10; 14. 24, 26, 27. He. 6. 17. Ac. 5. 39.

d 2 Co. 8. 12. Ps. 72. 4, 12–12. 2 Ch. 6. 8. see ver. 1.

5 See note * below.

e 1 Ti. 4. 8. ch. 10. 27; 14. 24; 12. 14, 21. Jn. 4. 14. Ps. 91. 1, 10. Job 5. 19–22; 22. 21–30. Ro. 8. 1, 28, 33–39.

6 He may be visited with trouble as other men, but with no evil that can destroy his peace or endanger his salvation.—*C.*

g ch. 15. 19; 26. 13–15; 12. 27; 6. 9, 10; 24. 30–34. Ro. 12. 11.

h ch. 21. 11; 9. 8, 9; 12. 1; 28. 23. De. 13. 11.

7 Heb. *will be cunning.*

i ch. 10. 1, 5; 17. 2, 21, 24; 28. 24; 30. 17.

j Jn. 10. 5. Lu. 8. 18. De. 13. 1–4. Mat. 26. 6, 12; 7. 15. 2 Jn. 10. Ep. 4. 14. 2 Ti. 3. 1–5; 4. 3, 4. Mar. 4. 24.

8 Heb. *A witness of Belial.*

k Ps. 10. 5, 11, 13. Is. 28. 14, 15, 22.

l Job 15. 16; 20. 12, 13; 34. 7. Ho. 4. 8.

9 He lives, he feasts upon the desire and plan and perpetration of iniquity.—*C.*

* The antithesis in this verse is not well brought out in the present rendering. Probably the true meaning is as follows: —'The desire of a man (that which he longs for when in distress or poverty) is his relief (the assistance or alms calculated to satisfy his wants or save him from impending calamity); but (still) the poor man (who is thus forced to beg and

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pray for help) is better (even though he should fail to obtain and continue to suffer) than the liar.' The moral is, poverty is to be preferred to lies.—*P.*

m Is. 29. 20. Ec. 8. 11. Is. 28. 22. Ps. 7. 14–16. ch. 2. 22; 5. 23.

CHAP. XX.

a Ge. 9. 21. Ho. 7. 5; 4. 11. ch. 23. 29, 30. Is. 28. 1, 3, 7. 1 Co. 6. 10.

1 Wine tempts a man to scoff at death, eternity, and judgment—'strong drink to rage' in causeless anger and quarrels.—*C.*

b ch. 16. 14, 15; 19. 12; 17. 11; 38. 36. Ec. 8. 2; 10. 4.

2 To provoke any one to anger is a sin; much more to provoke a ruler; even as the Spirit hath said, 'Fear God—honour the king.'—*C.*

c ch. 16. 32; 17. 14; 25. 8–10; 3. 30. Ge. 23. 7, 8.

d Ch. 18. 6, 7; 13. 26–17. 22; 22. 22, 23–30. Ro. 8. 1, 28, 33–39.

e ch. 10. 4; 24. 33; 26. 13–15.

3 Or, *winter.*

g ch. 6. 10, 11; 19. 15. Lu. 16. 24. Mat. 25. 8.

h ch. 18. 4. 2 Co. 2. 11, 15; 10. 15.

i Mat. 6. 2. Lu. 18. 8, 11. ch. 25. 14.

4 Or, *bounty.*

j Jn. 1. 47. Ps. 12. 1. Is. 57. 1. Mi. 7. 2. Ec. 7. 28.

k Ps. 25. 21. Ac. 24. 16. 2 Co. 1. 12. Tit. 2. 11, 12.

5 *Integrity.* — See note on ch. 11. 3.—*C.*

l Ps. 112. 2; 37. 26.

n 2 Sa. 23. 4. ver. 26; ch. 16. 12. Ps. 101. 3–8.

o 1 Ki. 8. 46. 2 Ch. 6. 36. Job 14. 4; 15. 4. Ps. 51. 5. Ec. 7. 20. 1 Jn. 1. 8. Ja. 3. 2.

6 What a needful memorial of the native pollution of the human heart, and of its utter inability for its own renewal and purification! What a catechism to guide us to the Spirit of holiness, and the blood that cleanseth from all sin!—*C.*

p De. 25. 13–15. Le. 19. 35, 36. Mi. 6. 10, 11. ch. 11. 1; 16. 11; ver. 23.

7 Heb. *a stone and a stone.*

8 Heb. *an ephah and an ephah.*

q Mat. 7. 16. ch. 22. 6.

r Ex. 4. 11. Ps. 94. 7–9. Ro. 11. 36.

s Ro. 12. 11. ch. 6. 9–11; 19. 15; 24. 30–34; 12. 11, 14; 13. 4; 10. 4.

t Ps. 36. 3; 12. 2. 1 Th. 4. 6. Ja. 4. 16.

29 Judgments[m] are prepared for scorners, and stripes for the back of fools.

CHAPTER XX.

WINE *is*[a] a mocker, strong drink *is* [1]raging; and whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise.

2 The[b] fear of a king *is* as the roaring of a lion; *whoso* provoketh him to anger sinneth *against* his own soul.[2]

3 *It*[c] *is* an honour for a man to cease from strife: but [d]every fool will be meddling.

4 The[e] sluggard will not plough by reason of the cold;[3] *therefore*[g] shall he beg in harvest, and *have* nothing.

5 Counsel[h] in the heart of man *is like* deep water: but a man of understanding will draw it out.

6 Most[i] men will proclaim every one his own goodness:[4] but[j] a faithful man who can find?

7 The[k] just *man* walketh in his [5]integrity; [l]his children *are* blessed after him.

8 A[n] king that sitteth in the throne of judgment scattereth away all evil with his eyes.

9 Who[o] can say, I have made my heart clean, I am pure from my sin?[6]

10 [p]Divers weights,[7] *and* divers [8]measures, both of them *are* alike abomination to the LORD.

11 Even[q] a child is known by his doings, whether his work *be* pure, and whether *it be* right.

12 The[r] hearing ear, and the seeing eye, the LORD hath made even both of them.

13 Love[s] not sleep, lest thou come to poverty; open thine eyes, *and* thou shalt be satisfied with bread.

14 *It*[t] *is* naught, *it is* naught, saith the

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of ruin; but the tokens of his favour greatly refresh and invigorate their spirits. 13. An ignorant, headstrong, and impious son is a plague and grief to his parents; and a contentious wife is a gradual ruin to her family, so perpetually vexing her husband that he can scarcely live with her. 14. Persons may have houses and riches left them by parents; but a prudent wife is not obtained, even by diligent care, without the peculiar direction and blessing of the Lord. 15. Sloth and idleness sink the mind into a dull stupidity and unconcern, and thereby reduce men to extreme beggary and want. 16. He who carefully keeps the commandments of God as the rule of his life, secures the welfare of his own soul: but he that lives at random, led only by his own brutish inclinations, shall be miserable in time and in eternity. 17. He who compassionately relieves the necessities of the poor really enriches himself; as what he gives is but lent to the Lord, and shall be repaid, with large interest and increase of blessings, upon him and his posterity. 18. Children ought to be faithfully corrected before they are fixed in evil habits and customs; nor ought their cryings or entreaties make parents abate the necessary severity towards them. 19. Men given to passion and fury bring themselves into great mischiefs: and if we extricate them out of one danger, they will quickly involve themselves in another. 20. To listen to instruction, and kindly receive reproofs, or even corrections, is the proper way to attain much solid and lasting wisdom and experience. 21. Many are the purposes and contrivances of men, and they often lay them with great care: but it is only the will of the Lord which is able to bring to pass whatsoever is best. 22. A desire to do good to others is a real kindness to them, though it be not in our power to effect it. And a poor man who would fain do us good, is better than one who promises much and does little. 23. True godliness, and a religious care to please the Lord in all things, increase a spiritual life, and issue in life eternal. They afford the most satisfying comfort in God's favour, produce the most agreeable contentment with our lot, and are an excellent preservative both from sin and from suffering. 24. Sluggards are so much given to laziness and idle sauntering, that they can hardly be persuaded to take their meat or do the most necessary and easy things. 25. Incorrigible sinners, and particularly scoffers at religion and despisers of reproof, ought to be severely punished, as a warning to such as are inconsiderate; but such as are wise and prudent will need no more but a gentle reproof to make them learn their duty and practise accordingly. 26. Children, who by their debaucheries waste their father's substance and deal unkindly with their mother, disgrace their parents, and at last render themselves infamous and miserable. 27. Great care ought to be taken to avoid listening to false doctrine, sinful advice, or even idle and frothy language, as it tends to make us wander from the true doctrines of Christ and practice of holiness. 28. An impious witness, whose conscience is so hardened that he can swear to anything, laughs at all law and justice, and even at the threatened judgment of God upon perjured persons: and the mouth of the wicked utters the most false, sinful, and mischievous speeches with greediness. 29. But terrible judgments shall certainly be inflicted upon those that scoff at conscience and religion; and indelible marks of God's displeasure shall be inflicted on those who slight good instructions.

Ver. 2. *He that hasteth with his feet sinneth.* He that hasteth with his feet, without judging by his head—who, more forward than thoughtful—must end in sin. *C.*

Ver. 3. *Fretteth against the Lord.* The *elephant*, the *rhinoceros*, the *lion*, and the *tiger* are often inclosed within cages. When wild they *fret* and strive, but soon learn that resistance is vain and submission good; but unrenewed man, less wise than 'the beasts that perish,' *fretteth* against the Lord, and striveth to the end against his Maker. Grace alone can teach him to say, 'Let the Lord do what seemeth him good:' 'Thy will be done on earth as in heaven.' *C.*

Ver. 7. The word 'hate' must evidently be understood in the comparative sense of Lu. 14. 26. And where poverty arises from idleness, indiscretion, or wastefulness, the coldness of brethren and friends, so far from being criminal, may be a righteous judgment and retribution. In other cases, however, it may indicate a criminal want of sympathy; and in the case of Christ Jesus our Lord, was exhibited in the highest form of guiltiness. Had our Lord come in riches, splendour, and earthly pride, the Pharisees would have worshipped him whom they bought and crucified. *C.*

Ver. 13. *Dropping.* The dropping of water through the flat roofs of eastern houses must have been a common occurrence. It would bring (1) a disagreeable noise; (2) defilement of furniture and dress; (3) in the end rottenness; (4) disease. *C.*

Ver. 19. An ill-tempered man will, in the end, come to punishment; for though his friend deliver him again and again, he will at last offend beyond all power of apology or intercession. *C.*

Ver. 22. *Kindness.* The most amiable quality is kindness. With it a man of inferior mental attainments is esteemed; without it the highest accomplishments can never secure esteem or confidence. *C.*

Ver. 24. *His bosom.* Rather 'in the *dish*,' meaning that out of which the Orientals eat with the hand. See Mat. xxiii. The meaning is the *slothful*, even when his hand is filled with opportunities and means of success, will not lift up his hand to provide for his own support. *C.*

CHAPTER XX. Ver. 1. Immoderate drinking of wine, or other intoxicating liquors, exposes men to the jest and detestation of others; it makes themselves abusive and scurrilous, mocking even at sacred things, and renders them like fools, sots, or madmen, furious, tumultuous, and quarrelsome: while it seems to exhilarate the spirits, it deceitfully drowns both reason and conscience, and tends to the ruin of both soul and

buyer; but when he is gone his way, then he boasteth.

15 There[u] is gold, and a multitude of rubies: but the lips of knowledge *are* a precious jewel.

16 Take[v] his garment that is surety *for* a stranger;[a] and take a pledge of him for a strange woman.

17 Bread[y] of deceit[9] *is* sweet to a man; but afterwards his mouth shall be filled with gravel.

18 *Every*[z] purpose is established by counsel; and with good advice make war.

19 He[a] that goeth about *as* a tale-bearer revealeth secrets; therefore meddle not with him that flattereth[1] with his lips.[2]

20 Whoso[b] curseth his father or his mother, his lamp[3] shall be put out in obscure darkness.

21 An[c] inheritance *may be* gotten hastily[4] at the beginning; but the end thereof shall not be blessed.

22 Say[d] not thou, I will recompense evil; *but* wait on the LORD, and he shall save thee.

23 Divers[e] weights *are* an abomination unto the LORD; and a false balance[5] *is* not good.

24 Man's[g] goings *are* of the LORD; how can a man then understand his own way?

25 *It*[h] *is* a snare to the man *who* devoureth *that which is* holy, and after vows to make inquiry.

26 A[i] wise king scattereth the wicked, and bringeth the wheel[6] over them.

27 The[j] spirit of man *is* the candle[7] of the LORD, searching all the inward parts of the belly.

28 Mercy[k] and truth preserve the king; and his throne is upholden by mercy.

29 The[l] glory of young men *is* their strength; and [m]the beauty of old men *is* the gray head.[8]

30 The blueness of a wound cleanseth away evil;[9] so[o] *do* stripes[1] the inward parts of the belly.

h Mal.3.8,9. Ec.5.4,5. Ju.11.35. Mat 5.33. Je.22.9; 34.8–22. Ac.5.1–4. *i* Ps.101.3–8. ver.8, with Is.28.27, 28. 2 Sa.12.31. *j* Jn.1.4. Ge.2.7. Ec.12.7. 1 Co.2.11. Ro.2.14,15. Job 32.8. Zec. 12.1. *k* Ps.102.1; 25.21; 75.2. ch.29.14; 16.6. Je.22.16. *l* 1 Jn. 2.13,14. Je.9.23. *m* ch.16.31. Le.19.32. Job 12.12. *o* He.12.10. Is.27.9. ch.22.15. Ho.2.6,14. 1 Pe.1.7. Job 36.9,10.

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u ch.3.14,15; 8.11,19; 3. 9. Job 28. 15–19. Ju. 17. 3. 1 Ti. 3.15. Phi. 3.8.
v ch.27.13; 22.27.
x ch. 2. 12, 16; 5.3; 7. 10; 23.27.
y ch.9. 17; 4. 17. Job 20.12,14. Is.44.20.
9 Heb. *Bread of lying* or *falsehood.*
z ch.15.22; 11.14; 19. 20; 24.6. Ju.19.30; 20. 9. Lu.14.31.
a ch.11. 13; 18. 8; 26. 20,22. Le.19.16. 1 Ti.5. 13.
1 Or, *enticeth.*
2 That is, either with him who flatters you by pretending that he intrusts his secret to you as a special favour; or with him that is 'open of his lips,' as the words literally mean, and therefore tempted, by his spirit of *talkativeness*, to fabricate and circulate falsehoods.—*C.*
b De. 27. 16. Ex. 21. 17, with 20. 12. Le. 20. 9. Mat.15. 4. ch. 30. 17. Joh 18.5,22.16.
3 Or, *candle.*
c ch.28.20,22. 1 Ti.6. 9.
4 The danger lies not in the speedy *inflowing* of wealth, but in the hasty spirit with which it is sought—a spirit that will soon learn to employ any means for obtaining its end, and that will finally defeat its efforts by its over-eagerness, and entaila curse because it grasped at riches as a possession, and sought them not as a blessing.—*C.*
d De.32.35.ch.17.13; 24. 29. Ro. 12. 17–21. 1 Th.5.15.1 Pe.3.9.
e Ver.10.ch.11.1.
5 Heb. *balances of deceit.*
g Ps.37.23.ch.16.1,9. Je.10.23. 2 Co.3.5. Ro. 8.26.
6 The allusion seems to be to an Asiatic method of thrashing corn by laying it out on a thrashing-floor, and drawing over it a 'wheel,' nearly in the form of a European roller.—*C.*
7 Or, *lamp.*
8 'They who are stricken in years, though weak in body, though even deprived of the use of their senses; yet the silver crown of hoary hairs, which the finger of God hath set upon their head, doth make them venerable in all places where they come, so that they carry an authority or majesty with them' (*Mueffel*).—*P.*
9 Heb. is *a purging medicine against evil.*
1 Appropriate punishments restrain sinful appetites.—*C.*

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CHAP. XXI.

a ch. 16. 1, 9. Ps. 105. 25; 106. 46. Da. 4. 35. Ezr. 7. 27.
1 Rather, as watercourses for irrigation.—*C.*
b ch.16.25; 20.6; 25. 14; 30. 12. Lu.18.11,12.
c Je.17.10. He. 4. 13. Jn. 2.24,25. Re.2.23.
d 1Sa.15.22. ch.15.8. Is.1.11. Ho.6.6. Mi.6.7, 8. Mar.12.33.
2 This is no condemnation of sacrifice under the law, nor warrant for neglect of ordinances under the gospel. Thus saith the Lord, 'These ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone,' Mat. 23. 23. —*C.*
e ch.6.16–18; 8. 13; 15. 8. Ps. 101. 5.
3 Heb. *Haughtiness of eyes.*
4 *The haughing*—Rather, 'the lamp;' the religious profession of the wicked (see Mat.25.2,8,12) 'is sin.'—*C.*
5 Or, *the light of the wicked.*
g ch.10.4; 13.4; 19. 15, 24; 6.10–11; 23.21; 24.30–34; ver. 25.
h Pe.2.3. ch.10.2; 13. 11; 8.36; 28.22. Je.17.11. Job xviii. xx. 1 Ti. 6.9, 10.
6 Treasures which are accumulated by deceit, fraud, and lying, are vanity; they are tossed to and fro by the winds of fortune; they are often swept away altogether; and those who gathered them have only been seeking their own destruction.—*P.*
i ch.10.6; 11. 2–7; 13. 21. Ps.7.16; 9.16; 55.23.
7 Heb. *saw them,* or *dwell with them.*
j Ps. 14. 1–5; 36. 1–4. Tit.3.3.
k Ac. 24. 16. 2 Co. 1. 12. Mat.7.17; 12.35.
l ch.19.13; 25. 24; 27. 15; ver.19.
8 The flat roofs of many eastern houses are occupied as dwelling-places, both by day and by night. —*C.*
9 Heb. *a woman of contentions.*
1 Heb. *an house of society.*
n Ja.4.5. ch.4.16; 10. 23. Ex.32.22. Ps.36.1–4. Mi.7.4,5.
2 Heb. *is not favoured.*
o ch.19.25. Ps.58.10, 11; 64.9. Re.11.13.
p Ps.107.43. Ho.14.9. 1 Co. 10. De. 13. 11. Ps.119.120.
q ch.11.3,5,6; 14. 32. Is. 3. 11. Ro.2.8,9. Job xviii.xx.
r Mat. 7. 2; 18. 30, &c.; 25.41–46. Ja. 2. 13. ch.28.27.
s ch.17.8; 18.16; 19.6. Ge.xxxiii.

CHAPTER XXI.

THE king's[a] heart *is* in the hand of the LORD, *as* the rivers of water:[1] he turneth it whithersoever he will.

2 Every[b] way of a man *is* right in his own eyes: [c]but the LORD pondereth the hearts.

3 To[d] do justice and judgment *is* more acceptable to the LORD than sacrifice.[2]

4 An[e] high look,[3] and a proud heart, *and* the ploughing[4] of the wicked,[5] *is* sin.

5 The[g] thoughts of the diligent *tend* only to plenteousness; but of every one *that is* hasty, only to want.

6 The[h] getting of treasures by a lying tongue *is* a vanity tossed to and fro of them that seek death.[6]

7 The[i] robbery of the wicked shall destroy them;[7] because they refuse to do judgment.

8 The[j] way of man *is* froward and strange: [k]but *as for* the pure, his work *is* right.

9 *It*[l] *is* better to dwell in a corner of the house-top,[8] than with a brawling woman[9] in a wide house.[1]

10 The[n] soul of the wicked desireth evil: his neighbour findeth no favour[2] in his eyes.

11 When[o] the scorner is punished, the simple is made wise; and when the wise is instructed, he receiveth knowledge.

12 The[p] righteous *man* wisely considereth the house of the wicked: [q]*but God* overthroweth the wicked for *their* wickedness.

13 Whoso[r] stoppeth his ears at the cry of the poor, he also shall cry himself, but shall not be heard.

14 A[s] gift in secret pacifieth anger; and a reward in the bosom strong wrath.

15 *It*[t] *is* joy to the just to do judgment: [u]but destruction *shall be* to the workers of iniquity.

16 The[v] man that wandereth out of the way

t Ro.7.22. Ps.149.2. 2 Co.1.12. Ac.24.16. *u* Mat.7.23. Ps.9.16,17; 55.23. ver.12. *v* ch.13.20. Lu.15.13. He.6.4–6; 10.26,27,38. ch.2.19; 7.25–27; 9.14–18.

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body. 2. The just wrath of a king is terrible: and they that offend him, by exasperating language or behaviour, expose themselves to temporal and lasting ruin. 3. It is honourable to avoid contention to the utmost, and to get out of it as quickly as possible, by confessing our own faults, and forgiving those of our neighbours: but foolish and wicked persons are always ready to begin or maintain quarrels. 4. Such as, through indolence and self-indulgence, neglect their business in its proper season, may expect beggary and misery; while they who are diligent enjoy abundant felicity. 5. Some men, through their reservedness of temper, and others through deep design, conceal their intentions: but persons of great sagacity will discover them, or even by their artful insinuations make themselves to declare them. 6. Most men will boast how friendly, humane, charitable, and generous they are: but it is hard to find one answerable in deeds to his trust, his relation, his promises, or pretences. 7. Justified and gracious persons, by their practice, manifest the sincerity of their heart and profession; and their children are blessed of God and regarded by men on their account. 8. A king who makes it his business to execute judgment and justice faithfully, effectually suppresses crimes and impieties by his strict inspection of affairs. 9. No man on earth is perfectly free from sin in heart or life, nor can he make himself so. 10. To buy with larger weights or measures, and sell with lesser ones, and all other injustice, is extremely detestable to God. 11. Men's continued practice is the surest mark of their disposition, and by that the future conversation of young persons may be guessed at; and yet they, even children, often strangely conceal their vices. 12. All our natural faculties and senses, and the right use of them, are from God, and therefore ought to be employed for his glory. 13. Immoderate sleep, or other slothfulness, wastes our time and draws on poverty and want: but watchful care and diligent labours are the means of obtaining everything necessary. 14. Some, while they buy goods, will dishonestly and falsely cry them down, and yet afterwards boast of their good bargain and cheating the seller. 15. Wise and gracious speeches, proceeding from a wise and understanding heart, are more valuable than all the gold, pearls, or precious things on earth. 16. Never trust him, without a proper pledge, who rashly becomes surety for everybody, strangers and harlots not excepted; for he will quickly be reduced to beggary. 17. Gains, honours, and pleasures, acquired by unrighteous courses, may at first be extremely agreeable to men; but they will at last produce anguish of conscience, pangs of repentance, or torments of despair. 18. Deliberation with ourselves, and consulting with others who are prudent, is the way to obtain success in our undertakings, especially in matters of importance and danger. 19. It is always necessary to suspect flatterers, and to turn a deaf ear to tale-bearers, who, by treacherously revealing the secrets which others have intrusted to them, labour to insinuate themselves into our confidence, and then betray us. 20. Slighters, revilers, abusers, and wishers of mischief to parents, bring fearful and lasting ruin on themselves and posterity, however they may prosper for a time. 21. Many, by unrighteous courses, quickly become rich: but the foundation being laid in rapine, extortion, or fraud, it shall quickly waste away, or prove a curse to such as enjoy it. 22. Never revenge injuries received; but commit thy cause to God who judges righteously; wait patiently in the use of lawful means for the fulfilment of his promises, and he will vindicate and deliver thee in his own time. 23. Injustice, even in the smallest things, is so extremely abominable to God, that it cannot be too much hated or avoided. 24. Men's thoughts, words, and actions are all directed by God to his own ends: and none can certainly know beforehand what will be the issue of them. 25. A sacrilegious converting of what pertains to God to our own private use, and studying how to be loosed from the obligations of solemn vows, terribly ensnare men's souls, and bring certain ruin upon them. 26. Pious and prudent magistrates exert themselves to discourage and terrify the wicked, and punish them with proper severity. 27. The rational soul and conscience, especially when renewed by the Spirit of God, act as his deputies; discovering, judging, accusing, or approving whatever passes within us, according as it is contrary or conformable to God's revealed will. 28. Bounty and clemency, joined with justice and faithfulness to their

of understanding shall remain in the congregation of the dead.

17 He[x] that loveth pleasure[3] *shall be* a poor man: he that loveth wine and oil shall not be rich.[4]

18 The[y] wicked *shall be* a ransom for the righteous, and the transgressor for the upright.[5]

19 *It*[z] *is* better to dwell in the wilderness,[6] than with a contentious and an angry woman.

20 *There*[a] *is* treasure to be desired and oil in the dwelling of the wise: [b]but a foolish man spendeth it up.

21 He[c] that followeth after righteousness and mercy findeth life, righteousness, and honour.

22 A[d] wise *man* scaleth the city of the mighty, and casteth down the strength of the confidence thereof.

23 Whoso[e] keepeth his mouth and his tongue keepeth his soul from troubles.

24 Proud[f] *and* haughty scorner *is* his name who dealeth in proud wrath.[7]

25 The[h] desire of the slothful killeth him; for his hands refuse to labour.

A.M. cir. 3029.
B.C. cir. 975.

[x] Lu.15.13,14; 16.25. ch.6.10,11; 5.10; 23.21.
[3] Or, *sport*.
[4] *Epicurism*, the desire of luxuries in eating and drinking, is an acquired habit: indulgence is its parent, poverty is its descendant.—*C*.
[y] ch.11.8. Is.43.3,4. Jos.7.26.2 Sa.21.14. Ps.32.10. Re.12.16.
[5] Thus Achan was a ransom for Israel (Jos.vii.), and Haman for Mordecai and Israel, Es.vii.—*C*.
[z] See ver.9.
[6] Heb. *in the land of the desert*.
[a] Lu.6.45. Ps.112.3, 5; 129.2. ch.10.4. Mat.6. 19,20.
[b] ch.6.26; 23.21; 28. 19. Mat.25.1–10.
[c] ch.15.9; 21.4. Mat. 5.6; 6.33. 1 Co.15.58. Ro. 2.7,10. Is.3.10. 2 Ti.4.7, 8. 1 Sa.2.30.
[d] Ec.9.14, &c. 2 Sa. 20.16; 5.7.
[e] ch.12.13; 13.3; 18. 21; 10.19; 17.27. Ps.39.1.
[f] Ps.138.6. Ec.7.8,9.
[7] Heb. *in the wrath of pride*.
[h] ch.13.4; 6.9–11; 12. 27; 15.19; 19.24; 22.13.

* The 'false witness' who asserts what he has neither seen nor heard, shall soon be detected and condemned; but he that declares only what he has seen and heard, will have his witness accredited to all generations; and, even 'though dead,' he will speak 'constantly,' He.11.4.—*C*.

A.M. cir. 3029.
B.C. cir. 975.

[i] Ps.10.3. Hab.2.9. Eze.32.31.
[j] Ps.112.9. Is.32.8. Lu.6.30–36.
[k] Ps.50.9, 16. ch.15. 8; 28.9. Is.66.3; 1.11–15. Je.6.20. Am.5.22.
[8] Heb. *in wickedness*.
[l] ch.19.5,9.
[9] Heb. *A witness of lies*.
[1] See note * in first column
[m] 2 Co.1.18. ch.12.19.
[n] Je.44.17,18.22; 3.2,3; 2.34.
[o] Ps.112.5; 39.1.
[p] 2 Ti. 2, *considereth*, Ps.119.59.
[q] Je.9.23. Is.8.9,10. Ac.5.39. Jonah 1.18.
[r] Ps.33.17; 20.7; 3.8. Ec.9.11.
[s] Or, *victory*.

CHAP. XXII.

1 *Chosen*, not as a thing that can be got by a wish, but as an object to be sought after by faith, love, and humility before God, and truth, and industry, and uprightness before men.—*C*.
[2] Or, *favour is better than*, &c., ch.17.1.
[3] They 'meet together,' it may be, not in companionship, but in interest; and are dependent for their individual happiness upon the discharge of their common duties. The Lord made them for one another, and woe to that party by whom his will is disregarded!—*C*.

26 He[i] coveteth greedily all the day long: but the [j]righteous giveth, and spareth not.

27 The[k] sacrifice of the wicked *is* abomination: how much more *when* he bringeth it with a wicked mind?[8]

28 A[l] false witness[9] shall perish:[1] but[m] the man that heareth speaketh constantly.

29 A[o] wicked man hardeneth his face: [p]but *as for* the upright, he directeth[2] his way.

30 *There*[q] *is* no wisdom, nor understanding, nor counsel, against the LORD.

31 The[r] horse *is* prepared against the day of battle: but safety[3] *is* of the LORD.

CHAPTER XXII.

A *GOOD*[a] name *is* rather to be chosen[1] than great riches, *and* loving favour rather [2]than silver and gold.

2 The[b] rich and poor meet together;[3] the LORD *is* the maker of them all.

3 A[c] prudent *man* foreseeth the evil, and hideth himself: [d]but the simple pass on, and are punished.

[a] ch.15.17,30. Ec.7.1. Col.3.14. 3 Jn.12.
[b] ch.29.13; 14.31. 1 Co.12.21, &c. Ja.2.1. Ps.49.2,7.
[c] ch.27.12; 18.10. Is.26.20,21.
[d] ch.7.22,23. Ju.xvi.2 Sa.15.11, with 18.7.

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word, are principal means of securing the government of princes, and entailing their kingdom on their posterity. 29. Strength, vigour, and courage render young men respected, but gravity, wisdom, and experience are the peculiar ornaments of the aged. 30. Severe corrections are necessary to restrain or reclaim some stubborn and obstinate tempers, and to purge out those corrupt affections which are lodged in the heart.

Ver. 6. Generosity is much more common than fidelity; ostentation of generosity more common still. Fidelity to man is not uncommon in the sense of honesty; but in the sense of love, admonition, rebuke, and prayer, how seldom is it to be found! Above all, while men glory in their generosity with the gifts of God, who is faithful in service to the Giver? *C*.

Ver. 10. This is not confined to mere commercial integrity, but embraces all relative duties, whether between ourselves and our neighbours, or ourselves and God. Take one of the latter, as one of the most neglected, because spiritual and invisible. We expect gratitude of men for all our kindness; do we similarly weigh and measure our gratitude to God? We ask forgiveness of him daily for all our trespasses; do we employ the same weight and measure towards them that trespass against us? *C*.

Ver. 16. Never place confidence in a thoughtless fool who pledges his word, character, or credit for a stranger who has inveigled him. Above all, never trust an abandoned libertine, who, being 'joined to an harlot,' is dissevered from Christ, 1 Co. 6. 15, 16; and who, careless about his own soul, will never be faithful to your interest farther than he is bound by ties of law, and constrained by its compulsions. *C*.

Ver. 27. The thoughts of the natural man are chiefly directed to 'what he shall eat and what he shall drink,' Lu. 12. 22, 30; nay, his 'god is his belly,' Phi. 3. 19. But the spirit of the renewed man is the candle of the Lord, searching out and mortifying all the deeds of the body that the soul may live. *C*.

Ver. 30. *The blueness of a wound*, &c. Some wounds do occasionally assume a *bluish* tinge; but it is always an unhealthy symptom, and unfavourable to healing. The word 'blueness' should rather be rendered *suppuration*, which brings the description into accordance with the ordinary process of healing. *C*.

CHAPTER XXI. Ver. 1. The wills, inclinations, and purposes of kings and others, are entirely under the eye and observation of God: and he would turn them into right paths as surely as the gardener or husbandman manages his canals of water. 2. Men, through their self-love, often fancy their own purposes and works to be extremely right; while the Lord, who perfectly knows their hearts, observes them to be very defective or sinful. 3. Uprightness of heart, and holiness and virtue of life, are more pleasing to God than the most pompous devotions or the most liberal benefactions or alms. 4. Not only the insolence, pride, and ambition of wicked men are criminal before God, but all their natural, civil, and moral actions, and all their worldly greatness and prosperity lead to sin; and all they do is sinful in its principle, manner, and end. 5. Prudent contrivances and laborious industry are the proper means of plenty and affluence: but hasty resolutions, precipitant measures, and unjust methods involve men in trouble and loss. 6. The getting of wealth by lying, flattery, calumny, or perjury, is a beguiling and unprofitable course, however much used by such as walk in ways leading to destruction; and the wealth thus obtained is as unsubstantial and transient as heaps of chaff or clouds of smoke before the wind. 7. The injuries which wicked men do to others, in rendering their families poor or desolate, shall, in most ruinous punishments, be returned upon their own heads, because they are wilfully bent upon their unjust dealings. 8. The whole temper and course of a wicked man are contrary to the law and nature of God, and odious to him: but they whose consciences are washed in Jesus' blood, and their hearts renewed by his grace, walk in good works, acceptable to God and profitable to men. 9. Better is it to live poorly and solitary in the open air, exposed to all the injuries of the weather, or to be thrust into some little corner, than have a spacious house and numerous family governed by a contentious wife, whose perpetual scolding and brawling, on the smallest occasion, is more intolerable than thunder, lightning, or blustering winds. 10. A wicked man's heart desires to be ever doing mischief, and to have others falling into it: nor will he spare good or bad, friend or foe, if, by reproof or otherwise, they stand in the way of his covetousness, ambition, or other lusts. 11. When obstinate scoffers at the laws of God and men are punished in providence or by the magistrates; others, particularly such as they have seduced, will bethink themselves what they are doing: and wise men will improve instructions and admonitions, to render themselves wiser and better. 12. While righteous magistrates search the houses of the wicked for ill-gotten goods, and in order that they may be duly punished and deprived of power to do further mischief, godly men, in order to deter them from like courses, consider the judgment and ruin which God brings on the wicked for their sins. 13. They who refuse to help the poor in distress shall be reduced to misery themselves, and have none to pity or help them. 14. Presents, especially if secretly and prudently given, have a powerful influence to appease angry and wrathful men. 15. The execution of justice, and the practice of holiness and virtue, are a pleasure to the righteous; but are a terror and burden to the wicked, whom God and the magistrates shall concur to destroy. 16. He that will not live according to the directions of God's Word, but follows the conduct of his own lusts and passions, shall, after all his extravagances, be for ever fixed in hell. 17. Voluptuous persons destroy their own pleasures by wasting their estates; and they who are given to costly and delicious feeding can never thrive. 18. Wicked men often fall into the very miseries which they had prepared for the godly; and in times of common calamity are often severely punished that the righteous may be delivered. 20. True wisdom enables men to procure what is necessary for their families, and to enjoy it with satisfaction; but foolish persons lavishly waste what they neither know how to get or how to live without. 21. They who make it their business to receive and improve Jesus Christ and his righteousness and grace, in a life of holiness and virtue, shall find every new-covenant blessing in time and eternity. 22. Wise men, by their prudence, kindness, and perseverance, can effect the most difficult enterprises, and do more than others who have much more strength. 23. Restraint of the tongue from impure, false, profane, rash, injurious language, greatly preserves men from troubles, embarrassments, and miseries. 24. Pride, insolence, and outrageous words only render men infamous and contemptible. 25, 26. The slothful man is killed by an insatiable desire after that which he has not and will not labour for; but pious and diligent persons have enough for themselves, and also wherewith to relieve others. 27. All the appearances of devotion and piety about unrenewed persons being hypocritical, proceeding from a wicked principle, done in a wicked manner, and to a wicked end, are abominable to God. 28. The testimony, character, and soul of a false witness shall quickly be ruined: but he that speaks nothing but what he knows to be true, is fixed and invariable in his attestations. 29. Impenitent sinners refuse to blush at their abominations, and obstinately resolve to go on in them; but sincere saints carefully conduct their thoughts, words, and actions by the rule of God's Word. 30. No projects, however wisely laid or prudently conducted, can defeat or alter the purposes or counteract the providence of God. 31. Neither horses, chariots, nor powerful armies can obtain victories, or even protect their owners: but all safety and salvation are of and through faith in Christ himself.

Ver. 7. *The robbery of the wicked shall destroy them.* There are two views of the subject. (1) Several nations live by robbery, and reckon it an honourable employment. Yet, in the end, all such communities, like the piratical Algerines and murderous Thugs, are brought to destruction. (2) There is a robbery of God when he is defrauded of that worship, honour, and glory that are due to his name, which must finally terminate in the destruction of the guilty, Mal. 3. 9. *C*.

Ver. 13. Not 'he that stoppeth his ear at the *importunity* of the poor' is condemned, for that importunity is often the result of vice, idleness, or fraud; but he that disregards 'their cry' when it arises, as in a child, from want or pain that they cannot supply or relieve. *C*.

Ver. 22. Never did the world appear in a more hopeless state than a little before the dawn of the blessed Reformation. The human mind was enslaved to authority and tradition—an authority without charter from God, a tradition without name, till manufactured on emergency. The consciences of men were prostrate before the shrine of the confessional; their spirits were terrified into cowardly submission by the fires of an imaginary purgatory; and the walls of spiritual Babylon were high, as unto heaven. Yet these walls were *scaled*, and this city was taken, not by 'power nor by might,' but by a few 'wise men'—men 'made wise unto salvation' by the Scriptures (2 Ti. 3. 15), and strong and victorious by the Spirit of truth, and love, and holiness. *C*.

CHAPTER XXII. Ver. 1. A good character,

4 By[e] humility,[4] *and* the fear of the LORD, *are* riches, and honour, and life.

5 Thorns[g] *and* snares *are* in the way of the froward: he that doth keep his soul shall be far from them.

6 Train[h] up[5] a child in the way[6] he should go; and when he is old he will not depart from it.

7 The[i] rich ruleth over the poor; and the borrower *is* servant to the lender.[7]

8 He[j] that soweth iniquity shall reap vanity: and the rod of his anger shall fail.[8]

9 He[k] that hath a bountiful eye[9] shall be blessed; for he giveth of his bread to the poor.

10 Cast[l] out the scorner, and contention shall go out; yea, strife and reproach shall cease.

11 He[m] that loveth pureness of heart, *for* the grace of his lips[1] the king *shall be* his friend.[2]

12 The[o] eyes of the LORD preserve knowledge; and he overthroweth the words[3] of the transgressor.

13 The[p] slothful *man* saith, *There is* a lion without, I shall be slain in the streets.[4]

14 The[q] mouth of strange women *is* a deep pit: he that is abhorred of the LORD shall fall therein.

15 Foolishness[r] *is* bound in the heart of a child; *but* the [s]rod of correction shall drive it far from him.

16 He[t] that oppresseth the poor to increase his *riches, and* he that giveth to the rich, *shall* surely *come* to want.

17 Bow[u] down thine ear, and hear the words of the wise, and apply thine heart unto my knowledge:

18 For[v] *it is* a pleasant thing if thou keep them within thee;[5] they shall withal be fitted in thy lips.[6]

A.M. cir. 3029.
B.C. cir. 975.

e Is. 57. 15. Ps. 112. 3. Lu. 14. 11. Ja. 4. 6. ch. 21. 21. 1 Ti. 4. 8. Mat. 6. 33; 19. 29.

[4] Or, *The reward of humility, &c.*

g Job 18. 8. Ro. 3. 16, 17. ch. 4. 16; 15. 9.

h Ep. 6. 4. Ge. 18. 19.

[5] Or, *Catechise.*

[6] Heb. *in his way.*

i De. 15. 6. Ja. 2. 6.

[7] Heb. *to the man that lendeth.*

j Job 4. 8. Ho. 10. 13. Ga. 6. 7, 8.

[8] Or, *and with the rod of his anger he shall be consumed.*

k 2 Co. 9. 6. Ps. 41. 1–3. ch. 11. 25; 19. 17. Is. 32. 8.

[9] Heb. *Good of eye.*

l Ps. 101. 5; 1. 1. Ge. 21. 9. ch. 24. 9.

m Mat. 5. 8. ch. 16. 13.

[1] Or, and hath *grace in his lips*, Ps. 45. 2.

[2] When purity of heart is manifested in kind and loving words, in wise and good counsels, in pure and holy lessons, the princes and rulers of the earth shall court the friendship and society of such men.—*P.*

n Is. 59. 19–21. 2 Ch. 16. 9. Ac. 12. 22–24. Job 5. 12, 13. Is. 44. 25.

[3] Or, *the matters.*

o ch. 26. 13; 15. 19.

[4] Vices are seldom separate — so the slothful man here demonstrates that he is excusing his sloth by falsehood. 'There is a lion without, he will be slain in the streets,' in the crowded thoroughfare, where the lion would not venture to come. —*C.*

q ch. 2. 16, 19; 5. 3; 7. 5–11; 23. 27; 6. 26–29. Ec. 7. 26.

r Ge. 8. 21. Job 14. 4. Jn. 3. 6.

s ch. 13. 24; 19. 18; 23. 13; 29. 15, 17. He. 12. 9–11.

t Mi. 2. 2–5. Ps. 12. 5. ch. 11. 24; 23. 10, 11. Ja. 2. 13 ver. 22, 23.

u ch. 1. 8; 2. 1–5, 10; 3. 1–4, 17, 18. Mat. 11. 15, 28–30. Is. 55. 3. Ps. 45. 10; 90. 12.

v ch. 3. 17. Ps. 19. 7–10; 119. 11. Je. 15. 16. Ac. 18. 24, 28.

[5] Heb. *in thy belly.*

[6] Or, 'For it shall be pleasant if thou keep them within thee (meditate upon them so as to reduce them in due time to practice; and if they shall be adapted to thy lips (so that thou mayest be able to instruct others, and to order thine own speech in accordance with them)." Acting thus, men enjoy peace of mind.—*P.*

x Jn. 20. 31. 1 Pe. 1. 21.

[7] Or, trust *thou also.*

[8] In order that thou mayest put confidence in God, I have revealed to thee knowledge of him, his power, and his goodness.—*P.*

y Ho. 8. 12. Ps. 12. 6; 19. 7–10; 119. 72, 103. 2 Ti. 3. 15–17. Lu. 1. 3, 4. 1 Pe. 3. 15. Col. 4. 4. 2 Pe. 1. 19, 21.

[9] Or, *to those that send thee*, 1 Pe. 3. 15.

z See ver. 16.

[1] Either because he is too weak to oppose oppression, or too obscure to obtain human defence or redress; or in such need that he will allow himself to be robbed by an exorbitant interest paid for relief of present necessities. —*C.*

a Zec. 7. 10. Ex. 23. 6.

b Mal. 3. 5. Job 31. 21. Ps. 35. 1; 72. 4. ch. 23. 11. Is. 33. 1; 49. 26. Je. 51. 36; 50. 34.

c ch. 9. 6; 13. 20; 21. 24; 29. 22. Ps. 1. 1; 26. 4. Je. 15. 17.

d Ps. 106. 35. Ex. 34. 15, 16. Jos. 23. 12, 13. 1 Co. 15. 33. ch. 13. 20.

e ch. 6. 1; 11. 15; 17. 18; 20. 16; 27. 13.

f Ex. 22. 26. 2 Ki. 4. 1. ch. 20. 16.

h De. 19. 14; 27. 17. ch. 23. 10. Job 24. 2.

[2] Or, *bound.*

i Lu. 21. 36. 2 Ti. 4. 2. Ro. 10. 11. Ec. 9. 10. ch. 12. 24; 10. 4; 13. 4.

[3] Heb. *obscuremen.*

CHAP. XXIII.

a Ge. 43. 16, 33, 34. 1 Sa. 9. 22. Jude 12.

[1] Consider how readily this rich abundance may tempt and be abused to excess, and how deeply and irreparably that excess may ruin your character and prospects.—*C.*

b Mat. 18. 8, 22. 1 Co. 9. 27.

[2] Put a restraint upon appetite by firm resolution; for you must sacrifice appetite to protect character.—*C.*

c Da. 1. 8. Lu. 21. 34. Phi. 4. 5.

[3] It does not mean that 'the ruler' invites the guest to deceive him by his dainties; but that when dainties are presented to an unrestrained appetite it is their nature to deceive into destructive indulgence.—*C.*

19 That[z] thy trust may be in the LORD, I have made known to thee this day,[7] even to [8]thee.

20 Have[y] not I written to thee excellent things in counsels and knowledge,

21 That I might make thee know the certainty of the words of truth; that thou mightest answer the words of truth to them that send unto thee?[9]

22 Rob[x] not the poor, because he *is* [1]poor; [a]neither oppress the afflicted in the gate;

23 For[b] the LORD will plead their cause, and spoil the soul of those that spoiled them.

24 Make[c] no friendship with an angry man; and with a furious man thou shalt not go;

25 Lest[d] thou learn his ways, and get a snare to thy soul.

26 Be[e] not thou *one* of them that strike hands, *or* of them that are sureties for debts.

27 If[g] thou hast nothing to pay, why should he take away thy bed from under thee?

28 Remove[h] not the ancient land-mark,[2] which thy fathers have set.

29 Seest thou [i]a man diligent in his business? he shall stand before kings; he shall not stand before mean *men*.[3]

CHAPTER XXIII.

WHEN thou[a] sittest to eat with a ruler, consider diligently what *is* before thee:[1]

2 And[b] put a knife to thy throat,[2] if thou *be* a man given to appetite.

3 Be[c] not desirous of his dainties; for they *are* deceitful meat.[3]

4 Labour[d] not to be rich; [e]cease from thine own wisdom.

5 Wilt thou set thine eyes upon[4] that [g]which is not? for *riches* certainly make themselves wings; they fly away as an eagle toward heaven.

d ch. 28. 20. Jn. 6. 27. 1 Ti. 6. 8–10. *e* ch. 26. 12; 3. 5, 7. Ro. 12. 16; 11. 25. [4] *Wilt thou cause thine eyes to fly upon.* *g* 1 Co. 7. 31. Ec. 1. 2; 12. 8. 1 Ti. 6. 17. Ps. 62. 10. ch. 27. 24.

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qualifying men to be useful for God in their generation, and the noted respect and friendship of those among whom we live, are more honourable and comfortable than all the riches of the world. 2. The rich by their wealth and the poor by their labour are mutual supports of each other, and ought to live together in harmony and kindness, as the same Lord made them both, and appointed them their respective conditions. 3. Prudent men foresee calamities or temptations when approaching, and use proper means for securing themselves; but foolish and inconsiderate persons go on securely in their sins and are ruined. 4. True humility and real godliness are the certain way to honour and happiness in this world and in that which is to come. 5. Wicked men meet with much trouble and danger in their sinful ways: but he that takes proper care of his soul shall be preserved therefrom, and enjoy manifold blessings. 6. Let children be carefully instructed in the truths and accustomed to the ways of God as early and earnestly as possible, and they will retain the impression, and practise the same, as long as they live. 7. Rich men domineer over the poor; and they who borrow are obliged to depend on the will and pleasure of the lender. 8. He whose common practice is to do mischief shall be paid in his own coin, with misery and trouble; and at length his power of wronging others shall be taken from him. 9. They who compassionately observe the wants of the poor, and cheerfully relieve them, shall be largely rewarded of God. 10. The removal of graceless persons, who scorn all good counsels, from a society, is an excellent mean to compose the contentions therein, and to prevent strifes and mutual reproaches for the future. 11. He that loves and practises sincerity and plain-heartedness, will recommend himself even to princes, by the piety, pleasantness, and candour of his discourse. 12. God, in his providence, carefully preserves his own oracles and ordinances among men, and provides for, preserves, and honours all who through faith are made wise unto salvation: but he overrules the counsels and designs of the wicked and perfidious. 13. Slothful persons imagine mighty hinderances in the way of their duty, where there are none, or at least very few. 14. Nothing is so dangerous, so eternally dangerous, as the ensnaring flatteries of whorish women, and the enslaving influence of fleshly lust. If a man be ensnared by them, nothing but infinite mercy and power can prevent his utter and everlasting destruction. And seldom are any, who have not provoked the Lord by former wickedness, permitted to fall into these snares. 15. False opinions and bad inclinations adhere so closely to the minds of children, that not only instructions and reproofs, but even seasonable and duly severe chastisements, must remove their obstinate folly. 16. He that by violence or fraud oppresses the poor to enrich himself, or gives to the rich what he took from the poor, or what he should give to relieve their wants, shall himself be reduced to want and beggary. 17. Attend diligently, and consider seriously, the counsels and precepts of wise men, and particularly those given in this book. 18. For it will afford thee great satisfaction heartily to embrace, thoroughly to digest, and faithfully to preserve them in thy mind: and by these means thou wilt be qualified to instruct others in them. 19. Men who are quick and dexterous, but prudent, in despatching whatever business is committed to them, are in a fair way to be preferred to some honourable employment in the service of their prince.

Ver. 7. *The rich ruleth over the poor.* This should not generate either tyranny in the one, or envy in the other. It is an arrangement of Providence for mutual good—the child that obeys is as much blessed as the parent that rules. And so, where rich and poor alike fear God, the poor is as happy as the rich. *C.*

Ver. 15. *The rod of correction.* Be it never forgotten by parents, that 'the rod' signifies not exclusively an instrument of punishment, but authority and power; and that 'correction' consequently is not confined to corporal punishment, but extended to every means by which the mind may be corrected by wise precept, godly example, or rational restraint. *C.*

Ver. 16. *Giveth to the rich.* Giveth bribes to the rich, as is common in eastern despotisms, to induce them to overlook and countenance his oppressions. The whole history of the *pashalics* of Western Asia is a striking commentary upon this important doctrine of sacred political economy. *C.*

Ver. 17. From ver. 17–21 there is either a preface to a new division of the book of Proverbs, or a conclusion from the foregoing instructions. The latter view seems most congenial to ver. 19, 20. *C.*

Ver. 27. This is a warning against dishonest suretiship, by them that have 'nothing to pay.' The deducible rule is the only one consistent with Christian integrity, viz. that no man should be surety for another beyond what he is able and, if need be, willing to pay for him. *C.*

CHAPTER XXIII. Ver. 1. When you are honoured with a seat at the table of a great man, remember that you are in danger if you take not heed to your behaviour, considering what and how you eat, what and how you speak, and to whom. 2. And avoid, as you would avoid death, every approach to intemperance and folly in language, as well as excess in eating and

6 Eat[h] thou not the bread of *him that hath* an [1]evil eye, neither desire thou his dainty meats:

7 For as he thinketh in his heart, so *is* he: Eat[i] and drink, saith he to thee; but his heart *is* not with thee.

8 The morsel *which* thou hast eaten shalt thou vomit up, and lose thy sweet words.[5]

9 Speak[k] not in the ears of a fool; for he will despise the wisdom of thy words.

10 Remove[l] not the old land-mark;[6] and enter not into the fields of the fatherless:

11 For[m] their Redeemer *is* mighty; he shall plead their cause with thee.

12 Apply[o] thine heart unto instruction, and thine ears to the words of knowledge.

13 Withhold[p] not correction from the child; for *if* thou beatest him with the rod, he shall not die.[7]

14 Thou shalt beat him with the rod, and shalt deliver his soul from hell.

15 My[q] son, if thine heart be wise, my heart shall rejoice, even mine:[8]

16 Yea, my reins shall rejoice [r]when thy lips speak right things.

17 Let[s] not thine heart envy sinners: [t]but *be thou* in the fear of the LORD all the day long.

18 For[u] surely there is an end;[9] and thine expectation shall not be cut off.

19 Hear[v] thou, my son, and be wise, and guide thine heart in the way.

20 Be[x] not among wine-bibbers; among riotous eaters of flesh.[1]

21 For[y] the drunkard and the glutton shall come to poverty; and drowsiness shall clothe *a man* with rags.[2]

22 Hearken[z] unto thy father that begat thee, and despise not thy mother when she is old.

23 Buy[a] the truth, and sell *it* not; *also* wisdom, and instruction, and understanding.

A.M. cir. 3029.
B.C. cir. 975.

h Ps.141.4.Da.1.10.
i ch.28.22. De. 15.9. Mat.20.15.Mar.7.22.
j Ps.12.2.55.21.
[1] The man who is niggardly, who grudges every morsel of food consumed at his table, and who yet invites others to eat and drink with him, must have some ulterior object in view. He must aim at something which he could not otherwise obtain. Consequently both he and his feasts ought to be avoided. By eating at his table you place yourself to some extent in his power. It is hard to refuse the request of a host.—*P.*
k ch.9.8;13.1;26.4,5. Mat.7.6.
l De.19.14;27.17. ch. 22.28. Is. 5.8.
[6] Or, *bound.*
m Job 31. 21. ch. 22. 23. Je. 50.34; 51.36. Ps. 12.5.
o ch.2.1, 2;22. 17–19. Eze.33.21. Mat. 13.23. Ja.1.21. Is.55.3. Re. 2. 7,29.
p ch.13.24; 19.18; 22. 15;29.15–17. 1 Co.5.5. 2 Co.10.4.Ep.6.4. Re. 3. 19.He.12.5–11.
[7] See note on ch.13. 24;22.15. And let it be carefully observed by parents, that while this passage seems confined to the 'rod' of corporal punishment, still that rod is not delivered into the hand of brutal passion, but intrusted solely to the hand of parental love.—*C.*
q ch.29.3,10.2;15.20. r Th.2.20.
[8] Or, *even I* will rejoice.
r Ja.3.2.Ep.5.4.Col. 4.4.3 Jn.4.
s Ps.37.1–3,7;73.3,17; ch.3.31;24.1.
t Ps. 4. 4. He. 12. 28. ch.28.14.
u ch.24.14. Je.29.11. Ps.9.18;62.5;37. 37. He. 10. 35;10.19. Lu.10.25.
[9] Or, *reward.*
v ver.12,23,26; ch. 4. 1,10,23.
x Ro.13.13.Ep.5.18. Is.5.11;22.12, 13. Mat. 24.49.
[1] Heb. *of their flesh.*
y Lu.21.34. ch.10.5; 6.9.10:21.17.Re.3.17.
[2] The drunkard wastes his money, his time, his opportunities, his health, his capacity, his temper, his character—and usually terminates his career with the ruin of himself—and if, alas! he have a family, with their ruin likewise.—*C.*
z ch.1.8;2.1;3.1;4.1; 6.20;30.17.Ep.6.1,2.
a Is. 55. 1. ch. 4. 5, 7; 2. 2–4. Mat. 13. 44, 46. Re.3.18. Jude 3. Phi.3. 7–9. Ps.119.72,111,127, 162.

A.M. cir. 3029.
B.C. cir. 975.

b ch.10.1; 15.20; ver. 15,16. Ps. 127. 3–5; 144. 12. Is.44.3–5.1 Th.2.20. 2 Jn.4.3 Jn.4.
c Ps.119.2. Is.44.5; 1. 18;56.3–8;7.2 Co.8.5.
d Ps.119.9,11;107.43. 2 Pe.1.19. Jn.5.39. Is.8. 20.
[3] God the Father must here be the speaker, directing the eyes of a regenerate son to his ways in Jesus Christ. No other father has a right to make the demand, or so confidently to direct to his own ways for guidance to his son.—*C.*
e ch.22.14;23.16,19; 5. 5–11. Ga.4.26. Ec.7.26.
g ch.7.12;139.14–16; 7.26. Ec.7.26.
[4] Or, *as a robber.*
h Is.5.11,12,22;28.1, 3. Hab.2.5. ver.21; ch. 20.1. Mat.24.49. Ep. 5. 18. Le. 17. 2. 1 Co. 6.9, 10. Ga.5.21.
i 1 Th.5.22. ch. 4.14, 15. Job 31.1. Mat.5.28.
j Ro.6.21. Lu.21.34. ver.29. Is.28.1,3;1.20.
[5] Or, *a cockatrice.*
k Eze.16.26–29. Re. 17.4,5.
l Ps.147.26,27. Is.1.3; 42.23,25.
[6] Heb. *in the heart of the sea.*
[7] The bed in the ship (in the midst of the sea) being at the best unsettled. The bed on the mast having additional tossing, with additional danger.—*C.*
n Je.5.3.
o Is.56.12; 22.13; 1.5. De.29.19. 1 Co. 15. 32–34.
[8] Heb. *I knew it not,* Je.5.3.Ep.4.18.
[9] Among the greatest curses of drunkenness is the production of a craving and often a madly ungovernable appetite for more indulgence. —*C.*

CHAP. XXIV.

a Ps.37.1,7; 73.3; 26. 9.ch.23.17;3.31;ver.19.
[1] Be not envious against them, because of their temporary prosperity; above all, do not let their prosperity tempt you to desire to be a partaker of their evil deeds, for the sake of becoming a partner in their ill-gotten gains.—*C.*
[2] *House* is often applied, not merely to a building, but to a family, a kingdom, and to the whole church of God, He. 11. 7. Ps.122.5. He.3.2. 'The wisdom that cometh down from above' alike contributes to the building and stablishing of each.—*C.*

24 The[b] father of the righteous shall greatly rejoice; and he that begetteth a wise *child* shall have joy of him.

25 Thy father and thy mother shall be glad, and she that bare thee shall rejoice.

26 My son, [c]give me thine heart, and [d]let thine eyes observe my ways.[3]

27 For[e] a whore *is* a deep ditch; and a strange woman *is* a narrow pit.

28 She[g] also lieth in wait as *for* a prey,[4] and increaseth the transgressors among men.

29 Who[h] hath woe? who hath sorrow? who hath contentions? who hath babbling? who hath wounds without cause? who hath redness of eyes?

30 They that tarry long at the wine; they that go to seek mixed wine.

31 Look[i] not thou upon the wine when it is red, when it giveth his colour in the cup, *when* it moveth itself aright:

32 At[j] the last it biteth like a serpent, and stingeth like an adder.[5]

33 Thine[k] eyes shall behold strange women, and thine heart shall utter perverse things:

34 Yea, [l]thou shalt be as he that lieth down in the midst of the sea,[6] or as he that lieth upon the top of a mast.[7]

35 They[n] have stricken me, *shalt thou say, and* I was not sick; they have beaten me, *and* [o]I felt *it* not:[8] when shall I awake? I will seek it yet [9]again.

CHAPTER XXIV.

BE not thou [a]envious against evil men, neither desire to be with them;[1]

2 For[b] their heart studieth destruction, and their lips talk of mischief.

3 Through[c] wisdom is an house builded,[2] and by understanding it is established;

4 And by knowledge shall the chambers be filled with [d]all precious and pleasant riches.

b Es.3.6,7. Ex.1.10.Ps.10.7; 31.13; 64.2,3;56.5,6;57.3,4;109.2–5.
c ch.14.1;3.13–19;4.5–13;8.18–21;9.1. 1 Ti.4.8. *d* ch.20.15.

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drinking; and so much the more if thou art given to such weakness. 3. Never show a fondness for delicate provision; for it often betrays men into excess, or into some indecent unwarrantable behaviour. 4. Never labour immoderately with heart or hand to obtain riches; and never depend on thy own prudent management, but on God himself, for the success of thy undertakings. 5. Never set thy mind or affections upon riches, nor pursue with eagerness what perhaps thou canst never attain; for if thou dost, they may suddenly and irrecoverably be taken from thee, and become witnesses against thee before God, with respect to thy guilt in pursuing or abusing them. 6. Never receive an obligation from a sordid, covetous, and churlish wretch; and never let the best cheer tempt thee to accept of his invitation to a feast: 7. For he is to be judged of by the disposition of his heart, not by his fair words. And while he flatters and urges thee to eat, he has no real kindness for thee, nor in the least wishes thee to make use of his provision. 8. When thou seest his sordid carriage, it will make thee repent thy tasting of his dainty meats, or paying any regard to his kind but deceitful compliments. 9. The wisest counsels and reproofs, addressed to fools and scorners, will be but contemned and trampled under their feet. 10, 11. Never encroach upon the property of the fatherless or others who have no help in man: for the Almighty God will take their part, redress their grievances, and revenge the injuries done to them. 12–16. If parents carefully instruct and correct, and children seriously regard and receive their instruction, and submit to their correction, it will greatly promote the happiness and comfort of both. 17, 18. Never envy the prosperity of sinners; but study to live in favour and in humble fellowship with God. Thus shall thy troubles quickly have an end, and the expected blessings of eternity be enjoyed by thee, while the prosperity of sinners shall be turned into everlasting misery. 19–21. Carefully study true wisdom, and let thine heart be exercised in faith and holiness. Avoid all intimacy with intemperate persons; for they and their slothful brethren will quickly reduce themselves to outward and even eternal misery. 22–25. Pay the utmost regard to the instructions, reproofs, and good example of parents: spare no pains or cost to know, embrace, and hold fast the truths of God; to find out and walk in the true way of salvation, and to grow in the knowledge of Christ, and never part with it upon any account. Thus shalt thou be a remarkable blessing and comfort to thy parents. 26–28. Receive my counsels with thy whole heart, that it may be filled with and fixed on a God in Christ; and carefully observe and follow my directions and example. Thus shalt thou be delivered from whorish women, by whose enticements multitudes are seduced into manifold wickedness and irrecoverable ruin. 29–35. Carefully avoid all drunkenness, and every occasion of or temptation to it, as it occasions bloody quarrels, inflames fleshly lusts, and animates to whoredom: it fills the mouth with obscene, rude, profane, or senseless discourse; it renders the head stupid and giddy; it hardens men in wickedness; and, in fine, issues in misery both here and hereafter.

Ver. 6. *Niggardliness* and *hospitality* are not unfrequently combined in the same person. This hospitality, however, originates not in kindness, but in ostentation. With such contradictory characters form no intimacy: what is essentially evil cannot come to good. *C.*

Ver. 23. *Buy the truth* by the expenditure of attentive hearing, earnest prayer, diligent study, unreserved obedience, devoted zeal, cheerful self-denial—in all 'looking unto Jesus,' and depending upon the promise and gift of his teaching Spirit, whom he has freely promised to all who 'ask.'—*Sell it not* to appetites, to indolence, to vanity, to pride, to covetousness—whereby Satan ever seeks to 'catch away' the seed of truth from the heart, Mat. 13. 19. *C.*

CHAPTER XXIV. Ver. 1. Never envy the prosperity of wicked men, nor desire any intimacy or connection with them. 2. For they contrive and labour to ruin others that themselves may become rich and great; and by lies, calumnies, and the like, they labour to undo them: but such conduct will at last bring destruction upon their own head. 3–6. True godliness, attended with prudence and diligence, is the proper method to procure estates, raise families, get wealth, strength, or victory. 7. Solid knowledge, and serious and sensible discourse, are above the reach of foolish inconsiderate persons; nor can they judge or advise to any purpose in public concerns. 8. The more art and contrivance there is in doing evil, the more malignity

5 A[e] wise man *is*[3] strong; yea, a man of knowledge increaseth strength.[4]

6 For[g] by wise counsel thou shalt make thy war: and in multitude of counsellors *there is* safety.[5]

7 Wisdom[h] *is* too high for a fool; he openeth not his mouth in the gate.

8 He[i] that deviseth to do evil[6] shall be called a mischievous person.

9 The[j] thought of foolishness *is* sin; and the scorner *is* an abomination to men.

10 *If*[k] thou faint in the day of adversity, thy strength *is* small.[7]

11 If[l] thou forbear to deliver *them that are* drawn unto death, and *those that are* ready to be slain;

12 If thou sayest, Behold, we knew it not; doth not he that [m]pondereth the heart consider *it?* and he [o]that keepeth thy soul, doth *not* he know *it?* and shall *not* he render to *every* man according [r]to his works?

13 My son, [q]eat thou honey, because *it is* good; and the honey-comb, *which is* sweet to thy taste:[8]

14 So[r] *shall* the knowledge of wisdom *be* unto thy soul: when thou hast found *it*, [s]then there shall be a reward, and thy expectation shall not be cut off.

15 Lay[t] not wait, O wicked *man*, against the dwelling of the righteous; spoil not his resting-place:

16 For[u] a just *man* falleth seven times, and riseth up again: but the wicked shall fall into mischief.

17 Rejoice[v] not when thine enemy falleth, and let not thine heart be glad when he stumbleth;

18 Lest the LORD see *it*, and it displease him,[9] and he turn away his wrath from him.[1]

19 [x]Fret[2] not thyself because of evil *men*, neither be thou envious at the wicked:

20 For[y] there shall be no reward to the evil *man;* [z]the candle[3] of the wicked shall be put out.

21 My son, [a]fear thou the LORD and the king; *and* meddle not with them[4] that are given to change:[5]

22 For[b] their calamity shall rise suddenly; and who knoweth the ruin of them both?

23 These[c] *things* also *belong* to the wise. *It* [d]*is* not good to have respect of persons in judgment.

24 He[e] that saith unto the wicked, Thou *art* righteous; him shall the people curse, nations shall abhor him:

25 But[g] to them that rebuke *him* shall be delight, and a good blessing[6] shall come upon them.

26 *Every*[h] *man* shall kiss *his* lips that giveth a right answer.[7]

27 Prepare[i] thy work without, and make it fit for thyself in the field; and afterwards build thine house.[8]

28 Be[j] not a witness against thy neighbour without cause; and deceive *not* with thy lips.

29 Say[k] not, I will do so to him as he hath done to me; I will render to the man according to his work.

30 I[l] went by the field of the slothful, and by the vineyard of the man void of understanding;

31 And,[n] lo, it was all grown over with thorns, *and* nettles had covered the face thereof, and the stone-wall thereof was broken down.

32 Then I saw, *and* considered[9] *it* well; I looked upon *it*, [o]*and* received instruction.

33 *Yet*[p] a little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to sleep:

34 So[q] shall thy poverty come *as* one that travelleth; and thy want as an armed man.[1]

CHAPTER XXV.

1 *Observations about kings,* 8 *and about avoiding causes of quarrels and sundry causes thereof.*

THESE *are* also [a]proverbs of Solomon, which the men of [b]Hezekiah king of Judah copied out.[1]

2 *It*[c] *is* the glory of God to conceal a thing: [d]but the honour of kings *is* to search out a matter.

3 The[e] heaven for height, and the earth for depth, and the heart of kings [2]*is* [3]unsearchable.

4 Take[g] away the dross from the silver, and there shall come forth a vessel for the finer.

5 Take[h] away the wicked *from* before the

A.M. cir. 3029. B.C. cir. 975.

e ch.21.22.2Sa.20.16, Ec.9.14-16.Col.1.11;3. 10;2.19.

3 Heb. is *in strength.*

4 Heb. *strengtheneth might.*

g ch.11.14; 15.22; 20. 18.Lu.14.31,32.

5 See note on ch. 11.14.—*C.*

h 1 Co.2.14. Ps.10.5. ch.14.6.

i ch.14.22;23.7; 6.14, 18.Is.32.7.Ps.41.7.

6 A man without thought may casually do an injury; but he that, of deliberate purpose, devises evil for the sake of annoyance or revenge, shall be called mischievous, an image of Satan, a liar, an evil plotter, a murderer from the beginning.—*C.*

j Mat.5.28. Ac.8.22. Ge.6.5; 8.21. ch.22.10. Mat.15.19.ver.8.

k He.12.5. Ho.7.11. 1 Sa.27.1.

7 Heb. *narrow.*

l Ps. 82. 4. ch. 14. 25. Is.58.6,7. 1 Jn.3.17. Ja. 2.15,16; 5.19,20.2 Ti. 2. 26.

m Je.17. 10. Ps. 17. 3; 26.2;139. 1,23;147. 5.

o Job 7. 20. Ps. 16. 1; 17.5,8;121.3-8.

p Job 34.11. Ps.62.12. Je. 32. 19. Ro.2. 6. Re. 22.12.

q Is.7.15,22. Ca. 5.1. Mat.3.4.ch.25.16.

8 Heb. *upon thy palate.*

r Ps. 19, 10; 119. 103. Je.15.16.ch.3.17;16.24.

s ch.23.18. Ps. 58.11; 9. 18. Mat. 19. 28, 29. 1 Co.15.58.

t Ps.10.8,9;37.32; 56. 6;59.3; 140. 4,5; 142.3. 1 Sa.19.11.

u Job 5.19. Ps.34.19; 37.24.Mi.7.8-20.Am.5. 2;8.14.Es.7.10.

v Job31.29.Ps.35.15; 41.8,11.ch.17.5. Ro.12. 19.

9 Heb. *it be evil in his eyes,* Ob. 12. Zec. 1.15.

1 Lest he transfer the judgment to thee, as the leprosy of Naaman was transferred to Gehazi.—*C.*

x Ps.37.1,7;73.3. ch. 23.17. Je.12.1.ver.1.

2 Or, *Keep not company with the wicked.*

y Ps.11.6. Is.3.11.

3 Or, *lamp.*

4 Heb. *changers.*

5 Not as condemning all change; for change may be good, as was the glorious and blessed Reformation. But the warning is, meddle not with them that are 'given to change;' who are the slaves, the very worshippers of change for its own sake—never resting in any opinion, principle, or arrangement; never satisfied with what is planted, till they have plucked it up; never satisfied with what is builded, till they have pulled it down; and never aware of their danger till the tree they are uprooting falls upon their head, and the house they are undermining overwhelms them in its ruins.—*C.*

A.M. cir. 3029. B.C. cir. 975.

b Nu.xvi. 2 Sa.xviii. xx. 1 Ki.i. 1 Th. 5. 3. 2 Pe.2.13.

c ch.25.1.

d Le.19.15.De.1.17; 16.19.ch.18.5;28.21. Jn. 7.24. Ro.2.11. Je.2.1. 1 Ti.5.21.

e ch. 17. 15. Is. 5. 23. Eze.13.22. Ex.23.7.

g Ps.15.4.Mat.14.4.

6 Heb. *a blessing of good.*

h Da.2.48;5.29.

7 Heb. *that answereth right words.*

i 1 Ki.5. 18; 6. 7. Lu. 14.28,29.

8 This proverb teaches prudence and forethought in everything—in business, in controversy, in ecclesiastical plans and schemes. Before any new work is undertaken we ought to seek counsel of God, and consider well whether we have the agencies and power necessary to carry it out.—*P.*

j Ex.20.16;23.1. Ep. 4.25.Col.3.9. Le.19.11. ch.19.5,9;14.5.

k ch.20.22.Mat.5.39 -45.Ro.12.17,19. Ep.4. 31,32.ver.17.

l Ps.37.25.ch.6.6-11. Ca.1.6.

n ch.19.24; 21.25;22. 13. Ec. 10. 18. Ge.3.18. Mat.13.22.He.6.8.

9 Heb. *set my heart.*

o De.13.11;32.29.Ps. 4.4.1 Co.10.6,11.

p ch.6.9, &c.

q ch.10.4;13.4;20.4.

1 Heb. *a man of shield.*

CHAP. XXV.

a ch.1.1;10.1. 1 Ki.4. 32.

b 2 Ki. xviii.-xx. 2 Ch.xxix.-xxxii.

1 This is the commencement of the third division of the book. The proverbs in this division resemble to some extent those in the second; but there are noticeable differences. The verses in the second division consist generally of two antithetical members; in this division the two members are parabolic rather than antithetical. We notice a parallelism similar to that which characterizes Hebrew poetry. The proverbs, too, as a rule, are longer; sometimes they extend to two, three, and even more verses. There is also a topical connection in some of them, which is not observed in the proverbs of the second division. Another characteristic is that they are directed to the whole body of the people, whereas the former were chiefly designed for the young.—*P.*

c De.29.29. Ro.11.33.

2 Heb. there is *no searching,* 1 Ki.4.29.

3 The means of power for good or for evil, and its versatility, amidst conflicting opinions and interests, is utterly beyond search or calculation.—*C.*

d 1 Ki.3.9-28;4.29-34,&c. Job 29.16. *e* Job 11.8; 35.5. Je.31.37. *g* 2 Ti.2.21. Job 28.1. Mal.3.3. Is.1.25-27. *h* ch.20.8. Es.7.10;8.1.

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is there in it: and the doer ought to be held as ignominious and detestable. 9. The inclination to and contrivance of evil is sin; but he that makes a sport of sin, and contemns reproofs for it, ought to be abhorred by every person. 10. To give up all for lost, and be discouraged from duty, in the time of distress, is a great evidence of weakness in knowledge, wisdom, courage, and grace. 11, 12. If, pretending that thou didst not know their case or how to relieve them, thou neglectest to exert thyself for the deliverance of persons who, by hatred, envy, or false accusations, are in danger of losing their life, remember that God, who knows all the secrets of thy heart, who preserves thy soul in life, and observes all the motions of it, will severely punish thee, and give thee up to similar distress. 13, 14. As the most delightful satisfaction and nourishment are found in eating of honey, especially that pure part of it which drops from the comb, so shall solid and spiritual wisdom and knowledge be pleasant and profitable to thy soul, issuing in abundant present and eternal happiness, answerable to and even far exceeding thy most enlarged expectations. 15, 16. To attempt by craft or violence to ruin the righteous, even under their affliction, is as vain as it is malicious: for though they may frequently fall into sin, when they repent the Lord again raises them up: but wicked men, refusing to repent of sin, are plunged into irretrievable ruin. 17, 18. Never rejoice, no, not in heart, when any private enemy of thine falls into sin or trouble, lest the Lord be thereby provoked to deliver him, and plunge thee into the miserable condition from which he is recovered. 19, 20. Never envy the prosperity of wicked men, nor be enticed to follow their impieties on account of it; for whatever may be their appearance, they can have no real happiness here, nor anything but eternal misery hereafter: and often their blaze of outward prosperity is quickly extinguished, and either they or their seed reduced to wretchedness even in this life. 21, 22. Always reverence, worship, and obey God as thy own God in Christ; and be humbly obedient to magistrates, as his deputies on earth. Never have anything to do with those who appear fond of novelties, either in religion or in civil government; for unexpected and inconceivably dreadful calamities shall unavoidably and violently seize upon such, and upon their associates. 23. If thou wouldest be and appear wise, abhor it as a thing extremely sinful and ruinous, to regard persons in judgment on account of anything else but the merits of their cause. 24. Whoever, contrary to evidence, pronounces a wicked man innocent, or a bad cause to be good, exposes himself to the curses and detestation of men, and the fearful judgment of God. 25. But they who labour earnestly to check vice by the just punishment of evil-doers, shall have satisfaction in their own mind, and shall be remarkably blessed of God, and prayed for and commended by men. 26. Every person will highly honour and dearly love him who speaks the plain, naked, edifying, and seasonable truth, whether as a judge, a witness, or private person. 27. Never undertake or begin any weighty affair without

king, and his throne shall be established in righteousness.

6 'Put[4] not forth thyself in the presence of the king, and stand not in the place of great *men:*

7 For[j] better *it is* that it be said unto thee, Come up hither, than that thou shouldest be put lower in the presence of the prince whom thine eyes have seen.

8 Go[k] not forth hastily to strive, lest *thou know not* what to do in the end thereof, when thy neighbour hath put thee to shame.

9 Debate[l] thy cause with thy neighbour *himself;* and discover not a secret to another:[5]

10 Lest he that heareth *it* put thee to shame, and[n] thine infamy turn not away.

11 A[o] word fitly spoken[6] *is like* apples of gold in pictures of silver.

12 *As*[p] an ear-ring of gold, and an ornament of fine gold, *so is* a wise reprover upon an obedient ear.

13 As[q] the cold of snow in the time of harvest, *so is* a faithful messenger to them that send him; for he refresheth the soul of his masters.[7]

14 Whoso[r] boasteth himself [8]of a false gift,[9] *is like* clouds and wind without rain.

15 By[s] long forbearing is a prince persuaded, and a soft tongue breaketh the bone.

16 Hast[t] thou found honey? [u]eat so much as is sufficient for thee, lest thou be filled therewith, and vomit it.

17 [v]Withdraw[1] thy foot from thy neighbour's house, lest he be weary of thee,[2] and *so* hate thee.

A.M. cir. 3029.
B.C. cir. 975.

i Ps.75.6;131.1.

4 Heb. *Set not out thy glory.*

j Lu.14.8–11. ch. 16. 19.

k ch. 17. 14. Ja. 4. 1. ch.13.10;10.12;18.6;30. 33.R0.6.21.

l Mat. 5. 25; 18. 15. 1 Co.13.3,4.

5 Or, *discover not the secret of another.*

n ch.6.33.

o ch.15.23. Is. 50.4. 1 Co.9.20.

6 Heb. *spoken upon his wheels.*

p Ps.141.6.ch.9.8;15. 31;28.23;27.6;1.8,9. Is. 50.4. 1a.25.31.

q ch. 13. 17; ver. 25, Job 33.23. Mal.3.1.

7 In Palestine harvest begins in April, and is all gathered in by the middle of July. This is the hottest season of the year; and as from the middle of May onwards there is no rain, and the sky is entirely cloudless, cool drinks are most refreshing to the weary labourers. Those only who have during the long day borne the heat of a Syrian sun can fully appreciate the force and beauty of this proverb.—*P.*

r Lu.18.10, &c.1 Ki. 22.11. ch.20.6. Lu. 4.6. Jude 11,12. 2 Pe. 2. 17, 18.

8 Heb. *in a gift of falsehood.*

9 A favour promised, but never bestowed, by one who had it in the power of his hand.—*C.*

s Ge.32. 4, &c. 1 Sa. 25.28;24.16. ch.15.1; 16.14.

t ch.24.13. Is.7.15,22. Ps. 81, 16. De. 32. 13. 1 Sa. 14 25, 27. Mat.3.4. Ex.3.8.ver.27.

u 1 Co.7.29,30;9. 25. 1.11.21.34.

v 1 Th. 4. 11. 1 Ti. 5. 13. Tit.2.5.

1 Or, *Let thy foot be seldom in thy neighbour's house.*

2 Heb. *full of thee.*

* A city thus unprotected was exposed to sudden raids, and open to the assault of every foe. So is it with the passionate man. He gives free license to temper, tongue, and act. The adversary can thus assail him at every point.—*P.*

x Ps.120.4;55.21;140. 3;57.4.ch.12.18.

3 The 'maul' or mace, the sword and arrow, were the weapons of war most in use among the people of Palestine. A false witness is likened to the whole three. The danger he creates, and the injury he inflicts, are thus most graphically portrayed.—*P.*

y 2 Ti. 4. 16. Mat.26. 46,70. Is. 36.6. Eze.29. 7,16.

z Da.6.18.Ro.12.15.

a Ex.23.4,5. Ro. 12. 20,21.2Sa.16.12.2 Ki.6. 20. Mat.5.44.

b Job 37.22.

4 Or, *The north wind bringeth forth rain; so doth a backbiting tongue an angry countenance.*

c Ps.15.3. Ro.1.30. 2 Co.12.20.

d ch. 19. 13; 21. 9, 19; 27.15.

e Je.18.14. Ge.45.26, 28.Ps.42.1, with Lu.2. 10, 11. Mat. 11. 28–30. Jn.7.37. Re.22.17. 1 Ti. 1.15.Ps.89.15.

f Mi.7.8. Mat.26.69–71. Ju.xvi.

h ver. 16. ch. 24. 13; 27.2. 1 Ju.14. 11.

i ch.16.32; 22.24; 17. 12; 27.3. 1 Sa.25.17. Ps. 106.33.

5 See note * in first column.

CHAP. XXVI.

a Ec.3.1,11. 1 Sa.12. 17.

b Ps.15.4;12.8. Es.3. 1.1 Sa.2.30.

1 During the harvest, that is, from April to July, snow is altogether unknown in Palestine; and with the exception of an occasional slight shower in April, rain never falls. All the operations of harvest, including threshing and winnowing, are performed in the open air; during the whole harvest period also, three-fourths of the people live and sleep in the open air; consequently rain or snow would be most inopportune and destructive.—*P.*

18 A[x] man that beareth false witness against his neighbour *is* a maul, and a sword, and a sharp arrow.[3]

19 Confidence[y] in an unfaithful man in time of trouble *is like* a broken tooth, and a foot out of joint.

20 *As* he that taketh away a garment in cold weather, *and as* vinegar upon nitre; [z]so *is* he that singeth songs to an heavy heart.

21 If[a] thine enemy be hungry, give him bread to eat; and if he be thirsty, give him water to drink:

22 For thou shalt heap coals of fire upon his head, and the LORD shall reward thee.

23 The[b] north wind driveth away rain;[4] so *doth* an angry countenance [c]a backbiting tongue.

24 *It*[d] *is* better to dwell in a corner of the house-top, than with a brawling woman, and in a wide house.

25 *As*[e] cold waters to a thirsty soul, so *is* good news from a far country.

26 A[g] righteous man falling down before the wicked *is as* a troubled fountain, and a corrupt spring.

27 *It*[h] *is* not good to eat much honey; so *for men* to search their own glory *is not* glory.

28 He[i] that *hath* no rule over his own spirit *is like* a city *that is* broken down. *and* without walls.[5]

CHAPTER XXVI.

1 *Observations about fools,* 13 *about sluggards,* 17 *and about contentious busybodies.*

AS snow[a] in summer, and as rain in harvest; so[b] honour is not seemly for a fool.[1]

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deliberate thought and sufficient preparation. 28. Never rashly or groundlessly affirm or insinuate anything to the hurt of thy neighbour's character: and never entice any one to believe or say ill of him. 29. Never, either in heart, word, or deed, revenge the injuries done to thee. 30–34. And from the misery and want which others have brought upon themselves, by their negligence, sloth, or misspending of time, learn earnestly to avoid these things, as ruinous to thy outward estate, as well as to the spiritual and eternal happiness of thy soul.

Ver. 14. *The knowledge of wisdom*—the knowledge of Christ, 'the power of God, and the wisdom of God,' revealed to Old Testament saints in prophecies and types, not so clearly to the Jewish, but yet as certainly, as to the Christian church. *C.*

Ver. 16. *A just man falleth seven times,* &c. He falleth six times into trouble, sorrow, disappointments, and various calamities in worldly labours and affairs, arising sometimes from his own mistake or oversights, sometimes from others; a seventh time into religious afflictions (for such is the ordinary import of the *seventh,* as derived from the Sabbath), and these fallings may include mental anguish for himself, his friends, yea, his enemies, or the church—or they may include persecutions for the sake of truth and righteousness. Still he shall rise again, being helped of God, who will graciously perfect strength in his creature's weakness. *C.*

Ver. 26. Either he that giveth a right answer to a judge, whereby truth and justice are settled; or a right answer to an inquirer, whereby knowledge is extended; or a right answer to a caviller and false accuser, whereby iniquity is exposed, and innocence and right protected. *C.*

Ver. 30–32. *I went by the field of the slothful . . . and received instruction.* 'There is no darkness, nor shadow of death, where the workers of iniquity may hide themselves,' Job 34. 22. Do as they may, they are detected even by the eye of man. Thorns, nettles, and broken walls whisper the story of their owner's indolence, and point out the invisible spectre, poverty, as he advances in the guise of a hungry traveller, and discover the gleaming of those resistless arms with which he will soon destroy his thoughtless and self-devoted victim. *C.*

CHAPTER XXV. Ver. 2. It is the glory of God that his counsels are unfathomable, and his works, either of creation and providence, so mysterious, that the wisest on earth cannot comprehend their nature, reason, or ends: but it is the honour of kings diligently to search the Scriptures, thoroughly to examine intricate causes, and dive into plots and conspiracies, or fully to display the reasons of their actions. 3. But vulgar minds can no more judge of the secret reasons of statesmen, than they can perfectly search and measure the heavens and the earth. 4, 5. As silver, when purified from its dross, may be framed into whatever vessels the founder pleases; so kingdoms may be established in the most virtuous and happy forms, when wicked persons are removed from the counsels and company of kings. 6, 7. Never ambitiously affect or thrust thyself into courts, or any places or stations that belong not to thee; for it will be more honourable and satisfying to be invited to them, than to be disgracefully thrust from the honours which thou hast arrogated to thyself, and that in the presence of the prince unto whom thou hast approached too near. 8–10. Never enter into any contention till thou hast well considered the goodness and weight of thy cause, and how to manage it, lest in the issue thou be plunged into perplexity and covered with shame. And, if it be possible, make up matters privately, even where thy cause is good. And never let anger or hatred provoke thee to discover thy neighbour's secrets in order to disgrace him, lest such as hear of it not only reproach thee for thy perfidiousness, but even retort upon thee such shameful conduct, which will render thee infamous through life. 11, 12. A wise instruction, advice, reproof, or word of comfort, seasonably and properly given, is comely, valuable, and ornamental: and scarcely can anything be more ornamental in life than a ready and humble hearkening and submitting to wise and seasonable reproof. 13. Cold drink or air in harvest is not more grateful and refreshing to the reapers, than good servants or ambassadors are to their masters, by their speedy despatch of the important business committed to them, and faithful report of their success. 14. It is extremely empty and deceiving to boast of graces, virtues, or abilities which we have not, or to promise what we cannot or care not to perform. 15. By patient submission and expectation princes are most readily pacified and persuaded: and humble, soft, and affectionate language bows the most stiff and hardened tempers, and overcomes even stubborn resolutions to the contrary. 16. Created comforts and pleasures are very agreeable if used in due moderation; but otherwise they lose their relish and plunge us into guilt and trouble. 17. To maintain a friendly intercourse with our neighbours is dutiful and pleasant; but too many, too long, or unseasonable visits render us disagreeable and disliked. 18. Slander and a bearing false witness are most dangerous and murderous means of destroying our neighbour. 19. Confidence in an unfaithful person in the time of trouble will, to our great anguish and grief, entirely disappoint us of help or relief. 20. As taking away clothes in winter increases our sense of cold, and vinegar irritates nitre, so unseasonable mirth renders a sad heart still more sorrowful. 21, 22. In time of need always render good for evil; and kindly bestow necessary supplies on such as have injured thee: thus shalt thou soften their rage, slay their hatred, and gain their affections; and the Lord shall reward thee with blessings, while he fearfully punishes them if they continue obstinate. 23. As the north wind in many countries dispels clouds and prevents rain, so frowns and rebukes check reproachful slandering and lying. 24. It is better to live cooped up in a corner, exposed to all the injuries of the weather, than in a large family and stately palace with a contentious, brawling, and scolding wife. 25. Good and certain news from a far country, where our friends and fortunes are, is expected with impatience, heard with delight, and believed and thought on with refreshing pleasure; but especially the gospel, which brings from God the blessed tidings of pardon, peace, grace, and

2 As the bird by wandering, as the swallow by flying; [c]so the curse causeless shall not come.

3 A[d] whip for the horse, a bridle for the ass, and a rod for the fool's back.

4 Answer[e] not a fool according to his folly,[2] lest thou also be like unto him.

5 Answer[g] a fool according to his folly,[3] lest he be wise in his own conceit.[4]

6 He[h] that sendeth a message by the hand of a fool cutteth off the feet, *and* drinketh [5]damage.[6]

7 The legs of the lame are not [7]equal; [i]so *is* a parable in the mouth of fools.

8 As he that bindeth a stone in a [8]sling, [j]so *is* he that giveth honour to a fool.[9]

9 *As*[k] a thorn goeth up into the hand of a drunkard, so *is* a parable in the mouth of fools.[1]

10 The great *God*, that formed all *things*, both[l] rewardeth the fool, and rewardeth transgressors.[2]

11 As[n] a dog returneth to his vomit; *so* a fool returneth to his folly.[3]

12 Seest[o] thou a man wise in his own conceit? *there is* more hope of a fool than of him.

13 The[p] slothful *man* saith, *There is* a lion in the way, a lion *is* in the streets.

14 *As*[q] the door turneth upon his hinges; so *doth* the slothful upon his bed.

15 The[r] slothful hideth his hand in *his* bosom; it grieveth him[4] to bring it again to his mouth.[5]

A.M. cir. 3029.
B.C. cir. 975.

c Nu.23.8.Re.13.5,6. Ps.109.28.Je.15.10,11.

d Ps. 32. 9. ch.10.13. Jn. 2. 15. 1 Co. 4. 21. 2 Co.10.6.

e Mat. 7. 6. Lu.23.8. Is.36.21.ch.9.7,8.

[2] *Answer not a fool according to his folly*—that is, in a foolish spirit and manner.—*C.*

g Mat.21.24; 16.1–4. Tit.1.13.

[3] *Answer a fool according to his folly*—that is, with such wisdom, temper, and reproof, as may prevent the production of his self-conceit.—*C.*

[4] Heb. *his own eyes.*

h ch.13.17;10.26.Nu. 13.31.

[5] Or, *violence.*

[6] Employs a disqualified agent, and is disappointed.—*C.*

[7] Heb. *are lifted up.*

i ch.17.7. Ps. 50. 16; 64.8.ver.9.

[8] Or, *As he that putteth a* precious *stone in a heap of stones.*

j Ps. 15. 4. ch. 30. 22; 19.10;27.7;ver.1.

[9] The marginal reading must be followed; for not even a fool would *bind* a stone in a sling.—*C.*

k See ver.7.

[1] See note * below.

l ch. 11. 31. Ro. 2. 6. Re.22.12.

[2] Or, *A great* man *grieveth all, and he hireth the fool, he hireth also transgressors.*

n 2 Pe.2.22.Ex.8.15.

[3] Heb. *iterateth his folly.*

o Lu.18.11. Re.3.17. ver.16.Ro.12.16.ch.28. 11;29.20.Mat.21.31.

p ch. 22. 13; 15. 19. Mat.22.5.

q ch.6.9,10; 24.33. 2 Ti.3.7.

r ch.19.24;12.27.

[4] Or, *he is weary.*

[5] See note on ch. 19. 24.—*C.*

* His senseless drunkenness tempts him to seize the thorn; his ungoverned violence wounds himself more and more. And so is the fool who would teach wisdom when he should be an humble listener.—*C.*

s ver. 12. Lu. 18. 11. Ec.10.14.ch.12.15.

t ch.13.10; 17.14; 18. 6,7;22.10;25.8;30.33.

[6] He increases the noise, and risks being torn.—*C.*

[7] Heb. *flames* or *sparks.*

u ch.14.9; 16.23. Ep. 5.4.

[8] Heb. *without wood.*

v ch.22.10;16.28;ver. 22. Ja.3.6. Le.19.16. 1 Ti.5.13.

[9] Or, *whisperer.*

[1] Heb. *is silent.*

x ch.15.18; 20.12; 30. 33;29.22.Nu.16.1.

y ch.18. 8; 22. 13; 20. 19.Eze.22.9.

[2] Heb. *chambers.*

z ch. 10. 18; ver. 24–26.2Sa.15.3,4.Mat.2.8.

[3] Rather, 'shining lips,' lips which give forth pleasant and beautiful words, lips which are ever wreathed with a smile, lips whose language and grace serve only to conceal the bitterness and hatred which lurk within. The succeeding verses are a development of the same sentiment.—*P.*

[4] Or, *is known.* ch. 10.18.Ps.12.2;55.21

a Je. 9. 2–8. Mi. 7. 5. Mat.10.16,17.Ps.12.2.

[5] Heb. *maketh his voice gracious.*

[6] His secular and religious principles are all abominable before God who sees the heart.—*C.*

[7] Or, *hatred is covered in secret.*

b 2 Sa. 13. 22, 26. Ps. 55.21,23.

[8] Either before the 'congregation' of his acquaintances, before 'the church,' or the 'justice courts' of the world.—*C.*

c Ps.7.15,16;9.15;57. 6.ch.28.10.Ec.10.8. Ju. 9.18,33.Es.7.10.

d Es.3.5.

e Ps.12.2. ch.7.21; 1. 10–16;6.24;29.5.

16 The[s] sluggard *is* wiser in his own conceit than seven men that can render a reason.

17 He[t] that passeth by, *and* meddleth with strife *belonging* not to him, *is like* one that taketh a dog by the ears.[6]

18 As a mad *man* who casteth [7]firebrands, arrows, and death,

19 So[u] *is* the man *that* deceiveth his neighbour, and saith, Am not I in sport?

20 Where[8] no wood is, *there* the fire goeth out; so [v]where *there is* no tale-bearer,[9] the strife ceaseth.[1]

21 *As*[x] coals *are* to burning coals, and wood to fire; so *is* a contentious man to kindle strife.

22 The[y] words of a tale-bearer *are* as wounds, and they go down into the innermost parts[2] of the belly.

23 Burning[z] lips,[3] and a wicked heart, *are like* a potsherd covered with silver dross.

24 He that hateth dissembleth[4] with his lips, and layeth up deceit within him:

25 When[a] he speaketh fair,[5] believe him not; for *there are* seven abominations[6] in his heart.

26 *Whose* [7]hatred[b] is covered by deceit, his wickedness shall be showed before the *whole* congregation.[8]

27 Whoso[c] diggeth a pit shall fall therein; and he that rolleth a stone, it will return upon him.

28 A[d] lying tongue hateth *those that are* afflicted by it; [e]and a flattering mouth worketh ruin.

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salvation. 26. When righteous men are decoyed into scandalous sins, or are degraded from their influence and authority, and oppressed and persecuted, it is as hurtful to a church or nation as if the public fountains were corrupted and poisoned. 27. To hunt after worldly applause and honours, however sweet they be to corrupt nature, is extremely disgraceful and dangerous. 28. And to be furious and passionate renders us useless and miserable.

Ver. 1. *Men of Hezekiah.* Who the 'men of Hezekiah' were is unknown; and in such cases conjecture is useless. Nor would the knowledge be of any value, for the object of the record is not to give authority to these proverbs, but to remind the wise men of one generation to preserve and copy out for circulation the wisdom of a foregoing generation.—*Note,* It is thus God has given grace to the Protestant churches to multiply and circulate so many millions of copies of the Holy Scriptures in almost all languages of the earth. *C.*

Ver. 9. In perfect accordance with that precept of our Saviour, 'If thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone,' Mat. 18. 15.—Every confidential secret implies a trust; and he that reveals it, even to his most intimate friend, thereby teaches that friend to divulge it to another, and is thus most likely to be brought to shame as an idle babbler or unfaithful steward. *C.*

Ver. 11. Holden and others interpret the passage of oranges, citrons, and such golden or precious fruit, produced at feasts in baskets of silver network. But as it contains no mention of taste, the reference seems rather to be to figures of fruit of gold, interspersed amongst branches and leaves of silver, according to the gorgeous style of eastern palaces. *C.*

Ver. 13. *As the cold of snow in the time of harvest.* The snow of the lofty Hermon supplied, throughout the heat of summer and toil of harvest, snow for cooling either wine or water—the most reviving of all cordials under a burning sun. *C.*

Ver. 17. No wise man can be much in his neighbour's house; for any man will find useful employment in his own. And he that imposes himself upon others, because he is weary of himself or of his duty, will soon become a weariness and a nuisance to others. *C.*

Ver. 20. *As vinegar upon nitre.* Vinegar poured on the *nitre* of the ancients (carbonate of soda) causes an instant ebullition in the form of tears. And so does the ill-timed mirth of the fool wring new sorrows from the heavy heart. *C.*

Ver. 22. *Thou shalt heap coals of fire upon his head,* &c. And so extract love from his angry heart, and purify him from his enmity, as 'coals of fire' extract metals from the hard rock, and clear away the dross with which they are commingled. 'The Lord shall reward thee' with thine enemy's conversion, or the peace of thine own conscience. *C.*

Ver. 26. A righteous man, tempted by fear or hope, to flatter and become subservient to the wicked, is sure to trouble his own peace of mind, if not finally to corrupt his principles. Peter trembling before a servant maid, and accommodating his speech to a rude and blasphemous soldiery, is a striking exemplification of this proverb. *C.*

CHAPTER XXVI. Ver. 1. Dignity and authority are very ill placed in the hands of foolish and wicked men, who know not how to use them, but will do mischief to themselves and others by them. 2. Causeless curses and imprecations can hurt the innocent no more than the birds that fly over their heads. 3. Obstinate, stupid, and refractory sinners, like beasts, must, by sharp punishments, be restrained from evil, and excited to good. 4. Answer not an ignorant and impertinent fool in his own brawling and reproachful manner, so as to imitate his impertinence. 5. Answer a proud conceited fool with such strength and evidence of reason as may render him sensible of his folly, and check his pride. 6. He who employs fools or rakes in any important business, deprives himself of the advantage he might have expected, and brings much inconvenience and mischief upon himself. 7. As dancing or walking by a lame man would but manifest his lameness, so the pretences of fools to wisdom do but render them the more ridiculous. 8. Honour bestowed upon fools is very unstable and useless, if not mischievous. 9. Grave, holy, and wise sayings upbraid fools for their impertinence and wickedness, however insensible they may be of the sharpest rebukes. 10. God, and even wise princes, punish sins of ignorance and wilful wickedness in a wise, just, and suitable manner. 11. Foolish sinners quickly, and often shamelessly, return to the very sins for which they have been sharply punished, and of which they have before repented, as grievous and hurtful. 12. There is more hope of the amendment of a sottish man, than of one who is so wise and virtuous in his own conceit that he thinks himself above instruction. 13. They who have no mind to labour, never want pretences for their idleness; and their sluggish fancy represents to them the most improbable and insuperable difficulties. 14. It is almost a toil for such to turn themselves on their bed; and though they seem busy, they do nothing to the purpose. Though they move in the formal round of external duties, they are never a whit nearer to heaven. 15. Pretending cold, or inability, they can scarcely apply to any work; and it is almost a burden for them to take their meat. 16. But though they take no pains to acquire knowledge, they look upon themselves as perfect miracles in wisdom, and treat with absolute contempt every argument that can be used to convince them of their mistakes and danger. 17. It is extremely dangerous to engage in other men's quarrels and disputes, which do not belong to us. 18, 19. To wrong our neighbours, by either word or deed, and then pretend that it was in jest, discovers us to be stupidly insolent and diabolically mad. 20. A proper discouragement of tale-bearers, whisperers, and slanderers, is an effectual mean to prevent contentions, or even to extinguish such as are begun. 21. It is also necessary to avoid contentious persons, who, by their provoking language, kindle up or inflame quarrels, even as one inflamed coal or piece of wood kindles another. 22. The wounds given to men's characters, business, and spirits, by calumnies slyly and secretly spread, are extremely painful and hurtful, and sometimes will scarcely admit of a cure. 23. Malicious and angry language corresponds very well with an envious and wicked heart; and notwithstanding their fine show, scarcely anything is more detestable than affectionate words when used to cover hatred and enmity of heart; nor will the dissimulation pass long undetected. 24–26. Nothing is more common in the world than dissembled professions of regard and affection; and yet nothing more base, and in the end more hurtful and ignominious, to the user. 27. They who labour to destroy their neighbours, whether by fraud or violence, involve themselves in the very mischiefs which they had intended for others. 28. Liars and slanderers chiefly hate those whom they have slandered, fearing that they may avenge themselves; and also those who confute their slanders. And flat-

CHAPTER XXVII.

1 *Observations of self-love,* **5** *of true love,* **11** *of care to avoid offences,* **23** *and of the household care.*

BOAST [a]not thyself of to-morrow;[1] for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth.

2 Let[b] another man praise thee, and not thine own mouth; a stranger, and not thine own lips.[2]

3 A stone *is* heavy,[3] and the sand weighty; but[c] a fool's wrath *is* heavier than them both.

4 Wrath[d] *is* cruel,[4] and anger *is* outrageous; but who *is* able to stand before envy?[5]

5 Open[e] rebuke *is* better than secret love.[6]

6 Faithful[g] *are* the wounds of a friend: [h]but the kisses of an enemy *are* deceitful.[7]

7 The[i] full soul loatheth[8] an honey-comb: but[j] to the hungry soul every bitter thing is sweet.

8 As[k] a bird that wandereth from her nest, so *is* a man that wandereth from his place.

9 Ointment and perfume[9] rejoice the heart; so[l] *doth* the sweetness of a man's friend by hearty counsel.[1]

10 Thine[m] own friend and thy father's friend forsake not; neither go into thy brother's house in the day of thy calamity: *for* better is a neighbour *that is* near than a brother far off.[2]

11 My[o] son, be wise, and make my heart glad, that I may answer him that reproacheth me.[3]

12 A[p] prudent *man* foreseeth the evil, *and* hideth himself: *but* the simple pass on, *and* are punished.

13 Take[q] his garment that is surety for a stranger, and take a pledge of him for a strange woman.[4]

14 He[r] that blesseth his friend with a loud voice, rising early in the morning, it shall be counted a curse to him.[5]

15 A[s] continual dropping in a very rainy day and a contentious woman are alike.

16 Whosoever hideth her hideth the wind, and the ointment of his right hand, *which* bewrayeth *itself.*

17 Iron sharpeneth iron; [t]so a man sharpeneth the countenance of his friend.[6]

18 Whoso[u] keepeth the fig-tree shall eat the fruit thereof; so he [v]that waiteth on his master shall be honoured.

19 As in water face *answereth* to face; [w]so the heart of man to man.

20 Hell[y] and destruction are never[7] full; so [z]the eyes of man are never satisfied.

21 *As*[a] the fining-pot for silver, and the furnace for gold, so *is* a man to his praise.[8]

22 Though[b] thou shouldest bray a fool in a mortar among wheat with a pestle, *yet* will not his foolishness depart from him.

23 Be[c] thou diligent to know the state of thy flocks, *and* look[9] well to thy herds:

24 For[d] riches[1] *are* not for ever; and doth the crown *endure* to every generation?[2]

25 The[e] hay appeareth, and the tender grass showeth itself, and herbs of the mountains are gathered:[3]

26 The[g] lambs *are* for thy clothing, and the goats *are* the price of the field:

27 And[h] *thou shalt have* goats' milk enough

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CHAP. XXVII.

a Ja. 4. 13, &c. 2 Co. 6. 2. Ps. 95. 7. Lu. 12. 19, 20. Is. 56. 12.

1 Heb. *to-morrow day.*

b ch. 25. 27. 2 Co. 10. 12, 18; 12. 11.

2 For a man to boast of his own attainments, principles, sayings, or works—or delightedly to listen to, or anxiously *angle* for, the praises of others, is a sure sign of a weak head and a foolish heart.—*C.*

3 Heb. *heaviest.*

c Da. 3. 19. 1 Jn. 3. 12. Ac. 12. 2, 3.

d Job 5. 2. ch. 6. 34; 10. 12; 30. 30. Ja. 1. 11, 19.

4 Heb. *Wrath* is *cruelty, and anger an overflowing.*

5 Or, *jealousy.*

e ch. 28. 23. Mat. 18. 15. 1 Ti. 5. 20. Lc. 19. 17. Ga. 2. 11.

6 Better than such 'secret love' as winks at faults till their consequences become irreparable.—*C.*

g Ps. 141. 5. Lc. 29. 17. Mat. 18. 15.

h ch. 20. 18; 7. 13; 26. 23–26. 2 Sa. 20. 9.

7 Or, *earnest* or *frequent.*

i Mat. 9. 12. Am. 8. 5.

8 Heb. *treadeth under foot.*

j Job 6. 7. 2 Ki. 4. 39–44. Jn. 6. 9.

k Job 39. 14–16. Is. 16. 2. ch. 21. 16.

9 Ointments and perfumes are much used in many eastern countries; and, at the close of visits, it is common to sprinkle rose water, &c. on departing friends.—*C.*

l Ac. 28. 15. 2 Co. 2. 15.

1 Heb. *from the counsel of the soul.* ch. 11. 24; 15. 22; 12. 15; 24. 26; 20. 18.

m Am. 1. 9. ch. 18. 24; 19. 7; 17. 17. Ob. 12–14.

2 The meaning is, forsake not an old, hereditary, and long tried friend, for a new one, however near the relation, and however strong your claims.—*C.*

3 He that educates his children in the fear of God, can never be justly reproached: for the godly education of children necessarily includes the exemplary discharge of every other duty.—*C.*

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4 See note on ch. 20. 16.—*C.*

r Ac. 12. 22, 23. 1 Ki. 22. 6. Ps. 12. 2. ch. 26. 25; 10. 18.

5 Loud and ostentatious praises are always to be suspected of insincerity.—*C.*

s ch. 19. 13; 21. 9, 19; 25. 24.

t Ac. 15. 39; 18. 4; 28. 15. He. 10. 24.

6 The allusion seems to be to a *file,* in which iron hardened into steel is employed to sharpen various iron tools. Even so, the encouragement of a friend gives edge to the purposes, courage, and efforts of his friend.—*C.*

u 1 Co. 9. 7, 13. Ca. 8. 12.

v Mar. 10. 43. Col. 3. 22. 1 Pe. 5. 5, 6. 1 Pe. 4. 21. Ps. 123. 2. Mat. 24. 42–47. 1 Sa. 2. 30. Jn. 12. 26.

w Ge. 6. 5. Ro. 8. 7. Ps. 33. 15.

y ch. 30. 16. Hab. 2. 5.

7 Heb. *not.*

z Ec. 1. 8. 1 Jn. 2. 16.

a ch. 17. 3. Job 28. 1. Zec. 13. 9.

8 As the fining-pot separates silver from the dross; and the furnace, gold from its alloy; so praise discovers what is in man: if he can bear it without vanity, pride, and arrogance, he is a sterling character, a real Christian.—*C.*

b Is. 1. 5. Je. 5. 3; 6. 29; 13. 23. 2 Ch. 28. 22. Ex. vii.–xiv.

c Ge. 31. 38, 39; 33. 13. 1 Ch. 27. 29–31. 2 Ch. 32. 29.

9 Heb. *set thy heart.*

d Ja. 1. 10, 11. Zec. 1. 5, 6. Pe. 1. 13, 14. Ec. 1. 2. He. 13. 14.

1 Heb. *strength.*

2 Heb. *to generation and generation.*

e Ps. 104. 14, 15. Ch. 6. 8; 10. 5. Lu. 12. 42. Jn. 6. 9.

3 'The grass appeareth, the tender herb showeth itself.' This should be the translation; for hay, or dried grass, is not used in the East. *Herbs of the mountains,* the hardier herbaceous plants.—*C.*

g Job 31. 20. Eze. 27. 21.

h Mat. 6. 33. 1 Ti. 6. 8. He. 13. 5. ch. 30. 8, 9.

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o ch. 10. 1; 23. 15, 16, 24, 25; 15. 20. Ps. 127. 5. *p* Ps. 57. 1–3. See ch. 22. 3; 18, 10. Is. 26. 20; 32. 2, with Ju. xvi. *q* ch. 20. 16; 22. 26, 27; 6. 1–4; 11. 15; 17. 18. Ex. 22. 26.

terers ruin men by drawing them into proud, rash, and pernicious courses.

Ver. 2. As wandering will never bring the bird home, and as flying will never bring the swallow to rest, so the curse without a cause will never light upon the head of the innocent object of the curser's enmity. *C.*

Ver. 19. If there be one practical advice more important than another, it is this: 'Never speak a word but in truth—be always in earnest:' a loose jest may 'set the table in a roar;' no harm may be meant; but no good is intended: it is therefore sin. And as a firebrand, thrown at random, may destroy a splendid palace, so may a thoughtless jest ruin a fair reputation.—*Note,* Children, look to a God of truth—speak words of truth—never jest at the expense of truth—be always in earnest. *C.*

Ver. 23. *Silver dross* is ordinarily lead, with which the cheapest kinds of earthenware are covered by the potter while immersed in a burning furnace. 'Burning lips' are not 'lips breathing warmth of affection,' but 'words that burn' up reputations (see ver. 24), and which are often covered over, and even ornamented as with 'silver dross.' Yet as a 'potsherd' shall they be dashed to pieces, when men 'by their words shall be justified, and by their words shall be condemned.' *C.*

CHAPTER XXVII. Ver. 1. Never boast what thou wilt be, or do, in any future period; for thou knowest not what changes Providence may make in a very short time. 2. Never commend thy own excellencies or works; but leave that to others who cannot be suspected of partiality. 3, 4. The anger, cruelty, and rage of foolish men are very intolerable, crushing, and hard to be appeased; but an envious desire of revenge is still more dangerous, as it lies hid, increases daily, and is more and more exasperated, till it find opportunity to vent itself in the intended mischief. 5. To tell men plainly of their faults, and rebuke them freely when need requires, is a more valuable piece of friendship than the strongest inward affection. 6. Just and seasonable reproofs, however severe, ought to be cheerfully received when they proceed from true love and faithful regard: but the most tender and abundant expressions of kindness from an enemy ought to be suspected as false and treacherous. 7. Rich men are apt to be unsatisfied with, or even to nauseate, the most delicious enjoyments: but poverty disposes men to a ready and thankful reception of the smallest blessings, though mixed with care and labour. 8. When men, by levity or discontent, change their country, trade, or office in which Providence had placed them, they ordinarily expose themselves to manifold dangers and inconveniences, but rarely mend their condition. 9. The kind conversation and prudent counsels of affectionate friends are extremely refreshing and comfortable. 10. Nay, such friends are more to be depended on in a time of distress than our nearest relations. 11. My son, improve these instructions to make thee truly wise and good; which will at once comfort my heart, and enable me to refute such as charge me with want of due care about my children. 12. Prudent men foresee the approach of calamities, and take proper methods to avoid them; but inconsiderate persons, deceived by others, securely rush forward till they are ruined. 13. Never trust, without a sufficient pledge, a man that is so foolish and rash as to be surety for persons whom he knows not, and even for harlots. 14. Extravagant and flattering commendations of a friend or benefactor are rather a disparagement than an honour, as it is a shame to have connection with such silly sycophants. 15. A contentious and brawling woman is a continued plague and a destructive ruin to her husband, family, and estate: 16. For it is quite impossible to conceal her infamous bawling humour, or to make her hold her tongue. 17. By mutual conversation friends quicken the wit, enliven the affection, strengthen the judgment, and animate the activity of one another. 18. Such servants as faithfully defend their master's person and reputation, and labour to preserve and promote his wealth, ought to be rewarded by him, and shall be honoured of God and men. 19. There is a surprising likeness in the tempers and dispositions of men, both among saints and sinners; and most are inclined to carry themselves towards others as they do towards them. And they who are remarkably sagacious can penetrate far into the inclinations and designs of others. 20. It is impossible to satisfy the corrupt desires of men: the more they are indulged the more they crave: and nothing but the fulness of God can satisfy the desires of an immortal soul. 21. Nothing more effectually tries a man than high commendations. If he be light, vain, frothy, and easily puffed up by them, it discovers his emptiness: but if under them he be humble, modest, and sensible of his own defects, it manifests him truly valuable. 22. Some are so hardened and stupified in their sinful courses, that no reproofs or corrections can make them a whit better. 23–27. Masters should look after the management of their worldly affairs themselves, and not leave all to servants; for without due care and diligence, the richest estates will soon come to nought: whereas by a proper care of the hay, grass, herbs, and flocks which Providence bestows, they may enjoy a most comfortable livelihood for themselves and families.

Ver. 16. Eastern women may be literally called *hidden,* whether in the tent in the desert, or the *harem* in the city. But the unsanctified *contentious* woman, who has not received of the Lord that ornament of a 'meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price,' 1 Pe. 3. 4, can no more have her folly hid than the wind can be restrained from blowing, or ointment on the hand from betraying its presence by its odour. *C.*

Ver. 22. The *pestle* and *mortar* were used for separating grain from the husk long subsequent to the introduction of mills; and in some European countries are still used for the formation of a substitute for what, in Britain, is called 'pearl-barley.' The image admirably illustrates the inseparability of folly from a fool. *C.*

CHAPTER XXVIII. Ver. 1. Guilt makes men cowards but conscious integrity makes men courageous, and proceed with undaunted resolution in the most hazardous undertakings. 2. To punish the wickedness of nations, God permits them to fall into factions or murder their sovereigns; but a prince of remarkable piety

for thy food, for the food of thy household, and *for* the maintenance[4] for thy maidens.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

General observations of impiety and religious integrity.

THE wicked[a] flee when no man pursueth: but [b]the righteous are bold as a lion.

2 For[c] the transgression of a land many *are* the princes thereof: [d]but by[1] a man of understanding *and* knowledge the state *thereof* shall be prolonged.[2]

3 A[e] poor man that oppresseth the poor[3] *is like* a sweeping rain, which leaveth[4] no food.[5]

4 They[g] that forsake the law praise the wicked: but such as keep the law contend with them.

5 Evil[h] men understand not judgment: but they that seek the LORD understand all *things*.

6 Better[i] *is* the poor that walketh in his uprightness, than *he that is* perverse *in his* ways, though he *be* rich.

7 Whoso[j] keepeth the law *is* a wise son: [k]but he that is a companion of riotous *men*[6] shameth his father.

8 He[l] that by usury and unjust gain[7] increaseth his substance, he shall gather it for him that will pity the poor.

9 He[m] that turneth away his ear from hearing the law, [o]even his prayer *shall be* abomination.

10 Whoso[p] causeth the righteous to go astray in an evil way, he shall fall himself into his own pit: but [q]the upright shall have good *things* in possession.

11 The[r] rich man *is* wise in his own conceit:[8] but [s]the poor that hath understanding searcheth him out.

12 When[t] righteous *men* do rejoice, *there is* great glory: but when the wicked rise, a man is hidden.[9]

13 He[u] that covereth his sins shall not prosper: but whoso confesseth and forsaketh *them* shall have mercy.

14 Happy[v] *is* the man that feareth [1]alway: [x]but he that hardeneth his heart shall fall into mischief.

15 *As*[y] a roaring lion, and a ranging bear; *so is* a wicked ruler over the poor people.

16 The[z] prince that wanteth understanding *is* also a great oppressor: [a]*but* he that hateth covetousness shall prolong *his* days.

17 A[b] man that doeth violence to the blood of *any* person shall flee to the pit; let no man stay him.

18 Whoso[c] walketh uprightly[2] shall be saved: but *he that is* perverse *in his* ways shall fall at once.

19 He[d] that tilleth his land shall have plenty of bread: but he that followeth after vain *persons* shall have poverty enough.

20 A[e] faithful man shall abound with blessings: [g]but he that maketh haste to be rich shall not be [3]innocent.[4]

21 To[h] have respect of persons *is* not [5]good: for, for a piece of bread *that* man will transgress.

22 He that hasteth to be rich *hath* an evil eye,[6] and[i] considereth not that poverty shall come upon him.

23 He[j] that rebuketh a man, afterwards shall find more favour than he that flattereth with the tongue.

24 Whoso [k]robbeth his father or his mother, and saith, *It is* no transgression; the same *is* the companion of a destroyer.[7]

25 He[l] that is of a proud heart stirreth up strife: [n]but he that putteth his trust in the LORD shall be made fat.

26 He[o] that trusteth in his own heart is a fool: [p]but whoso walketh wisely, he shall be[8] delivered.

A.M. cir. 3029.
B.C. cir. 975.

4 Heb. *life.*

CHAP. XXVIII.

a Le. 26. 17, 36. De. 28. 7, 25. Ps. 53. 5.
b Ac. 4. 13; 14. 3. 2 Sa. 17. 10. ch. 30. 30.
c 1 Ki. xvi. 2 Ki. xv. 2 Ch. xxvi.
d Job 22. 30. Eze. 22. 30. Ec. 9. 15. 1 Ki. 11. 12, 36; 15. 4.
1 Or, *by men of understanding* and *wisdom shall they likewise be prolonged.*
2 'By rebellion in a land tyrants shall become its rulers; but, where a people are wise, an able prince shall reign long.'—*Hodgson.*
e Mat. 18. 28–30.
3 'A man in power, that is needy, and oppresseth the poor.'—*Holden.*
4 Heb. *without food.*
5 The greater part of Palestine was cultivated in terraces. With immense care and skill the terraces were constructed along glen, bank, and mountain side, from base to summit. Gentle rain watered the thirsty soil, and made it productive. But a sweeping torrent, such as at long intervals deluges the country, washes the soil off the terraces, breaks down the rude sustaining walls and banks, and leaves vast tracts bare and desolate.—*P.*
g Ps. 10. 3. Mal. 3. 15. 1 Ki. 18. 18; 20. 42; 22. 15–23. Ac. 12. 22. Mat. 14. 3. Ep. 5. 11.
h Jn. 7. 17. Ps. 92. 6. Je. 4. 22; 8. 7. 1 Co. 2. 14, 15. 1 Jn. 2. 20, 27.
i ch. 19. 1; 19. 26. Ps. 16. 3, ver. 18, with 1 Ki. 18. 21. Ps. 12. 2.
j ch. 29. 3; 1. 8; 2. 1–6; 3. 1, 4.
k ver. 24; ch. 10. 5; 29. 15; 13. 20.
6 Or, *feedeth gluttons.*
l ch. 13. 22. Ec. 2. 26. Job 27. 16, 17.
7 Heb. *by increase.*
m Zec. 7. 11. 2 Ti. 4. 3. ch. 1. 24–28.
o Ps. 66. 18; 109. 7. ch. 15. 8; 21. 4, 27.
p ch. 26. 27. Ps. 7. 15, 16; 9. 15; 10. 2. Ec. 10. 8.
q Mat. 6. 33. Ps. 37. 11, 29, 31.
r ch. 26. 16. Is. 10. 13.
8 Heb. *in his eyes.*
s ch. 18. 17. Ec. 9. 11, 15.
t ver. 28; ch. 11. 10; 29. 2. Ec. 10. 6. He. 11. 38.
9 Or, *sought for.*
u Ps. 32. 3, 5. Job 31. 33. 1 Jn. 1. 8–10. Je. 3. 12, 13; 31. 18–20.

A.M. cir. 3029.
B.C. cir. 975.

v ch. 23. 17. Ps. 112. 1
1 The man that always acts under a filial and reverential awe of God.—*C.*
x Ro. 11. 20; 2. 5. ch. 29. 1. Ex. vii.–xiv. Le. 26. 18, 21, &c.
y Ex. 1. 12, 13. Es. 3. 9, 10. Mat. 2. 16. 2 Ki. 15. 16; 21. 16; 23. 35. Je. 4. 7; 50. 17. 2 Ti. 4. 17.
z 1 Ki. 12. 11, 14. 1 Sa. 8. 11–17.
a 1 Ki. 2. 11; 11. 42; 15. 10; 22. 42.
b Ge. 9. 6. Ex. 21. 14. Nu. 35. 31.
c Ps. 84. 11. ch. 10. 9, 25; 11. 3–7; ver. 6. Ps. 73. 18–20. Mat. 27. 3–5.
2 Looking upwards to God—having his affections and treasures in heaven.—*C.*
d ch. 12. 11; 13. 20; 23. 21; 1. 18, 19; 9. 6. Ps. 1. 4.
e Ps. 1. 1–3; 112. 1–9; 128. 1–6.
g ch. 13. 11; 23. 4; 20. 21. 1 Ti. 6. 9.
3 Or, *unpunished.*
4 He that 'maketh haste' to be rich, cannot be seeking first the kingdom of God and his righteousness (Mat. 6. 33), for seeking and hasting are utterly incompatible; and he that seeketh not, hath no promises, but many threatenings.—*C.*
h ch. 18. 5; 24. 23. Le. 19. 15. De. 16. 19. Ja. 2. 1, 2. Ex. 23. 1–8. Eze. 13. 19.
5 He that respects persons, and not justice.—*C.*
6 Or, *He that hath an evil eye hasteth to be rich,* ver. 20. 1 Ti. 6. 9.
i Ge. 13. 10; 19. 17. Job 20. 22; 27. 16. Ps. 52. 5. Ja. 1. 9, ch. 13. 11; 20. 13.
j ch. 27. 5, 6. Ps. 141. 5. Mat. 18. 15.
k Ju. 17. 2. ch. 19. 26.
7 Heb. *a man destroying.*
l ch. 13. 10; 6. 17, 19; 18. 15.
n Ps. 2. 12; 84. 12; 13. 5; 37. 3–7; 84. 11, 12. Je. 17. 7, 8.
o ch. 3. 5, 6. 1 Co. 2. 14. Ro. 8. 7. Je. 17. 9.
p 2 Ti. 3. 15. ch. 2. 8–16. Is. 1. 16–19.
8 He who trusts in his own firmness of resolution, and power of resisting temptation, is a fool; but he that walketh wisely, distrusting himself and trusting God, dreading the counsel of his own passions, and humbly and prayerfully seeking the guidance of the Spirit, 'he shall be delivered' from the seductions of sense, the malice of enemies, and the snares of Satan.—*C.*

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and prudence is extremely useful for settling or preserving a state. 3. A needy man placed in power, and squeezing from the poor that little which they have, is a most ruinous scourge to a nation. 4. Apostates from the ways of God are the most forward in encouraging men in wickedness, and commending them for it: but they who resolutely observe God's law, do what they can to reform or punish them. 5. Unregenerate men have no solid or experimental knowledge of what is right or wrong: but they who study God's Word, and depend on his instructions, understand whatever is necessary to salvation. 6. A poor man, who acts honestly and uprightly in all he does, is far happier, and more useful and commendable, than a rich pretender to virtue, who obstinately and craftily practises vice. 7. He is an honour to his parents, as well as to himself, who studies the law of God, and observes the rules of piety and sobriety there prescribed: but he that associates himself with rakes, drunkards, and gluttons, and spends his time and money in sensual pleasures, is a shame and vexation to them. 8. God often translates the wealth, gotten by covetousness and oppression, from the gatherers into the hands of such as are merciful and benevolent. 9. The very prayers and other religious services of them who obstinately live in their sins are, in God's view, an abominable and hypocritical prostitution of his ordinances, since it appears as if they thus intended to make him a partner in their wickedness. 10. They who by their persuasion, example, or cunning contrivances seduce upright men into sinful and dangerous practices, shall themselves irrecoverably fall into that very mischief which they intended for others: but they who live in simplicity and godly sincerity shall enjoy the blessings of grace here and of glory hereafter. 11. Rich men, being courted and complimented by every one, are apt to imagine themselves extremely wise: but sensible and religious persons, however poor, quickly discern their emptiness and ignorance. 12. It is an honour and happiness for a nation when pious and prudent men are advanced to places of power and trust: but when the wicked are exalted, the persons, lives, and estates, especially of good men, are in danger, and they are obliged to conceal them. 13. He that conceals, extenuates, or defends his sins, exposes himself to severe punishments: but he who through faith in Christ confesses and forsakes them, shall be graciously blessed by God and honoured by men. 14. Happy is he who lives under the constant awe of God's perfections, and under a jealousy of his own evil heart and a fear to do evil: but he that obstinately and presumptuously goes on in his sinful courses shall irrecoverably and eternally perish. 15. How cruel and terrible a plague is a tyrannical ruler! His subjects, unable to resist, are harassed by oppression, and terrified with fears of still greater evils.—17. Murderers shall never be able to escape the judgment of God; but shall hurry themselves into sudden and irretrievable destruction, without any one to help or pity them. 18. Real godliness, strict honesty and integrity, are the sure road to safety, honour, and happiness: but fraudulent sinners, obstinate in their wickedness, shall quickly involve themselves in the depths of misery. 19, 20. They who believe in Christ, and act with diligence, fidelity, and candour in their dealings, shall have abundant blessings from God and honours from men: but they who hasten to be rich, render themselves execrable by their base and fraudulent methods. 21. When judges have accustomed themselves to respect persons in judgment, the most insignificant bribe will make them disregard both law and equity, and favour an unrighteous cause. 22. He that hastens to be rich envies everybody who has more than himself, covets whatever he sees, and grudges to part with the most necessary expense or alms; and never seriously thinks how quickly God may take him from his wealth, or it become a curse to him, so that through his money he corrupts himself. 23. They who in an honest and friendly manner reprove a man for his faults, will afterwards have much more of his favour and regard than they who flatter him in his sins. 24. They who snatch all that they can from their parents are as bad as common robbers, and are in a fair way to associate themselves with such. 25. A man of a proud, insolent, and ambitious spirit involves himself in perpetual quarrels, and has no satisfaction in what he enjoys; nay, many times wastes his estate in contentions: but he who, trusting in the Lord to redress his grievances, patiently bears injuries, lives comfortably and happy. 26. Nothing is more foolish than to rely wholly on our own wisdom and ability, or to trust in our own heart, which is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: but he who walks according to the counsels of wise men, and the directions of God, shall escape, or be delivered out of, manifold dangers and troubles. 27. He who kindly and cheerfully relieves such as are in want shall

27 He[q] that giveth unto the poor shall not lack: but he that hideth his eyes shall have many a curse.

28 When[r] the wicked rise, men hide themselves: but when they perish, the righteous increase.

CHAPTER XXIX.

1 *Observations of public government,* 15 *and of private.* 22 *Of anger, pride, thievery, cowardice, and corruption.*

HE [a]that, being often reproved,[1] hardeneth *his* neck, shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy.

2 When[b] the righteous are in authority,[2] the people rejoice: but when the wicked beareth rule, the people mourn.

3 Whoso[c] loveth wisdom rejoiceth his father: but[d] he that keepeth company with harlots spendeth *his* substance.

4 The[e] king by judgment establisheth the land: but he that receiveth gifts[3] overthroweth it.

5 A[g] man that flattereth his neighbour spreadeth a net for his feet.

6 In[h] the transgression of an evil man *there is* a snare: [i]but the righteous doth sing and rejoice.[4]

7 The[j] righteous considereth the cause of the poor: *but* the wicked regardeth not to know *it.*

8 Scornful[k] men bring[5] a city into a snare:[6] but[l] wise *men* turn away wrath.

A.M. cir. 3029.
B.C. cir. 975.

q De.15.7,8.ch.22.9; 11.26; 21.13; 19. 17. Ps. 41.1–3. He.13.16. Is.58. 7.

r ver.12; ch.29.2. Ps. 12.1,8.

CHAP. XXIX.

a 1 Sa.2.25,34. 2 Ch. 36. 16. Ge.6.3,7. ch. 28. 13,14; 5.11–13. Is.30.12–14. 2 Cc.7.11–14.

1 Heb. *A man of reproofs.*

b ch.11.10; 28. 12, 28. Ec.10.5. Re.11.15. Es. 3.15; 8.15.

2 Or, *increased.*

c ch.10.1; 15.20; 27. 11.

d ch.5.9,10; 6.26; 28. 7,24. Lu.15.13,30.

e ch.20.8. Ps. 72.1–8. 2 Ch.19.8. Da.11.20.

3 Heb. *a man of oblations.*

g Ho.7.3; 5.1. Ps.55. 21; 140.5. ch.7.21; 26.28.

h ch.5.22; 11.5,6; 12. 13. Job 18.7–10.

i Ps. 97. 11; 118. 15; 132.16.

4 Inasmuch as the faithful walk in their callings with an upright conscience, and are blessed by the Lord many ways exceedingly; they both outwardly magnify him with psalms and hymns, and spiritual songs, and inwardly are cheerful, being 'filled with joy of the Holy Ghost.' Even in affliction, in bereavement, in persecution, the children of God are able to rejoice. They know that 'all things work together for good' to them. Paul and Silas sang praises to God from the inmost recesses of a prison.—*P.*

j Job 29.16. Ps.41.1.

k Is.28.14,15. ver. 6. Eze.23.31.

5 Or, *set a city on fire.*

l Ps.106.23. Ja.5.15–18. Eze.22.30.

6 Men who scorn the truth, and will not receive it; who scorn good counsel, and will not listen to it; who scorn their fellow-citizens, and will not unite with them in patriotic efforts; who scorn the enemy, and will not prepare to oppose them; who scorn God, and will not hearken to or obey him.—*P.*

A.M. cir. 3029.
B.C. cir. 975.

m Mat.7.6; 11.17–19.

7 In charity he has undertaken a useless labour; but will find no *rest,* no success.—*C.*

o 2 Ch.18.7. 1 Jn.3.12, 13. Jn. 15. 19. Ps.142.4. ch.11.30. 1 Sa.22.23.

8 Heb. *Men of blood.*

p ch.14.33; 15.28; 12. 16,23. Ju.16.17. Am. 5. 13.

q Es.3.8,10. 1 Ki.21. 11–13.

r ch.22.2. Mat.5.45. Jn.1.9.

9 Or, *the usurer,* Mat.9.9. 1 Co.6.10.

s Ep.2.1.

t ch. 20. 28; 25. 5. Je. 22.16. ver.4. Ps.72.4; 15. 5; 89.2.

u ver.17,21; ch.10.1, 5; 17.21,25; 19.26; 28.7; 22.6,15; 23.13. 1 Ki.1.6. Mi.6.9.

v ver. 2. Ho.4.1,2,7. ch.23.28.

x Ps.37.36; 58.10; 91. 8; 92.9,11.

1 See notes on ch. 13.24; 22.15; 23.13.—*C.*

y ch.13.24; 19.18; 22. 15; 23.13,14; ver.15.

z 1 Sa. 3. 1. Ps. 74. 9. Am.8.11–13. Mat.9.36. 2 Co.4.3.

2 Or, *is made naked.*

a Ps.119. 2; 19. 11. 1 Co.15.58. Jn.13.17. Ja. 1.25.

3 Where there is no revelation the people perish, or apostatize from godliness, being 'destroyed (by false teachers) for lack of (true) knowledge,' Ho.4.6.—*C.*

b ch.19.29; 26.3. Job 19.16.

c Ec.5.2. Ja.1.19.

4 Or, *in his matters.*

d 1 Sa.3.7,8, withch. 30.23.

5 In luxury, without religious restraint.—*C.*

9 *If*[m] a wise man contendeth with a foolish man, whether he rage or laugh, *there is* no [7]rest.

10 The[o] blood-thirsty[8] hate the upright: but the just seek his soul.

11 A[p] fool uttereth all his mind: but a wise *man* keepeth it in till afterwards.

12 If[q] a ruler hearken to lies, all his servants *are* wicked.

13 The[r] poor and the deceitful man[9] meet together: [s]the LORD lighteneth both their eyes.

14 The[t] king that faithfully judgeth the poor, his throne shall be established for ever.

15 The[u] rod and reproof give wisdom: but a child left *to himself* bringeth his mother to shame.[1]

16 When[v] the wicked are multiplied, transgression increaseth: [x]but the righteous shall see their fall.

17 Correct[y] thy son, and he shall give thee rest; yea, he shall give delight unto thy soul.

18 Where[z] *there is* no vision, the people [2]perish: but [a]he that keepeth the law, happy *is* he.[3]

19 A[b] servant will not be corrected by words: for though he understand he will not answer.

20 Seest[c] thou a man *that is* hasty in his words? [4]*there is* more hope of a fool than of him.

21 He that [d]delicately[5] bringeth up his servant from a child, shall have him become *his* son at the length.

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thereby increase his own estate: but he that avoids taking notice of their miseries draws upon himself the curse of God and of men. 28. When wicked men are increased in number, and advanced in authority, good men are obliged to hide themselves from their tyranny and persecution: but when God casts down the wicked, the righteous take courage, and openly show themselves; and their numbers are increased under pious and prudent governors.

Ver. 5. *They that seek the Lord understand all things.* They know more about all things, than worldly men know about any one thing: for they 'know that all things work together for good to them that love God.' *C.*

Ver. 7. *Shameth his father. Shames* him for neglecting his education—for not restraining him in time—or, notwithstanding all his care, breaks his heart by his incorrigible follies. *C.*

Ver. 11. It is the special duty of the rich to give their children a good education, both in secular and religious knowledge; for if the well-educated poor once discover any inferiority in the rich, contempt for their ignorance, and the disorganization of society, is sure to follow.—*Note,* A true religious education can alone teach the rich kindness and the poor gratitude. *C.*

Ver. 17. The murderer shall *flee* in terror of conscience till the grave receives him: let no man *stay* him in this flight by hiding him from deserved justice, Ge.9.6. *C.*

Ver. 22. *An evil eye* never means, as the ignorant and superstitious imagine, an eye that can inflict evil according to the malignity of its owner; but an eye that cannot see aright, because of some obstruction in its organization. In this verse, temporal riches form the obstruction that will not permit the hastener to see things that are 'not seen and eternal,' 2 Co. 4. 18. *C.*

CHAPTER XXIX. Ver. 2, 4. Where justice is impartially executed, and liberty and property secured, the nation grows great and happy; but bribery and oppressive taxes ruin a state. 5. Flatterers artfully draw men into wickedness and ruin. 6. In the wicked course of sinners, one sin draws on another and its attendant plagues; but the godly, by walking in Christ, obtain solid and lasting joy and comfort.—8. Obstinate sinners and scornful men, by laughing at all things serious, sacred, or civil, throw nations and cities into the most ruinous disorder; but pious and prudent rulers, by their prayers and piety, avert the deserved judgment of God, and by their wise conduct divert the fury of men. 9. It is to no purpose to spend reasonings or reproofs upon incorrigible fools; for in whatever manner they appear to take them, they will still persist in their folly and wickedness. 10. Blood-thirsty men direct their murderous malice especially against godly magistrates or other valuable persons; but such as are truly virtuous labour to defend and promote the welfare of such. 11. Fools inconsiderately speak out whatever comes into their head; but wise men think well before they speak, and only utter what they know and as the opportunity requires. 12. If a ruler hearken to lies, flatteries, or false accusations, his whole court will quickly become so wicked, that it will be hard to find an honest man in office. 13. Poor men who want estates, and rich men who get or increase their estates by fraud, are connected together in this world, and the Lord, without distinction, allows to both his light of nature, or revelation, and blessings of providence, as is good in his sight. 14. Kings who faithfully administer justice to their subjects, and set themselves to protect and help the poor, take the most proper course to gain their subjects' affection, and to continue their kingdom to many generations. 15. Careful instructions and reproofs, and prudent corrections, are of great use to render children wise, prudent, and pious: but children left to follow their own inclinations prove a disgrace and plague to parents, particularly to their indulgent mothers. 16. When wicked men are increased in number and advanced in dignity, presumptuous wickedness abounds more and more: but the righteous ought not to be discouraged, as they shall quickly see their downfall. 17. Children carefully brought up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, bid fair to be a help and comfort to their parents. 18. Where men want the oracles of God and ordinances of the gospel, they cannot but live wickedly on earth and be miserable in eternity: but great is the present and future happiness of such as, renewed by his grace, strictly observe his laws. 19. No persuasion, reproofs, or threatenings will avail with some refractory and slavish-minded servants; nothing but blows will make them regard what is said or attend to their duty. 20. It is more easy to instruct and reform the most weak and ignorant, than to rectify what is amiss in a rash, heady, and self-conceited manager of his affairs. 21. If servants, who continue long in a family, be too much indulged or favoured, they are apt to behave with as much boldness and freedom as if they were children; or even to domineer over them, and labour to disinherit them. 22. Passionate persons are apt to quarrel and contend about trifles, and to fall into a multitude of sins, in word or deed, both against God and men. 23. Proud, saucy, and ambitious behaviour renders men contemned, hated, and miserable; but meekness and humility procure useful and lasting honours. 24. Partnership with thieves or fraudulent persons, endangers both soul and body, and is apt to involve men in perjury. 25. An immoderate fear of men ensnares us into much guilt and mischief: but he that puts his whole confidence in God shall be preserved from them. 26. Multitudes court the favour of princes and other great men: but it is God alone who determines the lots of men here and hereafter. 27. There is a stated antipathy between the righteous and wicked; their natures, tempers, counsels, and ends being the very reverse of each other.

Ver. 1. *Hardeneth* himself by seeking excuses or palliations for his sin; or even false interpretations and doctrines to defend his evil courses. He 'shall fall without remedy,' as the carcasses of the unbelievers fell in the wilderness, to whom God sware in his wrath, they should not enter into his rest, He. 3. 11. *C.*

Ver. 4. *He that receiveth gifts.* According to the margin, 'a man of oblations.' The true meaning seems to be: a king who supports justice and equity in the fear of God, establishes his kingdom; but he who substitutes for these 'weightier matters of the law,' mere 'legal oblations,' ceremonial observances, overthrows it. This was literally exemplified and fulfilled by the rulers of the Jews in the days of our Lord. See Mat. 23. 23, 38. *C.*

Ver. 12. The ruler that 'hearkens to lies,' is either he that will bear nothing but flattery, or he that will credulously receive false accusations, and will indolently neglect to judge for himself. All his servants will soon be wicked: for godly men will fly from him; and wicked men will gather around him, as vultures to the carcass of the dead. *C.*

Ver. 13. *The deceitful man,* who overreached him, oppressed him, and made him poor.—*The Lord lighteneth both their eyes.* The enriched to see, if he would, better riches than he has gained; the poor, to seek better than he has lost. *C.*

Ver. 19. Even 'a servant' will not be corrected by (mere hasty) words, see ver. 20; example, authority, and religious principle must all be brought to bear upon him. *C.*

Ver. 24. That the Jewish judges adjured the accused is evident from the case of our Lord, Mat. 26. 62–64. The verse accordingly means, that the 'partner' (the accomplice) of the thief hears such an adjuration: yet, bound by a false and diabolical principle, misnamed honour, 'bewrayeth not the matter,' and is thereby guilty of perjury, to the ruin of his soul. *C.*

CHAPTER XXX. Ver. 2. Though of men I am the least learned, and human wisdom possess not; and though in science I have had no instruction, yet of holy things have I knowledge—(*Hodgson*). *C.*

Ver. 19. *The eagle* soaring high in air, its eye and appetite on earth, till, with the rapidity of lightning, it descends upon its unsuspecting prey.—*The serpent* scaling the lofty *rock,* where armies could not follow, and noiselessly and fatally smiting its victim. —*The ship,* impelled by invisible winds, adopting innumerable

22 An[e] angry man stirreth up strife, and a furious man aboundeth in transgression.

23 A[g] man's pride shall bring him low: but honour shall uphold the humble in spirit.

24 Whoso[h] is partner with a thief hateth his own soul: he heareth cursing, and bewrayeth *it* not.

25 The[i] fear of man bringeth a [6]snare: [j]but whoso putteth his trust in the LORD shall be safe.[7]

26 Many[k] seek the ruler's favour:[8] but *every* man's judgment *cometh* from the LORD.

27 An[l] unjust man *is* an abomination to the just; and *he that is* upright in the way *is* abomination to the wicked.

CHAPTER XXX.

1 *Agur's confession of his faith.* 7 *The two points of his prayer.* 10 *The meanest are not to be wronged.* 11 *Four wicked generations.* 15 *Four things insatiable.* 17 *Parents are not to be despised.* 18 *Four things hard to be known.* 21 *Four things intolerable.* 24 *Four things exceeding wise.* 29 *Four things stately.* 32 *Silence in case of error the way to prevent wrath.*

THE words of Agur the son of Jakeh, *even* the[a] prophecy: the man spake unto Ithiel, even unto Ithiel and Ucal,[1]

2 Surely[b] I *am* more brutish than *any* man, and have not the understanding of a man.

3 I[c] neither learned wisdom, nor have the knowledge[2] of the holy.

4 Who[d] hath ascended up into heaven, or descended? [e]who hath gathered the wind in his fists? who hath bound the waters in a garment? who hath established all the ends of the earth? what[g] *is* his name, and what *is* his son's name, if thou canst tell?[3]

5 ¶ Every[h] word of God *is* [4]pure: [i]he *is* a shield unto them that put their trust in him.

6 Add[j] thou not unto his words, lest he reprove thee, and thou be found a liar.

7 ¶ Two *things* have I required of thee;[5] deny me *them* not[6] before I die:

8 Remove[k] far from me vanity and lies; give me neither poverty nor riches; [l]feed me with food [7]convenient for me:[8]

9 Lest[n] I be full, and deny *thee*,[9] and say, Who *is* the LORD? [o]or lest I be poor, and steal, and take the name of my God *in vain*.

10 Accuse[p] not[1] a servant unto his master, lest he curse thee, and thou be found guilty.[2]

11 ¶ *There is* a generation *that* [q]curseth their father, and doth not bless their mother.

12 *There is* a generation *that are* [r]pure in their own eyes, and *yet* is not washed from their filthiness.

A.M. cir. 3029.
B.C. cir. 975.

e ch.15.2,18;22.24;10. 12;26.21;30.33.Mat.15. 19.Ro.1.29.

f Da 5.20,21.Job22. 29. Ac.12.23. Ec. 18.7, 8.ch 15.33; 18.12. Mat. 23.12. Lu. 14. 11; 18.14. Ja.4.6,10.1 Pe.5.5.

g Ps. 50. 16–22. Is. 1. 23. Mat.16.26. Lu.5.1.

h Ge. 12, 12,13; 20. 2, 11. Mat.26.69-74. Ju.7 13;9.21;12.42,43.

6 The fear of man often leads to folly and falsehood, by which it is hoped difficulties and dangers may be avoided; it leads to a forsaking of the true faith in times of persecution, and thus entails destruction. There is no more powerful incentive to sin than slavish cowardly fear. —*P.*

i Ec.7.18. See ch.18. 10.

7 Heb. *set on high.*

k Ps.62.12; ch. 19. 6, with21.1.Ge.43.14.Es. 4.16.

8 Heb. *the face of a ruler.*

l Ge. 3. 15. Ps. 15. 4; 139. 21; 119. 115. See ver.10.

CHAP. XXX.

a ch.31 1.Nu.24.3. 2 Pe.1.19–21.

1 See note * in second column.

b Ps.73.22. Job 11.12. 1 Co.15.9.Ep.3.8.

c Am. 7.14, 15. Mat. 16.17. Ro.11.33.Phi.3.8 1 Tim. 1. 18.

2 Heb. *know.*

d Jn.3.13.Ro.10.6.

e Job 38. 4, &c. Ps. 104.3, &c.; 135.7; 24. 2; 50.2,3.Is.40.12,&c.

f De. 28. 58. Is. 9. 6; 53.8. Job 11.7.

3 This appears from Ro.10. 6 to be a prophetical inquiry after Christ—*What is his name?* &c. This is an evident reference to God the Father and his eternal Son. See 1 Jn. 1. 1–3.—*C.*

h Ps.12. 6; 18. 30; 19. 8; 119.140.

4 Heb. *purified.*

i Ps.84.9,11;115.9–11; 91.2,3; 3.3,12;18.35.

j Pr. 2. 2; 22. 32. Re. 22.18,19.

5 *Of thee?* Of thee, the LORD. Ver.9.—*C.*

6 Heb. *withhold not from me*, Lu. 10. 42. Ja. 5. 16.

k Ps.119.29,37.Is.33. 15.

l Mat.6.11.1 Ti.6.8.

7 Heb. *of my allowance.*

8 This is not a prayer for a 'middle place,' an imaginary 'golden mean' between poverty and riches, but a prayer against temptation either by the one or the other, and a prayer for food convenient, with satisfaction and contentment in the allotments of Providence. —*C.*

n Ne.9.25,26.De.32. 15;31.20;8.12. Ho.13.6. Je.5.7.

9 Heb. *belie* thee.

o Ps.125.3.

p 1 Sa.22.9. Ro.14.4.

1 Heb. *Hurt not with thy tongue.*

q ver. 17. Le. 20. 9. De.27.16.ch.20.20.

r Lu.18. 11, &c. Is. 65.5. Je.2.35. Tit. 1.10. 2 Ti.3.5.ch.26.12.Re.3. 17.

2 This is not confined to a mere protection for the servant of an earthly master, but for the servants also of the 'one Master in heaven.' See Mat. 23. 10. Ro. 14. 4. And, be it specially remembered, that it was under an accusation laid against him as a servant before Jehovah that our Lord suffered at the hands of Caiaphas and the Jews.—*C.*

s ch.6.17;26.12;8.13. Hab.2.4,18.2.11,17;65. 5;28.1,3. Lu.18.11,12.

t Job 29.17.ch.12.28. Ps.52.5;57.4;14.4. Am. 8.4. Hab.3.14. Zep.3.3. Mi 2.1,3;3.3.

3 There is a generation of unnatural and blasphemous contemners of authority (ver.11), of self-righteous, hypocritical Pharisees (ver. 12), of proud self-conceited despisers (ver.13), and of cruel oppressors (ver. 14): four grievous classes amongst unregenerate men.—*C.*

4 *The horse-leech hath two daughters*—that is, two similitudes. The first *two* of the *four*, viz., 'the grave and barren womb,' the one like Rachel (Ge.30.1), saying, 'Give me children, or else I die;' the other as eagerly repeating, in the language of nature and ear of reason, 'Give me thy children—let them die.'—*C.*

5 Heb. *Wealth.*

u ch.27.20. Hab.2.5. He.6.7. Is.30.33.

v ch. 20. 20; see ver. 11. Ge. 9. 22, 25, with Mat. 13.4,19. Le.20.9.

6 Or, *the brook.*

x Job 39.27. Is.40.31.

y Ps.104.26;107.26.

7 Heb. *heart.*

z Ex.22.16. Je.31.22. Is.7.14. Lu.1.35.

a ch.7.14,15. Je. 7.9, 10;8.12. Re.17.3. 2 Th. 2.9,10.

b 2 Ki.8.12.ch.19.10; 28.3. Ec.10.7.1 Sa.25.3, 10,11,25. De.32.15. Ps. 73.7–9.

c ch.19.13;21.9,19;27. 15.

d Ge.xvi.xxi. ch.29. 21.

e Job 12.7.1 Co.1.27.

8 Heb. *wise made wise*, Job 39.1, &c.

g ch.6.6–9. Ec.9. 10. Mat.6.19,20.

h Le.11.5. Ps.104.18. Is.33.16;42.11.

i Ex.10.4. Le. 11.22. Joel 1.4;2.7,11. Is.33.4.

9 Heb. *gathered together.*

j ch.22.29. Job 8. 13, 14.

1 Heb. *a mighty old lion*, Nu.24.ch.28.1.

2 Heb. *girt in the loins*; or, *a horse.*

k Ec.8.4. 1 Ki 4. 24, 25. Is.9.6.

l Hab.2.4.ch. 26.12. Ec.8.3.

n Job 21.5;40.4. Ro. 3.19. Mi.7.16. ch.17.28. Lc.10.4.

* Of Agur, Jakeh, Ithiel, and Ucal, nothing is historically known, and conjecture is useless. Nor is it generally so important to know who a man was, as to know his sentiments—his principles of action. Agur signifies stranger or gathered; Jakeh, ready obedience; Ithiel, God with me; Ucal, power. *C.*—The fourth great division of the book begins with this chapter. It is different from all the others. Its author is different, and its style and subject are different. In the words of Agur we have, as Ewald says, a succession of beautiful little pictures illustrating great moral truths. The style is not so dignified, nor is the language so pure and archaic in character, as the early portions of the book. —*P.*

13 *There is* a generation, O how [s]lofty are their eyes! and their eyelids are lifted up.

14 *There is* a generation whose teeth *are as* swords, and their jaw-teeth *as* knives, to [t]devour the poor from off the earth, and the needy from *among* men.[3]

15 ¶ The horse-leech hath two [4]daughters, *crying*, Give, give. There are three *things that* are never satisfied, *yea*, four *things* say not, *It is* enough:[5]

16 The[u] grave; and the barren womb; the earth *that* is not filled with water; and the fire *that* saith not, *It is* enough.

17 ¶ The[v] eye *that* mocketh at *his* father, and despiseth to obey *his* mother, the ravens of the valley[6] shall pick it out, and the young eagles shall eat it.

18 ¶ There be three *things which are* too wonderful for me, yea, four which I know not:

19 The[x] way of an eagle in the air; [y]the way of a serpent upon a rock; the way of a ship in the midst[7] of the sea; and [z]the way of a man with a maid.

20 Such[a] *is* the way of an adulterous woman; she eateth, and wipeth her mouth, and saith, I have done no wickedness.

21 For three *things* the earth is disquieted, and for four *which* it cannot bear:

22 For[b] a servant when he reigneth; and a fool when he is filled with meat;

23 For[c] an odious *woman* when she is married; and an handmaid [d]that is heir to her mistress.

24 ¶ There be four *things which are* [e]little upon the earth, but they *are* exceeding wise:[8]

25 The[g] ants *are* a people not strong, yet they prepare their meat in the summer;

26 The[h] conies *are but* a feeble folk, yet make they their houses in the rocks;

27 The[i] locusts have no king, yet go they forth all of them by bands;[9]

28 The[j] spider taketh hold with her hands, and is in kings' palaces.

29 ¶ There be three *things* which go well, yea, four are comely in going:

30 A lion,[1] *which is* strongest among beasts, and turneth not away for any;

31 A greyhound;[2] and an he-goat also; and a king, [k]against whom *there is* no rising up.

32 If[l] thou hast done foolishly in lifting up thyself, or if thou hast thought evil, [n]*lay* thine hand upon thy mouth.

33 Surely the churning of milk bringeth forth

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courses, braving all dangers—then deceitfully 'reposing on her shadow' in port, as if she had never felt the wind or been tossed upon a wave.—*The man* secretly desiring, and, undeterred by coldness or repulse, ardently wooing and winning the *maid* of his choice; and in the exercise of chastened and holy affections, not only conscious of no guilt, but fully assured of a blessing: these four are the emblems of the adulteress. As the eagle she on her prey descends; as the serpent she glides and poisons her victim; as the ship in the storm she is tossed by passions, yet seems ever in the calm of smiles and blandishments; and with all the ardour of youthful devotedness seeking the object of its hallowed affections will she pursue her guilty courses, and, by aid of a hardened conscience (her substitute for innocence), will she 'feast, and wipe her mouth, and say, I have done no wickedness.'—And woe to the lamb when the eagle soars! and woe to the callow bird when the serpent glides! and woe to the sailor-boy who trusts the calm and never foresees the storm! and woe to the man who yields his peace and salvation to the persevering lures, the deceitful smiles, and the hardened conscience of an adulteress! Col. 3. 5, 6; He. 13. 14; Re. 22. 15. *C.*

REFLECTIONS.—Let me thus always think meanly of myself, and highly of my God and Saviour, and of his works and Word: and be a good savour of Christ to all around me. Earnestly should I covet further degrees of holiness, but be regardless as to the comforts and enjoyments of this life, and content with such things as I have. Let me never be a busybody in other men's matters, but heedfully watch against the temptations incident to my own condition. Let me never be an idle spectator of what is around me: but whatever evil I observe, let me avoid, hate, and mourn over it; and whatever good I observe, even in animals, let me, in a Christian manner, imitate the same. If I have proudly involved myself in sin, humbly should I repent of it, and always avoid contention before it be meddled with. Nothing is to be got by pride, passion, or ill language but bloodshed and damage.

butter, and the wringing of the nose bringeth forth blood; [o]so the forcing of wrath bringeth forth strife.

CHAPTER XXXI.

1 *Lemuel's lesson of chastity and temperance.* 6 *The afflicted are to be comforted and defended.* 10 *The praise and properties of a good wife.*

THE words of king Lemuel, the prophecy[1] that his [c]mother taught him.[2]

2 What,[b] my son? and what, the son of my womb? and what, the son of my vows?

3 Give[c] not thy strength unto women, nor thy ways to that which destroyeth kings.

4 *It*[d] *is* not for kings, O Lemuel,[3] *it is* not for kings to drink wine, nor for princes strong drink;

5 Lest[e] they drink, and forget the law, and pervert[4] the judgment of any of the afflicted.[5]

6 ¶ Give[g] strong drink unto him that is ready to perish, and wine unto those that be of heavy hearts.[6]

7 Let him drink, and forget his poverty, and remember his misery no more.[7]

8 Open[h] thy mouth for the dumb in the cause of all such as are appointed to destruction.[8]

9 Open thy mouth, [i]judge righteously, and plead the cause of the poor and needy.

10 ¶ Who[j] can find a virtuous woman? for her price *is* far above rubies.[9]

11 The[k] heart of her husband doth safely trust in her, so that he shall have no need of spoil.[1]

12 She[l] will do him good, and not evil, all the days of her life.

13 She[m] seeketh wool and flax, and worketh willingly with her hands.

14 She[o] is like the merchants' ships, she bringeth her food from afar.

15 She[p] riseth also while it is yet night, and giveth meat to her household, and a portion to her maidens.[2]

16 She[q] considereth a field, and buyeth [3]it: with the fruit of her hands she planteth a vineyard.

17 She[r] girdeth her loins with strength, and strengtheneth her arms.

18 She perceiveth[4] that her merchandise *is* good: [s]her candle goeth not out by night.

19 She[t] layeth her hands to the spindle, and her hands hold the distaff.

20 She[u] stretcheth out her hand to the poor; yea, she reacheth[5] forth her hands to the needy.

21 She is not afraid of the snow for her household; for all her household *are* clothed with scarlet.[6]

22 She[v] maketh herself coverings of tapestry; her clothing *is* silk and purple.

23 Her husband is known [x]in the gates, when he sitteth among the elders of the land.

24 She[y] maketh fine linen, and selleth *it;* and delivereth girdles unto the merchant.

25 Strength[z] and honour *are* her clothing; and she shall rejoice in time to come.

26 She[a] openeth her mouth with wisdom; and in her tongue *is* the law of kindness.

27 She[b] looketh well to the ways of her household, and eateth not the bread of idleness.[7]

28 Her[c] children arise up, and call her blessed; her husband *also,* and he praiseth her.

29 Many daughters have done [8]virtuously, but thou excellest them all.

30 Favour[d] *is* deceitful, and beauty *is* vain: *but* [e]a woman *that* feareth the LORD, she shall be praised.

31 Give[g] her of the fruit of her hands; and let her own works praise her in the gates.

A.M. cir. 3029. B.C. cir. 975.

c ch.17.14; 10.12; 15.18; 16.26; 26.21; 28.25; 29.22; 22.4.

CHAP. XXXI.

1 Heb. *burden*, ch. 30.1. Is.13.1; 21.1; 22.1. Na.1.1.

a 2 Ti.1.5; 3.15. ch.1.8; 6.20.

2 See note ' below.

b 1 Sa.1.28. Is.49.15.

c ch.5.9; 6. 26; 7. 26. Ho.4.11,18.

d Ec.10.17. Ho.7.5. Hab.2.5.

3 *i.e.* devoted to and before God.

e Ho.4.11. Le.10.9. De.17.18.

4 Heb. *alter.*

5 Heb. *of all the sons of affliction.*

g Ps.104.15. 1 Ti.5.23. Ju.9.13.

6 Heb. *bitter of soul,* 1 Sa.1.10.

7 This is no license to seek oblivion of sorrow in wine and strong drink. On the contrary, it is an order to the king, to the rich, to reserve 'strong drink and wine' to those that are ready to perish with poverty, pain, and debility.—*C.*

h Job 29.15, 16. Ps. 82.3,4; 79.11. 1 Sa.19.4. Is.3.4,16.

8 Heb. *the sons of destruction.*

i Job 29.15, 16. Is. 1. 17. Je.19.15. Ps. 58.1. De.1.16. Is. 11. 4. Zec. 7 9.10. Je 22 4,16.

j ch 12.4; 18.22; 19.14. Ec.7.28. Re.12.1. Ca.6. 8,9.

9 'Who is he that hath found a virtuous wife?' From this verse to the end the verses are alphabetical, as if containing the primary elements and final sum of all domestic economy.—*C.*

k Ep.5.33. Ac.13.22. Lu.1.6. 1 Pe.3.1-7.

1 *He shall have no need of spoil.* 'And abundance he shall never lack.'—*Hodgson.*

* The words of Lemuel' betray different authorship from 'the words of Agur.' There is greater simplicity in construction, and greater regularity in arrangement. It reminds us of some of the alphabetical psalms. It is indeed an alphabetical poem, each verse commencing in succession with a letter of the Hebrew alphabet. The poem proper begins at the tenth verse. Döderlein has well termed it 'a golden A B C for women.'—*P.*

2 As we approach the equator, the days and nights become nearer equality of length: so that 'rising while it is yet night' becomes a common domestic occurrence. Besides, in warm climates little work is done, or can be done, in the heat of the day; and it is therefore necessary to rise early—rest during the heat, and resume work in the evening.—*Note,* The whole passage is either an emblem of the church, or a warning to the church (who is 'the bride, the Lamb's wife'), telling her to 'be instant in season, and out of season;' and even while the world lieth in darkness to prepare for the rising of 'the Sun of righteousness.'—*C.*

q Jos.15.18,19. Mat. 13.44. Ca.8.12; 4.16.

3 Heb. *taketh.*

r 1 Pe.1.13. 1 Co.16. 13. Ep.6.10. 2 Ti.2.1. Phi.4.13.

4 Heb. *She tasteth.*

s Mat.5.16; 25.4. Phi. 2.15,16. Jn.12.36.

t Ex.35.25,26. Tit.2. 12-14; 3.8.

u Ps. 41. 1. ch.19.17. He.13.16.

5 Heb. *she spreadeth.*

6 Or, *double garments.*

v 1 Pe.3.3,4. Ro.13. 14. 2 Co.1.12. Ac.24.16.

x De.16.18; 21.19; 22. 24. Job 29.7. Mat.19.28.

y Re.3.18; 19.8. ver. 13,19. Ep.6.14,15.

z ver. 18. Ps. 132.16. Is.52.1-6; 35.10; 61.10.

a 1 Pe. 3. 1-6. Ps. 37. 30. Col.3.14; 4.6. 1 Co. 13. 3. Ep.4.29; 5.4,3. Ca. 4.11; 7.9.

b 1 Ti.5.8,14. 1 Th.4. 11. 2 Th.3.12. Jn.6.27. 1 Co.15.58.

7 The emblem of the watchful superintendence, and tender but vigorous discipline, which the church should exercise over all her members.—*C.*

c 1 Ki.2.19; 10.8. Ga. 4.26. Ca.6.8,9. Lu.1.28, 29.

8 Or, *have gotten riches.*

d Ps.103.15,16. Ja.1. 11. Is.40.6.

e Ec.7.18; 12.13. Ps. 112.1-3; 128.1,2. Is 3.10.

g Mat. 7. 16-20. Ps. 128.2. Re.14.13. 1 Th.2. 10. 2 Co.1.12. Phi.2.12, 15,16.

CHAPTER XXXI. Ver. 1. Of Lemuel nothing more is known than what is here recorded: and where there is nothing certain, conjecture is of no service. The word signifies 'God with them;' and if rulers did but know and always feel by whom, and for whom, and to whom they reign, it would ever be the best description of that high office to which 'the powers that be are ordained of God.' *C.*

Ver. 22. *Silk.* Rather, *linen.* It is doubtful if silk was known in Western Asia till long after the time of Christ. *C.*

Ver. 26. This passage is a beautiful description of a good wife, given of the Lord; but its real excellency lies in being an emblem of the church, opening 'her mouth with wisdom,' and knowing nothing by her ministers but 'Jesus Christ and him crucified.' *C.*

REFLECTIONS.—What blessings might mothers be to families, churches, and nations, would they but carefully educate their children! And it is unnatural and irreligious when they do otherwise. When princes are given to whoredom and drunkenness, and regardless of the poor or of the exact administration of justice, they are but a plague to the nation which they govern. With great care and circumspection ought all, especially such as bear rule in church or state, to make choice of their yokefellows in marriage. And it is a great blessing to themselves, and all their connections, if Providence direct them aright. But it is absurd and ruinous when wealth, beauty, or parentage are preferred to real virtue and religion, in the choice of wives or husbands. What a scandal to human nature is it when wives become the plague, the reproach of families! or when such as are virtuous and prudent are abused by husbands, unfaithful, drunken, imperious, cruel, outrageous, or churlish!—But infinite is the mercy that God, by his grace, has formed all who accept Christ into a living church, which, as the spouse of his Son, are made to answer this amiable and glorious description.

CONCLUDING REMARKS ON THE BOOK OF PROVERBS.

Solomon, we are told (1 Ki. 4. 32), composed no less than *three thousand* proverbs. As we count them, in modern verses, this collection does not contain so many. The conclusion therefore is, that many have been allowed to pass into oblivion, and that we possess but a part. If it be so, this is in no way to be wondered at in the case of Solomon, since we are told (John 20. 30) that, even in the case of 'a greater than Solomon,' 'many other miracles' are stated to have been wrought, which were not specifically recorded by the evangelist. Next to the book of Psalms, the Proverbs of Solomon are most frequently quoted in the New Testament; and that, be it well observed, not merely as a treasury of moral precepts, but as a direct revelation of JESUS as the wisdom of God and the power of God.

If considered merely as a collection of moral precepts for the regulation of fathers, mothers, children, and servants in families—or of kings, magistrates, and subjects in states—it contains more true practical wisdom than all the philosophers of Greece Rome, and more modern times, have ever been able to produce. Nor can there be any question that the ancient and most distinguished philosophers of Greece borrowed the principles of their moral doctrines from these proverbs; and have, in two respects, surpassed the modern deistical moralists; first, in the superiority of their moral code; and, secondly, in the honesty wherewith they acknowledged the source from which they were borrowed.

The book of Proverbs seems naturally divisible into five parts:—1. The first nine chapters containing various instructions and excitements to the study of the true *wisdom*—the knowledge of JESUS CHRIST, 'the wisdom of God, and the power of God.' 2. From x.–xxii. 16, which contains what is properly called the Proverbs. 3. From xxii. 17—xxv. inclusive, containing paternal instructions, speaking as unto children. 4. Extends from xxv.–xxix. inclusive, consisting of detached moral precepts, and is distinguished by having been 'copied out' by 'the men of Hezekiah.' 5. Includes xxx. xxxi.; the former containing the prayer and instructions of Agur to Ithiel and Ucal: the other addressed to Lemuel by his mother.

The whole, if considered as a mere literary and philosophical monument of the Hebrews, in the days of their prosperity, would place them as far above 'Greek and Roman glory,' as the sun, in his brightness, is above a flickering and 'sickly taper;' while, independent of all external evidences, the height, the depth, and immaculate purity of their morals, present an internal illustration of their divine origin, which no candid mind can possibly resist.—*C.*

THE BOOK OF ECCLESIASTES.

To warn others, Solomon here (1) Represents the vanity and vexation which adhere to all created enjoyments; particularly to those in which men ordinarily look for happiness; as human learning and policy, sensual delights, honour, power, and riches, or an empty profession of religion, ch. i.–vi. (2) Prescribes remedies against that vanity and vexation which attend those things; viz. sitting loose to them; enjoying them moderately, but never expecting much from them; acquiescing in the will of God concerning us in every event; remembering God in the days of our youth; and continuing all our life in his fear and service, with an eye to the future judgment, ch. vii.–xii. But in both parts the demonstrations of the vanity of things, and the prescriptions of remedies, are somewhat mixed.

[This book has been frequently represented as 'Solomon's penitential discourse, composed a little before his death; in which he recants and laments' his follies and departures from God. From whom, or at what time, this opinion originated in the Christian church, we are unable to say: nor is it of any importance to ascertain its origin. To say the least of it, it is altogether unsupported by any scriptural authority! It is also unsupported by any traditional Jewish authority. For the Talmudical writers ascribe the book, not to Solomon, but to Hezekiah; Kimchi, to the prophet Isaiah; while Grotius considers it to have been composed by order of Zerubbabel. Jahn refers it to a period posterior to the Babylonish captivity, and Zirkel to the times of Antiochus Epiphanes; and Jerome informs us, that, on account of some imaginary contradictions, the Jews, after the captivity, were averse to receiving it into the canon of Scripture, till more mature consideration convinced them of their error. That Solomon was the author, is apparent from internal evidence; especially from ch. 1. 12, 16; 2. 4, 6; 12. 9, 10. Of the Christian reader we ask specially that, when entering upon the study of it, he would lay aside all preconceived and unauthorized opinions about the date and object of the book, and come to examine it in a prayerful and teachable spirit. And this matter is more peculiarly necessary than may at first sight appear: for as he that views a landscape through a coloured glass, sees every object tinged with some colour that belongs not to the object, but to the glass; so he that commences the study of this book, under the impression that it is a record of Solomon's personal experience, retractation, and penitence—nay more, a kind of death-bed renunciation of the follies by which his wisdom had been stained—comes with a principle of interpretation that he brings to no other book; that is, an unauthorized determination about what the writer must intend, and not a simple inquiry into the meaning of what he actually says.

In humbly entering upon the interpretation of this book, we therefore cast away every opinion, however current and however supported, about the date and object of this book; and, by the grace of God, seek to ascertain the mind of the Spirit as revealed in its contents. *C.*]

CHAPTER I.

1 The Preacher showeth that all human courses are vain: 4 because the creatures are restless in their courses, 9 they bring forth nothing new, and all old things are forgotten, 12 and because he hath found it to be so in the studies of wisdom.

A.M. cir. 3029.
B.C. cir. 975.

THE words of [a]the Preacher,[1] the son of David, king of Jerusalem.

2 Vanity[b] of vanities, saith the Preacher, vanity of vanities; all *is* vanity.[2]

3 What[c] profit hath a man of all his labour which he taketh under the sun?

4 ¶ *One*[d] generation passeth away, and *another* generation cometh: [e]but the earth abideth for ever.

5 The[g] sun also ariseth, and the sun goeth down, and hasteth[3] to his place where he arose.

6 The[h] wind goeth toward the south, and turneth about unto the north; it whirleth about continually, and the wind returneth again according to his circuits.

7 All[i] the rivers run into the sea; yet the sea *is* not full: unto the place from whence the rivers come, thither they return again.[4]

8 All[j] things *are* full of labour; man cannot utter *it:* [k]the eye is not satisfied with seeing, nor the ear filled with hearing.[5]

9 ¶ The[l] thing that hath been, it *is that* which shall be; and that which is done, *is* that which shall be done: and *there is* no new *thing* under the sun.

10 Is there *any* thing whereof it may be said, See, this *is* new? [m]it hath been already of old time, which was before us.

11 *There*[n] *is* no remembrance of former *things;* neither shall there be *any* remembrance of *things* that are to come with *those* that shall come after.[6]

12 ¶ I[o] the Preacher was king over Israel in Jerusalem:

13 And[p] I gave my heart to seek and search out by wisdom concerning all *things* that are done under heaven: [q]this sore travail hath God given to the sons of man, to be exercised therewith.[7]

14 I[r] have seen all the works that are done under the sun; and, behold, all *is* vanity and vexation of spirit.

15 *That*[s] *which is* crooked cannot be made straight; and that which is wanting[8] cannot be numbered.

16 I[t] communed with mine own heart, say-

A.M. cir. 3029.
B.C. cir. 975.

CHAP. I.

a ver. 12; ch. 7. 27; 12. 8–10. Pr. 25. 1.

1 In Hebrew, either he that gathers, or he that addresses an assembly.—*C.*

b Ps. 39. 5, 6; 62. 9, 10; 144. 4. ch. 10. 8; 2. 11, 15, 17, 19, 21, 26. Ro. 8. 20. Mar. 8. 36, 37.

2 The first two chapters of this book bear the aspect of a personal confession, the record of the writer's experience. The great burden of it is *vanity*—the vanity of everything earthly. He searches after happiness, but his search is vain. He searches after wisdom, but he only finds sorrow; for the utmost limit of human wisdom is the grave. The conclusion he arrives at is, that man ought to be contented, so far as this life is concerned, with the calm, prudent, and rational enjoyment of such things as are placed within his reach.—*P.*

c ch. 2. 22; 5. 15; 3. 9. Hab. 2. 13. Pr. 23. 5. Job 1. 21. Ps. 49. 16, 17. 1 Ti. 6. 7.

d Ps. 89. 47, 48; 90. 10. Job 14. 2, 20. Zec. 1. 5.

e Ps. 104. 5; 119. 90. 2 Pe. 3. 10–13. ver. 9.

g Ps. 19. 5, 6.

3 Heb. *panteth.*

h Jn. 3. 8. Job 37. 9, 17; 38. 24. Ac. 27. 13, 14.

i Job 38. 10. Ps. 104. 8, 9; 107. 26, 35.

4 Heb. *return to go.*

j ver. 9, 10; ch. ii. iii. vi. with 1 Co. 2. 9. Phi. 3. 8–14. 4. 11, 12.

k Pr. 27. 20.

5 The meaning seems rather to be, 'All words become weary;' human misery is so great—human experience so sad and uniform, that when we attempt to describe it in words we are wearied with the recital—man cannot utter it.—*P.*

l ch. 3. 14, 15; 6. 10; 7. 10. Ge. 8. 22. Je. 31. 35, 36. 2 Pe. 2. 1, with 2 Co. 5. 17. Re. 21. 4, 5.

m Mat. 5. 12; 23. 32. ver. 9. Lu. 17. 26–30. Ac. 7. 51.

n Ps. 103. 16. Job 18. 17. Pr. 10. 7. ch. 2. 16.

6 Hengstenberg translates: 'No memorial have they of old; nor shall they who are to come have any remembrance of those that shall come after.' A fond dream of this world, he remarks, is to possess the immortality of renown. Even this barren consolation is here taken away, and so a conclusion is made to the development of the thought contained in ver. 3, that man has no profit of all the labour which he taketh under the sun. —*P.*

o See ver. 1. 1 Ki. 4. 1, 21. Pr. 1. 1; 25. 1.

p Pr. 2. 3, 4; 4. 7. Ep. 5. 15. 1 Ki. 4. 33. Ps. 111. 2.

q Ge. 3. 19. ch. 3. 10.

7 Or, *to afflict them.*

r Ac. 4. 28. ver. 17, 18; ch. 2. 11, 17, 26. 1 Ki. 4. 29–33.

s ch. 7. 13, with Is. 42. 16. Job 11. 6.

8 Heb. *defect.*

t Ps. 4. 4; 77. 6.

CHAPTER I. Ver. 12. *Vanity*—a vapour, emptiness, an object destitute of real good, a statement destitute of truth—an idol, because destitute of that life and power which its ignorant worshippers ascribe to it. *C.*

Ver. 4. *For ever.* This earth abideth through 'all generations;' and 'we, according to God's promise, look for new heavens and a new earth,' 2 Pe. 3. 13, so that the earth literally 'abideth for ever.' *C.*

Ver. 9. *There is no new thing under the sun.* There is nothing new in nature, in moral principles, in sciences, or in arts. New discoveries are but the adoption of principles already in full operation in nature, or the revival of things forgotten. New combinations and applications, however, of old principles there may be, and this is the utmost novelty that human ingenuity may claim. *C.*

Ver. 13. *I gave my heart to seek,* &c. Not by vain philosophy, falsely called wisdom; but by that which begins in the 'fear of the Lord,' and embraces all that is revealed of the 'manifold wisdom of God' in Jesus Christ, Ps. 111. 10; Ep. 3. 10. *C.*

Ver. 15. A world where everything crooked, inconvenient, annoying, adverse, could be made straight—and where everything wanting in wishes, desires, accomplishments, possessions, could be obtained—would not be suited to the present fallen state of man. God has therefore in mercy, while he inflicted the curse, suited this 'sore travail' as a check to the natural and a discipline to the renewed man. *C.*

Ver. 17. *Madness*—sometimes applied to great and unreasonable anger; more frequently to persons who understand and can discourse well upon all subjects but one. And such ever is the mere intellectual and moral man, wise upon all subjects but one, the knowledge of God in Christ, 1 Co. 1. 18–24; 2 Co. 5. 19, 20. *C.*

Ver. 18. The reason of this is that human wisdom can only demonstrate the vanity of all earthly things. It proves that pleasure is short-lived, that fame soon passes away, that wealth cannot prolong life, that no source of human enjoyment is or can be lasting. The more man knows of these things—the more he reflects upon them, if he have no higher source of happiness, the more miserable must he become. *P.*

REFLECTIONS.—How feelingly a true penitent, from his own experience, preaches that vanity and vexation which attend created enjoyments! All things indeed in nature concur to manifest this humbling truth, though it is very hard to convince most men of it: for, notwithstanding the perpetual flux, returns, and oblivion with which created things are marked, we are too apt to be resting in them. Neither our own observation nor experience, nor the dictates of the Spirit of

ing, Lo, I am come to great estate, and have gotten [u]more wisdom than all *they* that have been before me in Jerusalem; yea, my heart had great[v] experience[9] of wisdom and knowledge.

17 And[x] I gave my heart to know wisdom, and to know madness and folly: I perceived that this also is vexation of spirit.

18 For[y] in much wisdom *is* much grief; and he that increaseth knowledge increaseth sorrow.

CHAPTER II.

1 *The vanity of human courses in the pursuits of pleasure.* 12 *Though the wise be better than the fool, yet both have one event.* 18 *The vanity of human labour, in leaving it they know not to whom.* 24 *Nothing better than joy in our labour; but that is God's gift to the good only.*

I SAID[a] in mine heart, Go to now, [b]I will prove thee with mirth; therefore enjoy pleasure: and, behold, this also *is* vanity.

2 I[c] said of laughter, *It is* mad; and of mirth, What doeth it?

3 I[d] sought in mine heart [1]to give myself unto wine,[2] (yet [e]acquainting mine heart with wisdom,) and to lay hold on folly, till I might see what *was* that good for the sons of men, which they should do under the heaven all the days of their [3]life.[4]

4 I[g] made me great works; I [h]builded me houses; [i]I planted me vineyards:

5 I[j] made me gardens and orchards, and I planted trees in them of all *kind of* fruits:

6 I[k] made me pools of water, to water therewith the wood that bringeth forth trees:

7 I[l] got *me* servants and maidens, and had servants[5] born in my house; [m]also I had great possessions of great and small cattle above all that were in Jerusalem before me:

8 I[o] gathered me also silver and gold, and the peculiar treasure of kings and of the provinces: [p]I gat me men-singers and women-singers, and the delights of the sons of men, *as* musical instruments,[6] and that of all sorts.

9 So[q] I was great, and increased more than all that were before me in Jerusalem: also my wisdom remained with me.

10 And[r] whatsoever mine eyes desired I kept not from them; I withheld not my heart from any joy; for my heart rejoiced in all my labour; and this was my portion of all my labour.

11 Then[s] I looked on all the works that my hands had wrought, and on the labour that I had laboured to do; and, behold, [t]all *was* vanity and vexation of spirit, and [u]*there was* no profit under the sun.

A.M. cir. 3029.
B.C. cir. 975.

u 1 Ki.3.12; 4.29–31; 10.7,23,24.ch.2.9.
v Job 7.7.He.5.14.
9 Heb. *had seen much.*
x ch.2.12; 7.23,25. 1 Th.5.21.
y ch.12.12.2 Co.1.20, 21.1 Ti.1.4.

CHAP. II.

a Lu.12.19,20. ch.1. 16,17.
b ch.8.15;11.9. Is.50. 11.Ja.5.5. Tit.3.3.
c Am.6.3,6.Pr.14.13. ch.7.2–6.
d Pr.20.1.1 Sa.25.36. ch.1.17.
1 Heb. *to draw my flesh with wine.*
2 Not to give himself to intemperance, but to the examination of the vaunted enjoyment of wine-bibbers.—*C.*
e 1 Ki.18. 21. Mat. 6. 24.ver.9.
3 Heb. *the number of the days of their life.*
4 'The wise Solomon,' says Hengstenberg, 'did not give himself to intoxication of the senses in the way of a mere voluptuary; for the voluptuary cannot help doing what he does—he is the slave of his passions and desires; but in the manner of an inquirer who, standing on an eminence above sensual enjoyments, wishes to know by personal trial what can be obtained from them, so as to be able, in virtue of his own experience, to instruct others how far a true good is or is not to be found therein.'—*P.*
g Ge.11.4,Da.4.30.
h 1 Ki.7.1,2; 9.1,15–19, with Ps.49.11. Job 21.21.
i Ca.1.14;8.11;7.12.
j Je. 39. 4. 1 Kl.4.33. Ca.4.12–10;5.1;6.2.
k Ne.2.14.Ca.7.4.
l 1 Ki. 4. 26, 27. Ezr. 2.58.
5 Heb. *sons of my house.*
m 1 Ch.27.29–31.Job 1.3;42.12.2 Ki.3.4.
o 1 Ki.9.14,28; 10.10, 14,21,22,27.
p 2 Sa.19. 35. Ezr. 2. 65.
6 Heb. *musical instrument and instruments,* Am. 6. 5. 2 Ch.9.11.
q ch.1.16. 1 Ki. 3.12, 13;4.30;10.7,23.
r ch.11.9; 3.22; 5.18; 9.9. Ju.14.2.ver.24. Ps. 128.2.
s 1 Jn.2.16,17.ver.1, 17,19, 21–23,26; ch.1.2, 3,14;3.10;4.4,16;5.13;6. 2.
t ch.11.8.
u 1 Ti.6.6.

* This is no Epicurean assertion, insinuation, or objection, as some imagine. There is literally nothing better for a man, than thus to eat, drink, and enjoy. (1) There is nothing better for his health and strength of body. (2) There is nothing better for his soul; for if he 'enjoy good' in his eating and drinking, both have been 'sanctified by the word and prayer,' 1 Ti. 4. 5; and both he has used to the 'glory of God,' doing 'all in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ,' 1 Co. 10. 31. But are not immortality and glory better? Ro.2.7. Yes, yes, undoubtedly; but immortality

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and glory are not 'under the sun,' the limit of this life and world, to which Solomon's inquiry is here confined. See ch.1.3; 2.3,11,18,20,22.—*C.*
v ch.1.17,7,25.
7 I turned myself from my profitless and vexatious labours, to record the conclusions of wisdom, and denounce human madness and folly.—*C.*
8 He turned himself from his career of experimental pleasure, to draw a comparison between those things he had tried. He considered wisdom, madness, and folly in their relations to each other. He estimated their relative worth. He did not discard wisdom. He kept it with him, and used it in all his assays.—*P.*
9 Or, *in those things which have been already done.*
x Pr.1.–ix.;10.1;14.1. ch.7.4–6,12. Mal. 3.18; 4.1,2.
1 Heb. *that there is an excellency in wisdom more than in folly.*
y Pr.17.24.ch.8.1;10. 2,3.
z Ps.49.10. ch. 9.2,3, 11;6.8.
2 *One event.*—Vanity, vexation, and death. 'To each his sufferings: all are men, condemned alike to groan; the tender for another's pain, the unfeeling for his own.'—*C.*
3 Heb. *happeneth to me, even to me.*
a 1 Ki.3.12;4.31.
4 Human wisdom, far as it excelleth human folly, is still vanity, because it cannot save from death. Wise and foolish alike die.—*P.*
b Ex.1.6, 8. ch. 1. 11; 9.1–3. Ps.103.16; 88.12; 49.10.2 Sa.3.33.
c He.9.27.
d Job 7. 15, 16. 1 Ki. 19.4,10,14. Jonah 4. 3, 8. Phi. 1.23.2 Co.5.2–4.
e See ver.11.
g ch.1. 13; ver. 1–12.
5 Heb. *laboured.*
h Ps. 49. 10; 17. 14. 2 Co.12.14.ch.5.13.
i 1 Ki.12. 8, 14. 2 Ch. 10.14.ch 1 22.
j 1 Ki.8.14.1 Ti.6.10.
k ch.1. 14; 12. 1. Ro. 6.21.
6 Not to cause his heart to despair of grace or mercy in the future world, or to despair of good in this; but to teach his own heart, and, through his experience, the hearts of others, to despair of any worldly labour and success being able to ward off vanity and vexation.—*C.*
l See ver.18,19.
7 Heb. *give.*
n Mat.16.26. ch.1.3; 3.9;5.10,11,17;6.8.
o Job 5. 7; 14. 1. Ac. 14 22. Ps.90.7–10;127.2; 139.5–11. Ge.47.9. ch.8. 16.
p ch.3.12,13,22;5.18; 8.15;9.7;11.9.
8 Or, *delight his senses.*
9 See note [s] in first column.
q Le.26.5. De. 8. 17, 18. Ho. 2. 8, 9. ch.5.18, 19.
r 1 Ki.4.21–31. ch.6. 1,2;ver.1–12.
s Le. xxvi. De. xxviii.Is.3.10,11.Ro.2. 7–11. Job xviii.xx.xxii.
1 Heb. *before him,* Ge.7.1. Lu.1.6.

12 ¶ And [v]I turned myself to behold wisdom, and madness, and [7]folly:[8] for what *can* the man *do* that cometh after the king? *even* that which hath been already done.[9]

13 Then I saw [x]that wisdom[1] excelleth folly, as far as light excelleth darkness.

14 The[y] wise man's eyes *are* in his head; but the fool walketh in darkness: and I myself perceived also [z]that one event[2] happeneth to them all.

15 Then said I in my heart, As it happeneth to the fool, so it happeneth even to me;[3] and [a]why was I then more wise? Then I said in my heart, that this also *is* vanity.[4]

16 For[b] *there is* no remembrance of the wise more than of the fool for ever; seeing that which now *is*, in the days to come shall all be forgotten: and [c]how dieth the wise *man?* as the fool.

17 Therefore[d] I hated life; because the work that is wrought under the sun *is* grievous unto me: [e]for all *is* vanity and vexation of spirit.

18 ¶ Yea, I hated [g]all my labour which I had taken[5] under the sun; because [h]I should leave it unto the man that shall be after me:

19 And who knoweth [i]whether he shall be a wise *man* or a fool? yet shall he have rule over all my labour wherein I have laboured, and wherein I have showed myself wise under the sun. This *is* also [j]vanity.

20 Therefore I went about [k]to cause my heart to despair of all the labour which I took under the sun.[6]

21 For[l] there is a man whose labour *is* in wisdom, and in knowledge, and in equity; yet to a man that hath not laboured therein shall he leave[7] it *for* his portion. This also *is* vanity, and a great evil.

22 For[n] what hath man of all his labour, and of the vexation of his heart, wherein he hath laboured under the sun?

23 For[o] all his days *are* sorrows, and his travail grief; yea, his heart taketh not rest in the night. This is also vanity.

24 ¶ *There*[p] *is* nothing better for a man, *than* that he should eat and drink, and *that* he should make his soul[8] enjoy good in his [9]labour. This also I saw, that [q]it *was* from the hand of God.

25 For[r] who can eat, or who else can hasten *hereunto*, more than I?

26 For[s] *God* giveth to a man that *is* good in his sight[1] wisdom, and knowledge, and joy:

God, are credited by us. Take heed, my soul, never more to esteem or desire them as God; never more depend on or delight in them as thy God. If, by all my labours for human knowledge, I can neither satisfy my mind, rectify my nature or lot, nor amend the world, let me study to know Christ and him crucified; thus shall I be changed into the same image from glory to glory. And let this knowledge, which is eternal life, be the chief object of my pursuit.

CHAPTER II. Ver. 1. *Enjoy pleasure.* Not sinful pleasure, for then could not wisdom remain, see ver. 9; but the legitimate pleasures derived from useful labour, permanent improvements, and the social intercourse of well-ordered society. *C.*

Ver. 3. *To lay hold on folly.* That childish pursuit of toys and amusements, to the rejection of more important objects and pursuits—and which must be seized and examined 'as it flies,' because ever changing in object and fashion. *C.*

Ver. 8. The last clause some are disposed to translate 'wives and concubines,' a sense to which the words may be strained; but which the *wisdom* claimed in this inquiry, ver. 9, could by no means tolerate. *C.*

Ver. 11. How is the *joy* of ver. 10 to be reconciled with the vexation of ver. 11? Simply thus: all this joy, so far as derived from all his labour, was, when examined by the light of wisdom, nothing but vanity, because it had no real profit; and nothing but vexation, because inseparably mingled with disappointments. *C.*

Ver. 17. *Therefore I hated life.* But not with the hatred of a selfish misanthrope or exhausted sensualist, for where then had been wisdom? ver. 9; but with the hatred of a well-instructed and experienced believer, according to the word of our Lord, Lu. 14. 26; Jn. 12. 25. *C.*

Ver. 23. And a merciful dispensation it is, though arising out of the curse; for the heart, when it findeth 'no rest in the night,' is thereby instructed to draw near to Jesus, who alone can give it rest, Mat. 11. 28. *C.*

Ver. 25. The best Hebrew MSS. concur with the evident sense of the passage, in reading for 'more than I'—'without him,' that is, without God's gift. *C.*

A GLIMPSE OF SOLOMON'S POOLS. [ECCLESIASTES, ii : 6.]—"I made me pools of water, to water therewith the wood that bringeth forth trees." There are three of these pools, and above them is a large building which we see in the picture, a sort of half castle and half tavern, which is said to be of Saracenic origin. To the west of this there is a spring, which, in connection with three others, supplies the pools with water. These pools are partly excavated in the rocky bed of the valley, and partly built of large stones. They are so arranged that the bottom of each pool is higher than the top of the one next below it. In this way it is possible to fill every pool with water. According to Josephus, there was a city near Bethlehem which had gardens and rivulets of water, to which Solomon was in the habit of taking a morning drive. These pools are about three miles southwest of Bethlehem.

but to the sinner he giveth travail, to gather, and to heap up, that [t]he may give to *him that is* good before God. This also *is* vanity and vexation of spirit.

CHAPTER III.

1 By the necessary change of times, vanity is added to human travail. 11 There is an excellency in God's works. 16 But as for man, God shall judge his works there, and here he shall be like a beast.

TO every[a] *thing there is* a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven:[1]

2 A[b] time to be born,[2] and a time to die: a[c] time to plant, and a time to pluck up *that which is* planted:

3 A[d] time to kill, and a time to heal: [e]a time to break down, and a time to build up:

4 A[g] time to weep, and a time to laugh: a time to mourn, and a time to dance:

5 A[h] time to cast away stones, and a time to gather stones together:[3] a [i]time to embrace, and a time to refrain[4] from embracing:

6 A time to get,[5] and a time to lose: a time to keep, and [j]a time to cast away:

7 A [k]time to rend,[6] and a time to sew: [l]a time to keep silence, and a time to speak:

8 A[n] time to love, and a time to hate: a time of war, and a time of peace.

9 What[o] profit hath he that worketh in that wherein he laboureth?

10 I[p] have seen the travail, which God hath given to the sons of men to be exercised in it.[7]

11 ¶ He[q] hath made every *thing* beautiful in his time: [r]also he hath set the world[8] in their heart, so that [s]no man can find out the work that God maketh from the beginning to the end.

12 ¶ I[t] know that *there is* no good in them, but for *a man* to rejoice, and [u]to do good in his life.

13 And[v] also that every man should eat and drink, and enjoy the good of all his labour, it *is* the gift of God.[9]

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t Job 27.16,17. Pr.13. 22;28.8.

CHAP. III.

a ver.17;ch.8.6;7.14.
1 In the division of the book commencing here and terminating at ch. 6. 9, the starting-point of the philosophic inquirer is different, but the result is the same. Peace in this world is to be secured not from extravagant pursuit of any one object, not from undue indulgence in any one pleasure, but in a calm, judicious, and regular use of those things which nature and taste present to us.—*P.*

b Ga. 4. 4. Job 14. 5. Jn. 7. 30; 8. 20; 13. 1; 16. 21. He. 9. 27.
2 Heb. *to bear.*

c Is. 5. 2, 5. Je. 18. 7–9; 1. 10. 1 Co. 3. 8.

d Ex. 21. 13. Is. 38. 21. De. 32. 39. Ho. 6. 1, 2.

e Is. 5. 2, 5, 6. Je. 18. 7–9.

f Ro. 12. 15. Mat. 9. 15. Re. 19. 1. Ps. 30. 5; 126. 5, 6; 150. 4. Jn. 16. 19, 20.

g ver. 2, 3.
3 It may well imply a time to clear a field for husbandry, and collect the stones again for building.—*C.*

f Ex. 19. 15. Joel 2. 16. 1 Co. 7. 3–5. Ca. 2. 6, 9.
4 Heb. *to be far from.*

5 Or, *seek.*

f Jonah 1. 5. ch. 11. 1. Ac. 27. 18, 19. Mat. 10. 37. He. 10. 34. Ps. 112. 9.

h Ge. 37. 29, 34. Ac. 9. 39.
6 To rend a garment in sorrow, as was customary with the Jews.—*C.*

i Job 2. 13. Ps. 39. 1, 9. Am. 5. 10, 13. Pr. 17. 28. Is. 58. 1. Joh 32. 4, &c.

n Ex. 20. 12. Lu. 14. 20, 26. Ps. 139. 21. Re. 2. 2.

o Mat. 6. 27; 16. 26. ch. 1. 3; 2. 11. Ps. 127. 2.

p Ps. 111. 2. ch. 1. 13, 14.
7 See note on ch. 1. 13.—*C.*

q Mar. 7. 37. De. 32. 4.

r Ps. 19. 1–6. Ro. 1. 19, 20; 2. 15.
8 *The world*—the secret, the hidden period — ETERNITY past and to come, Ro. 1. 20; 2. 7.—*C.*

s Job 11. 7, 8. Ro. 11. 33. ch. 8. 17. Ps. 104. 24; 40. 5.

t Phi. 4. 4, 5. ch. 2. 24; 9. 7–9. 1 Co. 15. 58; 10. 31. Ga. 6. 9, 10. Lu. 1. 75.

u Ps. 37. 3.

v ch. 2. 24; 7. 9. Ps. 128. 2, with 6. 2.
9 Let no one pervert these words to the sanction of unhallowed luxury.

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There is nothing good, but as it is done or enjoyed 'to the glory of God.' See ch. 2. 24. So to possess and enjoy is, however, not a tendency of the carnal mind, it is of grace, 'it is the gift of God.'—*C.*

x Ja. 1. 17. Ro. 11. 36. Ps. 119. 90, 91. ch. 1. 4. Je. 31. 35, 36; 33. 20, 21.

y Pr. 30. 6. Is. 10. 5, 15. Jn. 19. 10, 11.

z Is. 59. 18, 19. Ps. 64. 9. He. 12. 28, 29. Re. 15. 4. ch. 12. 13.

a ch. 1. 9; ver. 14.
1 Heb. *that which is driven away.*

b ch. 5. 8. Je. 5. 1, 2. Ps. 58. 2; 82. 2. ch. 5. 8. Is. 1. 21–23; 59. 14. Mi. 2. 2; 7. 3. Zep. 3. 3.

c 1 Co. 4. 5. ch. 12. 14. 2 Co. 5. 10. Ac. 17. 31. Re. 20. 12. *Id.* Mat. xxv. Jude 14, 15. Ro. 2. 6–8. 1 Th. 1. 6–10.

d ver. 1.
2 Or, *that they might clear God, and see, &c.*, Ps. 51. 4. Ro. 3. 4.

e Ps. 32. 9; 49. 12, 20; 73. 21, 22. Pr. 30. 2, 3. Job 1. 1. 12. Is. 1. 3. Je. 8. 7. 2 Pe. 2. 12. Jude 10.
3 The problem solved in this verse may be thus stated: How can we account for the prosperity of the wicked under the supreme rule of a just God? The reply is introduced by the phrase, 'I said in my heart,' *i.e.* I came to this conclusion regarding it—'It is because of the state of mankind, that God might purify them (and humble them), by showing them that of themselves (when left to their own ways) they are (brutal and depraved as) beasts.'—*P.*

g Ps. 49. 12, 14, 20; 73. 22. ch. 2. 16. Ge. 7. 21, 22.
4 That is, he has no *pre-eminence* in exemption from suffering and death. See ch. 2. 14.—*C.*

h Ps. 89. 48; 90. 10. Ge. 3. 19. ch. 12. 7. Job 30. 23; 1. 21. Ps. 104. 29, with Lu. 16. 22, 23. Phi. 1. 23.
5 Heb. *of the sons of man.*
6 Heb. *its ascending*, ch. 12. 7.
7 How few seem to know or care about their immortal spirits!—*C.*

i ch. 2. 24; 3. 12, 13; 5. 18; 8. 15; 9. 7.

j Job 14. 21. Is. 63. 16. ch. 6. 12; 9. 12; 8. 7.

CHAP. IV.

a Is. 50. 1; 51. 23. ch. 3. 16; 5. 8. Mi. 2. 2; 3. 2, 3. Job 3. 4, 7–12. Lu. 1. 2, 9, 16, 17. 2 Ti. 4. 10. Ps. 69. 20.
1 Heb. *hand.*

14 I know that whatsoever God doeth, [w]it shall be for ever: [x]nothing can be put to it, nor any thing taken from it: and God doeth *it*, [z]that *men* should fear before him.

15 That[a] which hath been is now; and that which is to be hath already been; and God requireth that which is past.[1]

16 ¶ And, moreover, [b]I saw under the sun the place of judgment, *that* wickedness *was* there; and the place of righteousness, *that* iniquity *was* there.

17 I said in mine heart, [c]God shall judge the righteous and the wicked: for *there is* [d]a time there for every purpose, and for every work.

18 ¶ I said in mine heart concerning the estate of the sons of men, that[2] God might manifest them, and that they might see that they themselves are [e]beasts.[3]

19 For[g] that which befalleth the sons of men befalleth beasts; even one thing befalleth them: as the one dieth, so dieth the other; yea, they have all one breath; so that a man hath no pre-eminence[4] above a beast: for all *is* vanity.

20 All[h] go unto one place; all are of the dust, and all turn to dust again.

21 ¶ Who knoweth the spirit of man[5] that goeth[6] upward,[7] and the spirit of the beast that goeth downward to the earth?

22 ¶ Wherefore[i] I perceive that *there is* nothing better, than that a man should rejoice in his own works; for that *is* his portion: for [j]who shall bring him to see what shall be after him?

CHAPTER IV.

1 Vanity is increased unto men by oppression, 4 by envy, 5 by idleness, 7 by covetousness, 9 by solitariness, 13 by wilfulness.

SO I[a] returned, and considered all the oppressions that are done under the sun: and behold the tears of *such as were* oppressed, and they had no comforter; and on the side[1] of

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REFLECTIONS.—Numerous are the contrivances of men to find that in creatures which they should seek, and can only find, in God himself. But how vain and vexing are their diversified, their unnumbered, their utmost attempts! Till our souls return to God in Christ, as our ALL and IN ALL, they will be always like birds wandering from their nests. Thrice happy are they to whom God gives grace to take all things from him; to enjoy him in all things, and all things in him; and to use all things for his glory, and as means of attaching their heart to him and his ways.

CHAPTER III. Ver. 1–11. However disjointed, useless, and afflictive the events of Providence may appear to us, God has connected them together in the most amazing beauty and harmony, and orders the season of each as tends most to advance his glory and the good of the people. And whatever worldly wisdom men may have, they will never be capable of comprehending the astonishing extent of the mysteries which God exhibits to their view in his works of creation and providence. 12, 13. It is therefore best in itself, and a benefit from God, to use worldly enjoyments moderately, and to improve them for the advantage of others. 14. God, in his wisdom and providence, seeks to train and discipline men in righteousness, and therefore we ought not to quarrel with but kindly submit to his pleasure. 15. In every age God, by new returns of things, governs the world with great uniformity of appearances. 16, 17. The very power which he has bestowed upon men as a remedy for grievances, is often used to oppress and injure the innocent; and therefore there must be a future general judgment by God himself, in which all things shall be rectified, by clearing the innocent, rewarding the righteous, and condemning the wicked. 18–21. Affected with these views, I wished that God would make men, particularly those who haughtily oppress others, to consider how mean and brutish they are, and to ponder the nature of that immortal soul which chiefly distinguishes them from beasts, whose life entirely vanishes in death.

Ver. 1. 'A time for every purpose,' unfavourable as well as favourable to the man that thinks to get profit of his labour; that is, solid, abiding satisfaction, which he can call, and keep as his own: the one stands at all times over against the other, Ec. 7. 14. *C.*

Ver. 2. *A time to plant*, &c. Among the horrors of war is the destruction of woods. A great man who had been at much pains to ornament a wild mountain district with buildings and trees, exclaimed when all had been destroyed, 'I care nothing for the house—I can soon raise a new one; but the trees! the trees! when will they be grown again!'—*Note*, How grateful should a people be when a land continues to enjoy peace and advance in improvement! This also is of God. *C.*

Ver. 8. *A time to hate.* Not a time permitted to hate, but which the carnal mind so perverts, Tit. 3. 3. *C.*

Ver. 11. More correctly, 'He hath also set eternity in their heart, so that no man can find out the work that God doeth from the beginning to the end.' Luther remarks on this passage: 'Man cannot hit upon the work which God does; that is, no man can know beforehand the hour which is ordained above; and however much he may plague himself, he can never know when it will begin or come to an end. It behoves us therefore to say, O Lord, to thee belongs the supreme direction, in thy hand it rests entirely to order and settle everything in the future; under thy control is my life and my death; so long as I need my life, so long thou givest it. And inasmuch as in respect of them no care or thought is of any use, I will act then in regard to other gifts, using them as they come; care and anxiety I will cast to the winds, and commit all to thee.' *P.*—*Everything beautiful.* Among the innumerable evidences of the being and goodness of God, is the beauty which he has so widely diffused. The heavens, the earth, the plants; the birds, the beasts, the insects, the fishes: the eye of affection, and the smile of friendship—all are beautiful—so suited not merely for being, but for well-being, that it is impossible for any but the fool, Ps. 14. 1, to observe them, and remain insensible to the perfections of the Maker of all. *C.*

Ver. 17. *God shall judge the righteous and the wicked.* From the present unequal distribution of good and evil, some philosophers have attempted to deduce the doctrine of a future judgment; while others have replied, that if the distribution have continued unequal through so many thousand years, there is therefore the more reason to conclude it will so continue for ever. In the face of this incapacity on the one hand, and sophistry on the other, revelation shows it to be not a questionable inequality of good and evil, but the *long-suffering* of God with sinners; and establishes the doctrine of future judgment upon his word of truth, and attributes of wisdom and justice. *C.*

Ver. 22. *Rejoice in his own works.* True joy in a man's own works lies (1) In the humble acknowledgment that he is 'an unprofitable servant,' Lu. 17. 10, for joy ariseth not from a proud assertion of merit. (2) In discovering that while his own works produce no righteousness, a believer is 'justified without the deeds of the law,' Ro. 3. 28. (3) In finding that, in all he has wrought, not *he* but *grace* has been the real worker, 1 Co. 15. 10. *C.*

REFLECTIONS.—We live in a world of changes; but all things outside man's will are governed by God's will. It is absurd then to choose it for our portion, or to take up our rest in it. Readily should we believe, that whatever God has given us is best for us, accommodate ourselves to it, and wait with patience for the full unravelling of what seems intricate and perplexed. Yea, to be entirely satisfied with God's providential disposals is highly necessary, as they neither can nor need

their oppressors *there was* power, but they had no comforter.

2 Wherefore[b] I praised the dead which are already dead more than the living which are yet alive.

3 Yea,[c] better *is he* than both they which hath not yet been, who hath not seen the evil work that is done under the sun.[2]

4 ¶ Again, [d]I considered all travail, and every right [3]work, [e]that for this a man is envied of[4] his neighbour. This *is* also vanity and vexation of spirit.

5 ¶ The[g] fool foldeth his hands together, and eateth his own flesh.

6 ¶ Better[h] *is* an handful *with* quietness, than both the hands full *with* travail and vexation of spirit.

7 ¶ Then I returned, and I saw vanity under the sun.

8 There is one *alone*, and *there is* not a second; yea, he hath neither child nor brother: yet[i] *is there* no end of all his labour; neither is his eye satisfied with riches; neither *saith he*, For[j] whom do I labour, and bereave my soul of good?[5] This *is* also vanity, yea, it *is* a sore travail.

9 ¶ Two[k] *are* better than one; because they have a good reward for their labour.

10 For[l] if they fall, the one will lift up his fellow: but woe to him *that is* alone when he falleth; for *he hath* not another to help him up.

11 Again, [m]if two lie together, then they have heat: but how can one be warm *alone?*

12 And if one prevail against him, two shall withstand him; and [o]a threefold cord is not quickly broken.

13 ¶ Better[p] *is* a poor and a wise child than an old and foolish king, who[6] will no more be admonished.[7]

14 For[q] out of prison he cometh to reign; whereas also [r]*he that is* born in his kingdom becometh poor.

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[b] Job 3. 17, &c.; ch. 6.3.
[c] ch.6.3.Job 3.11,16, 21;10.18,19.
[2] This verse is closely connected in sense with the preceding, and may be translated as follows: 'And more than both (the dead and the living), him that hath not yet been, that hath not seen the evil work that is done under the sun.'—*P.*
[d] ch.1.14; 2.11; 3. 16; 6.1;ver. 1.
[3] Heb. *all the rightness of work.*
[e] Ge.37.4-11. Jn.3.12. Mat.9. 34. Phi.1.15,16, 18.
[4] Heb. *this is the envy of a man from.*
[g] Pr. 6. 10; 12. 27; 24. 33;13.4;20.4.
[h] Pr. 15. 16, 17; 17. 1; 16.8.Ps.37.16.1 Ti.6.6.
[i] Pr. 27. 20. Is. 5.8. 1 Jn.2.16. Hab.2.5,9.ch. 5.10;6.2.
[j] Ps.39.6.
[5] This describes the state of a wretched miser, who, though he have none to possess what he acquires, yet pursues riches, however much he may possess, with an insatiable avidity; and even deprives himself of the necessary enjoyments of life.—*I.*
[k] Ge. 2.18. Pr. 27.17. 1 Co. 12. 18. Mar. 6.7. Ex.4.14,15;6. 26;31. 6. Hag.1.14. Ac.13.2.
[l] Job 4. 3, 4. Ho. 10. 24. Ju.7.21-23.
[m] 1 Ki.1.1,2. Ep.2.19. Col.2. 19.
[o] Da.3.17.
[p] Pr.26. 12. ch. 9.15, 16.1 Ti.4.12.
[6] Heb. *who knoweth not to be admonished,* 1 Ki.22.6. 2 Ch. 16.10;24.22;25.16.
[7] 'Better is a poor and a wise child than an old and foolish king who will no more be admonished,' either by the counsel of friends or the progress of opinions and providential signs and events. 'When out of prison, he'—that is, the poor and wise child, 'cometh to reign'—'when also'—that is, when in addition to the old and foolish king's refusal of admonition, such has been the result of his maladministration, that 'he that was born in his kingdom became poor;' and the public calamities demanded and compelled the elevation of another to obviate the evils of his foolish and disastrous reign.—*Note,* 'Child' does not necessarily signify an infant, but merely an inexperienced person. 1 Ki.3.7.—*C.*
[q] Job 5.11. Ps.113.7, 8.Ge.41.14,40.2Sa.7.8.
[r] Da.4.31. La.4.20.

A.M. cir. 3029.
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[8] *Second child*—that is, the son of the 'poor, but wise child,' who was called to the throne with all the advantages of personal wisdom and popular accession.—*C.*
[s] 2 Sa.15.12,13; 20.2. 1 Ki.1.5,7,40;12.10,16.
[t] ch.1.14;2.11,17,26.

CHAP. V.

[a] Ex.3.5.2 Ch.26.16. Ps.89.7. Jos.5.15. 1 Pe. 2.1,2. Ac. 10. 33. Ja. 1. 19,21.
[b] 1 Sa.15.22. Ps.50.8, 9. Is.1.11–15; 66.3. Ho. 6.6. Pr.15.8;21.27. Je.7. 9,10.
[c] Ge.18.27,30. Ps.39. 1;106. 33;116.11.
[1] Or, *word.*
[2] God is in all the earth in presence, but in heaven in visible and acknowledged glory; and as much above the worshipper as the heavens above the earth.—*C.*
[d] Pr. 10.19. Mat. 6.7, ver.3,7.
[e] Pr.10. 19; 15. 2. ch. 10.3,14.
[3] 'For as a dream cometh, &c., so cometh idle speech through many words.'—*Hodgson.*
[g] Nu.30.2.Ge.28.20. De.23.21–23. Ps.50.14; 66.13,14;76.11; 119.106. Is.19.21. Je.50.5. 2 Co. 8.5.
[h] He.10.38.
[4] Often when in great need, or in great suffering, we inwardly vow or resolve to amend our ways, to renounce our sins, to devote ourselves and all we have to God's service; but when health is restored, or prosperity again bestowed, the vows and resolutions are forgotten. The deceitful heart, centred upon the world and its enjoyments, finds no place for the love and service of God.—*P.*
[i] Ac. 5. 4. Pr. 20. 25. De.23.22.
[j] ver.1,2. Ja.1.12;3.2.
[k] 1 Ti.5.21. 1 Co. 11. 10, or Mal.2.7. Le.5.4, 5. He.1.14.
[5] *Angel.* The ministering priest, Mal. 12.7.—*C.*
[l] De.28.15,&c.
[m] Mat.12.36.ver.3.
[6] For as in many dreams is great vanity, so also in many words.'—*Boothroyd.*
[o] ch.12.13. Pr.23.17. He.12.28.
[p] See ch.3.16;4.1.
[7] Heb. *at the will* or *purpose.*
[q] Is.59.15. Ps. 58.11; 82.1;83.18; 12.5; 10. 18; 33.13–15.
[r] Ps.95.3.
[s] Ps.104.14,15. 1 Ch. 26.25–31. 1 Ki.4.7–23. 2 Ch.26.10.
[t] Mat.6.19,24. Ps.52. 7. 1 Ti.6.10.ch.6.7,14.8. 1 Ki.21.6. Pr.30.15.

15 I considered all the living which walk under the sun, with the second child[8] that shall stand up in his stead.

16 *There*[s] *is* no end of all the people, *even* of all that have been before them: they also that come after shall not rejoice in him. [t]Surely this also *is* vanity and vexation of spirit.

CHAPTER V.

1 *Cautions against abuse in divine service,* 8 *against murmuring at oppression.* 9 *The vanity of riches.* 18 *Joy in riches is the gift of God.*

KEEP thy[a] foot when thou goest to the house of God, and be more ready to hear [b]than to give the sacrifice of fools: for they consider not that they do evil.

2 Be[c] not rash with thy mouth, and let not thine heart be hasty to utter *any* thing[1] before God: for God *is* in heaven,[2] and thou upon earth; therefore let thy words [d]be few.

3 For a dream cometh through the multitude of business; and [e]a fool's voice *is known* by multitude of words.[3]

4 When[g] thou vowest a vow unto God, defer not to pay it; [h]for *he hath* no pleasure in fools: pay that which thou hast vowed.[4]

5 Better[i] *is it* that thou shouldest not vow, than that thou shouldest vow and not pay.

6 Suffer[j] not thy mouth to cause thy flesh to sin; neither say thou before [k]the angel,[5] that it *was* an error: wherefore should God be angry at thy voice, and [l]destroy the work of thine hands?

7 For[m] in the multitude of dreams and many words *there are* also *divers* vanities:[6] but[o] fear thou God.

8 ¶ If[p] thou seest the oppression of the poor, and violent perverting of judgment and justice in a province, marvel not at the [7]matter: [q]for *he that is* higher than the highest regardeth; and [r]*there be* higher than they.

9 ¶ Moreover,[s] the profit of the earth is for all: the king *himself* is served by the field.

10 He[t] that loveth silver shall not be satis-

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be altered. And let us study to answer his end in his providences, which is to make us truly religious. Amidst all the changes which we either feel or fear, let us believe and acknowledge the inviolable steadiness of his government. Let us constantly live in the faith of his future judgment of the world, that no oppression may sink our spirits, and no power nor honour render us proud, mischievous, or impious. Let us always maintain a deep sense of our own meanness, stupidity, and unruliness before God; and study to use whatever God gives us for our own comfort, and for the real benefit of others.

CHAPTER IV. Ver. 1. From viewing the various works and judgment-seats of men, and the common graves of all living things, 'I returned' to examine the *oppressions* produced in these works, and legalized by the imperfect administration of human justice; and I found the oppressed and the oppressor alike comfortless.—*Note,* The books of Judges, of Kings, and of the Prophets abundantly testify, that when a people are oppressed, it is by God's judgments upon their sins; while the examples of Pharaoh, Jeroboam, Belshazzar, and others, equally testify that the oppressor is judicially given over to his own ways, that he, in his turn, may become a warning to others in power. *C.*

Ver. 9. Almost all great works have been accomplished by two united spirits. Moses and Aaron, Joshua and Caleb, David and Jonathan, Elijah and Elisha, are striking examples in the Old Testament; and our Saviour is recorded in the New Testament to have sent his disciples 'two and two,' with his divine message of salvation. *C.*

Ver. 16. 'There is no end to all the people, to all by whom he is made a leader: but they that come after shall not rejoice in him.' That is, the popularity even of the son, not of an old and foolish, but of a young and wise king, may soon pass away: such is the instability of human opinion, and the vanity of human praise. *C.*

REFLECTIONS.—Into what a hell hath sin turned our earth! Men are often proud of transforming themselves into devils for tormenting their brethren. Often, through want of help and comfort, a man's life is made worse than death or non-existence. And desperately wicked are men when even right and useful works do but rouse their envy. But great is the mercy that God, with whom every right work is accepted, will be our final Judge. Let me then be diligent in business, and work the work of God while it is called to-day. Sloth of any kind tends to make men poor and miserable. But unhappy are they who are selfish and covetous; and who, without any temptation, deny themselves the comforts of life, and make themselves slaves to business. It is absurd to covet all to themselves, when friendship and social connections are much more calculated to their help, comfort, and improvement. Kings are often but a plague to themselves and their restless people; and tottering honours are rather burdens than advantages.

CHAPTER V. Ver. 1. *Keep thy foot.* An allusion to uncovering the feet in the sanctuary of God's presence, Ex. 3. 5. The emblem of putting off earthly thoughts and defilements, as it is written, 'Having these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all pollution of the flesh and of the spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.' *C.*

Ver. 6. *Suffer not thy mouth to cause thy flesh to sin.* Let no rash vow of your lips become the occasion of tempting you to any of the works of the flesh, such as covetous regrets after what you have vowed, or proud rivalry in religious offerings with your richer neighbours. See 1 Jn. 2. 16; Ga. 5. 19. *C.*

Ver. 9. *The profit of the earth is for all.* The poor often enjoying, through an eager and healthy appetite, more than the rich who never knew hunger. So equally does God distribute his favours, and so many the compensations for human wants, ver. 12. *C.*

REFLECTIONS.—Fearfully are men subjected to vanity; it enters not only into all their outward possessions, but even into their worship! Great need have we to take heed to our hearts, to our lips, and to our whole behaviour, in our religious performances, that they may not become means of dishonouring God and destroying ourselves. But, alas! often are they performed in a foolish and inconsiderate manner, our minds being no more serious in them than in an idle dream; and vows are often rashly made, and no less readily broken, in the view of Jesus and his angels and ministers. Very necessary is the constant faith and deep impression of God's greatness and omniscience, and the future judgment, to make us serious and cir-

fied with silver; nor he that loveth abundance with increase. This *is* also vanity.

11 When[u] goods increase, they are increased that eat them: [v]and what good *is there* to the owners thereof, saving the beholding *of them* with their eyes?

12 The[w] sleep of a labouring man *is* sweet, whether he eat little or much: but the abundance of the rich will not suffer him to sleep.

13 There[y] is a sore evil *which* I have seen under the sun, *namely,* [z]riches kept for the owners thereof to their hurt.

14 But[a] those riches perish by evil travail:[8] and he begetteth a son, and *there is* nothing in his hand.

15 As[b] he came forth of his mother's womb, naked shall he return to go as he came, and shall take nothing of his labour, which he may carry away in his hand.

16 And this also *is* a sore evil, *that* in all points as he came, so shall he go: and [c]what profit hath he that hath laboured for the wind?[9]

17 All[d] his days also he eateth in darkness, and [e]*he hath* much sorrow and wrath with his sickness.[1]

18 ¶ Behold *that* which I have seen: [g]*it is* good and comely[2] *for one* to eat and to drink, and to enjoy the good of all his labour that he taketh under the sun all the days[3] of his life, which God giveth him; for it *is* [h]his portion.

19 Every[i] man also to whom God hath given riches and wealth, and hath given him power to eat thereof, and to take his portion, and to rejoice[4] in his labour; [j]this *is* the gift of God.

20 For[5] he shall not much remember the days of his life;[6] because [k]God answereth *him* in the joy of his heart.[7]

CHAPTER VI.

1 *The vanity and misery of riches without use.* 3 *Of children,* 6 *and old age without riches.* 7 *The vanity of sight and insatiable desires.* 10 *The conclusion of vanities.*

THERE is[a] an evil which I have seen under the sun, and it *is* common among men;

2 A[b] man to whom God hath given riches, wealth, and honour, so that he wanteth nothing for his soul of all that he desireth, yet God giveth him not power to eat thereof, but a stranger eateth it. [c]This *is* vanity, and it *is* an evil disease.

3 ¶ If[d] a man beget an hundred *children,* and live many years, so that [e]the days of his years be many, and his soul be not filled with good, and [g]also *that* he have no burial;[1] I say, *that* [h]an untimely birth *is* better than he:

4 For[i] he[2] cometh in with vanity, and departeth in darkness, and his name shall be covered with darkness.

5 Moreover, [j]he hath not seen the sun, nor known *any thing:* this hath more rest than the other.

6 Yea, [k]though he live a thousand [3]years twice *told,* yet [l]hath he seen no good: [m]do not all go to one place?

7 ¶ All[n] the labour of man *is* for his mouth, and yet the appetite[4] is not filled.

8 For[p] what hath the wise more than the fool?[5] what hath the poor, that [q]knoweth to walk before the living?

9 Better[r] *is* the sight of the eyes than the wandering of the desire.[6] This[s] *is* also vanity and vexation of spirit.

10 ¶ That[t] which hath been is named already, and it is known [u]that it *is* [7]man; [v]neither may he contend with him that is mightier than he.[8]

11 Seeing there be [x]many things that increase vanity, what *is* man the better?

12 For [y]who [z]knoweth what *is* good for man in *this* life, all the days of his vain life[9] which he spendeth as [a]a shadow? [c]for who can tell a man what shall be after him under the sun?

CHAPTER VII.

1 *Remedies against vanity are, a good name,* 2 *mortification,* 7 *patience,* 11 *wisdom.* 23 *The difficulty of getting wisdom.*

A [a]*GOOD* name *is* better than precious ointment; and [b]the day of death than the day of one's birth.

A.M. cir. 3029. B.C. cir. 975.

u 1 Ki.3.13;4.22,23.
v Pr.23.5.Ps.127.2.
w Ps.4.8;127.2.
y ch.1.14;6.1,2.
z Pr. 1. 19, 32; 30. 9. Lu.16. 19. 1 Ti.6. 9,10. Ja. 2. 6, 7; 5. 1, 2, 4–6. 1 Ki.21.7,13.
a Job 5. 5; 20. 15–22; 18.5–21.
b Many in luxury, debauchery, gaming, and ambition, have more travail in spending their wealth than had their fathers in acquiring it.—*C.*
b Job 1.21. Ps. 49.17. Pr.11.4.1 Ti.6.7.
c Ps. 127.2. Pr. 23. 5; 17.29. Ho. 8. 7. ch. 1.3. Mat.16.26. Jn.6.27.
9 Laboured for the flattery of fools—the *éclat* of fashionable prodigality—for false friends that forsook him in his reverse of fortune, as the wind that passes and returns not.—*C.*
d Ps. 127.2;90.7,9;78. 33.ch.6.2,4.
e Pr.1.27–29.
1 Sad regrets in contemplating an ill-spent life, a shattered constitution, a ruined estate, beggared children, and a dreaded eternity, where his darkened heart refuses to look for a Saviour.—*C.*
g ch.2.24;5.12,13,22; 8.15;9.7;11.9.1 Ti.6.17.
2 Heb. there is *a good which is comely,* &c.
3 Heb. *the number of the days.*
h ch.3.22;2. 22; ver. 19.
i ch.2.24;3.12,13;6.2. De.8.18.1 Ki.3.13.
4 See the exposition of similar passages in the note on ch. 2.24.—*C.*
j ver.18;ch.2.22.
5 Or, *Though he give not much, yet he remembereth,* &c.
6 He, contrary to the experience of the luxurious prodigal (ver.13–17), shall think little of the past, his eyes being directed rather to future joys. —*C.*
k Ex.23.25. De. 28.8 –12. Ps. 4. 6, 7. Is. 64.5. Ro.5.1–5,11.
7 Or, 'He does not think much about the days of his life, because God hears him through the joy of his heart. The meaning is, The days of his life pass smoothly on when he thus wisely and prudently enjoys the blessings bestowed. His heart is fitted for God's service, and is lifted up to him in grateful thanksgiving.—*P.*

CHAP. VI.

a ch.5.13.1 Ki.10.27.
b Job 21. 10, &c. Ps. 17. 14; 73. 7. ch. 5. 19, with Lu.12.20. La.5.2. Ho.7.9.

A.M. cir. 3029. B.C. cir. 975.

c ch. 1.2, 14; 2.21–23; 4.4.
d 2 Ch.11.21.2 Ki.10. 1.
e ch.5.17;ver.4–7.
g 2 Ki.9.35–37. Is.14. 19,20. Je.22.19;36.30.
1 *No burial,* 'No burying place,' the want of which exhibited his covetousness—so sordid, that he would not provide a sepulchre for the body—so graceless as to neglect a resting-place for the soul.—*C.*
h Job 3.16. Ps. 58. 8. ch.4.3.
i Job 1.21;14.1. 1 Ti. 6.7. Ps. 9. 6; 90.7,9. Pr. 10.7. Is.65.15.
2 For he (the abortive birth) cometh, &c.—*C.*
j Ps. 58.8.
k Ge.v.xi.
3 Though he (the father of an hundred children, ver. 3) live a thousand years.—*C.*
l ver.3. Job xviii.xx. Is.65.20.
m Job 30.23;1.21. He. 9.27. ch.12.7. Ge.3.19.
n Pr.16.26. 1 Ti.6. 6–8. Jn.6.27. ch.5.10;4.8.
4 Heb. *soul.*
p ch.5.11;2.14–16; 9. 2.
5 Of this world, as such, the wise and the fool have alike. The superiority of the wise lies not in his enjoyments in time, but his possessions in eternity.—*C.*
q Ps.101.2. Ep.5.15.
r ch.2.24; 3.12, 13; 5. 18;8.15;9.7. 1 Ti.6.6–8.
6 Heb. *than the walking of the souls.*
s ver.2;ch.1.14; 2.11, 17;4.4.
t ch. 1.9;3.15.
u Job 14.1,4. Ps.103. 15;9.20;82.6,7. Is.31.3.
7 'That it is Adam' —dust, under the curse, yet cheered by the promise, an outcast from paradise, yet called to be an heir of God.—*C.*
v Job 9.3,4; 40. 2. Is. 45. 9, 10. ch. 5. 8. Ro.9. 19,20.
8 A new line of thought is here struck out—man's helplessness and weakness. He cannot contend with his Creator. Death comes, and man cannot tell what is beyond it. These solemn thoughts impress more deeply yet the vanity of all that is human.—*P.*
x Ps.73.6.ch.1.13; 2. 1,3–12;3.1;4.1,4,5,8,13; 5.1,8,10;ver.2,6,9.
y Ps.47.4. See ch. 2. 24. Jn.6.27.
9 Heb. *the number of the days of the life of his vanity.*
z Ps. 144. 4; 102. 11; 109.23. Ja.4.14. ch.8.13.
a Job 14.2. Is.63.16. ch.3.22;8.7,9,12.

CHAP. VII.

a Pr.15. 30; 22. 1. Is. 56.5;62.3,4;65.15. Re.2. 17.
b Phi.1.23. Is.57.1,2. 2Co.5.1. Re.14.13.

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cumspect in our worship, and for enabling us to behold, or bear up under, oppression and persecution. God makes the highest to live on the same simple things as the poorest. There is very little to profit or please, and much more to hurt and vex in riches, than we commonly think. The rich man's servant often enjoys more benefit by his wealth than the rich man himself, while he suffers none of the vexation! Nay, the covetous miser gets no comfort in his wealth, and it is swept away, so that his children never come to the possession of it. Much happier is he who receives whatever he has as God's free gift, and uses it to his glory. Little is he concerned at the evils which befall him in life when God favours him with solid comfort.

CHAPTER VI. Ver. 7, 8. Whatever wealth men gain by their labour is only available for meat, drink, or the like; but can never satisfy their soul, or even their avarice. And in respect to sensual gratification, fools may be as happy as the wisest; and even a poor man, who has common sense and prudence, may, by his industry, render himself and family as happy as the richest. 9, 10. A comfortable enjoyment of that which we have is far preferable to an insatiable desire and restless pursuit after that which we have not.—And, let our condition be what it may on earth, we shall still remain poor frail creatures, subject to manifold miseries: and it will be the utmost wickedness and madness to complain of our lot, or strive with God to get it rectified.

Ver. 2. If 'God giveth him not power to eat,' why doth he, by his Word and Spirit, 'yet find fault?' Because this denial of power to enjoy is not an evil disposition infused, but a judicial sentence passed upon his covetousness—the warning, if he repent not, of another sentence when he will lift up his eyes being in torments. *C.*

Ver. 6. *Do not all go to one place?* Not all spirits, of whom here there is no mention: but all bodies that must return to one thing, the dust: to one place, the grave. *C.*

Ver. 8. *What hath the poor that knoweth to walk* among *the living?* He sees the world, ver. 9, in all its beauty: and though he live on charity, yet if his desires be subdued to his station, he has more enjoyment in the mere sight of mountains, and hills, and fields, and fair dwellings, than their owner can obtain if subject to 'wandering desires.' *C.*

REFLECTIONS.—Men's riches are often a remarkable curse to them, and render them really more unhappy than the poorest. It is wretched to have wealth and yet no heart to use it for our necessary accommodations in life. And empty are all earthly enjoyments, which can afford no satisfaction to a soul. How unhappy do some men make themselves by the insatiable nature of their own lusts! And yet it is very hard to draw them from a sinful attachment to earthly things, or to persuade them to use them aright; and especially to bring them to receive the almighty Saviour, and his unsearchable riches, for their everlasting treasure and portion.

CHAPTER VII. Ver. 1. A good reputation is of more advantage for rendering us useful and happy than all the riches, pleasures, and honours of this world: and the day of death, which frees men from the miseries of this world, is preferable to the day of birth, which introduces into a life in which the enjoyments do not sufficiently balance the evils of it. 2–6. It is far safer and more profitable to attend occasions of mourning and faithful reproof, which conduce to make men thoughtful of death and eternity, and render them wise unto salvation; than of revelling, mirth, and folly, which seduce men into heedless dissipation. 7. Grievous oppression will provoke even wise men to unseemly rage and behaviour; and bribes received will corrupt the judgment and pervert the affections of the best. 8. We ought more to regard how a thing turns out at last, than what promising appearances it has at first. 10. In bewailing the evils of our times, we ought carefully to avoid all murmuring at the dispensations of Providence, as if they were not equal. 11. When rich

2 ¶ *It*[c] *is* better to go to the house of mourning than to go to the house of feasting: for that *is* the end of all men; and the living will lay *it* to his heart.

3 Sorrow[d] *is* better than laughter: for by the sadness of the countenance the heart is made better.

4 The[e] heart of the wise *is* in the house of mourning; [f]but the heart of fools *is* in the house of mirth.

5 *It*[h] *is* better to hear the rebuke of the wise, than for a man to hear the song of fools:

6 For [i]as the crackling[1] of thorns under a pot, so *is* the laughter of the fool.[2] This also *is* vanity.

7 ¶ Surely [j]oppression maketh a wise man mad; [k]and a gift destroyeth the heart.[3]

8 Better[l] *is* the end of a thing[4] than the beginning thereof; *and* [m]the patient in spirit *is* better than the proud in spirit.

9 Be[o] not hasty in thy spirit to be angry: for anger resteth in the bosom of fools.

10 Say[p] not thou, What is *the cause* that the former days were better than these? for thou dost not inquire wisely[5] concerning this.[6]

11 ¶ Wisdom *is* good [q]with an inheritance:[7] and *by it there is* profit to them that see the sun.

12 For[r] wisdom *is* a defence,[8] *and* money *is* a defence; but the excellency of knowledge *is*, *that*[s] wisdom[9] giveth life to them that have it.

13 Consider the work[1] of God: for [t]who can make *that* straight which he hath made crooked?

14 In[u] the day of prosperity be joyful, [v]but in the day of adversity consider: God also hath [w]set[2] the one over against the other, to the end that man [v]should find nothing after him.[3]

15 All[z] *things* have I seen in the days of my vanity: there is a just *man* that perisheth in his righteousness, and [a]there is a wicked *man* that prolongeth *his life* in his wickedness.

16 Be[b] not righteous over-much; neither make thyself over-wise:[4] why[c] shouldest thou destroy[5] thyself?

17 Be[d] not over-much wicked;[6] neither be thou foolish: [e]why shouldest thou die before thy time?[7]

18 *It*[g] *is* good that thou shouldest take hold of this; yea, also from this withdraw not thine hand: [h]for he that feareth God shall come forth of them all.

19 Wisdom[i] strengtheneth the wise more than ten mighty *men* which are in the city.

20 For[j] *there is* not a just man upon earth, that doeth good, and sinneth not.

21 Also[8] take[k] no heed unto all words that are spoken, lest thou hear thy servant curse[9] thee:

22 For[l] oftentimes also thine own heart knoweth that thou thyself likewise hast cursed others.

23 ¶ All[n] this have I proved by wisdom:[1] I said, [o]I will be wise; but it *was* far from me.

24 That[p] which is far off, and exceeding deep, who can find it out?

25 ¶ I[q] applied mine heart[2] to know, and to search, and to seek out wisdom, and the reason *of things*, and to know the wickedness of folly, even of foolishness *and* madness:

26 And[r] I find more bitter than death the woman[3] whose heart *is* snares and nets, *and* her hands *as* bands: whoso pleaseth God[4] shall escape from her; but the sinner shall be taken by her.

27 Behold, this have I found, (saith [s]the Preacher,) *counting* one by one, to find out the account;[5]

28 Which yet my soul seeketh, but I find not: [t]one man among a thousand[6] have I found; but a woman among [u]all those have I not found.

29 Lo, this only have I found, [v]that God hath made man upright; [z]but they have sought out many inventions.

A.M. cir. 3029. B.C. cir. 975.

c Is.22. 12. Mat. 5. 4. De. 32. 29. Jn. 11. 31, with Job 21. 12, 13. Ps. 73. 7; 119. 70. Is. 5. 11, 12; 22. 13. Am. 6. 4, 5.

d Or, *Anger*, 2Co. 7. 10. Je. 31. 18–20. Zec. 12. 10.

e Ne. 2. 2–5. Ps. 137. 1, 4. Da. 9. 3; 10. 2.

f Da. 5. 1, 2. Is. 22. 13; 5. 12.

h Pr. 13. 18; 27. 6; 17. 10; 15. 31, 32; 29. 9. Ps. 141. 5.

i Job 20. 5. Ps. 58. 9; 118. 12. ch. 2. 2.

1 Heb. *sound.*

2 Blazing high and brightly — soon expiring, and leaving nothing but blackness.—*C.*

j De. 28. 28, 34, 65. Ps. 73. 12–14.

k De. 16. 19. Ex. 23. 8. 1 Sa. 8. 3.

3 '*Surely* oppression *maketh a wise man* to be praised'—by calling out his prudence, patience, and decision; 'but a gift destroyeth the heart,' by flattering it into sinful compliances.—*C.*

l Lu. 16. 25. Ps. 126. 5, 6. Ja. 5. 11. He. 10. 36, 37. Is. 10. 24, 25. Job 42. 12.

4 *End of a thing*—rather, of a controversial discussion which tests patience and every other religious principle.—*C.*

m Pr. 14. 29; 16. 32. Ps. 138. 6. Lu. 18. 14.

o Pr. 14. 17; 16. 32; 12. 16. Jonah 4. 9. Ja. 1. 19. Ep. 4. 26.

p Ju. 6. 23. Je. 44. 17. Job 33. 13. De. 29. 29.

5 Heb. *out of wisdom.*

6 The inquiry of true wisdom would be, 'Were the former times better?'—*C.*

q Pr. 3. 9. Is. 23. 18. Lu. 16. 9. 1 Ti. 6. 16–19.

7 Or, *as good as an inheritance, yea, better too.*

r Pr. 2. 11; 14. 20; 18. 11. Job 1. 10; 22. 21–25. ch. 9. 16 ver. 19.

8 Heb. *a shadow.*

s Pr. 3. 2, 16, 18; 9. 6, 11; 8. 35. De. 30. 16, 20. Jn. 17. 3.

9 Christ, 'the wisdom of God,' giveth eternal life to them that follow him, Jn. 10. 28.—*C.*

1 The providential, the judgment, work of God.—*C.*

t ch. 1. 15. Is. 14. 27; 46. 10. Da. 4. 35. Ep. 1. 11.

u Ps. 103. 1–5; 40. 1–3.

v 1 Ki. 8. 47. Mi. 6. 9. Ps. 119. 71; 94. 12. Is. 26. 11; 42. 23.

w Jn. 16. 33. Ac. 14. 22.

2 Heb. *made.*

y ch. 6. 12; 3. 22; 9. 5.

3 Should not be able, with all his preparations and foresight, to tell whether prosperity or adversity would follow.—*C.*

z Is. 65. 20.

a ch. 2. 15; 3. 16; 5. 8; 8. 14; 9. 1, 2. Jn. 10. 2. Ac. 7. 59. Job vi. vii. x. with xxi xxvii. Ps. 37. 1, 7; 73. 3–14. Je. 12. 1, 2.

b ch. 12. 12.

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4 Wise in self-conceit, above God's revealed word, Ro. 1. 22; 11. 25. 1 Co. 3. 19.—*C.*

c Phi. 3. 6. Ro. 10. 2; 12. 3. Pr. 3. 7. 1 Co. 4. 6.

5 Heb. *be desolate.*

d Pr. 1. 11; 9. 6; 3. 31. Mat. 23. 32, 33. 1 Ti. 3. 11.

6 'Be not a condemner over-much;' that is, a severe judge of another man's servant, Ro. 14. 4.—*C.*

e Job 15. 32, 33. Ps. 55. 23. Pr. 10. 27. Is. 37. 36.

7 Heb. *not in thy time.*

g Pr. 2. 1. He. 2. 2; 4. 1.

h ch. 8. 12, 13. Mal. 4. 2. Ps. 25. 12; 34. 19. Je. 32. 40. Da. 4. 27. Job 5. 19.

i Pr. 21. 22; 24. 5. ch. 9. 16, 18; ver. 12.

j 2Ch. 6. 36. 1 Ki. 8. 46. Job 7. 20. Pr. 20. 9. Ja. 3. 2. 1 Jn. 1. 8. Ro. 3. 23.

8 Heb. *give not thine heart.*

k 1 Co. 13. 5, 7. 2 Sa. 16. 10. Is. 29. 21.

9 'Make light'—'speak evil of thee.'—*C.*

1 By the knowledge of Jesus, the true and only 'wisdom of God,' as he is revealed in promises, prophecies, and ordinances. That this is its meaning will be scripturally proved by comparing ver. 24 with ch. 30. 4. Ro. 10. 7. —*C.*

2 Heb. *I and my heart compassed.*

3 This is that emblematic and prophetical woman called MYSTERY, and BABYLON (Re. 17. 5, 18; 18. 4), sitting upon seven hills, that great city which reigneth over the kings of the earth; and of which God is ever saying, 'Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues.'—*C.*

4 Heb. He that is *good before God*, ch. 2. 26.

5 Or, weighing *one thing after another to find out the reason*, Je. 5. 1.

6 Who is *one man among a thousand?*—(1) A prince, a ruler in peace, or a leader in war, Ex. 18. 21. De. 20. 9. 1 Sa. 18. 13. 1 Ki. 9. 22. 1 Ch. 12. 14. (2) Amongst men, the most distinguished for the knowledge of God's will, Job 33. 23. ch. 8. 1. (3) Chief for all perfections of power and personal accomplishments, Ca. 5. 10. Now all these characteristics he found to meet in 'one man,' and in one only; and that was in 'the seed of the woman,' 'the seed of Abraham,' 'the Son of David,' yet 'David's Lord.' No other perfect man ever was, or ever will be, discovered.—*C.*

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l Mat. 15. 19; 18. 32, 33, 35; 6. 14, 15; 7. 1–5. Ja. 3. 9. Ga. 6. 1. *n* 1 Ki. 3. 12. ch. 1. –vii. *o* Ro. 1. 22. 1 Co. 1. 20. Ge. 3. 5. Eze. 28. 3. ver. 25. *p* Job 28. 12, 20. Ro. 11. 33. Ps. 36. 6. Is. 45. 15. *q* ch. 1. 17; 2. 12; ver. 27. *r* Pr. 22. 14; 5. 3–13; 2. 16–19; 7. 5–27. 9. 13–18. 1 Ki. 11. 3, 4. Ju. 16. 18. *s* See ch. 1. 1; 12. 8–10. *t* Job 33. 23. Je. 31. 22. Ca. 5. 10. *u* 1 Ki. 11. 1–3. *v* Ge. 1. 26, 27; 5. 1. *x* Ge. 3. 6, 7. Mat. 15. 19. Eze. xxii. Ho. 4. 1, 2.

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men are truly wise, they may do much good to others with their wealth in this world; 12. For both wisdom and wealth may be laid out for our protection and safety; but it is true piety and prudence that promote spiritual comfort and eternal happiness. 13, 14. To prevent murmuring, we ought carefully to observe how wise, just, and powerful God's operations are, and consider ourselves incapable of changing, even the most afflictive events of Providence, to our liking. In the time of prosperity we should therefore acknowledge God's goodness, and enjoy the benefit of it; and in the day of adversity we ought to consider the nature, author, and end of our afflictions, so as to make a good use of them: for God has disposed them in such variety, that none might be able to foresee future events in his particular lot. 15. I have often observed the most pious men sorely afflicted, and apparently miserable in this world; and the most wicked long enjoy an outward prosperity. 16–18. It is therefore necessary that men should avoid all needless scrupulosity and rash zeal not warranted by God's Word, lest it bring them into unnecessary troubles;—and especially should we avoid, with the utmost care, presumptuous sinning, lest, however he bear with others, it should provoke God quickly to cut us off, and send us to hell in our wickedness.—It is of great use to receive heartily and practise carefully this advice: for it is the true fearer of God who, by a circumspect regard to his law, shall escape both the extremes and their evil consequences. 19, 20. True piety and prudence tend more to direct, help, and protect men, than all human helps; even though the best are liable to manifold failings.—24. Human wisdom may judge of things present and obvious, but not of things future and mysterious. 25. I attempted a most careful and comprehensive search into God's providences, and men's counsels, conduct, and sinfulness; 26. And with grief and shame, I find that nothing more effectually entices and fixes men in guilt and ruin than a whorish woman. It is only by the remarkable mercy of God, and the most earnest and watchful piety, that one can either avoid or escape from her temptations; and often it is that those who have otherwise offended him are ruined by her influence. 27, 28. Here and there a truly honest man may be found among my courtiers: but a modest, plain-hearted, humble, and sincere woman have I not found among all my thousand wives and concubines.

Ver. 1. *Precious ointment.* Many unguents were of very great value among the Jews, as appears from Jn. 12. 3, where a single pound was estimated at about £9, 13*s.* 6*d.* British. Taking then a Roman penny at 7½*d.* or 7¾*d.* for the daily wages of a labourer, Mat. 20. 12, 13, and comparing it with modern wages in the neighbourhood of cities, the price of the ointment will be greatly increased.—*Note*, There is no name really good but that of a 'son of God,' 1 Jn. 3. 1; and to such a one, but to no other, the day of death is better than the day of his birth, Job 3. 5. *C.*

Ver. 15. Solomon prophetically foresees, and in this verse describes, Christ the only Son of man that ever had righteousness, ver. 20; Ro. 3. 10; and, by necessary consequence, the only one that could perish in 'his righteousness.' The second clause of the verse foresees and describes Antichrist, 2 Th. 2. 8. *C.*

Ver. 16. *Be not righteous over-much. Be not* a justifier *over-much*—that is, a self-justifier. Ro. 1. 17; 3. 22, 26; 5. 18, 19, 21; 10. 4; 1 Co. 1. 30 will discover what is the only true and sufficient righteousness; while Lu. 18. 9–14; Ro. 10. 3; Phi. 3. 9 will discover the basis of that 'over much' righteousness upon which Pharisees built of old, and upon which the Romanists have raised their acts of supererogation—works even beyond what were necessary for the workers' own salvation, and therefore applicable to the salvation of others. *C.*

Ver. 28. The 'one man' found, being perfect Christ; the *woman* sought is a perfect church. See Ga. 4. 26, 27, 31; Re. 12. 1, 6, 14–17. This scriptural interpretation, ch. 8. 1, of Solomon's parabolic inquiry, presents no splenetic record of his own experience; no harsh and more than questionable sentence on the relative intellectual and religious attainments and character of the sexes; consequently no unfilial stricture upon his own mother; no cruel and unfounded satire on half the population of the earth. *C.*

REFLECTIONS.—A truly good character is very valuable, and ought to be sought for and maintained with the greatest care. Happy is the death of those who die in the Lord! Let us then live much in the serious consideration of our last end. Christian reproofs are highly requisite to make or keep us grave and serious,

CHAPTER VIII.

2 Kings are greatly to be respected. 6 The divine providence is to be observed. 12 It is better with the godly in adversity, than with the wicked in prosperity. 16 The work of God is unsearchable.

WHO *is*[a] as the wise *man?* and who knoweth the interpretation of a thing? [b]A man's wisdom maketh his face to shine,[1] and the [2]boldness[3] of his face shall be changed.

2 ¶ I[c] *counsel thee* to keep the king's commandment, and *that* [d]in regard of the oath of God.

3 Be[e] not hasty to go out of his sight: stand not in an evil thing; [g]for he doeth whatsoever pleaseth him.

4 Where[h] the word of a king *is, there is* power; and who may say unto him, What doest thou?

5 Whoso[i] keepeth the commandment shall feel no evil thing; [j]and a wise man's heart discerneth both time and judgment.[4]

6 ¶ Because[k] to every purpose there is time and judgment, therefore the misery of man *is* great upon [5]him.[6]

7 For[l] he knoweth not that which shall be: for who can tell him when it shall be?[7]

8 ¶ *There is* no man that hath power [n]over the spirit to retain the spirit; neither *hath he* power in the day of death: and *there is* no discharge[8] in *that* war;[9] neither[o] shall wickedness deliver those that are given to it.

9 All[p] this have I seen, and applied my heart unto every work that is done under the sun: *there is* a time wherein one man ruleth over another [q]to his own hurt.

10 And[r] so I saw the wicked buried, who had come and gone from [s]the place of the holy,[1] and [t]they were forgotten in the city where they had so done. This *is* also vanity.

A.M. cir. 3029.
B.C. cir. 975.

CHAP. VIII.

a 1 Ki. 3. 13. 1 Co. 2. 16. ch. 7. 23. Ro. 11. 34. Pr. 1. 5, 6.

b Pr. 17. 24; 4. 9. Ex. 34. 29, 30. Ac. 7. 10, 15.

1 To beam with intelligence and benevolence.—*C.*

2 Heb. *the strength,* Is. 40. 31. Pr. 4. 18. ch. 7. 19. 2 Co. 3. 18.

3 His perseverance and firmness in illustrating and enforcing his views of truth and godliness will be changed, as the 'light that shineth more and more till the perfect day.'—*C.*

c Ro. 13. 1–6. Tit. 3. 1. Je. 27. 12.

d 2 Ki. 11. 17. 2 Ki. 2. 43. Eze. 17. 13–18.

e ch. 10. 4, 6. Pr. 14. 29; 19. 2.

g Pr. 30. 31; 16. 10–15. Da. 5. 19[14]. 35.

h Ro. 13. 1–4. Tit. 3. 1. Job 34. 18, 19; 33. 14.

i Ps. 119. 6. 1 Pe. 3. 13.

k Ex. 1. 17, 21, with Ho. 5. 11. Ac. 4. 19.

j 1 Ch. 12. 32. ch. 2. 14; 10. 2. Pr. 17. 24.

4 The meaning of this verse is thus expressed by Hengstenberg:—'As certainly as God in his own time shall judge righteously—a thing which is known to the wise heart—so certain is it, that those who hold God's commands, and therefore have God on their side, cannot be really and lastingly unhappy.'—*P.*

k ch. 3. 1, 17; 7. 14.

5 'The misery of man,' who will not wisely seek to discover the will of God, and discern the signs of providence (see ver. 5), 'is great upon him.'—*C.*

6 See note * in second column.

l Lu. 19. 41–44. ch. 3. 22; 6. 12; 9. 12; 10. 14. Pr. 24. 22.

7 Or, *how it shall be.*

n Job 14. 5. Ps. 49. 7; 89. 48. He. 9. 27. 2 Sa. 14. 14. 1 Ki. 2. 1[8].

8 (Or, *casting off* weapons.

9 The *war* with disease and death.—*C.*

o Pr. 14. 32; 10. 2; 11. 1. Ps. 9. 17; 73. 18, &c. Is. 3. 10; 28. 15.

p ch. 1. 14, 17; 2. 11, 12; 4. 1–4; 7. 14, 25.

q 2 Sa. xviii. xx. ch. 5. 13. 2 Ki. 11. 31.

r Ps. 82. 7; 58. 9.

s Ps. 82. 1; 122. 5.

t Je. 17. 13. He. 10. 38. Pr. 10. 7. Job 18. 17, 19. Is. 14. 20, 22.

1 Solomon refers to unholy prophets,

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priests, and kings, whose office was, and whose hearts should have been, 'holiness to the Lord.'—*C.*

u Ps. 20. 6; 50. 21. 2 Pe. 3. 3, 4. Is. 26. 10; 57. 11. Je. 48. 11. Mat. 24. 8, 49.

v Ps. 37. 11, 18, 19. Pr. 1. 32, 33. Is. 3. 10, 11; 65. 20, 23. Ro. 2. 7–10. Ps. 55. 23, with ch. 7. 15. Mat. 25. 34.

x Job 7. 6, 7; 14. 2. See ch. 6. 12. Ps. 144. 4; 102. 11; 109. 23; 39. 5.

y Job. 21. 7, &c. Ps. 73. 14. See ch. 7. 15; 9. 1, 2. Mal. 3. 15.

z Da. 11. 35. 1 Co. 11. 32.

2 This is exemplified in He. 11. 4, and by 'the noble army of martyrs' that have so often sealed the truth with their blood.—*C.*

a Ps. 37. 35. Ac. 20. 21.

3 This is exemplified in Re. 17. 13; 18. 7, 9–16; and by the long continued prosperity that godless men and empires have so often been permitted to enjoy.—*C.*

b ch. 3. 12, 22; 2. 24; 5. 18[19]. 7. 1 Ti. 4. 3, 4; 6. 17.

c 1 Co. 7. 30.

d See ver. 9; ch. 7. 25.

e Ps. 107. 23, 4, 9; 17. 14. Jn. 6. 27. Ge. 31. 40.

4 This cannot be true of any man; nor does Solomon assert it of any man. He speaks of the heart—the studious and sleepless spirit of the diligent searcher into the wisdom and works of God, Ca. 5. 2.—*C.*

g ch. 3. 11; 11. 5. Job 5. 9. Ro. 11. 33. Ps. 40. 5; 73. 16; 72. 18; 104. 24.

* The meaning of this verse appears to be this: Everything that the righteous man desires or purposes shall take place in its appointed time, and shall be rightly judged. But men are ignorant of the time. They know not when or how the things they desire shall take place, and on this account their unhappiness is very great. It will be seen that ver. 7 is closely connected in sense with the second clause of ver. 6.—*P.*

CHAP. IX.

a ch. 1. 14, 17; 2. 12; 4. 1, 4, 7. 25; 8. 16; 12. 9, 10.

1 Heb. *I gave* or *set to my heart.*

b De. 33. 3. 1 Sa. 2. 9. Is. 26. 12. 2 Co. 3. 5. Phi. 2. 12, 13. Re. 2. 1. Jn. 10. 28, 29.

11 ¶ Because[u] sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil.

12 ¶ Though a sinner do evil an hundred times, and his *days* be prolonged, yet surely I know that [v]it shall be well with them that fear God, which fear before him:

13 But it shall not be well with the wicked, neither shall he prolong *his* days, *which* [x]*are* as a shadow; because he feareth not before God.

14 There is a vanity which is done upon the earth; [y]that there be just *men,* unto whom it happeneth according to the [z]work of the [2]wicked: again, there be wicked *men,* to whom it happeneth according to the [a]work of the [3]righteous. I said, that this also *is* vanity.

15 ¶ Then[b] I commended mirth, because a man hath no better thing under the sun, than [c]to eat, and to drink, and to be merry; for that shall abide with him of his labour the days of his life, which God giveth him under the sun.

16 ¶ When[d] I applied mine heart to know wisdom, and to see the business that is done upon the earth; (for [e]also *there is that* neither day nor night seeth sleep with his eyes;)[4]

17 Then I beheld all the work of God, [g]that a man cannot find out the work that is done under the sun; because though a man labour to seek *it* out, yet he shall not find *it:* yea farther, though a wise *man* think to know *it,* yet shall he not be able to find *it.*

CHAPTER IX.

1 Like things happen to good and bad. 4 There is a necessity of death unto men. 7 Comfort is all their portion in this life. 11 God's providence ruleth over all. 13 Wisdom is better than strength.

FOR all[a] this I considered in my heart,[1] even to declare all this, [b]that the righteous, and the wise, and their works, *are* in the hand of

amidst so much folly and so many flashes of vain mirth as take place in the world. The very worst of things effectually work for the good of the saints. And a humble and patient resignation to the will of God makes us easy under the most grievous adversity and oppression. Christian wisdom and prudence tend greatly to our direction, safety, happiness, and strength. —They teach us to view God's hand in all that befalls us; to accommodate ourselves to every providence as it comes; and neither to be offended with the prosperity of the wicked nor the adversity of the godly in this life; to guard against all extremes: and, under a deep sense of our own faults, to carry ourselves mildly toward others who are overtaken in a fault. How short-sighted are the wisest of mortals with respect to the most important objects! But great is the mercy if they are brought to see their own leading follies and crimes, and, by the sight thereof, are led to repentance, to a deep sense of the riches of God's grace, and to search out the sinfulness of their heart and nature, till they apprehend themselves utterly vile before God.

CHAPTER VIII. Ver. 1. How few are truly wise, and can rightly take up or expound the words or works of God? And yet it is wisdom that renders a man truly honourable, mild, and majestic. 2. The laws of a king ought to be obeyed, not only from fear of the penalty, but from regard to God, whose deputy he is, and to the oath of allegiance sworn to him by the name and in the presence of God, as witness and guardian of it. 3. We must behave ourselves submissively; and never, through passion or discontent, withdraw from his service or cast off our allegiance; for, his power being so great, it is very dangerous to contend with him. 4. A king has power to enforce his commands; and none can oppose him without apparent danger. 5. He who prudently complies with the king's pleasure in lawful things, shall avoid the trouble and danger which he would otherwise incur. And it will require wisdom to direct in what time and manner we may deal with him to the best advantage. 6. For through inattention to the proper time and to proper direction in managing matters, men bring much trouble upon themselves: 7. For they are generally ignorant what things are to happen, and of the time in which what they expect will come to pass. 8. None, neither by force nor entreaty, nor by wickedness, are capable of preventing the removal of their soul from this world in one way or another, so it becomes all to be ready. 9. I have observed that rulers by their management often bring guilt and ruin upon themselves. 10. I have observed wicked rulers, notwithstanding the greatest funeral pomp, quickly forgotten in the very city in which they had often, in God's name, administered judgment. So vain and perishing are all the pomp and power of the greatest. 11. Because God in mercy sometimes delays to punish open transgressors of his law, hardened sinners, in a most presumptuous manner, abandon themselves to all manner of mischief and wickedness. 12. But though the sinner's days of reprieve, or even of prosperity, should be prolonged for a time, yet it is only they who truly fear God and walk in his ways that will be happy at last. 13. Wicked despisers of God shall not enjoy the true comforts of life, and shall be quickly hurried into misery here or hereafter. 14. It is, however, afflicting that some eminent saints are reproached, persecuted, and distressed in this world, while some ringleaders in wickedness meet with kind usage and remarkable prosperity. 15. This makes it evident, that nothing is more proper than soberly and thankfully to enjoy what God in his providence bestows upon us in this world, as all the reward that we can gain by our labour. 16, 17. It is best to refrain from curious inquiries into the reasons, ends, and meaning of God's dispensations; for after the most diligent, curious, and persevering search, I find they will still remain unsearchable to men.

Ver. 2–5. That 'the king' was a title of Messiah familiar in the days of Solomon, is obvious from Ps. 2. 6; 21. 1, 4, 6; 45. 1, 6; 98. 6, &c.; and there are such characteristics in this passage as clearly prove that Jesus is 'the King' whom Solomon prophetically honours. Thus in ver. 3, 'He doeth whatsoever pleaseth him.' Now this neither David, nor Solomon, nor Darius, Da. 6. 14, nor indeed the most despotic monarch on earth, ever could effect: then, to Solomon's King none may say, 'What doest thou?' But never was there an earthly king without some one honest enough, or bold enough, or factious enough, to question his acts. Above all, he who keepeth the commandment of Solomon's King 'shall feel no evil,' a lot which no earthly king enjoys himself, nor can bestow upon any of his subjects. But all these things the King in Zion can do, and all these blessings his subjects enjoy. *C.*

Ver. 9. This *hurt* arises (1) From the mental perturbation that every ungodly and unkind superior must experience. (2) From that human retaliation which the injustice of despotic rule so often provokes. (3) From these judgments which an all-wise and merciful God who suffers long, does yet in justice finally bring down upon the wicked. *C.*

Ver. 10. Wickedly ruled 'to their own hurt'—raised, as they imagined, imperishable monuments of their fame—died, and were forgotten—leaving nought but a new proof that 'all is vanity.' *C.*

Ver. 15. This is no libertine insinuation, as some imagine, but, when scripturally interpreted, a plain statement of an important truth. There is no doubt a 'laughter of fools,' and 'the end of that mirth is heaviness,' Pr. 14. 13; but there is also a mirth which forms an essential or concomitant part of God's worship, Ps. 100. 1, 2; Ne. 8. 6, 9–12; Ja. 5. 3; and it is of that mirth, with the thankful and temperate use of what men 'eat or drink,' that Solomon here speaks. *C.*

God: [c]no man knoweth either love or hatred *by* all *that is* before them.

2 All[d] *things come* alike to all: *there is* one event to the righteous, and to the wicked; to the good, and to the clean, and to the unclean; to him that sacrificeth, and to him that sacrificeth not: as *is* the good, so *is* the sinner; *and* he that sweareth, as *he* that feareth an oath.[2]

3 This[e] *is* an evil among all *things* that are done under the sun, that *there is* one event unto all; [g]yea, also the heart of the sons of men is full of evil, and madness *is* in their heart while they live, [h]and after that *they go* to the dead.

4 ¶ For[i] to him that is joined to all the living there is hope: [j]for a living dog is better than a dead lion.

5 For[k] the living know that they shall die: but [l]the dead know not any [3]thing, [m]neither have they any more a reward; [o]for the memory of them is forgotten.

6 Also[p] their love, and their hatred, and their envy, is now perished; neither have they any more a portion for ever in any *thing* that is done under the sun.

7 ¶ Go[q] thy way, eat thy bread with joy,[4] and drink thy wine with a merry heart;[5] for God now accepteth thy works.[6]

8 Let[r] thy garments be always white;[7] and let thy head lack no ointment.

9 Live[s] joyfully[8] with the wife whom thou lovest all the days of the [t]life of thy vanity, which he hath given thee under the sun, all the days of thy vanity: [u]for that *is* thy portion in *this* life, and in thy labour which thou takest under the sun.

10 Whatsoever[v] thy hand findeth to do, do *it* with thy might; [x]for *there is* no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave, whither thou goest.

11 ¶ I[y] returned, and saw under the sun, that

A.M. cir. 3029.
B.C. cir. 975.

c Ps.73.3,12,13. Mal. 3.15.ch.2.14,17.1.5.
d ch.8.14.
2 See note * below.
e Ps. 37.1,7; 73.3–14. Je.12.1,2.
g Ge. 6. 5. Je. 17. 9. Mat.15.19.ch.8.11. Ro. 1.29–31; 8,7,8. Tit.3.3. Pr.4.16.
h Job 30.23.He.9.27. Ge.3.19. ch.12.7. Pr.2. 18;9.18.
i Zec.9.10.Is.38.19.
j 2 Sa.12.23.Es.6.3.
k Job 30.23.He.9.27.
l Ps.6.5; 30. 9; 88.11. Is.38.18; 63.16. Job 14. 21.
3 The bodies only are dead; and they, literally, know not anything.—*C.*
m ch.1.9,11,18—22.
o ch.8.10. Job 7.8–10. Is.26.14.
p Ex. 1. 8. Job 3. 17–19; 14.21. Lu.12.18–20. Mat.2.20.
q ch.2.24; 3.12,22; 5. 18; 8.15;10.19. De.12.7. Ne.8.10–12.
4 See note on ch. 2. 24.—*C.*
5 The exhortation is addressed to the wise and righteous (ver. 1), to whom Jesus is made wisdom and righteousness, 1 Co.1.30.—*C.*
6 *God now accepteth thy works*—not as claims of merit (Lu. 12. 37), but as fruits of the Spirit (Ga.5.22), the person and works being accepted, not for their own sake; for the person is a sinner, and the works imperfect; but both being 'accepted in Jesus) the Beloved,' Ep.1.6.—*C.*
[illegible]
Mat. 17. Psa. 15
7 *Let thy garments be* [illegible]
Let the 'righteousness of saints,' 'washed and made white in the blood of the Lamb,' Re.3.4;7.14;19.8.—*C.*
s Pr.5.15–19. Ge.26. 8. Mal.2.15.
8 Heb. *See* or *enjoy*
[illegible]
x See ver.5,6.Re.14. [illegible]
10;4.T.4. [illegible]
[illegible] sense is. When the occurrences of life are regarded in the light of human reason only—from the stand-point of feeble short-sighted man, then the righteous and wicked appear to be dealt with in exactly the same manner. Both suffer, both die. Sceptics conclude from this that the providential dealings of a just God cannot extend to human acts. But the object of the sacred writer here manifestly is to raise man to a higher stand-point. He is to look to another state — an eternal home and reward for the righteous in heaven. The words of this passage bear a close analogy to the words of Paul in 1 Co. 15.19.—*P.*
x Ps.75.6,7. Je.9.23. Am.2.14–16. Ps. 33.16, 17. 1 Sa.17. 50. Hag.1. 5,9.
a ch. 2. 14, 15; 7. 15; ver.2. Job 5.11–14. La. 3.37,38.
b ch.3.22; 6.12. Hab. 1.14. Pr.7.22,23.
c Pr. 29. 6. 2 Pe.2.12. Ps.73.18,20. Lu.17.20–31; 21. 34, 35. Is. 30.13. 1 Th.5.2,3.
d ch.2.13;7.11,12,19.
9 2 Sa.20.15–22.2 Ki. 7.1. Lu.12.32. Mat.16. 18; 10. 24. 1 Pe. 5. 8. This may be an emblem of Christ's delivering his church.
1 Ungrateful as the world is, it does not generally forget to honour and reward military or diplomatic deliverers. The meaning therefore must be, that no one remembered having ever heard of this obscure man before he started into distinction by his superior wisdom.—*C.*
e Pr.21.22;24.5,6; 28. 10. ch.7.19. 2 Ch.20.12, 15.
g Mar. 6. 2, 3. Pr.10. 15.14;20;10.4. Ja.2.2, or [illegible]
2 Till some public difficulty or disaster call him from his quiet retirement to [illegible] Ge 41. [illegible] or Jn.10.27. Is.42.2.
t See ver. 16; ch. 7 10,19.
j Jos.7.1,5;22.20;8.9. He.12.15.
3 'One error,' one bad principle.—*C.*

CHAP. X.

1 He [illegible] *Flies of* [illegible] Mat 13. 2 Sa. 1.10. [illegible] 12 1.. [illegible] Pr. 2 [illegible] 8 Mat 13. Col 2.3. 1 Jn 3. [illegible] 18,16.2.11
2 His very walk has a physiognomy that betrays him.—*C.*
3 Heb. *his heart.*
d Pr. 6. 12–14; 12. 23; 13.16;18.2.1 Pe.4.4.
4 This *ruler* may be father, mother, teacher, minister of the Word, or civil governor.—*Leave not thy place*—do not try to evade reprehen- [illegible]—*C.*

[f]the race *is* not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong, neither yet bread to the wise, nor yet riches to men of understanding, nor yet favour to men of skill; [a]but time and chance happeneth to them all.

12 For[b] man also knoweth not his time: as the fishes that are taken in an evil net, and as the birds *that are* caught in the snare; so *are* the sons of men [c]snared in an evil time, when it falleth suddenly upon them.

13 ¶ This wisdom have I seen also under the sun, and [d]it *seemed* great unto me:

14 *There*[9] *was* a little city, and few men within it; and there came a great king against it, and besieged it, and built great bulwarks against it:

15 Now there was found in it a poor wise man, and he by his wisdom delivered the city; yet no man remembered that same poor man.[1]

16 Then[e] said I, Wisdom *is* better than strength: [g]nevertheless the poor man's wisdom *is* despised, and his words are not heard.[2]

17 The[h] words of wise *men are* heard in quiet more than the cry of him that ruleth among fools.

18 Wisdom[i] *is* better than weapons of war: but [j]one sinner[3] destroyeth much good.

CHAPTER X.

1 *Observations on wisdom and folly:* 16 *on the defects of governors;* 18 *slothfulness,* 19 *and money.* 20 *Men's thoughts of kings ought to be reverent.*

DEAD flies[1] cause the ointment of the apothecary to send forth a stinking savour: *so* [a]*doth* a little folly him that is in reputation for wisdom *and* honour.

2 A[b] wise man's heart *is* at his right hand; but [c]a fool's heart at his left.

3 Yea also, when he that is a fool walketh by the way,[2] his wisdom[3] faileth *him,* and [d]he saith to every one *that* he *is* a fool.

4 If the spirit of the ruler[4] rise up against

REFLECTIONS.—What excellency in himself—usefulness among neighbours—honour among friends—and courage among enemies—the true knowledge and fear of God give to a man! But it is foolish and sinful to disregard the laws of our rulers; to be forward in finding fault with their administrations; to persist in faults pointed out to us; or to neglect proper methods of obtaining redress of our grievances. Subjection to magistrates is highly necessary, not only for conscience' sake, but even for avoiding their wrath and securing our own comfort. Certain and irresistible in themselves, though uncertain in their circumstances, are troubles and death to sinful men. But when we see wicked men prosper while the godly are oppressed, there is need of patience and of looking by faith to the unseen, the eternal issue of things! and, in the meanwhile, to make the best use we can of what we meet with, and leave it to the Lord to comprehend and manage his own mysterious works.

CHAPTER IX. Ver. 1. *No man knoweth either love or hatred,* &c. No man can tell from prosperity that God loves him, nor from adversity that God hates him. Yet let no one ignorantly say, We have then no means of ascertaining whether God loves us or not. No one can so imagine when he reads Jn. 14. 23; 1 Jn. 3. 13, 19, 21; 4. 13, 16. *C.*

Ver. 2. The 'one event' that is common to all is death, see last clause of ver. 3; and 'this evil under the sun' exists as a perpetual memorial of the fall of man, an awful warning of 'the judgment to come'—a dungeon of darkness (sorrow) to the wicked, and a door of hope and joy to the children of God. *C.*

Ver. 4. *A living dog is better than a dead lion.* The 'dead lion' was the guardian emblem of the throne of Solomon, 2 Ch. 9. 18, 19, and although 'the like were not made in any kingdom,' yet 'a living dog,' though an unclean and despised animal, would by his mere barking or assault have done more to guard the monarch than the twelve dead lions by which the ascent of Solomon's throne was protected. *C.*

Ver. 5. *The memory of them* [the dead] *is forgotten.* Is this consistent with fact? Is the memory of a great man ever forgotten? Yes, always. The memory of a good or a bad man's actions may be preserved in history and trumpeted by fame; but the memory of every man—the memory of personal affection—the only real memory of the man—is altogether forgotten—his children cease to weep for him—and his grandchildren perhaps knew him not. *C.*

Ver. 10. 'What a life I have spent in laboriously doing nothing!' was the melancholy reflection of a learned man on his death-bed. And so must it be with the most diligent, if he do not embrace the four departments to which Solomon directs the intellectual and active energies—work, device, knowledge, wisdom. Time spent in bodily *works* but trains an animal; time spent in artful *devices* but fosters a serpent; time spent in worldly knowledge but collects a library: it is, when neglecting neither of these, man 'applies his heart to wisdom,' that he puts forth 'all his might,' and fulfils, through grace, the great ends of his creation. *C.*

Ver. 11. *Chance.* The meaning of this much-abused word may be found by contrasting the end of ver. 11 with the end of ver. 12, where 'evil time' and 'suddenly' are expository of 'time and chance.' Chance therefore signifies, not what is below or above the direction of Providence, but what comes unexpectedly and suddenly upon thoughtless ignorant men. *C.*

REFLECTIONS.—It is a great mercy to believers that they, and all their works, are in the hand and under the influence of God, their reconciled Father. Yet how often does he use them with as much severity in this world as if they were the most profligate sinners! Great is the mercy that there is an eternity at hand, when Providence so little distinguishes the righteous here in their condition either in life or in death. Remarkable are the advantages which men have in this life for bettering their states, tempers, or hopes. But quickly death puts an end to them all! to all opportunities of preparing for eternity; and to all our intimacies, enjoyments, or affections in this world. What need then have we soberly to relish the comforts of this life, relative to our spirits, our food, our raiment, and our relations. Quickly should we work out our salvation with fear and trembling while we have opportunity, as we know not how soon our soul may be required of us. Carefully should we acknowledge God, and depend on him for direction in all our paths, as without his assistance we can obtain nothing good, but must fall into misery and ruin. Yet how stupid are most men, who neither regard wisdom itself, nor those who thereby do them the greatest services! It is necessary that we should always act from regard to the authority of God, and from a principle of love, as men may perhaps disregard the best works that we can do for them. But much more useful are wise discourses than all the noisy harangues which fools admire. And even one impenitent and presumptuous sinner is often a great plague to a family, a church, or nation.

CHAPTER X. Ver. 1. A little imprudence or wickedness much hurts the character of one who has been reckoned uncommonly wise. 2. A wise man's

thee, [c]leave not thy place; for [d]yielding[5] pacifieth great offences.

5 There[h] is an evil *which* I have seen under the sun, as an error *which* proceedeth from[6] the ruler;

6 Folly[i] is set in great [7]dignity, [j]and the rich[8] sit in low place.[9]

7 I[k] have seen servants upon horses, and princes walking as servants upon the earth.

8 He[l] that diggeth a pit shall fall into it; and whoso breaketh an hedge, a serpent shall bite him.

9 Whoso removeth stones shall be hurt therewith; *and* he that cleaveth wood shall be endangered thereby.

10 If the iron be blunt, and he do not whet the edge, then must he put to more strength: but [n]wisdom *is* profitable to direct.

11 Surely [o]the serpent will bite without enchantment; and a babbler[1] is no better.

12 The[p] words of a wise man's mouth *are* gracious;[2] but[q] the lips of a fool will swallow up himself.

13 The beginning of the words of his mouth *is* foolishness; and the end of his talk[3] *is* mischievous madness.

14 A[r] fool also is full of words:[4] a man cannot tell what shall be; and [s]what shall be after him, who can tell him?

15 The[t] labour of the foolish wearieth every one of them, because he knoweth not how to go to the city.[5]

16 ¶ Woe[u] to thee, O land, when thy king *is* a child, and thy princes eat in the morning!

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17 Blessed[v] *art* thou, O land, when thy king *is* the son of nobles,[6] and thy princes eat in due season, for strength, and not for drunkenness!

18 By[w] much slothfulness the building decayeth; and through idleness of the hands the house droppeth through.

19 ¶ A[y] feast is made for laughter, and [z]wine maketh [7]merry: [a]but money answereth all [8]*things*.

20 ¶ Curse[b] not the king, no, not in thy thought;[9] and curse not the rich in thy bedchamber: for [c]a bird of the air shall carry the voice, and that which hath wings shall tell the matter.

CHAPTER XI.

1 *Directions for charity.* 7 *Death in life,* 9 *and the day of judgment, in the days of youth, are to be thought on.*

CAST thy[a] bread upon the [1]waters: [b]for thou shalt find it after many days.

2 Give[c] a portion to seven, and also to [2]eight; for [d]thou knowest not what evil shall be upon the earth.

3 If[e] the clouds be full of rain, they empty *themselves* upon the earth: and if the tree fall toward the south, or toward the north; in the place where the tree falleth, there it shall be.

4 He[g] that observeth the wind shall not sow; and he that regardeth the clouds shall not reap.

5 As[h] thou knowest not what *is* the way of the spirit, *nor* how the bones *do grow* in the womb of her that is with child; [i]even so thou knowest not the works of God who maketh all.

6 In[j] the morning sow thy seed, and in the evening withhold not thine hand: [k]for thou

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c ch.8.3. Pr.6.3;15.1; 25.15. Ro.13.1.
d 1 Sa.25.24, &c. *Yielding.* This does not inculcate a servile spirit, but demands yielding where the party admonished has been in error.—*C.*
e ch.3.16;4.1,7;5.13; 6.1.
6 Heb. *from before.*
f 1 Ki.12.13,14. Es.3.1. Ps.12.8.
7 Heb. *in great heights.*
g He.11.37,38. Ja.2.5.
8 It must mean 'the really rich;' the rich in wisdom, faith, and good works; otherwise the observation would be seldom realized.—*C.*
9 See note * below.
h Pr. 30. 22; 19. 20. 2 Sa.15.30.
i Ps.7.15,16; 9.15,16. Pr.26.27. Ac.28.3. Es. 7.10. Am.5.19. Ju.9.53. 2 Sa.17.23; 18.15. 1 Ki. 2.25,27,34,46.
k 1 Ch.12.32. 1 Ki.3. 9.2 Ch.19.5.ch.9.15-18. Ja.2.5.
l Je.8.17. Ps 58.5. Pr. 3.32.
1 Heb. *the master of the breach.*
m Ps. 58. 5. Ec. 10. 8, 11. Am. 5. 19. Ec.4.29.
2 Heb. *grace,* Col. 4.6.
n Pr.10.8,10,14; 13.3; 12.13; 18.7. Ps.64.8. Ja. 3.6,8.
3 Heb. *his mouth.*
o Pr.15.2.ch.5.3,7.
4 Heb. *multiplieth words.*
p ch. 3. 22; 6.12; 8.7. Is. 3.10.
q Hab.2.6,13. Is. 47. 12;57.10, with ver. 3.
The allusion to be to Ps. 5 (see also He. 11.10,16; 12.22; 13.14), and is a just description of those who know not, and will not know, that Jesus is 'the way, the truth, and the life.'
The humiliation of the people of God, and the triumph of the world, is a heavy stone of stumbling. But in his own good time God will remove this offence out of the way; those who have used violence will meet with recompense: and it is the

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less possible that they should escape ruin as they are utterly destitute of the corrective and preservative element of wisdom.' Such are the great lessons inculcated in ver. 5-10. In ver. 5-7 the apparently unjust dealings of providence are stated. In ver. 7-10 God's overruling wisdom and goodness are indicated in the language of symbol and proverb.—*J.*
v Pr.29.2,4;20.26;31. 4,5. Je.30.21.
6 Not the mere nobility of descent and title, but the nobility that superadds cultivated intellect and religious principles.—*C.*
w Pr.24.30,31; 12. 24, 27;21.25;10.4; 13.4; 20. 4;23.21. He.6.11,12.
y Ge.21.8; 26. 30; 29. 22; 43.34. Es. 1. 5. Da. 5.1.
z Ps. 104. 15. 1 Ti. 5. 23.
7 Heb. *maketh glad the life.*
a Pr.14.20.ch.7.12. 1 Ch.21.24. Is.8.21.
8 'The love of money is the root of all evil:' but not so its diligent acquirement, its careful keeping, and its charitable use.—*C.*
b Ex.22.28. Ac.23.5.
9 Or, *conscience.*
c Lu.19.40.

CHAP. XI.

a Is. 32.20. Lu. 30. Ps. 112.9.
1 Heb. *upon the face of the waters.*
b Ps. 41. 1, 17. Is. 32. 2 Give the due portion of bread (specific scriptural and spirit-

c Jn.3.8 Ps.139.14,15. d ch.8.17. Ro.11.33. Ps.104.24;92.5;40.5. e ch.9.10. Pr. Ho.10.12. Is.112.9. 2 Co.9.6-10. f 1 Co.3.7. Phi.4.6. ch.8.7. 1 Pe.5.7. Ps.37.5.

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understanding and inward abilities are always in readiness to direct him in his work: but a fool is unready in all he does, and knows not how to manage his affairs. 3. Nay, even in the most ordinary business his weakness appears, and he plainly discovers his folly to every one. 4. If the magistrate takes offence at thee, never desert thy station or employment, or withdraw thy subjection: but by submissive and patient carriage endeavour to pacify him. 5–7. Very often, to the great hurt of the subjects, magistrates employ, as their deputies and agents, persons of a weak or mercenary spirit, while persons of ability and true dignity are overlooked and contemned. 8. Both prince and people have need to beware of innovations; for he that endeavours to ensnare and ruin another shall thereby perish himself: and he that passes his due bounds to wrong others, brings unexpected mischief upon himself. 9. He that rashly attempts things too high and hard for him shall be hurt by it; and he that deals with men of stubborn tempers endangers himself. 10. If a man do not use proper means for his work, it will cost him so much more labour and pains. Wisdom is therefore necessary and profitable to direct in the choice and use of means. 11. As unenchanted serpents are disposed to bite, so rash and talkative persons are sure to do mischief with their words unless they be wisely prevented. 12. Wise men's words being pious, friendly, and profitable, procure them favour: but foolish, slanderous, and sinful speeches suddenly and irrecoverably ruin a man. 13. A fool at the first talks in a useless and impertinent manner; and at length he grows insolent and abusive, sticking at nothing wicked or malicious. 14. A fool pours forth his incoherent babblings, and pretends to know everything secret or future; and no one can tell what he will say next, or what mischief his foolish speeches may produce. 15. Fools find their work tedious and wearisome, because they want sense and prudence to manage the most ordinary business, even where the rules are ever so plain. 16. It is a great misery to a nation when their magistrates are ignorant, wilful, and unexperienced, and minding their sensual pleasures when they should be employed about the business of their office. 17. But happy is that nation whose magistrates are of truly excellent dispositions and endowments, and who use the enjoyments of life, not to satisfy inordinate lusts, but to fit them for their business. 18. Through sloth and indolence, estates, families, and nations are gradually reduced to wretchedness and ruin. 19. Even feasting affords but a very slight and transient pleasure; but a plentiful estate procures every outward advantage: we should therefore beware of spending it in luxury. 20. It is neither lawful nor safe to contemn, reproach, or wish evil to magistrates, however secretly, as it may be very quickly and surprisingly discovered to them.

Ver. 1. *Folly.* Solomon means by folly, (1) Childishness, Pr. 22. 11, that is, waywardness of temper, being easily disturbed; preference of toys to things of real value; and preference of amusement and self-will to learning and due control. (2) Want of prudent forecast, Pr. 13. 14. (3) Deceitfulness, Pr. 14. 3. (4) A hasty temper, Pr. 14. 29. (5) Pleasure in other men's folly, Pr. 15. 21. (6) Rejecting good advice, Ec. 4. 13. When folly is employed to designate the highest criminality, as De. 22. 21; Jos. 7. 15; Ho. 2. 10, it can easily be reduced to one or more of these heads. *C.*

Ver. 2. The wise man honours his heart; that is, his affections and their objects, by placing them at his right hand, the position of honour. The fool degrades all that he should hold dear. *C.*

Ver. 9. That is, he that doeth these things fraudulently and violently, as in digging a pit, or breaking a hedge, ver. 8. *C.*

Ver. 11. This translation is founded on the general opinion of 'serpent-charming' by music being a reality and not a juggling imposition: a matter still undecided. May not the verse be translated, 'Surely the serpent will bite without *hissing*' (that is to give warning of danger); 'and a calumniator is no better?' *C.*

Ver. 16. Either really a child, a minor, under a selfish regency, living in luxury, and abusing their power; or one of those who are always children, and never attain to the majority of intellect, because never acquainted with the Son of God, who alone can make men free, Jn. 8. 32, 36. *C.*

Ver. 20. Solomon warns against an uncharitable thought, because it would soon break out into a voice, and certainly be discovered. And thus he admonishes, not for the sake of a factitious loyalty, but because he that frets himself into cursing the king will speedily be in danger of cursing his God. See Is. 8. 21.—*Note,* The bird is most probably a reference to the use of *carrier pigeons* for speedy and secret missives. *C.*

REFLECTIONS.—Men of character have need to be careful, lest they should inadvertently ruin it. Many are extremely ill qualified for the business they take in hand; and imprudently expose their own folly and wickedness. But it is very dangerous when either rulers or subjects leave their proper stations and attempt violent changes of the public settlement. Vain and imprudent talking is often attended with the most hurtful consequences. It is necessary then to have our words always with grace, seasoned with salt. An imprudent management of their business frequently robs men of both the comfort and the benefit thereof. But it is a great mercy for nations when rulers and subjects do all diligently and prudently attend to their proper work, and act according to their station, neither doing nor speaking evil, but provoking one another to love and to good works.

CHAPTER XI. Ver. 1, 2. Cheerfully lay out thyself to bestow the necessaries of life upon the poor, who are entirely unable to requite thee; and so God shall plentifully reward thee for it in this life, or in that which is to come. And however great the number of needy objects be, bestow that which is necessary upon them all, according to thine utmost ability; for the opportunity of liberality may soon be lost to thee, and an evil time may quickly come, in which thou wilt infinitely need God to be the supplier of thy own wants. 3, 4. He bestows plenty upon men, in order that with it they may do good to others. And however undeserving the objects be on whom they religiously bestow their charity, they shall not lose their reward.—They that withhold it till every objection be answered, will never bestow it. 5, 6. As thou knowest

knowest not whether shall prosper,[s] either this or that, or whether they both *shall be* alike good.

7 ¶ Truly[t] the light *is* sweet, and a pleasant *thing it is* for the eyes to behold the sun:

8 But[n] if a man live many years, *and* rejoice in them all; [o]yet let him remember the days of darkness, for they shall be many. All that cometh *is* vanity.

9 ¶ Rejoice,[p] O young man, in thy youth, and let thy heart cheer thee in the days of thy youth, and walk in the ways of thine heart, and in the sight of thine eyes: [q]but know thou, that for all these *things* God will bring thee into judgment.[4]

10 Therefore[r] remove sorrow[5] from thy heart, and put away evil from thy flesh: [s]for childhood and youth *are* vanity.

CHAPTER XII.

1 *The Creator is to be remembered in due time.* 8 *The Preacher's care to edify.* 13 *Man's chief concern is to fear God, and obey his laws.*

REMEMBER[1] now[a] thy [2]Creator[3] in the days of thy youth, while [b]the evil days come not, nor the years draw nigh, when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure[4] in them;

2 While the sun, or the light, or the moon, or the stars, be not darkened,[5] nor the clouds[6] return after the rain:[7]

3 In the day when the keepers of the [c]house shall tremble, and the strong men shall bow themselves, and the grinders cease because they

a Is.26.8.Pr.22.6.Job 22,21.2 Ch.34.2,3.2 Ti.3.15.La.3.26-29.Le.2.14. *b* Ho.9.7.ch. 11.8.Ps.90.10.2 Sa.19.35. *c* Job 4.19.2 Co.5.1.

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3 Heb. *shall be right.*
s Job 33.28,30; 22.28. Jn. 1. 7, 9. 2 Co. 4. 4,6. Mal.4.2. Ps.84. 11; 8.3. Is.9.2.2.3,5.60.1,19,20.
n ch.6.6;8.12.
o Jn.12.35.De.32.29. ch.7.14; 1.2; 12.5. Mat. 24.44. Job 14.10,12. Lu. 16.9. 1 Ti.6.18,19.
p 1 Ki. 18. 27; 22. 12. Lu. 15. 13. Nu. 15. 39. De.29.19,20.
q De.32.29. ch. 3.17; 12.14. He.9.27. 2 Co. 5. 10. Ke.20.12; 18.7. Ro. 15.12.
4 See note * below.
r 2 Pe.3.11,14. Tit.2. 11–14. 2 Co.7.1. 2 Ti. 2. 22.
5 Or, *anger.*
s Ps.39. 5. ver. 8. Pr. 22.15;29.15.ch.1.2,14.

CHAP. XII.

1 Youth is the time when memory is most susceptible and most improvable, and the Spirit therefore specially stirs up this faculty.—*C.*
2 Heb. *Creators,* Job 35.10. Ps.149.2. Is. 54.5.
3 Many MSS. give this word plural; but many of high authority give the singular.—*C.*
4 It is not said, 'I have no pleasure,' for the old often enjoy the highest pleasure; but, 'I have no pleasure in them,' that is in the days of old age (as such), but in the believing hopes of immortality and glory.—*C.*
5 Not darkened in the sky, but darkened to the old man by the increasing infirmities of his own eyes.—*C.*
6 One infirmity follows another.
7 As rain does not exhaust the clouds, neither does one disease of the old prevent the speedy approach of another.—*C.*
* This is a wise exhortation given to the people of God by the Spirit of God! They are to live in the full yet sanctified enjoyment of life's comforts and blessings.

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There is to be no asceticism on the one hand, and no carnal indulgence on the other. God's hand is to be seen and acknowledged in all things; while we cheerfully and thankfully partake of his bounties, we must keep our eye fixed upon his judgment-seat. It ought to be observed that a cheerful spirit is here not only permitted to the servant of God, but it is represented as a necessary characteristic.—*P.*
8 Or, *the teeth* or *grinders fail, because they* grind *little.*
d Ge.27.1.
e Ps.141.3. Mi.7.5.
f 2 Sa.19.36.
9 *Doors shall be shut.* The mouth seldom opened for speech or food. *Daughters of music* —the power of the lungs, and the modulating and articulating powers of the organs of voice.—*C.*
h Je.1. 11, 12. Pr. 16. 31. Le.19.32.
i Job 30.23;17.13. Ps. 89.48;49.7–10. He.9.27. Ge.50.3,10. Je.9.17–20.
1 A description of the circulation of the blood and nervous structure and energy.—*C.*
j Ge.3.19; 18.27. Job 4. 19; 30. 19. Ps. 146. 4. He.0.27. Is.57.2. Phi.1. 23.2 Co.5.8. Jn.14.2.
k Ge. 2. 7. Is. 57. 16. Nu.16.22;27.16. Job 34. 14. Zec.12.1. He.12.9.
l ch.1.2,14.1;2.1,11, 15,17, 23,26; 4.4,8,16; 5. 7,10; 6.2,9; 8.10,14. Ps. 62.9.
2 Or, *the more wise the Preacher was,* &c. ch.1. xii.
m 1 Ki.4.32. Pr.1.1;10. 8;25.1.
3 Heb. *words of delight.*
4 *Acceptable,* because intelligible and instructive.—*C.*
5 Fastened in the memory and conscience.—*C.*
6 *One. Shepherd.* Christ the Lord, Ps. 23.1. Jn.10.11.—*C.*

are few,[8] and[d] those that look out of the windows be darkened,

4 And [e]the doors shall be shut in the streets, when the sound of the grinding is low, and he shall rise up at the voice of the bird, [g]and all the daughters of music shall be brought low;[9]

5 Also *when* they shall be afraid of *that which is* high, and fears *shall be* in the way, and [h]the almond-tree shall flourish, and the grasshopper shall be a burden, and desire shall fail; because man goeth to [i]his long home, and the mourners go about the streets:

6 Or ever the silver cord be loosed, or the golden bowl be broken, or the pitcher be broken at the fountain, or the wheel broken at the cistern:[1]

7 Then[j] shall the dust return to the earth as it was; and the spirit shall return unto God [k]who gave it.

8 ¶ Vanity[l] of vanities, saith the Preacher; all *is* vanity.

9 And moreover, because the Preacher was wise,[2] he still taught the people knowledge; yea, he gave good heed, and sought out, *and* [m]set in order many proverbs.

10 The Preacher sought to find [o]out [3]acceptable[4] words: and *that which was* written *was* upright, *even* words of truth.

11 The[p] words of the wise *are* as goads, and as nails fastened[5] *by* the masters of assemblies, *which* are given from [q]one shepherd.[6]

o Pr.1.1–6;8.6;22.22.1 Ti.1.15. *p* Je.23.28.Mat.3.7.Ac.2.37. Jn.6.63.1 Co.2.4,13.2 Co. 10.4. He.4.12. *q* Jn.10.18.1 Pe.2.25;5.4.Mat.28.20.He.13.20.

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not how the human soul is created or united to the body, or operates in and on it, nay, nor even how the child is formed in the womb, even so thou knowest not how God may deal with thee, or thy estate: and therefore neglect no opportunity of doing or receiving good; and without any curious prying into futurity, leave it entirely to God to recompense thee. 7, 8. Life and its comforts are desirable: but let men enjoy created comforts as long as they may, the lasting period of troubles, death, and eternity will infallibly succeed, and manifest the emptiness and insufficiency of all outward enjoyments. 9, 10. Whatever temptations young persons may have to indulge their own foolish and wicked inclinations and fancies, let them remember, with the deepest concern, that God will, in his awful judgment, call them to account for every part of their conduct. Let them take care to prevent those perplexities and miseries which sinful indulgence will at last bring upon them; for all the empty and short-lived pleasures of youth can never in the least balance the dangers of inexpressible and everlasting misery.

Ver. 1. *Cast thy bread upon the waters.* Some interpret thus: 'Cast thy bread-corn (seed) upon the waters,' as rice is said to be sown in Egypt; others, 'Sow thy bread-corn (seed) before the coming of the waters,' that is, before the rainy season. But as the word translated *waters* signifies *multitudes,* may not the meaning rather be, 'Cast thy bread (give forth thy spiritual instruction) before the face of the multitudes?" See Mat. 5. 1, as contrasted with the *portions* or more specific instructions prescribed in the second verse. *C.*

Ver. 3. The clouds of heaven water alike the desert and the garden, obeying chemical laws: and if a tree fall toward north or south, there it abides, obeying mechanical laws; how surely then should the intellectual and spiritual man obey the laws of his condition, and fulfil these beneficent purposes for which God has endowed him? *C.*

Ver. 9. This is no irony, as some have imagined: it is a simple and beautiful lesson. 'Rejoice in thy youth:' not in thy follies and lusts, 2 Ti. 2. 22. 'Let thy heart,' thine own conscience, and not vain companions, 'cheer thee' in thy course. 'And walk in the ways of thine heart'—thy conscience—not in the way of evil advisers; 'and in the sight of thine eyes'—not in the darkness of them that close their eyes, lest they should see, Mat. 13. 15. '*And* know thou, God will bring thee into judgment'—the judgment, not of condemnation, but of 'Well done, good and faithful servant,' Mat. 25. 23. *C.*

REFLECTIONS.—What a plain, profitable, and important duty is that of giving to the poor! Nothing is a more certain mean of making men rich. No objections, drawn from our right to what we have, from the narrowness of our circumstances, from the discouragements which we have already met with in it, or from our not knowing how it can be made up to us, ought to make us neglect so much as one opportunity of charity. But, above all, it is most sinful and foolish for either old or young to indulge their lusts, and live unconcerned about Jesus Christ and his salvation, when heavy troubles, an important death, an awful judgment, and an endless eternity are before them, and they know not how near!

CHAPTER XII. Ver. 1. Now, in youth, seriously think of, believe in, and serve the Divine Persons, who made, preserve, and redeem men, before the disquieting and disqualifying infirmities of old age come upon you: 2. Before the comforts of life, which render it agreeable, be withdrawn, and the powers of your mind and senses of your body be rendered almost useless, and the calamities of old age rise successively one after another: 3. When your head, arms, and hands shall shake, through weakness or palsy; your once strong shoulders stoop, and your legs and thighs bow under their weight; your teeth be generally lost, and your eyes sunk in their sockets and become dim; 4. Before your lips be but a little opened to eat or talk, because of the loss or looseness of teeth; before you be incapable to walk in the streets; your rest broken, and every little noise awaken you; your lungs fail, your voice become inharmonious and harsh, and your ears dull and regardless of music; 5. Before you, unable to climb, become afraid to mount or move on high, nay, are afraid of falling in the common way; before your hair become white; the least noise or weight become burdensome, and the lightest food load your stomach; and there be no inclination to or delight in former pleasures, because you draw nigh to the grave and the other world, when your friends shall lament their loss, and the hired mourners publicly pour forth their pretended sorrows;—6. Remember your Creator, before the union between your soul and body be loosed, or the pith of your back and nerves be weakened; the vessel in which your brain and animal spirits are contained be rendered unfit for use; your veins and arteries, which convey the blood and vital spirits, be rendered unfit to convey them any more from the right or left ventricles of your heart; 7. And your body be laid in the grave, to moulder into dust, and your soul appear to be judged before God who formed it.—11. The words of the prophets, and other holy men of God, are fitted to excite men's attention, awaken their conscience, and quicken their affections; and to make a powerful and lasting impression on their hearts, and so settle and establish them in the truth;—being inculcated by zealous teachers of the church, sent and qualified by Jesus Christ, the alone Head of his church.

Ver. 3. *Keepers.* The hands become more or less paralytic. *Strong men*—the vertebræ of the upright youth shall bend. *The grinders*—the teeth, a name by which the double-teeth are familiarly known. *Those that look out of the windows*—the optic nerves and humours of the eye. *C.*

Ver. 5. Afraid of ascents, because of debility. 'The almond-tree shall flourish'—the hair shall become white as the almond-blossom; or rather, *shall fall off.* 'The grasshopper' or locust, almost light as air that needs not his support, and instantly flies away. 'Desire' of food, company, music, fair prospects, &c. *C.*

Ver. 11. In ver. 10 the Preacher bears testimony to the purity and truth, that is, the plenary inspiration of the book which he is now completing. In ver. 11 he takes in a wider range. He testifies to the perfection of 'the words of the wise,' that is, of the whole of the sacred books then in existence. They are as goads, piercing sharp and deep. The second clause of the verse is not so clear. It is probable that there is here an example of that parallelism which is characteristic of Hebrew poetry, and that this clause corresponds with the preceding. Its meaning may be: 'The participators in the collection;' *i. e.* those who wrote or compiled the collection of sacred books, 'are as nails driven in.' The last clause of the verse states the origin of both the sacred books and the sacred writers: 'they are given by one Shepherd,' by the Lord. *P.*

REFLECTIONS.—Necessary and pleasant is an early acquaintance with Christ and his ways. But very absurd and dangerous are delays of spiritual concerns till old age, which may never be seen, and is a season very improper for commencing such care. Thrice happy are they who encounter the unnumbered infir-

12 And further, by [r]these, my son, be admonished: of making many books *there is* no end; and much study[7] *is* a weariness of the flesh.

13 ¶ Let us hear the conclusion of the whole [8]matter; [t]Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this *is* the whole *duty* of man.[9]

14 For [t]God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether *it be* good, or whether *it be* evil.

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r ver. 11. Jn. 5. 39. 2 Pe. 1. 19, 21. Lu. 16. 29.
7 Or, *reading*
8 Or, *The end of the matter, even all that hath been heard,* is.
s De. 6. 2; 10. 12. 1 Jn. 3. 22, 23. Pr. 1. 7, 33; 23. 17.
9 *This is the whole*

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of man. The whole end of his creation, the whole dignity and happiness of his being.—*C.*
t Ro. 2. 16; 14. 10. 1 Co. 4. 5. 2 Co. 5. 10. Jn. 5. 29. Lu. 12. 2. Mat. 25. 31. Ac. 17. 31. Re. 20. 12.

mities and troubles of old age, and the fears and pangs of death, in the full assurance that Jesus loved them, and gave himself for them! But, alas! how difficult is it to persuade us of the emptiness of all created things! This truth needs to be inculcated a thousand times over. Nor will that avail, unless the Holy Ghost inscribe it on our heart. It is necessary then that all preachers should be sent and qualified by Christ and his Spirit; and that, by every possible mean, they should labour to fix the truths of God in the consciences, understandings, affections, and memories of their hearers. And let us, in our religious course, attend chiefly to the principal points; and always act under the awe, and in the faith and hope, of the last judgment.

CONCLUDING REMARKS ON THE BOOK OF ECCLESIASTES.

The most common view of the Book of Ecclesiastes represents it as 'a philosophical inquiry after the *summum bonum*, or chief good of man; in which Solomon states the various opinions on the subject, the result of his own dear-bought experience in search of the respective enjoyments of human wisdom and human folly.' Without altogether excluding this view, others think Solomon's main design was to 'prove the immortality of the soul, or rather the necessity of another state after this life, by such arguments as may be deduced from reason and experience.'

Now, in all this, it is not a little remarkable—it is not a little lamentable—that it never seems to have occurred to the learned authors of these opinions, that Christ and his church formed any direct object of Solomon's investigation! Yet how strange if the *wisest man* could have written a book in which the 'Wisdom of God' obtained no place!

'Much of the obscurity, it has been observed, which is generally admitted to exist in the book of Ecclesiastes, arises from not attending to the train of argument proposed by Solomon, which difficulty the ordinary division of chapters and verses is supposed to have contributed to increase' (Horne's *Introduction*).

Now that, like other portions of Scripture, the book of Ecclesiastes contains some or many things 'hard to be understood,' cannot be denied. But has not its peculiar obscurities arisen from neglecting the beams of 'the Sun of Righteousness' shining so brightly in all its pages, rather than from any inattention to the mere train of a philosophical argument? That Ecclesiastes is a book of argument is admitted; but not in any other sense than that in which the Epistles to the Romans, Galatians, and Hebrews are books of argument. That is, the statements, illustrations, and conclusions are never of man, but from the Spirit of God.

If by 'wisdom' is to be understood anything less than the knowledge that 'God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself,' 2 Co. 5. 19, then, indeed, is the book of Ecclesiastes not only obscure, but often unintelligible. But if the 'wisdom' sought and commended by Solomon be the knowledge of 'Christ, the wisdom of God,' then the obscurity of the book becomes illuminated, and 'he may run that readeth it,' Hab. 2. 2.

Another source of its obscurity may be found in the principle of interpretation ordinarily adopted—a principle neither warranted by anything in the book itself, nor by authority of any other book of Holy Scripture. This principle is the assumption that the book 'was written by Solomon in his old age, after he had repented of his sinful practices; and when, having seen and observed much, as well as having enjoyed everything that he could wish, he was fully convinced of the vanity of everything but piety towards God' (Horne's *Introduction*). Now, that Solomon wrote the book at an advanced period of his reign, is obvious from ch. 2. 4–11; but though all his recorded labours terminate in 'vexation,' there is not one single reference to any special 'sinfulness' in his pursuits—an omission totally inconsistent with the genius of Scripture, which never fails in the most direct acknowledgment and condemnation of the sins of its chiefest characters. Had the book, therefore, been a confession of sin and retractation of error, these must have furnished its most plain and prominent statements. Sin would have been called sin, and not mere 'vanity and vexation of spirit;' for these words, however strong and expressive, come far short of that self-abasement and abhorrence which the consciousness of sin against God must produce, whenever his Spirit leads the sinner to repentance. The conclusion, therefore, is inevitable—Ecclesiastes is neither an acknowledgment nor retractation of sin in the inspired author, but an illustration of the insufficiency of all 'treasures on earth' for the purpose of inducing men to 'lay up their treasures in heaven,' to 'set their affections on things above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God.'

But the chief source of obscurity may be detected in two principles that would reduce light itself into darkness,—the first, taking words in a sense the writer never intended,—the second, interpreting by figures of speech that he never employed. Examples of the first may be found in the meaning attached to 'good' in ch. 2. 24, and 3. 13, &c., where the real good intended is commonly referred to unlimited sensual indulgence; and the second is exemplified ch. 11. 9, where a plain and godly admonition is commonly interpreted as a bitter irony.

In the preceding notes these arbitrary principles of interpretation have been altogether rejected; and, in subordination to the teaching of the Spirit, the book has been treated as its own expositor.—*C.*

THE SONG OF SOLOMON

Could not be a nuptial hymn composed in honour of any of his wives; for it was not composed till after the tower of Lebanon was built, ch. 7. 4; and so not till about twenty years after his marriage with Pharaoh's daughter. Many of the emblems used in it—as to be made a *keeper of the vineyard*, to have a *head like Carmel, a nose like the tower of Lebanon, eyes like fish-pools, teeth like a flock of sheep*, and to be *terrible as an army with banners*, &c.—if applied to a fine lady, are absurd to the last degree: but if the whole be understood of the union and fellowship between Christ and his people, it will appear most exalted, instructive, and animating. The name of God is not found in it, more than in Esther; nor could the continued allegory of the book well admit of it. But the agreement of its matter and language with other passages of Scripture—as Is. 54. 5; 62. 4, 5; Ho. 2. 19, 20; Mat. 25. 1–10; 9. 15; 3. 9; Ro. 7. 4; 2 Co. 11. 2; Ep. 5. 32; Re. 19. 7; 21. 2. 9; and especially with Ps. xlv.; its majestic style; its efficacy on the consciences of men for promoting their spiritual comfort and holiness; the sincerity of the bride in acknowledging her faults; and in fine, the general reception of it by the Jewish and Christian churches; sufficiently prove it inspired of God. To such as read it with a carnal and wanton mind, it will be the savour of death unto death: but to such as, acquainted with fellowship with Christ, peruse it with a spiritual and heavenly frame, it will prove a savour of life unto life, a counterpart of their gracious experience. It is a dialogue; in which the speakers are *Jesus Christ*, the blessed *Bridegroom* of souls; the *church*, which is his body and *bride*, and every particular saint in it: and the *daughters of Jerusalem* or *Zion*, who are either nominal professors of the true religion, or at best young and weak converts. The scope of it is to represent Christ and his people's mutual esteem of, desire after, and delight in one another. And as the bride denotes either the *church in general*, or a *particular believer*, the members, &c., attributed to her must have different significations assigned them, according as the one or the other is understood.

[The title of this book, 'The Song of Songs,' is generally understood to assert its eminence amongst or superiority over all other songs. Some eminent Hebraists, however, are disposed to translate the title 'The *Series* of Songs;' and this seems more consonant to the modesty of the sacred writer, who would be very unlikely to assume any special eminence, also to that equality which divine inspiration implies amongst the books of Scripture, as well as to the structure of the book itself, which changes so rapidly its speakers, time, place, and objects.

The ancient Jews, without exception, considered it a book divinely inspired, and inserted it in their sacred writings. By our Lord it was consequently author-

ized, when he exhorted the Jews to 'search the Scriptures;' and by Paul, when he affirmed that 'all Scripture is given by inspiration of God.' With the full conviction of its divine origin, it was newly translated into Greek, in the second century, by three eminent Christian divines; and in the third, it was inserted by Origen in his *Hexapla*, who also wrote some discourses explanatory of its sacred meaning.

Notwithstanding this concurrence, its divine authority is said to have been questioned in the fifth century by Theodore of Mopsuestia; and occasionally, down to the present day, various objections against its inspiration have been started by Christian divines. Now, without questioning either the objects or the principles of these objectors, it is not a little to be lamented that their learning has been so misapplied. For if the reception of the book by the Jewish church, and its approbation by our Lord and his apostles, be not, to a Christian, sufficient evidence of its divine authority, any higher evidence it must be impossible to obtain; and if this evidence is to be rejected in the case of one book, there is no ground for its sufficiency in the case of any other.

The objections to the divine authority of this book have arisen, as in the case of Ecclesiastes, from assuming an unauthorized principle of interpretation, and pronouncing the book a mere marriage song, and consequently unfitted for religious instruction. But again, whereas in Ecclesiastes, a book confessedly didactic, the ordinary and natural application of words has been rejected—in the Song of Solomon, a book confessedly written in similitudes or parables, the emblematic application of words has been rejected.

The Christian disciple will, however, make light of these cavils, and calmly repose upon the authentication of the book derived from Christ and his apostles. And while so reposing, he will find a treasury filled to overflowing with the unsearchable riches of Christ. He will be led into a banqueting-house of boundless hospitality; he will mingle with a company of purity and love; he will traverse gardens of loveliest flowers and sweetest odours; he will repose beneath trees with coolest shade and ripest fruits; thence will he climb the Lebanon heights of contemplation, and gaze upon the lovely land that lies beneath his feet, the land of his inheritance and his home, where Christ is the King, saints the subjects, and love the law; where the subjects themselves are kings and priests unto God, clad in the robes of the Lamb's immaculate righteousness, and crowned with the diadem of his unfading glory.

Some eminent interpreters have considered this book as a sacred drama extending through seven days, and have divided it into scenes, each of a day's continuance. Others have concluded it to be a succession of idyls, or little poems, with no connection of time, place, or person: but merely possessing some common object as their only principle of union.

In the following notes these principles of interpretation will be diffidently—on account of their authors—but firmly rejected, from their want of any but conjectural authority. The principles of interpretation adopted will be (1) The grammatical, including the singularity, or plurality, or sexes of the speakers. (2) Change of place. (3) Change of time. (4) Change of objects. (5) Change of sentiment or action. (6) The parallel—comparing spiritual with spiritual, explaining what here is unknown by what is elsewhere acknowledged. By following these natural principles, the book will be found a succession of beautiful, impressive, and instructive emblems of natural pictures, representing spiritual originals—an outward form of what is earthly, fabricated for little children, but with an inward spirit of what is only intended for perfect men. *C.*]

CHAPTER I.

1 *The church's love unto Christ.* 5 *She confesseth her deformity,* 7 *and prayeth to be directed to his flock.* 8 *Christ directeth her to the shepherds' tents;* 9 *and showing his love to her,* 11 *giveth her gracious promises.* 12 *The church and Christ congratulate one another.*

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THE Song[a] of songs, which *is* Solomon's.[1]
2 Let[b] him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth: [c]for thy love[2] *is* better than wine.
3 Because[d] of the savour of thy good ointments thy name *is as* ointment poured forth, therefore do the [e]virgins love thee.
4 Draw[g] me, we will run after thee. [h]The King hath brought me into his chambers: [i]we will be glad and rejoice in thee; [j]we will remember thy love more than wine: [3]the upright love thee.[4]
5 ¶ I[k] *am* black, but comely, [l]O ye daughters of Jerusalem, as the tents of Kedar, as the curtains of Solomon.
6 Look not upon me, because [m]I *am* black, because the sun hath looked upon me: [o]my mother's children were angry with me; they made me the keeper of the vineyards; *but* mine own vineyard have I not kept.[5]
7 ¶ Tell me, [p]O thou whom my soul loveth, where [q]thou feedest, where thou makest *thy flock* to rest at noon: [r]for why should I be as one that turneth aside[6] by the flocks of thy companions?
8 ¶ If thou know not, [s]O thou fairest among women, [t]go thy way forth by the footsteps of the flock, and feed thy kids beside the shepherds' tents.

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CHAP. I.

a 1 Ki.4.32.
1 *Solomon*—'peaceful and perfect'—in which name the son of David was a type of the Prince of peace—the perfect man—the true God, Jn.1.14. 1 Jn.v.—*C.*
b Ps.2.12.ch.5.10,16; 8.1,14. Lu. 15.20. Jn.3. 29.2 Co.11.2.
c ch.4.10. Ps.36.7. Is. 63.7. Ep.5.2. Re.1.5.
2 Heb. *thy loves.*
d Pr.27.9. 2 Co.2.14. Ps. 45. 7, 8. Is. 61. 1-3. Phi.2. 9, 10. 1 Co.1 30. Ps.45.17;119.55.
e Re.14.4. Mat.25.1. 2 Co.11.2.
g Jn.6. 44; 12. 32. Je. 31.3. Ho.11.4. Ps.45. 3, 4. Phi.3.12-14.
h Ep.2. 6. ch. 2. 3-6. Is.26.20. Jn.14.2.
i 2 Co.2.14. Is.45.25; 61.10. Phi.4.4;3.3.
j Is.63.7. Ps.48.9;103. 1-17. Re. 1.5. Ga.2.20. Ro.5.6-11,21.
3 Or, *they love thee uprightly,* 1 Co.16.22. ch.3.2-4; ver.7. Jn. 21. 17.

4 The word *me* continues to mark the bride; *we* marks the replies of the virgins. —*C.*
k ver.6. Ro.7.14-25. Is.64.6. Eze.16.14. Ps. 45.12,13.
l ch.2.7,11; 3.5,11; 5. 8;6.3. Ga.4.26.
m Ro.7.14,24. Ac.14. 22. Mat.13.6,21. Jn.16. 33.
o Mat. 10. 22, 25. Ps. 51.5. Tit.1.16. Phi.3.18, 19.2 Co.11.13,26. Ga.4. 29.
5 'A vineyard of mine own have I not kept.'—*C.*
p ch.2.3,16;3.1-4;5.8, 10,16;6.3. Ps.18.1. 1 Jn. 4.19.
q Jn.10. 9, 27, 28. Ps. 23.1-6. Re.7.17.
r Ps.120. 5, 6. Ep. 4. 14;6.12. Phi.3.2. Ro.7. 23,24.
6 Or, *as one that is vailed.*
s ver. 15; ch.2.10,14; 4.1-14;5.8;6.1,4-10;7.1 -7. Ps.45.13. Eze.16.14.
t Ep.5.1. He.6.12;13. 7. Pr.1.20;8.34.1 Co.11. 1.

CHAPTER I. Ver. 2. Blessed Jesus, upon whom I have been meditating, by thy Word and Spirit give me intimate fellowship with thee in thy ordinances, and full assurances of thy friendship: for the manifestations of thy redeeming love are more pleasant, reviving, and strengthening to my soul than any created enjoyments. 3. Such is the pleasant and powerful influence of thy mediatorial excellencies, offices, relations, and fulness of spirit and grace, that sincere and holy souls cannot but love thee with their whole heart. 4. By thy almighty influence direct and bring me into the nearest enjoyment of thyself, that I, and others excited by me, may pleasantly comply with thy alluring power, and follow hard after thee in the paths of duty.—Jesus, the King of his church, has already brought me into the most ravishing nearness to and spiritual intimacy with himself; therefore will we rejoice in him as our ALL and IN ALL; we will think of, believe, and extol his love above all created delights: for every candid and sincere professor heartily esteems, loves, and delights in thee. 5. In myself, and in respect of manifold infirmities, scandals, reproaches, and persecutions, I am deformed; but in my Head Christ, and as clothed with his righteousness, and endued by his Spirit, gifts, and graces, I am truly comely, O ye nominal professors and weak believers:—I am outwardly mean, but inwardly rich and glorious. 6. Look not therefore upon me with disdain, disaffection, or delight in my distresses, nor stumble at religion on account of them; for sore persecutions, tribulations, and temptations are befallen me: hypocritical professors, false teachers, and my own inward corruptions, enraged at my connection with Christ, and my cleaving to him, have oppressed me with the basest drudgery, and entangled me in carnal cares and secular affairs, which have hindered me from, or retarded me in, the due improvement of my own office, opportunities, gifts, and graces. 7. But, O all-compassionate Redeemer, whom I love with my whole heart, and above everything else, discover to me, by thy Word and Spirit, which is thy true church, and which are those assemblies wherein thou art remarkably present, and to whom thou affordest spiritual support and consolation amidst all their scorching persecutions and troubles: for why should I, whom thou hast redeemed, and who have sincerely devoted my whole self to thee, be left to associate myself with empty professors, false teachers, and inward idols, who, notwithstanding their pretences of friendship, are thy enemies and rivals on earth!

CHRIST. 8. O ye excellent ones of the earth, beautified with my salvation, righteousness, and grace, and whose church state is adorned with my ordinances, if your knowledge of duty be still indistinct, inquire after, observe, and follow the example of the saints in former and present ages; and let weak believers and young converts, with their weak or languishing graces, carefully attend my public ordinances dispensed by my faithful pastors. 9. And be encouraged in my love; for, notwithstanding the weakness which you feel, and the self-deformity which you discover, I your Redeemer and Husband have, and will render you comely and active, and will give you sufficient strength and courage to withstand and conquer your spiritual enemies, if you will only be faithful. 10. Whilst your church state is beautifully adorned by divine oracles, ordinances, gifts, and graces, professors, and ministers, your particular conversation before the world appears beautifully marked with a variety of precious and holy qualities, and your faith, by which you are united to my person as your Head, is precious and glorious in itself, and is productive of every good word and work. 11. And I, my Father, and the blessed Spirit will for ever continue and increase these spiritual ornaments in true believers.

BELIEVERS. 12. O that we may enjoy these blessed and ornamenting operations of thy grace! For, whilst thou, Jesus, dost converse familiarly with us in thine ordinances, how pleasant are thy promises and truths to our heart, and how vigorous and active, and acceptable to thee, are our implanted graces. 13. And, even during the night of trouble or time, how delightfully art thou, our beloved Husband, found in the public and private ordinances of thy grace, and art entertained by the most cordial embracements of our faith and love! 14. O what an inexpressibly delightful and precious system of excellencies, fountain of graces, source of blessings, repository of promises, treasure of pardoning, healing, comforting, nourishing, quickening, and refreshing influence, art thou to our heart!

SUPHENIAH ROAD—A SCENE IN THE MOST BEAUTIFUL CITY OF KING SOLOMON'S DOMINIONS. [SONG OF SOLOMON, i : 1.]—The above is a picture of a road in Supheniah, a suburb of Damascus. This is given here because it illustrates a scene in the dominions of Solomon. Damascus was one of the wealthy and beautiful cities in his kingdom. In passing from Jerusalem to Palmyra, the city Solomon built in the wilderness, Damascus would be on the direct route, and in going to Palmyra to-day tourists usually start from Damascus. And in the respect that both Damascus and Palmyra occupy oases in the midst of surrounding deserts, they are alike. There would be no Damascus were it not for the Abana river. The stream breaks through a gorge in the Lebanon mountains a few miles above the city, and at once begins a warfare with the desert. For twenty-five miles the conflict between the river and the burning sands of Syria is expressed in a luxurious and tropical vegetation.

9 I have compared thee, [u]O my love, [v]to a company of horses in Pharaoh's chariots.

10 Thy[w] cheeks are comely with rows *of jewels*, thy neck with chains *of gold*.

11 ¶ We[y] will make thee borders of gold with studs of silver.

12 ¶ While[z] the King *sitteth* at his table, my spikenard sendeth forth the smell thereof.

13 A[a] bundle of myrrh *is* my well-beloved unto me; he shall lie all night betwixt my breasts.[7]

14 My beloved *is* unto me *as* a cluster of [8]camphire[9] in the vineyards of En-gedi.

15 Behold,[b] thou *art* fair, my love;[1] behold, thou *art* fair; thou *hast* doves' eyes.[2]

16 ¶ Behold,[c] thou *art* fair, my beloved, yea, pleasant: [d]also our bed *is* green.[3]

17 The[e] beams of our house *are* cedar, *and* our rafters[4] of fir.

CHAPTER II.

1 *The mutual love of Christ and his church.* 8 *The hope,* 10 *and calling of the church.* 14 *Christ's care of the church.* 16 *The profession of the church, her faith and hope.*

I *AM* [a]the rose of Sharon, *and* the lily of the valleys.

2 As[b] the lily among thorns, so *is* my love among the daughters.

A.M. cir. 3009.
B.C. cir. 995.

u ch.2.2,10,13;4.1,7; 5.7;6.4. Jn.15.15.

v 2 Ch. 1. 16,17. Job 39.19,20. 1 Kl.10.28. Is. 31.1.

w 1 Pe.3.3,4. Mat. 5. 16. Phi. 1. 2; 2. 12–16. 1 Ti.1.5. Ga.5.6.

y Ge.1.26. Exe.16.11 –13. 1 Co. 1. 30; 12. 28. Ep.4.10–13.

z Mat.22.4. Re.3.20. Ex.20.24. Lu.24.32. ch. 2.2–7;4.16.

a ch.2.3;5.10,16; 3.4; 7.5. Ep.3.17. 1 Pe.1.8;2. 7. Phi.3.7–10. 1 Jn.1.7.

7 'It (the bundle of myrrh) shall lie,' &c. —*C.*

8 Or, *cypress*, ch. 4. 13.

9 *Camphire.* Henna, or Cyprus flowers. Shaw's *Travels*, p. 113.—*C.*

b ch.4.1,7,10; 5.12;7. 6. Ep.1.17,18;3.18,19.

1 Or, *my companion.*

2 'Thine eyes are doves,' returning to the ark of salvation, bearing the olive-leaf of peace.—*C.*

c ch.2.3;5.10,16. Phi. 3.8,9. 1 Pe.1.8;2.7. Col. 2.9.

d ch.3.7,9. 1 Jn.1.3,7. Ps.120.3;72.16. Ac. 2. 41. Col.1.5,6. 1 Th.4.5.

3 'How delightful the place! how luxuriant our carpet!'—*C.*

e Ep.2.20. 1 Ti. 3.15. Mat. 16. 18. 2 Ti. 2. 19. Ps.24.7,9. Jn.10.28.

4 Or, *galleries*, ch. 7.5.

CHAP. II.

a Is.7.14;9.6;4.2. Jn. 15. 1; 1. 14. Phi.2.6–11. ch.5.10–16.

b Ps.16.3. Mat.10.16. Phi.2.15,16.

A.M. cir. 3009.
B.C. cir. 995.

c ch.1.16;5.10–16. Is. 4.2;9.6,7.

1 Heb. *I delighted and sat down*, &c.

d Is.4.6;32.2. 1 Jn.1. 3,7. Re.22.1,2.

2 Heb. *palate.*

e ch.1. 4, 7, 8, 16. Ps. 26.8;84.3,10.

3 Heb. *house of wine.*

f Jn. 15. 9–15. Ps.60. 4. Is. 11. 10. Ro. 5. 5, 8. 1 Jn.4.9,10,19.

h He.12.13. Is. 35.3. Ps.116.7,12,13; 119. 81. ch.5.8. 2 Sa. 7. 20. Lu. 24.32.

4 Heb. *straw me with apples.*

5 'Refresh me with cordials, sustain me with citrons, for I am fainting with love.'—*C.*

i ch. 8. 3–5. Ps. 23. 4; 37.3–7;63.3,4;138.3,7. 1 Jn. 3. 24. Ep.5.29, 30. 2 Co.xii.

j ch.3.5;8.4.

6 Heb. *I adjure you.*

k Jn.10.4,5,27.

l Zep.3.17. Je.32.41. Is.40.4,5; 43. 25; 44. 22; 57.18.

m ver.17;ch.8.14.

o 1 Co.13.12. 2 Co.3. 18. Col.2.17. Lu.24.35.

7 Heb. *flourishing.*

p ver.8. Je.31.3,2 Sa. 23.3. Ps.85.8.

q ver.13; ch.4.8; 5.2. Jn.7.37. Re.22.17.

r Ep. 5. 8. Da. 9. 24. Lu.24.26. Is. 40. 2. Re. 11.15.

8 *Winter.* The season of spiritual coldness.—*The rain.* Portents of anticipated judgment (Ge. 7.4) and successional troubles, Ec.12.2.—*C.*

s ver.13; ch.4.12–14; 6.2,11; 7.8,12,13. Is.35. 1,2. Ac.3.21.

t Ac.1. 7, 8 Mar. 16. 15. Ps.89.15. 1 Th.1.5,1 Pe.1.12.

3 As[c] the apple-tree among the trees of the wood, so *is* my beloved among the sons. [1]I sat down [d]under his shadow with great delight, and his fruit *was* sweet to my taste.[2]

4 He[e] brought me to the [3]banqueting-house, and [g]his banner over me *was* love.

5 Stay[h] me with flagons, comfort me with apples;[4] for I *am* sick of love.[5]

6 His[i] left hand *is* under my head, and his right hand doth embrace me.

7 I[j] charge you,[6] O ye daughters of Jerusalem, by the roes, and by the hinds of the field, that ye stir not up, nor awake *my* love, till he please.

8 ¶ The[k] voice of my beloved! behold, [l]he cometh leaping upon the mountains, skipping upon the hills.

9 My[n] beloved is like a roe, or a young hart: behold, [o]he standeth behind our wall, he looketh forth at the windows, showing[7] himself through the lattice.

10 ¶ My[p] beloved spake, and said unto me, [q]Rise up, my love, my fair one, and come away:

11 For, lo, [r]the winter[8] is past, the rain is over *and* gone;

12 The[s] flowers appear on the earth; [t]the

CHRIST. 15. How comely and glorious is my church, as endowed with ordinances, and reformed by my Word and Spirit; and how adorned with intelligent, sincere, peaceful, peace-proclaiming, and faithful pastors, who search into gospel truths, and watch over, direct, and go before every individual member of it. And how certainly, and eminently comely, is every believing soul clothed with my righteousness, and endowed with my grace! How quick and discerning their spiritual understanding! How chaste, sincere, and single their affections, without the least glance of spiritual whoredom!

BELIEVERS. 16. But, blessed and divine Husband, what is all my derived comeliness in respect of thine, in thy person, offices, relations, and grace? How delightful are all these to my heart! How pleasantly glorious is thy promise, and the ordinances of thy gospel, for the conversion and consolation of souls, and for rendering them fruitful in good works! 17. And strong, durable, and lasting is thy church, in which I am honoured to dwell, and consists of such parts and members as keep the faith; and permanent are all her oracles, ordinances, and offices.

Ver. 2. The word *me* shows that the bride 'the Lamb's wife,' Re. 21. 9, is the first speaker; *thy*, addressing her, shows that the virgins, the church in her state of waiting and progress, reply. See Mat. xxv. *C.*

Ver. 5. *I am black as the tents of Kedar*—an humble acknowledgment of sin, in which words the bride speaks; *but comely as the curtains of Solomon*, a recognition of the sin, but an assertion of the beauty of faith and repentance, in which words the virgins speak. *C.*

Ver. 6. *Look not upon me*, &c. She speaks as a village maiden, accustomed, as all village maidens are in the East, to work in the vineyards; and so exposed to the burning sun that her skin was dark when compared with the fair daughters of Jerusalem. Though tanned with the sun she was still beautiful. What a noble figure of the church! Bearing the marks of the world's toils and persecutions; yet showing on every feature the lineaments of heaven. *P.*

Ver. 7. There is here a new picture, changing from a banqueting-house to a shepherd gone after his flocks. 'Why should I be as a stranger by the flocks of thy companions?' Why should I, as a stranger, follow any teacher, any spiritual feeder, but my Lord? *C.*——Eastern shepherds always lead their flocks to some shady spot, if possible beside a fountain, and leave them to rest there for one or two hours during the fierce noonday heat. This is a favourite time for the shepherds themselves to meet with their friends and to recline under shade of tree or rock. *P.*

Ver. 9. *I have compared thee, O my* partner. Not for personal accomplishments, but for costliness and beauty of ornaments; 'even the ornaments of a meek and quiet spirit, which is, in the sight of Heaven, of great price.' *C.*

Ver. 10. The maidens of Palestine wear an ornament composed of gold coins strung together in a row so as to overlap like scale-armour. It passes over the head, down each cheek in front of the ear, and is fastened under the chin. Instead of coins, thin discs of gold and silver were used in ancient times. They also wear numerous chains of gold or silver round the neck. The words of the text are therefore descriptive of a maiden decked in her ornaments. It is also worthy of note that fully caparisoned horses have their bridles covered with little plates of the precious metals, and have also numbers of chains and amulets strung round their necks. How graphic therefore are the words, 'I have likened thee, O my love, to a company of horses in Pharaoh's chariots!' *P.*

Ver. 14. *Camphire.* The camphire is a plant, the *Lawsonia inermis* of botanists. Of the dried leaves an unguent is made, called *henna*, with which the females of Syria and Egypt dye their nails. Its flowers have a sweet perfume, and eastern maidens often place bunches of them in their bosoms. The plant is still found at Engedi. *P.*

REFLECTIONS.—How precious and pleasant Christ is to believing souls! Ardently do they pant after further communications of his grace; sensible that they can do nothing of themselves, but Jesus must do all in them and for them. He takes the sweetest delight in speedily answering their prayers, and satisfying their souls with his loving-kindness; though often, amidst his kind visits, their outward state is such as lookers-on are apt to stumble at. With what pain and grief do lively saints lament the want of frequent and intimate fellowship with him and his people in the ordinances! But he is ready to direct and comfort them in this condition. He has done, and will do, for them the most amazing things, in furnishing them with his righteousness, his grace, and his glory. All their life, their strength, their grace, their comfort, their happiness come from him. His heart is full of high esteem and unbounded affection for them. And, through familiar fellowship with him, they receive and enjoy his comforting, sanctifying, and blessed influence.

CHAPTER II. CHRIST. 1. I am indeed glorious in my person as God-man, and in my mediatorial relations, estates, and works; and am infinitely comely, refreshing, and medicinal to every believing soul. 2. And partaking of my comeliness, righteousness, and grace, thou, my church, art incomparably more excellent and useful than all the societies, and true believers than all the persons on earth.

BELIEVERS. 3. But infinitely more my beloved Jesus excels angels and men in everything gracious, glorious, and operative. Often have I, under the covert of his righteousness, love, power, and providence, fearless of danger from heaven, earth, or hell, believingly viewed, admired, and applied to my soul, his person, offices, and relations, with all the pardon, peace, acceptance, adoption, sanctification, comfort, and endless glory, which flow therefrom! 4. Powerfully has he admitted me to partake of his fulness, in the most ravishing manner, in his Word and ordinances. And the manifestations of his love have effectually protected me from enemies, and encouraged and animated me to my spiritual work and warfare. 5. Ye ministers and fellow-professors, often have I needed your sympathy, direction, and comfort, under my sad perplexity and desertion. But, oh! if you could now help me to bear up under these ravishing discoveries and communications of Jesus' love! Oh for further and unspeakably more enlarged enjoyment of him, to strengthen me for supporting under, and improving what I have; 6. But why do I ask your assistance? While I enjoy the true, the delightful, and intimate embraces of an incarnate God, and have the joys of his promise imparted to my soul, his word, power, and grace marvellously uphold, delight, and invigorate my heart. 7. I therefore charge you, my fellow-professors, by everything kind, pleasant, or delightful, that ye disturb not my fellowship with him, nor do, nor cause me to do, anything which may provoke him to withdraw this sensible visit of his love. 8. Lo! though he had withdrawn, yet I now hear his voice, in the ministry of his Word and motions of his Spirit. Behold, he comes removing and triumphing over every hindrance of my fellowship with him! 9. Behold, in the most lively, lovely, and affectionate manner, he comes forward in the influence of his grace, and unto an actual assumption of our nature! Behold he, the substance of all our ceremonies, manifests his glorious and gracious excellencies, through them, and vouchsafes some obscure and transient glimpses of himself in every ordinance! 10. In what a heart-melting manner he said to my soul, Rouse up thyself from thy partial deadness, sloth, and security, and disentangle thyself more fully from the snares of the world and thy own lusts. Exercise thy faith in the most active, bold, and assured degree, in partaking of the most delightful fellowship with me: 11. For all impediments, arising from the wrath of God, the guilt or dominion of sin, or from terrible troubles, are now removed. 12–14. Now are come the days of power and times of love, in which the dispensations of the gospel are attended with almighty influence, and multitudes are, to their everlasting joy and comfort, converted to me, and rendered fruitful in good works. Arise, therefore, my poor, meek, chaste, but often persecuted bride; let no despondency, no sense of thy unworthiness, deter thee from approaching my presence in prayer and other holy duties: for both thy person and services are accepted by me, and are inexpressibly amiable in my sight. 15. And while ecclesiastical rulers take pains, both by doctrine and discipline, to free my church from false teachers, even those who

time of the singing *of birds* is come, and the voice of the turtle is heard in our land;[9]

13 The[u] fig-tree putteth forth her green figs, and the vines *with* the tender grape give a *good* smell. [v]Arise, my love, my fair one, and come away.

14 ¶ O[w] my dove, [x]*that art* in the clefts of the rock, in the secret *places* of the stairs, [z]let me see thy countenance, let me hear thy voice; for sweet *is* thy voice, and thy countenance *is* comely.

15 Take[a] us the foxes, the little foxes,[1] that spoil the vines: for our vines *have* [b]tender grapes.

16 ¶ My[c] beloved *is* mine, and I *am* his: he feedeth among the lilies.

17 Until[d] the day break, and the shadows flee away, turn,[2] my beloved, and be thou [e]like a roe or a young hart upon the mountains [3]of Bether.[4]

CHAPTER III.

1 The church's fight and victory in temptation. 6 The church glorieth in Christ.

BY night[a] on my bed I sought [b]him whom my soul loveth: I sought him, but [c]I found him not.

2 I[d] will rise now, and go about the city in the streets, and in the broad ways I will seek him whom my soul loveth: [e]I sought him, but I found him not.

A.M. cir. 3009. B.C. cir. 995.

9 This description of spring is equally beautiful and graphic. In Palestine the flowers burst forth in all their richness as if by magic; the groves are all alive with the voice of song; and from every rock and tree the sweet cooing of the turtle-dove is heard. The luxuriance, the brightness, the melody of early spring make Palestine a paradise.—*P.*

u ver. 12; ch. 7. 8, 12, 13; 6.11. Eze.47.12. Is. 61.11.

v ver.10. Is.60.1. Ps. 5[illegible].5.

w ch. 1. 15; 4. 1; 5. 2. Mat.10.16. Eze.7.16.

x Ezr.9.6. Da.9.7, or Ps.91.1,2,9. 2 Co. 1. 30; 10.4.

y ch.8. 13. He. 4. 16; 10.22. Ep.1.6. 1 Pe.2.5. Pr.15.8. Re.5.8.

z Eze. 13. 4. Ac. 15. 24. Tit.3.10. Re.2.2.

1 The wily servants of Satan that deceive inexperienced believers.—*C.*

a ver.13. Ps.110.3.

b Ps.63. 1, 2 Co.3.23. ch.6.3; 7. 10. Jn. 20. 28. Ga.2.20. Je.32.41. Zep. 3.17. Re.7.17; 21.3.

c ch.4.6. Lu. 1. 78. 2 Pe. 1.19.

2 *Turn.* Rather, 'encompass me round' with watchful care and protection.—*C.*

d ch.8.14; ver.9.

3 Or, *of division*, 2 Sa.2.29.

4 'Division.' Those obstructions of time that separate the believer from Christ and glory.—*C.*

CHAP. III.

a Is.26. 9. Ps.63.6,7; 4.4; 22.2, 77.2-4.

b ch.1.2, 7, 16; 5.8.

c Job 23.8, 9.

d ch. 5. 5. Is.64.7. Pr. 1.20, 21; 8.3, 34. Ps.84.1, 2, 10.

e Ps.22.1, 2; 10.1; 13.1-4; 42.9; 43.2.

A.M. cir. 3009. B.C. cir. 995.

f ch. 5. 7. Is. 62. 6. Eze.3.17. He.13.17. ch. 5.7.

g Ac.2.37; 16.30.

h ch. 6. 12. La. 3. 25. Pr.8.17. Mat.7.7. Ja.4. 8.

i Is.45.19. Je. 29. 12, 13.

k Re. 3. 11, 12. Pr. 4. 13. ch. 7. 5. Ge. 32. 26. Ho.12.3,4.

l Ps. 51. 18; 122.6-9; 137.5,6. Je.51.50.

m Ro. 10. 10, 14-17. Ga.4.19. 1 Co.4.15.

o ch.2.7; 8.4, 5. Mi.4.8.

1 See ch.2.7.—*C.*

p De. 8.2. Is. 43. 19. ch.8.5. Ps.43.3; 84.7. 1 Jn.5.4. Ga.6.14.

q Phi.4. 18. Re. 5. 8. Col.3.1. Phi.3.20. Ep.1. 6. Ro.12.1. 2 Pe.2.5.

2 Reference may here be made to sacrifice. The smoke ascended like a tall and graceful pillar from the burning victim, while the air around was filled with the fragrance of the perfumes and incense that were kindled at the same time. Dignity and grace are the characteristics chiefly represented.—*P.*

r ch.1.16. Jn. 14. 21, 23. 1 Jn.1.3, 7.

3 'Lo!' it is the palanquin of Solomon!—*C.*

s 2 Ki.6.17. He.1.14. 1 Co.12.28.

t Ep.6.17. Ps.45. 3. 2 Co. 10. 4, with Ex. 32. 27.

4 The emblem of that 'sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God,' Ep. 6. 17; and which every faithful soldier of Christ must bear for the defence of truth in the church.—*C.*

u Is.27. 3. Ne. 4. 22. Mat.13.25. Ep.6.12.

v He.2. 14. Jn. 1. 14, or Ps.89.3. 4. Is. 53.10, or Mar. 16. 15. 1 Co. 1. 24. Mat.16.18. Re.14.6.

5 Or, *bed*, or *litter*, or *throne*, ch. 1. 16; ver.7. Re.3.21.

3 The[g] watchmen that go about the city found me; *to whom I said*, [h]Saw ye him whom my soul loveth?

4 *It*[i] *was* but a little that I passed from them, but [j]I found him whom my soul loveth: I [k]held him, and would not let him go, until I [l]had brought him into my mother's house, and into the chamber of her that [m]conceived me.

5 I[o] charge you, O ye daughters of Jerusalem, by the roes, and by the hinds of the field, that ye stir not up, nor awake *my* love, till he [1]please.

6 ¶ Who[p] *is* this that cometh out of the wilderness [q]like pillars of smoke, perfumed with myrrh and frankincense, with all powders of the merchant?[2]

7 Behold [r]his bed, which *is* [3]Solomon's: threescore [s]valiant men *are* about it, of the valiant of Israel.

8 They[t] all hold swords,[4] *being* expert in war: every man *hath* his sword upon his thigh because [u]of fear in the night.

9 King Solomon made [v]himself a chariot[5] of the wood of Lebanon.

10 He[w] made the pillars thereof *of* silver, the bottom thereof *of* gold, the covering of it *of* purple, the midst thereof being paved *with* love, for the daughters of Jerusalem.

11 Go[y] forth, O [z]ye daughters of Zion, and

x 1 Ti.3.16. Is.9.6,7, or 2 Sa.23.5, or Col.1.27, or Ps.87.3. Ep.2.20-22.

y ch.4.8. Re.22.17. 2 Co.5.20.

z ch.1.5; 7.5; 8; ver.5. Ps.48.11; 97.8.

have but begun to vent their errors and irregularities, as they greatly mar her purity, peace, order, and beauty, and are especially apt to mislead weak believers, let every one be careful to search out, and mortify his own inward lusts, as these, if indulged, break up the work of grace in their hearts.—16. This kind inviter is my glorious Husband and Mediator, given of God to, and accepted by, me; and I am his by the Father's goodness, his own love and conquest, and by my surrender of myself to him. And O the infinite delight he takes in his people, and to converse with them in his ordinances! 17. Till the gospel day, in its pleasant light and powerful influence, break, and the shadows of Jewish ceremonies flee away; nay, till the day of perfect glory dawn, and all the shadows of desertion, temptation, and trouble are fled; do thou, blessed Jesus, often surprise me with the discoveries of thy glory and communications of thy grace, notwithstanding whatever hindrances, guilt, and wickedness are found with me.

Ver. 1. 'I am a wild rose of the fields, a lily of the valleys.'—Such a humiliating description as every self-examining believer will give of himself in comparison with the attainments of others. *C.*

Ver. 3. Judea is not celebrated for the apple, but its citrons were reckoned superior to those of all other lands; and the citron is therefore most probably the fruit-tree of this emblem. *C.*

Ver. 7. *I charge you.* This cannot be any form of adjuration, which would be both superstitious and impious. The reference is to the timidity of the startled *gazelle*, and the fleetness with which it escapes when disturbed in its slumbers. Spiritually, it inculcates 'praying, waiting, and watching,' for the Lord's coming in providence and grace. *C.*

Ver. 10-13. From verse 10 to 13 is presented one of the most beautiful emblems of Christ, by his Word and Spirit, inviting the soul of a believer, or the whole church, to arise from sleep, Ro. 13. 11, and follow him. *C.*

Ver. 14. The emblem here changes to a scene descriptive of the safety of the believer, or the church—defended as by a rock, and hid in the 'secret places of the precipices.' *C.*——In this verse the dove—not the turtle-dove, but the pigeon—is the emblem selected. Its favourite haunts are the clefts of the rocks, and the retired recesses of the steep stair-like ravines. From these its soft cooing is heard during the spring season. *P.*

Ver. 16. *He feedeth among the lilies.* 'Let him feed (his flock) among the lilies.'—The emblems of believers, adorned with grace and endowed with righteousness without their own merit, Ro. 3. 20-28; 4. 4-6. *C.*

REFLECTIONS.—O the unbounded glory and infinite usefulness of Jesus Christ, and the glory and usefulness of his people as connected with him! What must be the immediate enjoyment of God and the Lamb, when the imperfect and mediate enjoyment on earth is sometimes so transporting! Unhappy for ever is that heart which would change one hour's fellowship with Christ for all the pleasures, honours, and riches on earth. Tenderly should it be managed, and carefully improved and maintained. A small thing may interrupt it; and with the greatest reluctance and grief should the believing soul mourn over its want. Strong as death must be the love of our Redeemer, which makes him come to his people over every mountain of distance, darkness, wrath, provocation, and pollution. How earnest and affecting are his invitations to familiar intercourse with himself! And what a change in the world is made by his oracles, ordinances, and influence! But wicked ministers in a church, and carnal lusts in a heart, are our greatest plagues, and should be carefully removed. And the assured faith of our relation to Christ will make us effectually to long and cry for frequent and familiar fellowship with him.

CHAPTER III. Ver. 1. In time of desertion and trouble, and of a secure and slothful frame, in prayer and other private ordinances, I endeavoured to regain the sensible communications of Jesus' love: I persevered therein, but without any discernible success. 2. Stirring up myself therefore to a more active and lively frame of spirit, I attended the public ordinances of his worship, in order to obtain communion with himself. I often repeated my endeavours, but met with nothing but disappointments and discouragements. 3. Faithful ministers, who with care and labour inspect the souls of men, were often directed to speak pointedly to my case, which encouraged me to open it to them in familiar conversation, and beg their assistance in furthering my fellowship with him. 4. Not resting in duties and ordinances, by faith I essayed still more earnest and immediate application to Jesus himself. He graciously vouchsafed me his sensible presence. Then my heart clave to him by a lively exercise of faith, and by the most ardent and resolute affection. I carefully avoided everything which tended to disturb our fellowship or provoke his withdrawment; and not only laboured to get intimate enjoyment and full assurance of his love to myself, but to have his promised presence in the church and the public ordinances thereof. 5. I therefore again charge you, my fellow-professors or saints, to avoid everything which may in the least tend to mar my intercourse with him.

DAUGHTERS OF JERUSALEM. 6. What amazing persons are those who, separated from the world in affection, and delivered from former troubles, mount up heavenward in faith, in love, in spiritual-mindedness, and in holy desires and conversation;—all acceptable to God through Jesus' merits and intercession, and endowed with the manifold and precious graces of his Holy Spirit!

BELIEVERS. 7, 8. Nay, admire not us, nor the glories which we have freely received from Christ; but behold that new covenant of grace, and that familiar fellowship with him, which are the causes of everything amiable in us, and in which we are watched over and protected, amidst all our dangers, by almighty perfections, attendant angels, and vigilant ministers. 9, 10. Behold how, according to his deep compassion and universal love, he has not only assumed our nature in the most precious and useful form, but has formed a new covenant, and a gospel dispensation,—reared on stable, precious, and supporting promises,—founded in the unchangeable and everlasting love and purpose of God, in which men are protected by his righteousness and royal power; and his unbounded love makes everything proper, refreshing, and supporting for the members of his church, in order to transport them, in fellowship with him, through this world into the heavenly state! 11. Go forth then, my fellow-professors, from your unregeneracy, your self-righteousness, your filthy lusts, your carnal cares and sluggish frames; and with earnestness, faith, love, and wonder observe Jesus, our Prince of Peace, not only crowned by his Father with the highest glory and honour, but even by all the true members of his church, in their acceptance of him, and submission to him, as their Husband, Saviour, and Lord; particularly in that day of power, and time of love in which, to his inexpressible satisfaction, they are united to him by faith.

Ver. 1. 'In the night.'—That state of comparative darkness in which the believer and the whole church are still surrounded. See Ro. 13. 11, 12.—*I sought him* in his Word for direction, and in his promises for support.—*I found him not.* The seeker does not say, I believed him not, but 'I found him not:' because for more exercise of faith and faithful seeking, he calls the soul (the church) to add to private contemplation and prayer the observance and use of Christian converse and public ordinances. See ver. 2. *C.*

behold [a]king Solomon with the crown wherewith his [b]mother[6] crowned[c] him in the [d]day of his espousals, and in the day of the gladness of his heart.

CHAPTER IV.

1 *Christ setteth forth the grace of the church.* 8 *He showeth his love to her.* 16 *The church prayeth to be made fit for his presence.*

BEHOLD, thou[a] *art* fair, my love; behold, thou *art* fair; thou *hast* doves' eyes within thy locks: [b]thy hair *is* as a flock of goats that appear from[1] mount Gilead.

2 Thy[c] teeth *are* like a flock *of sheep that are even* shorn, which came up from the washing; whereof every one bear twins, and none *is* barren among them.

3 Thy[d] lips *are* like a thread of scarlet, and thy speech *is* comely: [e]thy temples *are* like a piece of a pomegranate within thy locks.

4 Thy[g] neck *is* like the tower of David, builded for an armoury, whereon there hang a thousand bucklers, all shields of mighty men.

5 Thy[h] two breasts *are* like two young roes that are twins, which feed among the lilies.

A.M. cir. 3009.
B.C. cir. 995.

a Mat.12.42. Is. 9.6. He.2.9. Phi.2.9–11.
b ch.8.5. Mat.12.50. Ga.4.19. Col.1.27.
[6] *His mother.* The church as she took refuge in this wilderness state, Re. 12.1–6.—*C.*
c Col.1.18. Re.1.5–7; 5.9. Phi.3.8–10.
d Jn. 3.29. Re. 21.9, 10. Ps.110.3. Eze.16.6–14. Re.11.15; 19.7. Is. 62.5; 53.11. Lu.15.32.

CHAP. IV.

a Eze.16.14. ch.1.15; 5.12. Ep.1.17, 18; 3.18, 19. Mat.11.29.
b ch. 6.5. Ps. 110.3. Phi.1.27; 4.8.
[1] Or, *that eat of*, &c.
c Th.2.10. 1Co.1.10, or Ga. 2.20. Tit. 2.11, 12; 3.8.
d Pr.31.26. 2Co.5.18–21. 1Co.1.23, 24. Re. 14.6, or Ep. 5.19. Col. 3.16, 17; 4.6. ch.7.9; ver. 11.
e ch.6.7. Eze.16.63, Ge.32.10. Ezr.9.6.
g ch.7.10; 7.4. 1Co. 12.28. Ep.4.11–13; 6.16. He.11.2Co.10.4. 1Jn.5. 4. Ro.8.37.
h ch.1.13; 7.3. 1Pe.2. 2. Is.66.11; 57.7. Ep.4. 11–13, or Ga. 5.6. 1Pe. 1.8, with Pr.5.19.

* *Amana* was a name given to that part of the range of Anti-Lebanon which joined Hermon. The name *Hermon* signifies 'lofty peak;' *Shenir* signifies 'breastplate.' Both were applied to the same mountain, and both were descriptive—the former of its prominent lofty cone rising far above all its fellows, the latter of its glittering icy summit, reflecting the rays of the sun. Both Hermon and Lebanon abound in wild beasts.—*P.*

A.M. cir. 3009.
B.C. cir. 995.

f ch.2. 17. Lu. 1. 78. Mat. 28. 20. Ac.3. 21. 2 Pe.1.19.
2 Heb. *breathe.*
f Ep.5.25, 27. Nu.23. 21. Je. 50. 20. Re. 1. 5. Col.2.10, 11. 1 Co.1.30.
k Is.54.5. Ho.2.19, 20. Re.18. 4. Ps. 45. 10, 11; 97.10, 13. Pr.9.6; 13. 20. Col.3.1, 2. 2 Co. 4. 18. 1 Pe.5.8.
l De.3.9, 25; 4.48.
3 See note * in first column.
4 Or, *taken away my heart.*
n He. 2. 11, 14. 2 Co. 11.2. Is.54.5. ch. 5.11.
o ch.6.4; 1.10, 15. Is. 62. 5; 53. 11. Zep. 3. 17. Je.32.41. He.12.2.
p ch. 1.2, 8, 15; 3, 1–5; ver. 1.
5 Heb. *loves.*
q ch.1.3, 12; 3.6. 2 Co. 1.21, 22. Ga.5.22–25.
r ver. 3; ch. 5. 1; 7.9. Col.3.16, 17; 4.6. Ps.45. 1; 71.8–24. Pr.24.13, 14.
s Ge.27.27. Ho.14.6, 7. Ps. 45. 8, with 12, 13. Tit.2.11, 12. Re.19.8.
t Pr.5.15–18. Jn.15.1. Is. 58.11; 44. 5. Re.21. 27. Tit.2.14. Ho.3.3.
6 Heb. *barred.*
u Ps.92.12–14. Is.60. 21. Jn. 15. 1–5, 8. Ep. 2. 10. Ga.5.22–25. 1 Co.12. 4–10.

6 Until[i] the day break,[2] and the shadows flee away, I will get me to the mountain of myrrh, and to the hill of frankincense.

7 Thou[j] *art* all fair, my love; *there is* no spot in thee.

8 ¶ Come[k] with me from Lebanon, *my* spouse, with me [l]from Lebanon: look from the top of Amana, from the top of Shenir and Hermon, from the lions' dens, from the mountains of the leopards.[3]

9 Thou hast ravished my heart,[4] my sister, *my* [n]spouse; [o]thou hast ravished my heart with one of thine eyes, with one chain of thy neck.

10 How[p] fair is thy love,[5] my sister, *my* spouse! how much better is thy love than wine! and [q]the smell of thine ointments than all spices!

11 Thy[r] lips, O *my* spouse, drop *as* the honeycomb: honey and milk *are* under thy tongue; [s]and the smell of thy garments *is* like the smell of Lebanon.

12 A[t] garden inclosed[6] *is* my sister, *my* spouse; a spring shut up, a fountain sealed.

13 Thy[u] plants *are* an orchard of pome-

Ver. 6. The emblem here changes to the arrival of a traveller coming out of the wilderness, not like the wayworn Israelites when they emerged from its solitudes, but as a beauteous and beloved bride borne in splendour, and escorted by the mighty.—*Note*, The Hebrew shows the traveller is a female. *C.*

Ver. 9. *A chariot.* Rather, 'a throne,' as the mention of pillars seems to require, and as the word may be translated, 'King Solomon made himself a throne'—the emblem of the King of Zion enthroned in glory, the reward and production of his humiliation unto death, Phi. 2. 5–11. *C.*

Ver. 10. Its inside strewed over with love-mottoes (after the manner of the East) by the daughters of Jerusalem, the emblems of those records whereby believers have witnessed Christ's love to them, and their love to Christ. *C.*

Ver. 11. *In the day of his espousals*, &c. The church restored to paradise, and uninterrupted communion with Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. *C.*

REFLECTIONS.—In this world the clearest days of intimate fellowship with Christ are suddenly turned into nights of desertion, trouble, ignorance, and sloth. But precious and dear is Jesus to lively saints;—nothing can content them without his presence and favour; and they count no labour nor suffering too hard to obtain it. Great is his love to them. He is loath to contend long with his people lest their spirit should fail before him. And an hour, a minute of his presence, richly rewards all their pains and sorrows in seeking for it. Promising is the appearance when the Word preached pointedly touches the heart and conscience of hearers, and leads them to careful inquiries concerning Christ. And remarkable fellowship with him effectually animates to an earnest wrestling in behalf of the church and public interests of religion. What extensive honour believers procure to themselves from all around them by an earnest care to maintain fellowship with him, and to follow him in a gracious, upright, and heavenly conversation! But if distinguished saints be so admirable and lovely, how much more is Christ himself and his covenant! With great care ought we to labour to have the heart and eyes of all around us fixed on him: for great indeed is his love, that he should take pleasure in espousing to himself poor, guilty, polluted, diseased, wretched, and mischievous sinners of mankind.

CHAPTER IV. Ver. 1–5, 7. Behold how glorious is the state of my church decked with ordinances, officers, and saints! How comely is she when ministers, her *lights*, or *eyes*, are intelligent, modest, humble, and holy, walking in all godly simplicity!—when converts, rooted in me as their Head, grow up in grace and perfect holiness in the fear of the Lord—feeding on the rich pastures of my Word, and surrendering themselves acceptable sacrifices to God!—How comely is she when ministers, who prepare spiritual nourishment for others, are sound in their doctrine, holy in their conversation, harmonious and meek in their behaviour, and active and successful in winning souls to me!—when their ministrations mark the soundness of their hearts!—when their dwelling on *redemption through my blood*, as their principal theme, renders themselves and their ministrations lively and pleasant; and when, with modesty, singleness, prudence, and order they, and other rulers, govern the flocks committed to their care!—when they, as superior to others in station, and as means of connecting them with Christ, and of conveying their spiritual nourishment, are upright, steady, and strong, and do watch over the church, and actively improve the whole armour of God for her defence and honour!—and when her various oracles, ordinances, and officers are remarkably useful for supplying the souls of men with the nourishing milk of God's Word!—But especially how fair and comely are believers, with respect to their personal capacity, when justified by active faith, and adorned with every spiritual grace!—when their spiritual knowledge, faith, and affection are sincere, single, humble, and seasonably discovered!—when their conversation in thought, word, and deed, notwithstanding many imperfections, is orderly and pure, manifesting a heart nourished in the pastures of the gospel!—when, by repeated acts of faith and meditation, they improve their spiritual provision; and their zeal for God is uniform, pure, and moderate, animating them to a fruitfulness in good works, and in winning others to me!—when their prayers and converse are profitable and pleasant, discovering the soundness of their heart, animated, and furnished by, and accepted through my blood!—when there is much secret and holy blushing on account of remaining defects!—when their faith, which unites them to me, furnishes with and really improves the whole armour of God for their defence from spiritual enemies, as the worthies of God formerly experienced!—when, feeding upon the doctrine of the prophets and apostles, they, to my inexpressible pleasure, abound in faith and love towards me, and in care to instruct and edify others!—How completely perfect are they in their justification, in the extent of their sanctification, and in my purpose and favourable acceptation. 6, 8. Till not only the gospel dispensation, but even the glorious millennium, and the resurrection to everlasting life, come, I, according to thy request, ch. 2. 17, will continue to bestow my special presence and influence in my church, which is rendered so delightful by my ordinances, and by the precious graces, prayers, and praises of my people.—Let therefore every one spiritually espoused to me there attend, and hold intimate fellowship with me, setting their affections on things above; forsaking the most excellent creature-satisfactions for my sake, shunning the intimacy of carnal, covetous, and violent men, and even the fellowship of superstitious, erroneous, and persecuting churches. 9, 10. O redeemed soul, partaker of the same human nature with me, begotten and adopted of my Father, and spiritually betrothed to my person, how, even with the weakest acts of thy faith, and the smallest degree of sincere grace and holy obedience, hast thou claimed, attracted, encouraged, and coupled my heart to thee! How incomparably acceptable and delightful is thy love, and that sweet fragrancy flowing from thy manifold graces! 11. How delightful thy prayers and praise! Thy instructing, reproving, and comforting discourse marks what sweet and nourishing truths and experiences are lodged in thy heart, and how delightful and attractive is thy holy and benevolent conversation! 12–14. My church is a delightful garden, separated from the world, set apart to the service of God, digged by gospel ministrations and influences, and especially protected by my providence, by the rules of order contained in my Word, and a medicinal spring of gospel truth hid from the view of a carnal world! And when purged of scandalous persons, her converts planted in the new kingdom do flourish more fragrant, delightful, precious, and useful, more numerous and different in circumstances, than all the fruit-bearing trees and spices of an orchard!—Yea, every particular believer is a garden set apart in beautiful order, and with infinite care and labour, to the service of God; and has in him the Holy Ghost and a principle of grace, as a well of water springing up into everlasting life: and in the most pleasant manner are their various gifts and graces exercised to my honour, their own advantage, and the edification of others.

BELIEVERS. 15. Blessed Jesus! great source and bestower of all life here or hereafter, it is to thy influences alone that we owe all our comeliness, fragrancy, and fruitfulness! let them run more abundantly into our hearts, that, by the exercise of thy grace, we may be rendered more useful to water and refresh others around! 16. And since we are thine, as well as under our own care, prevent everything tending to mar our fruitfulness; and let the Holy Ghost, in his convincing and sin-mortifying as well as in his comforting influences, stir up and quicken our hearts to a lively exercise of those gifts and graces with which we are endowed. And do thou, O Jesus, manifest thy presence in thine ordinances, and accept of and delight in those graces and good works which are wrought in us by faith in thyself.

Ver. 1. *My love*—'my Partner.' 'Thine eyes are doves' (see ch. 1. 15) behind thy vail.'—'Thine hair as a flock of goats.' They must have seen the beautiful hair of some of the Asiatic goats who would appreciate this comparison. *C.*

Ver. 2. *None is barren.* 'None is companionless,' an allusion to the correspondence of the upper and lower teeth, upon which both their beauty and utility so much depend.—*Note*, Personal beauty, like the other gifts of God, is good, and may, if not abused, be used for most gracious purposes. The details of personal beauty form, accordingly, most appropriate emblems of those gifts of the Spirit wherewith Christ adorns the believer and his bride the church. *C.*

Ver. 4. Reference may here be made not merely to the natural

granates, with pleasant fruits; camphire,[7] with spikenard;

14 Spikenard and saffron; calamus and cinnamon, with all trees of frankincense; [v]myrrh and aloes, with all the chief spices:

15 A[w] fountain of gardens, a well of living waters, and streams from Lebanon.

16 ¶ Awake,[y] O north wind; and come, thou south; blow upon my garden,[8] *that* [z]the spices thereof may flow out. [a]Let my beloved come into his garden, and eat his pleasant fruits.

CHAPTER V.

1 *Christ awaketh the church with his calling.* 2 *The church having a taste of Christ's love is sick of love.* 9 *A description of Christ by his graces.*

I AM[a] come into my garden, [b]my sister, *my* spouse: I [c]have gathered my myrrh with my spice; I have eaten my honeycomb with my honey; I have drunk my wine with my milk: eat,[d] O friends; drink, yea, drink abundantly,[1] O [e]beloved.

2 ¶ I[g] sleep, but my heart [2]waketh: [h]*it is* the voice of my beloved that knocketh, *saying*, Open[i] to me, my sister, my love, my dove, my undefiled: [j]for my head is filled with dew, *and* my locks with the drops of the night.

3 I[k] have put off my coat; how shall I put it on? I have washed my feet; how shall I defile them?

4 My[l] beloved put in his hand by the hole *of the door*,[3] and my bowels were moved for him.[4]

A.M. cir. 3009.
B.C. cir. 995.

7 Or, *cypress*, ch. 1. 14.

v ch. 5. 1.

w Ps. 87. 7; 46. 4. Jn. 4. 10, 14; 7. 38. Is. 58. 11. ver. 12, or Zec. 13. 1. 1 Co. 1. 30. Re. 22. 1. Je. 2. 13; 17. 13.

x Ezk. 37. 9. Is. 64. 1; 44. 3, 4; 59. 21. Jn. 3. 8. Mi. 2. 8.

8 Awake, O north wind, and come; blow thou south upon my garden.'—*C.*

y ch. 1. 12; 7. 12, 13; ver. 13, 14. Ga. 5. 22–25. 2 Pe. 1. 3–10; 3. 18.

z Ps. 101. 3; 63. 1, 2; 42. 1, 2. Is. 62. 5. Zep. 3. 17. Phi. 2. 13.

CHAP. V.

a ch. 4. 11, 16. Is. 58. 9; 65. 24. Ps. 50. 15; 91. 15.

b Mat. 12. 50. Ho. 2. 19, 20.

c Ps. 147. 11. Zep. 3. 17. ch. 4. 11–14. Is. 55. 1.

d Pr. 1. 23; 9. 5. Ps. 34. 8. Is. 55. 1–3. Re. 22. 17. Jn. 3. 29.

1 Or, *and be drunken* with *loves*.

e Jn. 15. 13–15. 1 Jn. 4. 9, 10, 19. Ep. 5. 2, 25.

g Mat. 26. 41. Ga. 5. 17. Ro. 7. 14–25. ch. 3. 1.

2 I slept, but my heart was awake'—an emblem of the wise virgins, who, as well as the foolish, slumbered and slept, Mat. 25. 5.—*C.*

h ch. 2. 8, 10. Jn. 10. 3, 4. Ps. 85. 8. Re. 3. 20.

i Pr. 8. 4; 23. 26. Ps. 24. 7–10; 81. 10.

j Is. 52. 14; 53. 2–10. Ps. 95. 3. Mat. 23. 37.

k Lu. 11. 7. Ro. 7. 23. Pr. 21. 25; 13. 4.

l Ps. 110. 3; 84. 2. Is. 26. 8, 9. Ac. 16. 14.

3 The garden-doors in Palestine have the lock inside. The lock is of wood, and in order to open it the latch with the wooden key thrust through a small square hole in the door, and the key then inserted in the lock. The description here is thus minutely accurate.—*P.*

4 Or (as some read), *in me.*

A.M. cir. 3009.
B.C. cir. 995.

m Ps. 42. 1; 63. 1, 2.

o Je. 15. 16. Phi. 2. 12, 13.

5 Heb. *passing* or *running about.*

p Ps. 24. 7, 9; 16. 2; 119. 94. Is. 44. 5.

q Ps. 30. 7. Is. 45. 15. Ho. 5. 15.

r ver. 2, 4. Ps. 77. 3. Mat. 26. 75.

s ch. 3. 1–3. Ps. 22. 1; 27. 8. 1; 80. 4. La. 3. 8.

t Ps. 141. 5. Ho. 6. 5. Je. 18. 18. Ac. 20. 29. Is. 56. 10, 11. 2 Co. 11. 13.

u ch. 2. 7; 8. 4. Ro. 15. 30. Ep. 6. 19.

6 Heb. *what.*

v Mat. 8. 27; 21. 10. Is. 63. 1.

x ch. 1. 8, 15; 4. 1, 7, 10; 6. 1, 9, 10. Ps. 45. 13.

y ch. 2. 1; 1. 16. Jn. 1. 14. Ro. 9. 5. He. 7. 26; 2. 10. Ep. 1. 21. Lu. 24. 26. Phi. 2. 6–11.

7 This single passage should have convinced any commentator that this book had no reference whatever to Solomon the son of David; for it is utterly impossible that the most unlimited vanity could compose and publish such a personal panegyric; but as an emblematic description of Messiah it well corresponds in glory with that exhibited to John the Divine, Re. 1. 13–16.—*C.*

8 Heb. *a standard-bearer*, Is. 11. 10, 59. 19.

z Ac. 7. 2. Tit. 2. 13. Mat. 28. 18. Da. 2. 41; 7. 14. Ps. 45. 7.

a Ro. 11. 33. 1 Ti. 3. 16. Re. 1. 14. He. 13. 8.

9 Or, *curled.*

b ch. 1. 15; 4. 1. Re. 1. 14. 2 Ch. 1. 16. 9. Ps. 119. 132; 5. 5. He. 4. 13.

1 Heb. *sitting in fulness*, that is, *fitly placed and set as a precious stone in the foil of a ring.*

c Ps. 27. 4. Ep. 5. 2. Jn. 1. 14.

2 Or, *towers of perfumes*

d Ps. 45. 2. Is. 50. 4. Lu. 4. 22. Je. 15. 16.

5 I[m] rose up to open to my beloved; [o]and my hands dropped *with* myrrh, and my fingers *with* sweet-smelling[5] myrrh, upon the handles of the lock.

6 I[p] opened to my beloved; [q]but my beloved had withdrawn himself, *and* was gone: [r]my soul failed when he spake: [s]I sought him, but I could not find him; I called him, but he gave me no answer.

7 The[t] watchmen that went about the city found me, they smote me, they wounded me; the keepers of the walls took away my vail from me.

8 I[u] charge you, O daughters of Jerusalem, if ye find my beloved, that[6] ye tell him, that I *am* sick of love.

9 ¶ What[v] *is* thy beloved more than *another* beloved, [w]O thou fairest among women? what *is* thy beloved more than *another* beloved, that thou dost so charge us?

10 My[y] beloved *is* white and ruddy,[7] the chiefest[8] among ten thousand.

11 His[z] head *is as* the most fine gold; [a]his locks *are* bushy,[9] *and* black as a raven;

12 His[b] eyes *are* as *the eyes* of doves by the rivers of waters, washed with milk, *and* fitly set:[1]

13 His[c] cheeks *are* as a bed of spices, *as* sweet [2]flowers; [d]his lips *like* lilies, dropping sweet-smelling myrrh:

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symmetry and stateliness of the neck; but to the costly chains and ornaments of gold which it was customary to wear in great profusion round the neck. David's armoury tower was graceful in the style of its architecture; and it was hung round with golden shields and polished armour. *P.*

Ver. 6. The emblem here changes, and the speaker retires to Lebanon, the mountain from which he speaks in ver. 8. The emblem represents Christ inviting the believer (the church) to lofty ascents of contemplation and extended views of providence and redemption. *C.*

Ver. 9. *One of thine eyes.* 'One glance of thine eyes:' that language of humility, purity, devotedness—which nothing but the eye can speak. *C.*

Ver. 11. *Lebanon.* Whiteness and incense—the one meaning from its snowy top; the other from the fragrant plants that adorned its sides. *C.*

Ver. 12. 'A garden *is* inclosed, my sister espoused; a spring *is* shut up.' This garden, &c., not being the emblem of the bride herself, but of the protected beauties and comforts of her residence. *C.*——Fountains shut up and sealed, that is, so covered and inclosed as to be secure against all inspection, are not uncommon in Palestine. There is one at Solomon's Pools. It is in an artificial subterranean chamber, the entrance to which is closed, and a subterranean channel conducts its waters into one of the great pools. *P.*

Ver. 15. *A well of living waters.* The emblem of the Word of Christ springing up continually in streams of life from the believer's heart and gospel ordinances, Jn. 4. 14.—*Streams from Lebanon.* The emblem of the 'good and perfect gifts that come down from the Father of lights,' Ja. 1. 17. *C.*——Perennial streams are very rare in Palestine, but they abound in Lebanon. Their waters are limpid, sparkling, and of icy coldness. The streams and fountains of Lebanon are proverbial throughout Syria as emblems of luxury and pleasure. *P.*

REFLECTIONS.—What infinite love Jesus bears to all people! He puts upon them his own comeliness, when they exercise a living faith in him. Earnest is his desire of their company: and soon shall they be with him where he is, to share his happiness and honour! Never, but when he went to suffer, did he say, Let these go their way. They are a good savour of Christ to all around or above them. And when they rightly behold their own comeliness in him, it effectually humbles them, and makes them ascribe all the glory to him, and to cry for more abundant supplies of his sanctifying influences. Surely it is the greatest honour for them, as his peculiar property, to keep themselves entirely for his service.

CHAPTER V. CHRIST. 1. At thy request, believing soul, I vouchsafe my special presence in my church and ordinances. I have with pleasure observed thy lively preaching, and cordial application of my precious and soul-nourishing truths. I have particularly observed and accepted the graces and services of believers. Let them also feast abundantly on my gospel provision, and take the comfort of their graces and works, as evidences of their faith and great salvation.

BELIEVERS. 2. Alas! the dull and lukewarm frame in which Jesus often finds his churches when he comes to bless them! And how slothful and secure my animal nature had made me, even while my spiritual endeavoured to hear and entertain him! Amidst much deadness and unconcern, I felt some impressions made upon my heart by his Word, Spirit, and rod; while he, in the kindest manner, besought me to exercise my faith and love, and to remove whatever hindered his most intimate approaches, as he was closely related to me, had suffered much for me and from me, had waited long for my opening to him, and was much grieved with my neglect of him! 3. In the most pitiful manner I evaded compliance with his kind invitations, as a thing I was not at present fitted for, and which I could not do without crossing my corrupt inclinations and troubling my flesh. 4. By the immediate power of his Spirit, Jesus touched my heart through his Word, and kindly stirred up my affections to a concern for my former slighting of him, and to an earnest desire after his presence. 5. Repenting of my former stupidity and indifference, and actuated by his influence, I prepared myself to entertain his visit; my faith and other graces put themselves into active and vigorous motion for the removal of everything that tended to hinder his access to my soul. 6. Notwithstanding my vigorous actings of faith upon his self-giving promises, and panting desires after him, I did not obtain any sensible manifestations of his presence. My heart was then filled with pain, grief, and shame at the remembrance of his slighted invitation. I carefully attended his ordinances, public and private, in order to seek and find him: but met with nothing but frowns and disappointments. 7. When ministers touched my case in their discourses, they but raised my hopes and increased my anguish: by their harsh reproofs, calumnies, and persecutions, they wounded and distressed my soul. They whose duty it is to prevent everything tending to disturb the peace and edification of the church questioned the truth of my profession, and charged me with the vilest hypocrisy. 8. O! my fellow-professors, I beg and charge you, that if this my Lord Jesus allow you any sensible intimacy with himself, you will represent to him the distressed case of my soul, and entreat him speedily to visit me, who earnestly desires him, and am at the point of death for want of his sensible presence.

DAUGHTERS. 9. Distressed, but precious and lovely saint, what means this so solemn charge? What singular and transcendent excellency is in this Jesus, the beloved of thy heart?

BELIEVERS. 10. Boundless and incomparable is his excellency! A glorious Godhead and a suffering manhood, a holiness of heart and life, and a bloody suffering, a glorious exaltation, and a humble debasement, mercy towards his people, and judgment against unbelievers, concur to render him in every respect a miracle of beauty! He is infinitely more dignified, kind, rich, and glorious, than all the ten thousands of created beings in heaven and in earth; and, as the great standard-bearer, he goes forth, attended by angels and saints, conquering and to conquer. 11. In his divine nature, and as he is the Head of government and influence to all people, he is pure, precious, substantial, glorious, useful, enriching, and unchangeable! Lasting and immutable is his comeliness! Beautiful, mysterious, and majestic are his well-connected purposes and providences! And ever fresh and comely those societies of saints which are rooted and grounded in him! 12. Pure, penetrating, pleasant, beautiful, and comforting is his all-seeing knowledge and his tender pity and care! 13. Delightful the manifestations of his love, glory, and grace! His words are gracious and comfortable, continually refreshing, quickening, and supporting to the souls of his people! 14. Perfect, glorious, and lasting, and all managed with infinite skill, are his munificent liberality, almighty power, and marvellous works, particularly of grace! Sincere, lasting, and wisely ordered for the good of all people, are his great purposes of love, his tender bowels of mercy and compassion, and his sympathizing intercession! 15. Sufficient and wisely exerted are his strength and power to bear or act in the work of our redemption!

14 His[e] hands *are as* gold rings set with the beryl; [g]his belly *is as* bright ivory overlaid *with* sapphires:

15 His[h] legs *are as* pillars of marble set upon sockets of fine gold; [i]his countenance *is* as Lebanon, excellent as the cedars:

16 His[j] mouth *is* most [3]sweet; [k]yea, he *is* altogether lovely.[4] This[l] *is* my beloved, and this *is* my friend, O daughters of Jerusalem.

CHAPTER VI.

1 *The church professeth her faith in Christ.* 4 *Christ showeth the graces of the church,* 10 *and his love towards her.*

WHITHER is thy beloved gone, [a]O thou fairest among women? whither is thy beloved turned aside? [b]that we may seek him with thee.

2 My beloved is gone down [c]into his garden, to the beds of spices, to [d]feed in the gardens, and [e]to gather lilies.

3 I[g] *am* my beloved's, and my beloved *is* mine: he feedeth among the lilies.[1]

4 ¶ Thou[h] *art* beautiful, O my love, as [i]Tirzah,[2] comely as [j]Jerusalem, [k]terrible[3] as *an army* with banners.

5 Turn away thine eyes from me, for they have overcome [4]me: [l]thy hair *is* [m]as a flock of goats that appear from Gilead:

6 Thy teeth *are* as a flock of sheep which go up from the washing, whereof every one beareth twins, and [o]*there is* not one barren among them.

7 As a piece of a pomegranate *are* thy temples within thy locks.

8 There[p] are threescore queens, and fourscore concubines, and virgins without number.

9 My[q] dove, my undefiled is [r]*but* one; she *is* the *only* one of her mother, she *is* the choice *one*[5] of her that bare her: [s]the daughters saw her, and blessed her; *yea,* the queens and the concubines, and they praised her.

10 ¶ Who[t] *is* she *that* looketh forth as the morning, fair as the moon, clear as the sun, *and* terrible [u]as *an army* with banners?

11 I[v] went down[6] into the garden of nuts, to see the fruits of the valley, *and* to see whether the vine flourished, *and* the pomegranates budded.

12 Or[x] ever I was aware,[7] my soul made me *like* the chariots of Ammi-nadib.[8]

13 Return,[y] return, O Shulamite; return,

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e Is. 52. 13. Mat. 28. 18.
g Ho. 11. 8. Lu. 1. 78. He. 2. 17, 18. Mi. 7. 18.
h Ps. 25. 10. Mi. 5. 2.
i Re. 1. 14–16. 1 Ti. 3. 16. 1 S. 9. 6, 7. Zec. 9. 17.
j ch. 1. 2. Ps. 19. 10; 119. 103. Je. 15. 16. Job 23. 12.
3 Heb. *his palate is sweetness.*
k ch. 1. 16; 2. 1, 3. Phi. 3. 7–10. Is. 9. 6, 7.
4 Heb. *desirablenesses.*
l ch. 2. 16; 6. 3. Jn. 20. 28. Ga. 2. 20.

CHAP. VI.

a Je. 14. 8. ver. 9, 10. ch. 1. 8, 15; 5. 9 i. 4, 7. Eze. 16. 14.
b Zec. 8. 21–23. Ac. 2. 37; 16. 30.
c ch. 5. 1; 4. 12–16; ver. 11. Mat. 18. 20; 28. 20.
d Zep. 3. 17. Is. 53. 11, 12. Eze. 34. 23. Re. 7. 17.
e Is. 58. 8; 30. 11. Jn. 10. 16; 14. 3; 17. 24.
g ch. 2. 16; 7. 10. Jn. 10. 28.
1 See ch. 2. 16.—*C.*
h Col. 2. 2, 5, 19. Ps. 87. 5.
i Jos. 12. 24. 1 Ki. 14. 17; 15. 21, 33; 16. 6.
2 See note * below.
j ver. 10. La. 2. 15. Ps. 48. 2.
k Nu. 24. 2, 5. Ac. 5. 11. 2 Co. 10. 4. Ep. 6. 12, 13.
3 *Terrible.* Rather, 'dazzling as a bannered host.'—*C.*
* *Tirzah.* This city became the capital of the ten tribes, 1 Ki. 15. 33. The word signifies 'benevolent,' in which we have the true principle of the comparison—'beautiful because benevolent.' See 1 Co. 13. 1. *C.*—Tirzah, now called Telluzeh, is situated among the mountains of Samaria, a few miles north-east of Shechem. Its site is one of the most beautiful and commanding in Palestine. It is surrounded by dense groves of olives and verdant valleys, while it overlooks a part of the Jordan valley and the whole of the picturesque mountains of Gilead away beyond. —*f.*

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4 Or, *they have puffed me up,* Ho. 12, 4. Mat. 15. 27, 28.
l See ch. 4. 1–3.
m ch. 4. 1.
o Mat. 21. 19; 25. 30.
p 1 Ki. 11. 3. 2 Ch. 11. 21. Ps. 45. 14. Re. 7. 9.
q ch. 2. 14; 4. 1; 5. 2; 4. 7. *r* 2 Sa. 7. 23. Nu. 23. 9. Ep. 4. 3–6, 16. 1 Pe. 2. 9. Tit. 2. 14. Ga. 4. 26.
5 *Choice one.* Separated one, even as every believer must be, like his Lord, 'separate from sinners.' —*C.*
s De. 4. 6, 7; 26. 18, 19; 33. 29. Ps. 126. 3.
t Re. 21. 10, 11. ch. 3. 6; 8. 5. Pr. 4. 18. 2 Pe. 1. 19. Re. 12. 1. Ep. 5. 27.
u ver. 4. Ps. 14. 5; 149. 6–8. Re. 19. 14. Ro. 8. 37.
v Jn. 15. 16. ver. 2; ch. 5. 1; 2. 12, 13; 7. 12. Ps. 92. 12–14. Is. 5. 2, 3.
6 *I went down.* The emblem here again to 'the garden of nuts;' rather, of 'rest or retirement.'—*C.*
x Je. 31. 18–20. Ho. 11. 8, 9. ch. 2. 8.
7 Heb. *I knew not.*
8 Or, *set me on the chariots of my willing people,* Ps. 110. 3.
y ch. 2. 14. Je. 3. 14, 22; 31. 18–20. Ho. 14. 1–4.

Skilfully contrived, and firmly fixed on the precious and durable foundations of his grace, are the dispensations of his providence! Elevated, stately and pleasant, always verdant and refreshing, is the full manifestation of him in all his excellencies! 16. Pleasant is his Word and the sensible communications of his love! Nay, all that is in his person, offices, relations, names, blessings, and ordinances is inexpressibly desirable; and nothing is truly desirable but as in or connected with him. This, this, O fellow-professors, is my spiritual husband, and my constant and sympathizing lover and benefactor.

Ver. 1. This verse complies with the closing invitation of the preceding chapter, and represents Christ delighting in the feast of his church, and inviting all that follow him to participate in his joy, Jn. 3. 29. *C.*

Ver. 2. *Open to me, my sister.* The emblem of our Lord standing at the door and knocking, and waiting for the opening of the closed door, Re. 3. 20. *C.*

Ver. 3. Two excuses easy to be understood by those who observe that it is not *Christ personal* but *Christ representative* that now knocks for admission, see Mat. 25. 40, 45. And when the hungry, the thirsty, the naked, the stranger, and the imprisoned have knocked and called, how few will be able to plead that they have never hesitated to rise, and never invented a plausible excuse for neglecting to open the door! *C.*

Ver. 7. The watchmen that, by their faithful preaching of the truth, found out (detected) the lately negligent, but now aroused and anxious seeker; they smote, they wounded the conscience, and they took away the vail of every plausible excuse. *C.*

Ver. 16. *He is altogether lovely.* Independent of its inspiration and its emblematic object, this description must present to the eye of an unprejudiced artist an imagery of most unequalled range, the product of a mind fraught with universal information. Its chief topics of comparison are (1) Colours; (2) Officered armies, ver. 10; (3) Precious metal; (4) Ornithology, ver. 11, 12; (5) Botany, ver. 13; (6) Jewelry, ver. 14; (7) Architecture; (8) Landscape, ver. 15; (9) Attractive eloquence, ver. 16. Every province of nature and art thus furnishing its tribute to the King, the 'Lord of all!' *C.*

REFLECTIONS.—Quickly, when entreated, does Jesus come to comfort the hearts and supply the wants of his people; and brings with him for their refreshment the fulness of promises, grace, and joy. Enlarged appetites after spiritual blessings are necessary for gospel hearers. But it is strange that even saints should refuse his gracious visits, for which they had earnestly prayed and patiently waited. Hard is the heart that remains untouched by his affectionate calls; base is the temper which renders men careless about him and his influences; and shameful and frivolous are the best excuses which can be made for evading his visits. It is indeed impossible for people wholly to exclude him from their heart; and they procure for themselves great grief and toil by neglecting to entertain his offered kindness. But it is base for ministers to act imprudently and untenderly towards those whose spirits the Lord has wounded. More dutiful and profitable is it to strive in prayers for one another. And how pleasant when, even under desertion, saints maintain the most exalted view of Jesus' person and fulness, and the most assured faith of their interest in them; and when even curious inquiries concerning him draw forth the warmest commendations of him!

CHAPTER VI. DAUGHTERS. 1. Precious saint, tell us where we may hope to find this thy beloved Saviour, that we may, after thy example, and in holy fellowship with thee, more heartily than ever seek him.

BELIEVERS. 2. Jesus, my beloved, is always present in his church, and is especially conversant in those assemblies where the graces of the people are most eminent; taking pleasure in and increasing their grace and comforts, and delighting to convert, and afterwards glorify, all who accept him. 3. And notwithstanding all my miscarriages, the mutual relation between him and me is as full and firm as ever; and he still delights himself in the assemblies of his people.

CHRIST. 4. In respect of oracles, ordinances, officers, and order, thou, my church, art extremely beautiful in my view, and terrible to enemies around. And in respect to real righteousness, glorious grace, and holy conversation, thou, O particular believer, art transcendently comely, and thy assured faith and fervent prayer overcome every opponent. 5–7. Such was my delight in the vigorous actings of thy faith and love, and in thy importunate prayers, that I could no longer absent myself; and being returned, I assure thee, for thy comfort, that thy holy thoughts and gracious exercise, thy unfeigned and operative faith, thy spiritual meditations, thy regular and active zeal, thy humility and self-abasement, together with all thy privileges, and everything belonging to my church, are as precious and comely as ever. 8, 9. Whatever beauties there be in earthly courts, there are none comparable to a true saint. In the one true church, nay, in one heavenly-begotten soul, there is more real comeliness than in all the world beside; all those of principal esteem, in either church or state, are disposed to express their approbation of it. 10. Gradual was the increasing light and glory of the church in her patriarchal, ceremonial, and gospel periods. Gradual and diversified is the growing comeliness and glory of every believer who truly turns to the light: they shine as the *morning light,* going on to perfection. In their borrowed and imperfect holiness they show fair as the moon; and in their genuine righteousness shine clear as the meridian sun; and, armed with the whole armour of God, they are terrible to every opposer. 11. Such is my regard to my church that, even while absent from thee, I was occupied among my outwardly mean but inwardly glorious and hidden ones, carefully observing if her fruitfulness in saints and in good works was answerable to her new-covenant soil, and how her various members did thrive in the advanced progress or weak beginnings of grace. 12. And thy vigorous actings of faith and fervent supplications took such hold of me, that I was constrained, as in a surprising transport of affection, speedily to return to thee in loving-kindness and in tender mercies. 13. Notwithstanding every former offence, return, therefore, my perfect and peaceable one, by faith and repentance, to thy wonted familiarity with me, that I and my Father, and blessed Spirit, and ministering angels may, with pleasure and satisfaction, behold thy beauties. However mean and worthless thou art in thy own eyes, yet how pleasant is it for me to behold Jews and Gentiles united into one society of saints, and to contemplate heavenly graces and holy duties withstanding and conquering the remains of inward corruptions, temptations, and fears!

Ver. 1. *O thou fairest.* This character of superlative female beauty, like the panegyric on male beauty, ch. 5. 10, &c., should have led every expositor to see that the book was never intended for any daughter of Eve; to any one of whom it had been the grossest flattery, alike degrading to the deceiving utterer and the credulous listener. But how literal the description when applied to her who is adorned by the Spirit with 'the beauty of holiness!' *C.*

Ver. 5. *Turn away thine eyes.* That is, thine eyes suffused with tears from seeking and suffering, ch. 5. 6, 7; see Ps. 116. 8. *C.*

Ver. 8. This is no enumeration of Solomon's family establishment, as it does not accord with the account in 1 Ki. 11. 3. It is an emblematic classification of the church, in which queens, concubines, and virgins are exactly equivalent to the triple classification, 1 Jn. 2. 12–14, fathers, young men, children. *C.*

Ver. 9. That is, the church in its progressive tripartite condition on earth, saw and praised the church in its glorified and perfected condition in heaven, as the most wondrous monument of the wisdom and grace of its Lord. *C.*

Ver. 11. The speaker in the *first person* from ver. 4 has been the bridegroom; and after the question, ver. 10, he resumes ver. 11. This must be the key, ver. 12, in which, not the bride, but the bridegroom speaks, saying, 'or ever I was aware'—before I had time for farther inquiry—'my soul,' my strong affection, 'set me on the chariots of my willing people'—the people promised to Christ 'in the day of his power,' Ps. 110. 3, and whom 'the love of Christ constraineth' (carries along with him) to judge and live, 2 Co. 5. 14. *C.*

Ver. 13. *Shulamite.* The Hebrew feminine of Solomon; 'the peaceful and the perfect.' —*The company of two armies,* The word *Mahanaim* is applied to the two bands into which Jacob divided his family, also to the two hosts of angels that he saw, Ge. xxxii.; and may well represent the two bands of 'Jews and Gentiles' in the church, Jn. 10. 16, and the correspondent 'ministering spirits sent forth to minister to them who shall be heirs of salvation,' He. 1. 14. *C.*

REFLECTIONS.—The believer's hearty commendations of Christ are glorious, when blessed by him, to

return, that we may look upon thee. What will ye see in the Shulamite? As it were the company of two armies.[9]

CHAPTER VII.

1 *A further description of the church's graces.* 10 *The church professeth her faith and desire.*

HOW beautiful[a] are thy feet with shoes, O prince's[b] daughter! [c]the joints of thy thighs *are* like jewels, the work of the hands of a cunning workman:

2 Thy[d] navel *is like* a round goblet, *which* wanteth not [1]liquor: [e]thy belly *is like* an heap of wheat set about with lilies:[2]

3 Thy[g] two breasts *are* like two young roes *that are* twins:

4 Thy[h] neck *is* as a tower of ivory; [i]thine eyes *like* the fish-pools in Heshbon by the gate of Bath-rabbim: [j]thy nose *is* as the tower of Lebanon which looketh toward Damascus:

5 Thine[k] head upon thee *is* like [3]Carmel,[4] and [l]the hair of thine head like purple: the King *is* held[5] in the galleries:

6 How[m] fair and how pleasant art thou, O love, for delights!

7 This[o] thy stature is like to a palm-tree, and[p] thy breasts to clusters *of grapes*.

8 I said, [q]I will go up to the palm-tree, I will take hold of the boughs thereof: now also thy [r]breasts shall be as clusters of the vine, and the [s]smell of thy nose like apples;[6]

9 And[t] the roof of thy mouth like the best wine for my beloved, that goeth *down* [7]sweetly, causing the lips of those that are asleep[8] to speak.[9]

10 ¶ I[u] *am* my beloved's, and his desire *is* toward me.

11 Come,[v] my beloved, let us go forth into the field; let us lodge in the villages:

12 Let[w] us get up early to the vineyards; let [v]us see if the vine flourish, *whether* the tender grape appear,[1] *and* the pomegranates bud forth: there will I give [z]thee my loves.[2]

13 The [a]mandrakes[3] give a smell, and at our gates *are* [b]all manner of pleasant *fruits*, new and old, *which* I have laid up for thee, O my beloved.

CHAPTER VIII.

1 *The love of the church to Christ.* 6 *The vehemency of love.* 8 *The calling of the Gentiles.* 14 *The church prayeth for Christ's coming.*

OH that [a]thou *wert* as my brother, that sucked the breasts of my mother! *when* I should find thee without, I [b]would kiss thee; yea, I should not be despised.[1]

2 I[c] would lead thee, *and* bring thee into my mother's house, *who* would instruct me: I [d]would cause thee to drink of spiced wine of the juice of my pomegranate.[2]

3 His[e] left hand *should be* under my head, and his right hand should embrace me.

4 I[g] charge you, O daughters of Jerusalem, that ye stir not up,[3] nor awake *my* love, until he please.

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9 Or, *of Mahanaim*, Ge. 32.2, or Jn.10.16.Ep.2.14,16,18;3.6;6.10–19. Ro. 3. 29; 7. 23. Ga.5.17,24.

CHAP. VII.

a Ep.6.15.Phi.1.27.
b Ps. 45. 10, 13. 2 Co. 6.18.
c 1 Ti.1.5. Col. 2. 19. Ep.4.15,16.2 Co.5.14.
d 1 Co.4.15. Ga.4.19. 1 Th. 2. 7, or 1 Pe. 2. 2. Mat. 4. 4. 2 Pe.1.4. Je. 15.16.
1 Heb. *mixture.*
e Ps.119.11;22.30;45. 15.
2 'Thy waist is like a goblet filled with mixed wine; thy body like a heap of wheat bounded with lilies.'—*C.*
f ch.4.5.
2 See ch. 1. 10; 4. 4. Ro.6.6.
g Ep. 1.17,18;3.18,19. Je.9.1. La.3.49,50;2.18.
h Pr. 22. 3. He. 11. 7. Ep. 5. 15. Mar. 13. 33; 14.38.
2 Is. 35. 2. Mi. 7. 14. Ep. 4. 15. Col. 2. 19, or He. 6. 11, 18, 19. Ro. 8. 24,25.
3 Or, *crimson.*
4 Still famous for the richness and beauty of its foliage, and the abundance and brightness of its wild-flowers.—*P.*
i ch.iv.Re.1.5;7.14.
5 Heb. *bound*, Ps. 68.24.Ge.32.26. Ho.12. 4.ch.3.4.Ex.25.34.
j ch.4.15,16; 2. 3,14; 4. 7. Is.60.5. Zep. 3 17.
o Ps. 92.12. Isa.41 13, 10.Col.2.19.2 Co.1.12.
p ver. 3; ch.4.5; 8. 8. Is.66.10,11.
q Jn.14.21,23. Je.32. 41.Ps 110.3;45.3-5.
r Is. 66. 10, 11. 2 Pe. 1.8.
2 2 Co.2.14.
6 'And the perfume of thy breath like citrons.'—*C.*
t Col.3.16,17;4.6.Ac. 4.11,12;2.37;16.14.

* Jewish writers mentionpomegranate wine; and a pleasant sherbet is still made

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in the East from the juice of the pomegranate. It is worthy of note that a city in the tribe of Dan is called *Gath-rimmon*, that is, 'the wine-press of the pomegranate;' and in all probability was so called from the fact that pomegranate wine was largely manufactured at it.—*P.*

7 Heb. *straightly.*
8 Or, *of the ancient.*
9 'And thy speech as the choicest wine, sent to those specially beloved, sparkling against the lips and the teeth.'—*C.*
u ch.2.16; 6.3. Ga.2. 20.Phi.3.8,9.Ps.45.11.
v ch.2.10–1314.8. Ps. 42.6;63.1,2;84.2. Is.26. 8,9.
x Ec.9.10.Pr.8.17.
y ch.6.11. 2 Co.13.5. 1 Co.11. 28. Ps.139. 23, 24;17.3.
1 Heb. *open.*
z Ex.25.22.Ps.122.5. He.4.16. Ec.e.20.40,41. Ps. 63. 1–7; 116. 1–19; cxli. 1,2.
2 'There will I present thee with baskets of fruit.' So the word is translated, Je. 24.1. —*C.*
a Ge.30.14.
3 See Ge.30.14; but it may be translated as in the note on text. —*C.*
b Ca.5.22,23. Ps. 65. 1,2. Mat.13.52. 1 Co.2. 9;10.3.1 Pe.4.11.

CHAP. VIII.

a Is.7.14;9.6;14.2. He. 2. 11, 12, 14. Jn. 1. 14; 2.11.
b Ps.2.12. Jn.5.12,23; 7.38,42. 1 Co.1.23,24.
1 Heb. *they should not despise me.*
c See ch.3.4.Ga.4.26.
d Pr.9.2,5.ch.7.9,12; 4.10;5.1.
2 See note * in first column.
e ch. 2. 6. De. 33. 27. 2 Co.12.9. Zep.3.17. Is. 62.4,5.
g ch.2.7;3.5.
3 Heb. *why should ye stir up*, or, *why*, &c.

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make others inquire after him. And it is prudent for deserted saints frequently and boldly to recognize the mutual relation betwixt Christ and their soul. Great is the mercy that, though he often for a time deserts a particular child, he never totally forsakes his church and ordinances, and often does much good while it is little perceived. How sweet and often surprising are the returns of his sensible presence! For unchangeable is his esteem of, love to, desire after, and delight in all people amidst all the changes of his countenance and providence. Engaging, honourable, and awful are the beauties of holiness when they shine in churches, ordinances, and saints. And unbounded is Jesus' care about all people, and to have them fruitful in graces and good works. He daily seeks to return them his sensible favours, and to see them cordially united among themselves, and valiantly contending with their spiritual enemies.

CHAPTER VII. 1–6. Thou, O my visible church, art adorned with ministers shod with the animating preparations of the gospel of peace;—ministers fixed in the most noted station, and contributing to thy inward health and fruitfulness;—strong in grace, and confirmed in the truth, and set for the defence of the gospel;—intelligent in the mystery of Christ, and sagaciously watching against thy spiritual foes.—Thou art also adorned with manifold oracles and ordinances, for the spread of my honour, the communication of my influences, and edification of my people.—How beautiful, O heaven-born soul, are thy affections and conversation, through the powerful influence of gospel truth! Glorious are thy inward principles of holiness, and first motions to good, wrought in thee by the Holy Ghost! Thy gracious desires are supplied with nourishing influences from above! Plentiful provision, and fruitfulness in holiness, is obtained by the digesting of my word in a particular application of it! Living on the breasts of inspired oracles and instituted ordinances, how glorious and attracting are the exercises of thy faith and love, and of thy holy endeavours to edify others! A sure and precious defence is thy unfeigned and vigorous faith! Clear and distinct is thy spiritual understanding in the matters of God! Wonderful is thy gracious sagacity in discovering truth, and discerning between good and evil: and attended with courage and watchfulness, especially against the most near, constant, and malicious enemies! Grounded in my blood, and effectually productive of good works, is thy towering hope supported by thy faith! And acceptable in me is even the very smallest part of thy holy principles or practices! 7. So affecting is thy beauty, bestowed by myself, that I cannot but regard thy fellowship, and take pleasure to look on, and abundantly delight in thee.—When the whole of thy graces and holy conversation is considered in connection, how comely, flourishing, victorious, and heavenly is the appearance! And how cordial and cheering to me are thy affection and kind entertainment; 8, 9. In my purpose I resolved, and in my promise I have sought, to manifest myself to my church, in converting nominal members, and vouchsafing my kindest fellowship to real saints.—This shall qualify thee to edify others, and give pleasure and satisfaction to me. Revived, refreshed, and comforted, by my influences, thy gracious discourse shall quicken and awaken others to taste of my love, and to open their mouths in my praise.

BELIEVERS. 10. O the inexpressible comfort which I enjoy in the faith of Jesus' relations, and in the intimations of his love to my soul! 11, 12. Beloved Redeemer and husband, let me, retiring from the hurry and cares of this present world, have the most ravishing and permanent fellowship with thee! Let me, without delay, not only have a deep concern for the spiritual prosperity of the church, but have an intimate and distinct knowledge of the condition of my own heart, and see whether my graces be weak or strong, flourishing or languishing. In this our retired communion will I discover the sincerity and fervency of my affection to thee. 13. While the precious, savoury, and medicinal truths of the gospel are to many a savour of life unto life; and while lively believers all around me begin to flourish and spread their heavenly influence; the inward graces of my heart show themselves in lively exercises; and everywhere new degrees of grace, and new acts of holiness, are added to the former: all which are, at thy command, set apart for promoting thine honour and service!

Ver. 1. *Shoes.* The shoes or sandals are noticed first, as the emblem of 'the feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace,' Ep. 6. 15.—*The joints of thy thighs*, &c. 'The mouldings of thy limbs are as ornaments, the workmanship of a skilful hand.' *C.*

Ver. 4. Heshbon was the capital of Sihon; and amidst its ruins a beautiful pool of water still exists. But is not the meaning of the emblem to be found rather in the meaning of the words, which abides, than in any work of art that might soon be destroyed? Heshbon signifies *thought;* Bath-rabbim, *the house of the mighty;* that is, 'Thine eyes are pools (bright depths) of intelligence and power.' *C.*

Ver. 5. 'Thy braided hair is like the royal purple festooned around the ceilings.'—*Note*, The word here translated *galleries* is also (ch. 1. 17) translated *rafters:* it has also been translated *ringlets.* The precise meaning of the word is uncertain; but, from its relation to *beams* (ch. 1. 17), and the fact that eastern ceilings are generally of boards, it has here been rendered *ceilings. C.*

REFLECTIONS.—Extensive are the beauties of holiness in the church and people of God, and fixed and uniform in the substantials thereof. What delight Jesus takes in the persons and services of his followers! He is ready to hold the most intimate fellowship with them. And with ravishing pleasure they glory in him, and in his love towards them. When inwardly warmed by his love, how ready are they to relinquish everything else, in order to have familiar intercourse with him! And a deep concern for the church of Christ, and exact observation of our inward condition, effectually promotes our endeavours to honour him.

CHAPTER VIII. BELIEVERS. 1. Blessed Redeemer, O that that happy period were come, in which thou shalt assume our nature, and be a member of our visible church, and, in consequence thereof, admit us to the most intimate fellowship with thee! Then, without regard to reproach or persecution, should I openly profess my reverence, subjection, and affection to thee. 2. Instructed by thy Spirit, I should spread abroad the knowledge of thee in the extended gospel church, and all my gifts and graces should be employed to serve and glorify thee. 3. O the infinitely transporting, the intimate, the endearing, the strength-

5 (Who[h] *is* this that cometh[4] up [i]from the wilderness, leaning upon her beloved?) [j]I raised thee[5] up under the apple-tree: there [k]thy mother brought thee forth: there she brought thee forth *that* bare thee.

6 ¶ Set[l] me as a seal upon thine heart, as a seal upon thine [6]arm: [m]for love *is* strong as death; jealousy *is* cruel as the grave: the coals thereof *are* coals of fire, *which hath* a most vehement flame.

7 Many[o] waters cannot quench love, neither can the floods drown it: [p]if a man would give all the substance of his house for love, it would utterly be contemned.

8 ¶ We have [q]a little sister, and she hath no breasts: what shall we do for our sister in the day [r]when she shall be spoken for?

9 If[s] she *be* a wall,[7] we will build upon her a palace of silver; and [t]if she *be* a door, we will inclose her with boards of cedar.

10 I[u] *am* a wall, and my breasts like towers; then was I in his eyes as one that found [8]favour.

11 Solomon[v] had a vineyard at Baal-hamon; he let out the vineyard unto keepers: every one for the fruit thereof was to bring a thousand *pieces* of silver.

12 My[w] vineyard, which *is* mine, *is* before me:[9] thou, [v]O Solomon, *must have* a thousand, and those [z]that keep the fruit thereof two hundred.

13 Thou[a] that dwellest in the gardens, [b]the companions hearken to thy voice: [c]cause me to hear *it*.

14 ¶ Make[d] haste,[1] my beloved, and be thou like to a roe or to a young hart upon the mountains of spices.

A.M. cir. 3009.
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h ch.3.6,6.10.
4 Or, *goeth up.*
i ch.2.10; 4.8. 1 Jn.5. 4. Ps. 45.10, 11. Col. 3. 1-5.
j ch.2.3.Ho.12.4.
5 The emblem here changes to one coming up from the wilderness, weak and dependent, leaning herself upon her beloved.—*C.*
k ch.3.11. Mat.12.50. Ga.4.19. Col.1.27.
l Is.49.16. Je. 22. 24. Hag.2.23.2 Ti.2.19.
6 This is the entreaty of her that leans: the heart to love—the arm to defend. See Hag. 2. 23. Je.32.24.—*C.*
m Jn.21.17. Phi.3.8,9. Ps. 73. 25; 73.1-4; 42.1; 63.1,8,4.2. Is.26.8,9. Pr. 6.34,35.
n Ps.32.6; 18.4; 69.1, 2. Is.8.7. Mat.7.27.
o Pr.6.35. Ps. 73. 25. Phi.3.7. 2 Co.5.14.
p Eze 28.28. Ge. 49. 10. Ps.22.27; 2.8. Ep.2. 12,14.17.
q Is. 11. 10; 49. 6, 12; 54. 5; 60.3,5,10,11. Ac. 11.19-23.
s Mat. 16. 18. Ep. 2. 22. Re.21.12,14,19.
7 *If she* become a *wall*,—builded up in Christ, Ep. 2. 22; a defence and fold for the flock, &c.—*If she* become *a door*, at which the flock 'go in and out, and find pasture,' &c. Jn.10.9. —*C.*
t Ac.14.27. 1 Co.16. 9. Re.3.8. ch.1.10,11.
u Col. 2. 7. ch.7.3,7. Jude 20,21. Eze.16.7.
8 Heb. *peace*, Ro.5. 1,10.
v Is.5.1,7. Mat.20.1-7; 21. 33-43; 25. 14-30. He.13.17.
x ch.1.6. Ps. 119.9,11. Pr.4.23. 1 Ti.4.16. Ac. 20.28.
9 *My vineyard—before me*, represents the private duties of the individual in the heart, the closet, or the family.—*C.*
y Ro.14.8.2 Co.5.15. Ps.72.17-19. Is.53.12.
z 1 Ti. 5. 17. 1 Th. 2. 19,20.
a ch.2.12,13; 4.12-14; 6.2,11; 7.11,12.
b ch.1.5,6; 2.7; 3.7-11; 5.8-16.
c ch.2.14. Ps.50.15.
d Re.22.17,20. ch.1. 2; 2.17. Lu.19.12.
1 Heb. *flee away.*

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ening and supporting fellowship that I should enjoy with thee! Nay, already the believing views of it fill my soul with the joys of my Lord! 4. Let me therefore once more charge you, my fellow-professors, to do everything in your power to continue this my delightful communion with Jesus Christ, and do nothing to interrupt it.

DAUGHTERS. 5. What admirable person is this, who, forsaking all worldly things for Christ, and delivered from her distressed condition, mounts up heavenward, by faith resting on him to bear her up under every burden, and forward through every duty and difficulty?

BELIEVERS. O Jesus, animated by thy own delightful influence, I have, by importunate prayers, obtained the most sensible manifestations of thy love; as others, in whose hearts thou art formed by faith, have also done. 6, 7. O let thy most endeared esteem, remembrance, and love of my soul, appear remarkably in all thy dispensations towards me: for so vehement and irresistible is my desire after intimate fellowship with thee, that nothing else can afford me satisfaction: no, not death and the grave are so dreadful to me as the fears of thy withdrawment! Kindled by thy love shed abroad in my heart, my love to thee melts all my inward powers, and burns up my corruptions. No affliction, temptation, desertion, or persecution can extinguish or abate it. Would the richest on earth tempt me from thee, with all his wealth, nay, with ten thousand worlds, I would utterly contemn and abhor the proposal. 8. But, Lord, we have many fellow-sinners, whom thou didst die for; particularly among the Gentiles, who enjoy no ordinances, and are yet unripe for their spiritual marriage, being destitute of faith and love; what shall we do to promote their conversion, when the offers of thy grace shall be made to them?

CHRIST. 9. When, according to my unchangeable purpose, they shall accept me as their foundation, I and my Father and blessed Spirit will endow them with manifold gifts and graces, and render them, in their hearts and church state, a firm tower and beautiful temple and palace for God. When the door of access to me shall be opened to them in the gospel, and the door of their heart opened to receive me, we, notwithstanding their insignificancy, weakness, troubles, and temptations, will thoroughly beautify, strengthen, and protect them.

BELIEVERS. 10. Indeed, blessed Redeemer, by thy infinite favour, I have been united to thee, and stand firm on thee as my foundation, and am come to some maturity and perfection in grace. 11. Thou, Lord Jesus, the infinitely wise and wealthy Prince of Peace, hast secured by thy blood, planted and purified by thy grace, sown with thy Word, and protected and managed by thy providence, the large vineyard of thy church. This thou hast committed to the care of thy gospel ministers, that they, by instructions, warnings, reproofs, and censures, might endeavour to their utmost to render the members fruitful in the works of righteousness, to thy praise and glory. 12. And, while the whole concerns of it are under thy special care, I have in charge the vineyard of my own heart, to watch over, defend, purge, and render fruitful in holy habits and exercises. Thou, Jesus, must have the principal honour of all that I am, have, or can attain to, and thy faithful ministers their subordinate share of my love and regard.

CHRIST. 13. Believing soul, who lovest and frequentest the assemblies of my people, and ordinances there dispensed, thy fellow-members regard and listen to thy instructions and warnings for their edification. Let me, when withdrawn from thee, particularly in my bodily presence, often hear thy prayers and praises, and the publication of my gospel in the world.

BELIEVERS. 14. And, O my blessed Husband and Saviour, not only maintain frequent and familiar intercourse with my soul, and with thy church on earth, in the instituted ordinances of thy worship, but hasten, hasten thy glorious appearance without sin unto our salvation;—when we shall be caught up to meet thee in the air, and shall, in one complete body, enter that happy, that eternal state, in which God shall be ALL in ALL.

Ver. 2. *I would cause thee*, &c. 'Thou shouldest accustom me to give thee spiced wine, with the juice of pomegranates.' *C.*

Ver. 5. *I raised thee up.* I revived thee, when left a helpless infant under the citron-tree. See Eze. 16. 4-8. In this reply the BELOVED speaks. *C.*

Ver. 6. *For love is strong.* 'Yea, love is strong,' &c. This is the reply of the *Beloved* who supports.—*Jealousy*, 'burning love'—*cruel*, rather, 'inexorable'—*vehement flame*, rather, 'the dissolving fire of Jehovah.' *C.*

Ver. 8. The grammar of the passage suggests that the 'daughters of Jerusalem,' who speak (ch. 1.-v.), who are still present (ch. 8. 4), are here the solicitous projectors for the welfare of the 'little sister.' This emblem has been expounded of the Gentile church —but it seems much more natural to understand by it such as are yet 'weak in the faith,' Ro. 14. 1; 15. 1; 1 Co. 3. 2; Ep. 4. 13. *C.*

Ver. 10. This has generally been considered as the answer of the 'little sister,' exemplifying full and instantaneous 'growth in grace.' But as the grammar will not warrant any change from the speaker in the first person (ver. 1, 2, 4) and the speaker in the first person (ver. 10), this must be understood as the language of the bride, encouraging the 'little sister' by her own experience of grace and attainments in faith. *C.*

Ver. 11. *Baal-hamon*, ruler of multitudes.—The *keepers* represent the rulers and instructors of the churches in their multitudes.—*A thousand.* As the annual rent for a vine seems to have been ordinarily a piece of silver. Is. 7. 23, the emblem indicates that return of 'fruit of the Spirit,' Ga. 5. 22, which is ever due in correspondence to privileges. *C.*

Ver. 13. *Thou that dwellest in the gardens.* It is impossible by the grammar to distinguish the speaker in ver. 13 from the speaker in ver. 14; and as in ver. 14 she calls to the listener, *my Beloved*, the speaker is the bride calling to her Redeemer, 'Even so, come, Lord Jesus!' Re. 22. 17, 20. *C.*

REFLECTIONS.—How kind, how marvellous is it, that God's only begotten Son, the brightness of his glory, has, by his assumption of our nature, become our brother, and will for ever continue bone of our bone and flesh of our flesh! And great is the mercy, that to him the gathering of the Gentiles hath and shall be! It is pleasant to remember past experiences of his love in the assured expectations of others still more sweet! And delightful is the frame, ardent the desires, and fervent the prayers, when a soul is overwhelmed with the consolations of Christ! Importunate intercession for the spiritual welfare of others often produces remarkable fellowship with him. Extensive revenues of holy thoughts, words, and deeds are due from every member of the church to Jesus Christ. And they who give him his due, will give his ministers theirs. But how strongly Christ and his people's hearts must be knit one to another! They cannot live but as it were in mutual intercourse. Soon will he come to take them to himself in glory; and, in the believing view of it, their waiting spirits cry, 'Even so, come, Lord Jesus.'

CONCLUDING REMARKS ON THE SONG OF SOLOMON.

Three points present themselves to the Christian reader and student in the preceding book:—

I. Was this book received into the canon of Holy Scripture, and sanctioned by our Lord and his apostles? To this there can be but one answer—it was.

II. Are there, in the New Testament, any such evident references as form a key to its interpretation? Such evident references may be found, Mat. 21. 33, when comp. with Song 8. 11; Ep. 5. 27, comp. with Song 4. 1, 7; Ep. 6. 15, comp. with Song 7. 1; Re. 3. 20, comp. with Song 5. 2. Other references have been suggested, but these are so evident as not to admit of question.

III. Are there such quotations of passages of Scripture parallel to or identical with the Song of Solomon, by which its spiritual import can be unquestionably established? The answer to this question is easy and direct. (1) By referring to He. 1. 8 there is found a direct address from God the Father to God the Son. (2) That address is quoted from Ps. 45. 6. (3) It is impossible to overlook the complete parallelism, nay identity, of that psalm with the scenery and character of the Song of Solomon. Therefore, by following the scriptural plan—comparing spiritual with spiritual, and the natural law of all interpretation—rising from what is plainly stated, granted, or ascertained, to what is less plain, questioned, or yet unknown, there can be no difficulty in coming to the conclusion, that the Song of Solomon forms a succession of emblems whereby the mutual love and union between Christ and his church are described for the instruction and comfort of believers.

That the Song of Solomon is capable of ready and great perversion, by 'men of corrupt minds,' is undoubted. For, whilst 'to the pure all things are pure,' so to

the impure all things are impure. And such is the state of the carnal mind, that just in proportion as any object is good, in like proportion may it be perverted to purposes of evil. Thus—just in proportion as a medicine is powerful to restore, may its improper administration render it powerful to destroy. And thus grace, in its every form, may be turned into licentiousness. But is the sufferer, therefore, to be deprived of a powerful medicine?—or is the physician who discovered and prescribed it to be pronounced an evil-doer? Is the sinner, therefore, to be deprived of access to pardon; and the God of all grace and consolation to be disrobed of his attribute of mercy? No. And neither is the church of God to be deprived of some of the brightest pages in the divine Word, because eyes that have 'loved darkness' cannot perceive their beauties.

To those who have observed what a prominent place love to Jesus holds in the New Testament (see for example, Jn. 14. 23; 1 Co. 16. 22; 2 Co. 5. 14), and to those who have experienced and rejoiced in 'the assurance' of that love—the Song of Solomon will ever furnish a subject of study, at once most delightful and profitable. *C.*

The various modes of interpreting this remarkable and extremely difficult book may be classified under three heads:—The Literal, the Typical, and the Allegorical.

1. *The Literal* makes the book a simple story related in the form of a dramatic poem. The facts of the story are given by Dr. Ginsburg as follows:—'A village girl, the daughter of a widowed mother of Shulam, is betrothed to a young shepherd, whom she met whilst tending the flock. Fearing lest the frequent meetings of these lovers should be the occasion of scandal, the brothers of the Shulamite employ her in the vineyard on the farm. Whilst on the way to this vineyard she one day falls in with the cortége of King Solomon, who is on a spring visit to the country. Struck with her beauty the king captures her, conveys her to his royal pavilion, then conducts her to Jerusalem in great pomp, in the hope of dazzling and overcoming her with his splendour, and eventually lodges her in his harem. But all is in vain. True to her virtuous love, she resists all the allurements of the exalted sovereign, spurns all his promises to elevate her to the highest rank, and in the midst of the gay scenes assures her humble shepherd, who followed her to the capital, that her affections are sacredly and inviolably pledged to him. Solomon, convinced at last that all his advances are in vain, allows her to quit the royal residence. Hand in hand the two faithful lovers return to her native place, and on their way home visit the tree under which their love-spark was first kindled, and there renew their vows of constancy and fidelity. On their arrival they are welcomed by their companion shepherds, and she is rewarded by her brothers for her exemplary virtue.' It is said that the object or moral of this charming story is 'to teach a lesson of practical righteousness by the record of an extraordinary example of virtue in a young maiden in humble life who encountered and conquered the greatest temptations from the most exalted personage in the land.' The theory is attractive, and the arguments employed in defence of it are not without weight; but I think the thoughtful student of God's Word, and especially such as have studied the genius of oriental poetry and imagery, will see that there is something higher and nobler in this book, than such a moral lesson. And, besides, I cannot see that the various parts of the book can be made at all to harmonize with such a simple and detailed story. In my mind the imagery is too sublime, the descriptions of far too elevated a character, to be applied even by an eastern poet to any mere narrative of real life.

2. *The Typical* theory of interpretation adopts as a basis the historical truth of the narrative, making the bride either Pharaoh's daughter, or some maiden of Palestine, whom Solomon had loved and married; but then this bride typified the church, and Solomon typified Christ, while the whole story was designed to represent in prophetic imagery the love subsisting between Christ and his church—a love mutual, indissoluble, and eternal. The great difficulty in the way of this theory is to establish the historical character of the narrative. A type must be a fact; and the narrative here has all the characteristics of ideality as distinguished from reality. No writer, however poetical, would describe ordinary events in such language as is employed in ch. 2. 1–4, 14; 6. 10–12; and no writer, even in the East, would put such language in the mouth of a virtuous maiden as we find in ch. i. ii. viii.

3. *The Allegorical* interpretation of the book seems to me to be the only possible and true one. The poem is conceived in the loftiest style of eastern imagery. Incidents of real life, events of everyday occurrence, customs which still prevail in the East form a groundwork, but they are all idealized and spiritualized, so that they may more strikingly exhibit to the pure and spiritual mind, grand divine truths. The leading image is common in Scripture. Human love in its purest and holiest type—that of husband and wife—is the symbol of the love of Christ and his church, of God and his people. Thus Isaiah says, 'Thy Maker is thine husband: the Lord of hosts is his name,' ch. 54. 5; and still more clearly: 'For thou shalt no more be termed Forsaken; neither shall thy land any more be termed Desolate; but thou shalt be called Hephzibah, and thy land Beulah; for the Lord delighteth in thee, and the land shall be married. . . . As the bridegroom rejoiceth over the bride, so shall thy God rejoice over thee,' ch. 62. 4, 5. The forty-fifth Psalm greatly resembles this book in style and imagery. So also the same imagery is common in the New Testament: 'I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ," 2 Co. 11. 2. The whole bearing and force of that beautiful passage in Ep. 5. 22–33 rest upon this same figure. The apostle John too, in the last book of the Sacred Canon, appears to embody the very idea of the Song of Solomon, when he records his glorious vision: 'And I John saw the Holy City, New Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.'

This is substantially the system of interpretation which was adopted generally by the Jews, and is developed in the Talmud. By them, of course, God is represented as the Beloved, and the people of Israel the loved one. In the early Christian church, the same view was taken, and was held almost universally until impugned by Erasmus. It appears to me to be in accordance with the analogy of Scripture, and with the genius of eastern poetry. The whole structure of the composition, too, discursive, yet having a subjective coherence, tends to the same conclusion. There is in it no sustained plot, no crisis of a story. It consists of expressions of most devoted affection, with reference to localities and ever-changing scenery, all adapted to call forth new emotions, and to exhibit unalterable love. Viewed in this light, interpreted in this manner, it is one of the purest and noblest portions of Holy Writ. It lifts the mind into an ideal world of spiritual communion with God in Christ. It shows us his tenderness, his watchful care, his devoted unceasing attachment to his people in all their waywardness, temptations, sorrows, and persecutions, such as we can see nowhere else. It shows us that friends and kindred—the nearest and dearest, may desert us in the hour of trial, but God will not and cannot, for love binds him to us and us to him by a tie that is indissoluble.

Yet, still, holy, pure, and comforting as this book is to the man whose nature the Spirit of God has mastered, the profitable reading of it by the ordinary Christian is confessedly difficult. Each one knows his own heart, and can best review his own feelings. But in this western land, where we are not accustomed to the gorgeousness of eastern imagery, or the nature of eastern life and manners, we need watchfulness, prayer, and a heart completely under the control of the sanctifying Spirit, if we would derive from this book those noble lessons which God intended it to embody and impart.

It is sometimes said that the Song of Solomon is not quoted or referred to in the New Testament, and that therefore it cannot have that high spiritual significancy which I have above advocated. In reply I quote the words of Hengstenberg:—'The New Testament is pervaded by references to the Song of Songs, and all of them are based on the supposition that it is to be interpreted spiritually. Proportionally no book of the Old Testament is so frequently referred to, implicitly or explicitly, in the New Testament, as this one; and we cannot but be surprised at the superficiality or the prejudices of those who have asserted that the Song of Songs is never quoted in the New Testament.' The following passages afford ample proof that its language and spirit were constantly before the mind of our Lord and his apostles, Mat. 6. 28–30; 13. 25; 24. 42, 21. 33; 26. 6–13; Mar. 14. 3; Lu. 12. 35–37; 13. 31, 32; 7. 38; Jn. 6. 44; 7. 33, 34, 12. 3; 21. 16; 3. 29; 2. 1–11; Ep. 5. 27.—*P.*